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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Science

**THEORETICAL-PRACTICAL PROBLEMS OF FORMATION
AND ASSESSING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN
TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

Speciality: 5801.01 – Theory and methodology of education and
training (methodology of teaching English)

Field of science: Pedagogy

Applicant: **Sevda Rafiq Imanova**

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The work was performed at Department of Foreign Language Teaching Methodology at the Faculty of Philology of the Azerbaijan University of Languages.

Official opponents: Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor
Iloxmjon Madaminovich Tuxtasinov

Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor
Zemfira Shahnazar Mammadova

Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor
Fikret Fatish Jahangirov

Doctor of Philological Sciences
Parviz Yasinali Aghayev

One-time Dissertation Council BED 2.15/1 of Supreme Attestation Commission under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan operating at Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University.

Chairman of the Dissertation council: Doctor of Historical Sciences,
Professor

Jafar Mammad Jafarov

Scientific secretary of the Dissertation council: Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences,
Associate Professor

Sharafat Aram Bakhishova

Chairman of the scientific seminar: Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences,
Professor

Dilara Abdul Ismayilova

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH

Actuality of the subject and the level of the problem study.

In the early 1990s, after the Great Leader Heydar Aliyev came to power, targeted reforms in various sectors of the country had a significant impact on expanding people's communication and their active participation in society, particularly in intercultural dialogue. In the context of global integration, despite the political, religious, and ethnic diversity of the international community, intercultural communication has become a key factor in the integration of peoples and societies. In this regard, preparing the younger generation for intercultural communication, which serves as a crucial mechanism for interethnic and interstate cooperation, has become an urgent task.

Located at the crossroads of Europe and the East, where multiple religions, cultures, and civilizations intersect, our country has recently hosted numerous events aimed at strengthening international intercultural dialogue. This highlights Azerbaijan's commitment to interethnic and intercultural dialogue and its emphasis on peace. With the support of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the Council of Europe, UNESCO, and other prestigious international organizations, Azerbaijan hosted the 1st and 2nd World Intercultural Forums in 2010 and 2012, the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Baku International Humanitarian Forums from 2011 to 2019, and the 29th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Baku, all of which further validate the points mentioned above.

In the context of this cooperation, Azerbaijan has the opportunity to showcase its rich synthesis of European and Eastern cultures and to familiarize itself with the best and most valuable qualities of the cultures of other nations around the world. All these opportunities provide a foundation for the youth to successfully represent Azerbaijan in international, universal cultural processes in the future, regardless of the field they choose to pursue, while preserving their national identity and uniqueness.

The holding of the 29th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, or COP29 for short, an

international conference in Baku from November 11 to 22, 2024, has raised the issue of young people's acquisition of foreign language skills and the formation of intercultural competence in them as an extremely important issue.

The communicative approach has been taken as a basis in Azerbaijan for recent decades in teaching foreign languages, conducting researches in this area and compiling textbooks and curricula and this shows its results. Azerbaijani students and graduates are evaluated for their ability to speak foreign languages correctly and fluently from the grammatical and phonetic aspects. However, nowadays following solely language rules during language use is not enough to establish successful communication. There are several gaps in our education system regarding students' ability to cooperate internationally in the future, adequately promote Azerbaijan, its culture, and spiritual values, and communicate with other cultures in real life.

Currently, it is very relevant to conduct research on the formation of intercultural competence, which is accepted by the European Council as one of the important competences for successful operations in the labor market. It is necessary to create a national model of the assessment tool proposed by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) that reflects Azerbaijani culture and national values. 13 countries around the world use assessment tools for evaluating the intercultural competence level. The development of the components of intercultural competence in the higher education system is a very complex and slow process, and the formation of the mentioned competence in the context of teaching foreign languages faces many theoretical and practical difficulties.

The research is aimed to the one of the fundamental problems in methodology – the scientific-theoretical and methodological issues in teaching the formation of intercultural competence serving intercultural dialogue in students studying the English language.

Today, in the globalizing world a policy of returning to native roots, cultures and traditions of nations is pursued. This is reflected in the content of the system, models, and educational tools developed

in the field of foreign language teaching, intercultural competence formation and evaluation. Researches and scientific discussions in this field prevail.

The level of development of the research, the study of the problem of intercultural competence is currently being conducted in several directions:

1. The concept of dialogue of cultures in education and teaching foreign languages (M.Byram, V.S.Bibler, S.Y.Kurganov, A.P.Sadokhin, V.V.Safonova, Y.I.Passov).

2. Fundamentals of intercultural and linguistic communication (D.Deardorff, C.Sinicrope, Y.M.Vereshagin, G.Chen, G.V.Yelizarova, M.Chibisova, O.Khukhlayev, B.Francis).

3. Formation of students' sociocultural competence (V.Varegiy, V.G.Vorobyev, A.V.Litvinov).

4. Formation of intercultural competence (V.Bernd, I.A.Zimnyaya, S.V.Mureyeva).

5. Students' intercultural communicative competence in the preparation process for foreign language majors (D.Deardorff, C.Sinicrope, T.Bosvud, I.L.Plujnik).

6. Intercultural communication issues (D.A.Ismayılova, G.J.Huseynzadeh,)

We can classify the research works in the field of formation and assessment of higher school students' intercultural competence in teaching foreign language as follows:

1) in the field of forming intercultural competence in language teaching methodology: D.Deardorff, M.Byram, J.Greenholtz, B.H.Shpitzberg, V.B.Gudykunst, S.Rathye, M.V.Lustig, A.J.Liddicoat, M.Hammer, M.Foucault, J.C.Beacco, A.N.Utekhina, A.E.Fantini, M.Barret, N.I.Almazova, V.Q.Apalkov, I.A.Zimnyaya, A.P.Sadoxhin, P.V.Sisoyev.

2) in the field of assessing the level of intercultural competence: M.Byram, M.E.Hashem, V.J.Prugger, L.Sergu, J.Takay, A.E.Fantini, K.Knapp, N.V.Chernyak, V.Q.Kostomarov, I.I.Xhaleyeva.

Taking into account the relevance of the problem, it is appropriate to formulate our thesis topic as follows: *"Theoretical-*

practical problems of the formation and evaluation of students' intercultural competence in English language teaching".

The object and the subject of the research. The object of the research is the formation and assessment of students' intercultural competence in teaching English at high schools.

The subject of the research is the theoretical and practical issues of the formation and assessment of students' intercultural competence in teaching English at linguistic high schools.

The goals and objectives of the research. The goal of the research is to develop a national model and system for the formation and assessment of students' intercultural competence.

The tasks of the research are as follows:

- to examine the existing scientific and theoretical literature on the problem envisaged in the thesis, to clarify the main scientific provisions related to the formation of intercultural competence;

- to reveal knowledge and skills related to intercultural competence (etiquette rules, nationality, cultural views, differences and diversities, similarities, behavior, tolerance, respectful approach);

- to get acquainted with the formation level of students' intercultural competence in studying English for professional purposes, to achieve the effectiveness of the work carried out in this area;

- to determine effective methods and ways of forming students' intercultural competence in the process of teaching English;

- to develop a didactic model for teaching intercultural competence and to conduct its experimental approbation in specialized faculties;

- to analyze the results obtained from the experiment in the field of teaching intercultural competence in specialized faculties, to systematize and generalize them.

Research methods. The following research methods have been used in the course of the research: theoretical analysis, observation, interview, conversation, questionnaire, induction and deduction, mathematical-statistical calculation and comparison, analysis and synthesis, abstraction, modeling and pedagogical experiment.

The main provisions of the defense:

- the program, syllabus and textbooks used in teaching English in specialized faculties create the basis for the formation of students' intercultural competence;
- to establish teaching in higher education institutions specializing in foreign languages in accordance with digital learning, ensuring the formation of students' intercultural competence.
- to determine effective ways and means for the formation and assessment of students' intercultural competence in the process of studying English for professional purposes in specialized faculties;
- to determine an appropriate national assessment model and classification for the Azerbaijani audience in order to ensure the formation of students' intercultural competence in studying English for professional purposes in specialized faculties;
- creating an Azerbaijani national model corresponding to the model created and proposed by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in terms of assessing intercultural competence.

The scientific novelty of the research lies in the study of the theoretical basis of a non-existent national assessment model for assessing the methodology and level of formation of intercultural competence in the higher education system of Azerbaijan, for the first time in teaching English. At the same time, a national model of intercultural competence has been developed in Azerbaijan, which is essential for students to develop in teaching English at linguistic high schools.

The theoretical and practical significance of the research. Theoretical significance of the research is the development of the scientific and theoretical bases of the formation of intercultural competence in the teaching of foreign languages in completely new conditions of direct intercultural communication in the modern era.

The results of the research can be used in teaching foreign languages in other high schools, in the preparation of teaching materials, programs and syllabi, in order to form intercultural competence in future specialists prepared for various fields.

At the same time, in order to form students' intercultural

competence in English lessons at linguistic high schools, it is necessary to independently form this process, implement its methodology, and prepare and choose materials and textbooks for its use, depending on the time and conditions allocated for teaching.

Approbation and application. The approbation of the main provisions of the thesis was presented in the form of reports at international and national scientific conferences. The results of the research were reflected in 35 scientific articles and theses published at home and abroad.

The name of the organization where the thesis was performed. The thesis was completed at the Department of Foreign Languages Teaching Methodology under the Faculty of Philology of Azerbaijan University of Languages.

The total volume of the thesis with characters indicating the volume of the structural sections separately. Thesis consists of introduction, 4 chapters, conclusion, list of used literature and appendices. The introductory part of the thesis is 7 pages (13 243 characters), chapter I 46 pages (88 652 characters), chapter II 54 pages (100 467 characters), chapter III 75 pages (140 330 characters), chapter IV 62 pages (96 944 characters), conclusion is 5 pages (8 042 characters), the total volume of the dissertation contains 447 678 characters, excluding the list of used literature and appendixes.

THE MAIN CONTENT OF THE RESEARCH

The **introduction** of the thesis states the relevance of the topic, object and subject of the thesis, goals and tasks of the research, research methods, the main arguments to be defended, scientific innovation, theoretical and practical importance, approbation and application, the name of the organization where the thesis was performed.

Chapter I of the thesis “**Theoretical foundations of the formation of intercultural competence in language-specialized higher schools**” consists of three paragraphs. The first paragraph “*Research History of Intercultural Competence*”, examines the

history of the emergence of intercultural competence as a research field and its development path up to the modern stage.

The study of intercultural relations shows that it has ancient history. So, certain relations between languages began to appear from the period when logical thinking was formed and when economic and military relations appeared between peoples. These relationships have always attracted the attention of thinkers and scientists. Intercultural communication created a foundation for the development and enrichment of nations. If we refer to history, we can mention Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Genghis Khan, Christopher Columbus and other personalities as the first intercultural communicators.

Intercultural competence was first studied in America in the post-war 1950s. When people working in the field of politics, economy, and business were sent to foreign countries they had to leave their work and come back due to unpleasant, controversial situations, conflicts, and misunderstandings due to the facts that they were not familiar with the cultures of those countries. Even mastering foreign languages at an adequate level did not help them to avoid complex work problems abroad. This order, in turn, led to the development of necessary research works, programs and textbooks, and increased attention to form the competence of establishing intercultural interactions.

In the 1960s and 1970s, an active search for methods and means of assessing and measuring the level of the formation of intercultural competence began.¹

In the 1980s, scholars began to study the intercultural competence of expatriates and the intercultural competence of society as a whole.² The most important period was in 1984, when B.Spitzberg and U.Kupach first described competence in communication from the point of view of effective behavior.

¹ Spitzberg, B.H., Kupach W.R. Interpersonal communication competence // – Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, – 1984. – p.2.

² Sinicrope, C., Norris J., Watanabe, Y. Understanding and Assessing Intercultural Competence: A Summary of Theory, Research, and Practice // Second Language Studies. – 2007. – Vol. 26, №1. – p.1-58.

According to their definition, a competent communication participant functions effectively, he/she is successful because he/she has the ability to skillfully manage the surrounding social environment to achieve his /her goal, and his or her behavior is approved by other communication participants in the interaction.

Since the 1990s, intercultural competence has become the focus of foreign language teaching methodology. In this period, as a resonance of the researches of the British scientist M.Byram in the field of teaching methods of foreign languages, new ideas were established about the individual's competence in communication.³ According to him, the aim of forming students' intercultural competence is not to be satisfied only with mastering the culture of country of the studied language. In addition, the methodology of teaching foreign languages, where the development of intercultural competence is dominant, withholds the tendency to adapt to the standards traditionally demonstrated by the native speakers of the studied language and its corresponding culture. In the early 2000s, mandatory courses on intercultural communication problems, including a wider range of specialties, actively integrated into curricula in all universities around the world.⁴

At the beginning of 2000 the active integration of the subjects on the issues of intercultural communication into the curricula of wider specialties had begun in all the universities of the world.⁵

At the same time, the study of more effective means for assessment the quality of teaching of subjects and evaluating the students' intercultural competence level has become widespread.

Starting from the 1990s and 2000s, scientists began actively to deal with the issues of intercultural communication in Azerbaijan.

³ Byram, M. *The Intercultural Speaker and the Pedagogy of Foreign Language Education // The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. – 2009. – p.321-332.

⁴ Vervoort, M.J.H. *Assessment and Development of Intercultural Competence of a Study Abroad: Master of Arts Thesis / M.J.H.Vervoort.* – Arkadelphia, Arkansas: Ouchata Baptist University, – 2010. – p.135.

⁵ Vervoort, M.J.H. *Assessment and Development of Intercultural Competence of a Study Abroad: Master of Arts Thesis / M.J.H.Vervoort.* – Arkadelphia, Arkansas: Ouchata Baptist University, – 2010. – p.135.

Foreign language teachers were the first to study the issues dealing with intercultural communication. G. Huseynzade, D. Ismayilova, A. Safiyev, A. Shiraliyev and other researchers' approach to the issues of intercultural communication caused significant conceptual changes in the methodology of teaching foreign languages.

The second paragraph of chapter I is called "***The essence and content of intercultural competence***". It is important to define key concepts and terms for each study. This paragraph defines the essence of the meanings of "intercultural competence", "culture" and "competence". Being acquainted with many studies on the nature and explanation of intercultural competence, in our opinion, the most relevant and extensive definition is given by M. Byram, which is one of the prominent researchers of intercultural competence: "*Intercultural competence refers to the ability to communicate successfully both with representatives of other cultures and with representatives of one's own culture*".⁶

The theory of *fuzzy logic* of the famous Azerbaijani scientist Lotfi Zadeh, who felt the necessity of the symbiosis of elements of Eastern and Western cultures is very important in understanding the nature, essence and inaccuracy of intercultural competence in creating its model, determining its constituent parts and evaluating the formed level. The mentioned issues prompt us to apply the principles of fuzzy logic theory to our research dedicated to the problem of intercultural competence formation.

Unlike classical logic, in fuzzy logic, not everything is black and white. The world isn't restricted to binary. This can be applied to the concept of native and other cultures. Between these two cultures there is a third culture. During the formation of intercultural competence, a third culture emerges as a result of the process of both cultural distance and cultural convergence, in which both (national and foreign) cultures play an equal important role. A person who acquires a new culture already has certain characteristics and occupies an intermediate position between native and foreign cultures.

⁶ Byram, M.S. Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence / M.S Byram. – Clevedon, Philadelphia, Toronto, Sydney, Johannesburg: – 1997. – p.12.

Nowadays, wars that pit religions and cultures against each other, terrorist incidents, racism, and genocide are the reasons for not seeing the third reality or the lack of desire to see it. Seeing and accepting the third is a process that develops civilization.

Joe Pearce defined the concept of culture according to L.Zadeh as “fuzzy sets”⁷ and later Jürgen Bolten introduced the term “fuzzy culture”.⁸

Communicative competence aims to prepare students for communication in a foreign language. The purpose of the formation of intercultural competence is to prepare students for successful interaction with representatives of different cultures. Foreign language skills are only one of the means of communication. The interaction between intercultural competence and intercultural communicative competence was expressed by A.Fantini, American specialist in teaching methods, with the following formula:

$$CC1+CC2+\dots+CC N = ICC^9$$

Herein CC-communicative competence, ICC – intercultural communicative competence. The sign “n” in the formula is the number of acquired communicative competences. An explanation of the formula is as follows: An individual who has communicative competence (CC1) in his native culture encounters a new communicative competence (CC2) possessed by a representative of another culture during intercultural interaction; if the individual intends to acquire this competence and achieves it, then intercultural communicative competence is formed.

The third paragraph of chapter I of the dissertation is called ***“Components and models of intercultural competence”***. In the context of our research we are interested only in intercultural models developed within the frame of foreign language teaching. This

⁷ <https://www.jstor.org/page-scan-delivery/get-page-scan/44125281/0>

⁸ Bolten, Jürgen (2013): Fuzzy Cultures: Consequences of an open and multi-valued concept of culture for conceptualisations of intercultural personnel development measures. http://iwk-jena.uni-jena.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Bolten_2013_Fuzzy_Cultures.pdf [12.03.2020]

⁹ Fantini, A.E. A central concern: Developing cultural competence // School for Intercultural competence. – Washington University. – 2007. – p.8

paragraph investigates and analyzes the classification of sixty-four models used for the formation of intercultural competence in thirteen countries of the world in this field, the studies of its components presented by various scientists.

Existing sixty-four models have been proposed by scientists from the following 13 countries: 1) USA, 2) Canada, 3) Germany, 4) Lithuania, 5) New Zealand, 6) Latvia, 7) France, 8) Netherlands, 9) Denmark, 10) Russia, 11) Great Britain, 12) Sweden, 13) Finland.

Among the models we researched, the most famous ones are models of intercultural competence made by Deardorff D.K., Fantini A., B.H.Shpitzberg, Yelizarova G.V. and Byram M. The last model is directly related to our research, as it was developed for the purpose of forming the concerned competence during the teaching of foreign languages (English) (Figure 1).

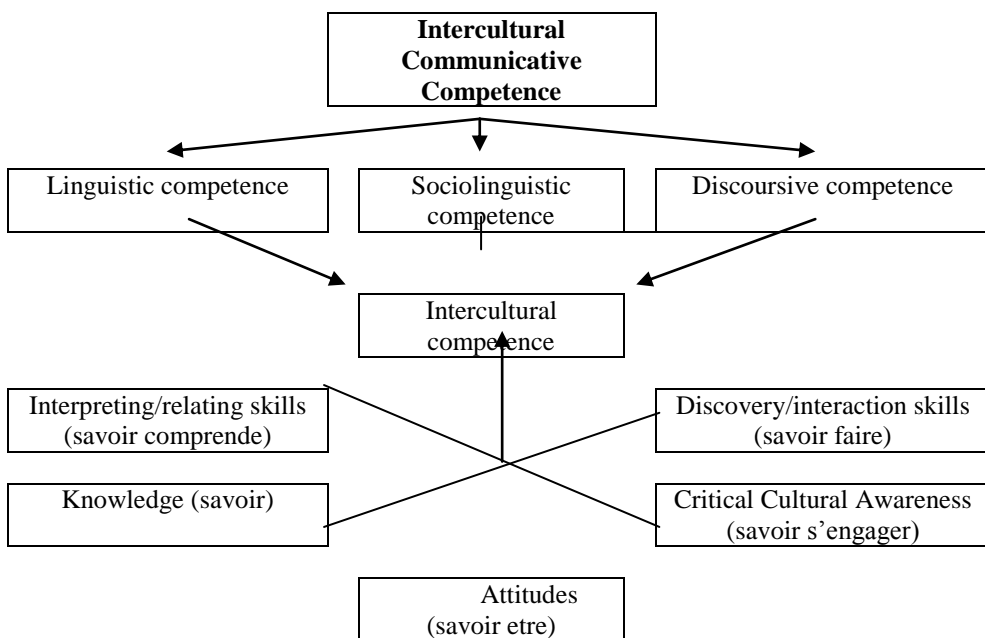


Figure 1.

M.Byram’s model of intercultural communicative competence

The literature we have reviewed elucidates that there is currently a lack of unanimity, consensus, and proportionality in

research on the structure of intercultural competence. The reason that some of the components included in the models of intercultural competence accepted and some are excluded, depending on the focused component during the selection.

Thus, despite the large number of models of intercultural competence, clarity and consensus have not been achieved in the field of its structure. The way out of this situation can be a compromise between the existing approaches. Thus, intercultural competence should be studied from the position of a specific approach, and as a result, the characteristic general and abstract features of its components should be distinguished, as well as the creation of a single universal model as a result of generalization should be considered appropriate.

The **second chapter** of the thesis is called “**The role of the formation of students’ intercultural competence in teaching of foreign languages in the globalized world**”. The *first paragraph* of the mentioned chapter “*Linguacultural approach to the formation of intercultural competence*” helps to understand new lexical units, their meanings through cultural associations specific to the culture of the people whose language is being studied in the linguistic-cultural approach used for the purpose of the formation of intercultural competence in the teaching of foreign languages.

Thus, it is clear that in this approach, culture is considered as the object of education, and the presentation of teaching material is based on the principle of starting from the cultural unit, not the language unit. It should not be forgotten that the national cultural units must be used on the same level as the cultural units of the language being studied. Foreign language teachers should use specially selected texts containing frame presuppositions when designing teaching materials. Frame presuppositions are the main condition for the formation of cognitive awareness of the personality.

The method of teaching any specific fragment of culture starting from linguoculturemes is implemented through the creation of the linguacultural sphere, which is considered as a structure consisting of a set of linguoculturemes belonging to a certain cultural field with a common meaning. For the formation of successful

intercultural competence, the linguacultural concepts included in the teaching material should express the specific aspects of both native and other cultures. Cultural knowledge and elements of the cultural field included in the teaching should depend on the future specialization of the students (international relations, philology, translation or teaching), age characteristics, and the level of language and cultural knowledge.

In addition, we accept the key idea that modern linguistics calls “discourse”. Discourse (lat. discursus) means “reasoning, argument”. This is related to the text taken from the informative aspect. Discourse is determined by extralinguistic, socio-cultural, psychological, pragmatic and other factors. It determines the interactive activity of the participants in the communication, the establishment and continuation of their relationships, their impact on emotional and informational, verbal and non-verbal levels, in a word, intercultural competence.

The theoretical review of existing literature allows us to conclude that the most effective and successful approach to the formation of intercultural competence during foreign language teaching is the linguacultural approach.

The second paragraph called “***Psychological foundations of the formation of intercultural competence***” studies psychological aspects and foundations of promoting of students’ intercultural competence in teaching English and defines the issues in terms of the problem. At the same time, the resource category of the psychological approach is taken into account in the educational process. The psychological aspects of perception that ensure the success of intercultural communication are the following: *attribution of cultural values, stereotypes, prejudice, generalizations, a state of uncertainty, a state of anxiety, empathy, tolerance, personal qualities, adaptation, integration.*¹⁰

We can classify the psychological factors that prevent successful intercultural communication as follows: 1. *Language*

¹⁰ Babayeva Ş. Etnopsixologiya / Ş.Babayeva, C.Aliyev, – Bakı: – 2020. – 346 s.

differences.¹¹ 2. Similarities.¹² 3. Stereotypes, prejudice.¹³ 4. Ethic and emic elements as universal and specific manifestations of psychology.¹⁴ 5. Anxiety and tension.¹⁵

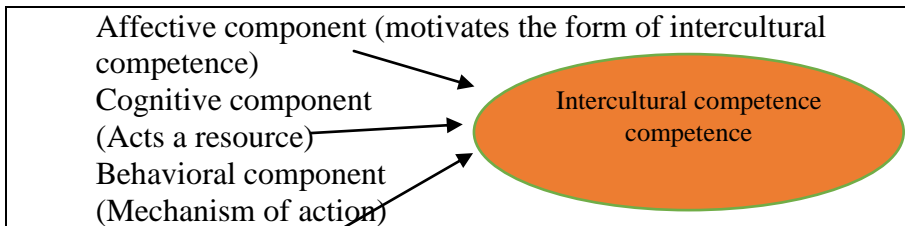


Figure 2.
Schematic illustration of the components of intercultural competence:

Affective component - creates a sensitive, positive attitude towards other culture, mentality, cognitive flexibility, intercultural communication situations, motivation to learn, and being open-minded.

Cognitive component – forms the basic structures in the consciousness that ensure the perception and acceptance of the language and phenomena of other sociocultural society.

¹¹ Колесниченко, В.Л. К вопросу об особенностях вербального и невербального коммуникативного поведения представителей английской и испанской лингвокультур // Труды Международ. науч.-практич. интернет-конференции “Преподаватель высшей школы в XXI веке”. Сб. 7. Ростов н/Д.: – 2009. – с.169-174.

¹² Мацумото, Д. Человек, культура, психология. Удивительные загадки, исследования и открытия / Д.Мацумото. СПб., – 2008.

¹³ Колесниченко, В.Л. К вопросу об особенностях вербального и невербального коммуникативного поведения представителей английской и испанской лингвокультур // Труды Международ. науч.-практич. интернет-конференции “Преподаватель высшей школы в XXI веке”. Сб. 7. Ростов н/Д.: – 2009. – с.169-174.

¹⁴ Почебуг, Л.Г. Социально-психологические принципы межкультурной коммуникативной компетентности // Аняевские чтения-2010. Современные прикладные направления и проблемы психологии: матер. науч. конф., 19-21 октября 2010. Ч. 2. СПб., – 2010.

¹⁵ Chibisova, M.,Khukhlaev O. Measuring teachers’ intercultural competence: Towards a theory-based instrument // Book of Abstracts of the 19th International Congress of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology. Germany, – 2008.

Behavioral component – provides knowledge of everyday, real-life communication etiquette norms, non-verbal means of communication accepted in the cultural society in question, reflecting the national consciousness and speech behavior characteristics of the speaker of the language (Figure 2).

Summarizing the psychological stages of the formation of intercultural competence and their characteristics, we present it in the following table (Table 1):

Table 1.

Psychological stages of formation of intercultural competence and their features

	Initial stage	Intermediate stage	Matureness
Cognitive	Difficulties in mastering and acceptance of new knowledge	Taking a progressive perspective in receiving information about the transition from authoritative to autonomous knowledge culture	The ability of conscious changing, to use the norms of other cultures
Inner personality	Ignorance of culture Perception of cultural differences as a threat	Accepts the existence of another culture	The ability to create an internal national identity, to integrate into another culture
Interpersonal	Different views are not accepted, lack of knowledge about the social system and norms, egocentric view of social problems	Easily interacts with others who are different	The ability to participate in interactions with different cultures, the ability to act by accepting other social systems, laws, rules

The third paragraph is called “*National and cultural identity as one of the main factors in the formation of intercultural competence of students in a globalized multicultural society*”. The purpose of the discussion around the study and importance of multiculturalism, and modern education is directed to better understanding of the concept of multiculturalism and the formation

of the role of multiculturalism in education.

This topic is also part of the policy of shaping and developing intercultural competence in education and social sciences, including concepts such as integration and world citizenship, as well as making correct forecast for the future.

Multicultural society ensures that all citizens shall preserve their national identity and enjoy their culture, customs and traditions, history. This type of society allows us to be more open and accepting of people and different cultures, which is one of the components of the competence that is the basis of our research.

K.Abdulla states that the model of multiculturalism in the Republic of Azerbaijan is more efficient than the model of the Western countries where the policy of multiculturalism first appeared.¹⁶ The teaching of the course of “Azerbaijani multiculturalism” in a number of foreign universities (since 2015, the mentioned course “Azerbaijani multiculturalism” has been taught in nearly 20 foreign universities) is one of the clear examples of the study of the mentioned experience.

The official language of Azerbaijan is the Azerbaijani language. However, there is also the opportunity for minority peoples living in the country to study in their native languages. There are Azerbaijani language and culture centers in several prestigious universities of the world. Students study the Azerbaijani language and culture at leading universities in countries such as Russia, China, and Indonesia.

National values become the moral value of education and upbringing only when the representative of one nation is not opposed to the representative of another nation, national feelings and national identity are preserved, every nation can prove the greatness and historicity of its contribution to the cultural development of human society.

The Republic of Azerbaijan has signed the “The Framework

¹⁶ Abdulla, K. President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev about the Azerbaijani model of multiculturalism: selected opinions (in Azerbaijani, Russian and English languages) / K.Abdulla, F.Najafov, C.Badalov, S.Khuduyev. – Baku: Baku International Center for Multiculturalism, – 2017. – p.67.

Convention for the Protection of National Minorities” of the Council of Europe in 1995 and ratified it in 2000.¹⁷ In 2009, the Republic of Azerbaijan approved the “The Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions” adopted by UNESCO in 2005.¹⁸

The results of answers of 14 second-year students who participated in our survey on the Google to the question “Are you aware of difference between your own culture and other culture?” is reflected in the diagram below (Diagram 1).

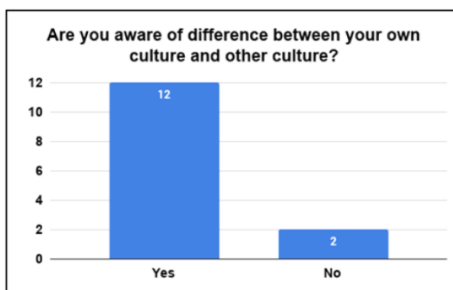


Diagram 1.

The **third chapter** of the thesis is called “**Formation and assessment of students’ intercultural competence in English classes**”. The first paragraph is called “*Possibilities of formation and evaluation of intercultural competence of students in the process of English language teaching*”. The circumstances under which intercultural competence is formed are divided in two directions:

1. Competence formed under circumstances without direct contact with another culture, in a teaching audience (foreign language classes, intercultural dialogue trainings, intercultural university courses)

¹⁷ <https://www.coe.int/az/web/compass/framework-convention-for-the-protection-of-national-minorities>

¹⁸ https://www.unesco.org/creativity/sites/default/files/medias/fichiers/2023/01/16.IGC_5_QPR_En_1.pdf.

2. In the second direction, intercultural competence is the competence, formed as a result of communication in a foreign cultural environment (during work or study abroad or in the international education system).

The assessment of the Azerbaijani higher school students' achievements in the educational process is traditionally carried out as a quantitative measurement of knowledge, abilities and skills. However, there is no system for assessing the level formed as a result of the impact of scientific knowledge, foreign languages and cultures acquired by students during their studies on their general outlook, moral education, and personal qualities, though the teaching programs and other documents presenting the goals of teaching and learning include the important personal qualities that we mentioned.

Teaching materials and syllabi in English language classes at the faculties of Education, Philology and International Relations and Regional Studies of Azerbaijan University of Languages were reviewed in the framework of our research. The syllabus of each course focuses on the systematic development of four skills, i.e. basic listening, reading, speaking and writing skills in English. Mastering new words is on focus attention. Students who successfully complete our pre-intermediate level course will: have a useful vocabulary related to their major; preparing written reports and oral presentations; they should have the ability to speak freely on topics devoted to lifestyle, intercultural issues, political and economic realities, social and cultural processes and various aspects of human relations.

The correct use of language materials during the formation of intercultural competence lays the foundation for achieving successful results. In this case, it is considered that the language materials must be motivational. The pedagogical conditions in foreign language classes for forming intercultural competence depends on the following factors: 1) *motivational goal*; 2) *teaching content*; 3) *organization*.

It is recommended to write essays based on related topics, stating the position and attitudes of students in the educational

process. At this time, the issues of using linguistic and rhetorical tools in written and oral speech should be kept in mind.

The second paragraph of chapter III is called “*The process of formation and assessment of intercultural competence in the English classes of the second-year students of the language-specialized university according to the national model*”. After examining several European models in our research, we *propose a national model* for the formation and evaluation of intercultural competence in the process of teaching a foreign (English) language in language-specialized universities in Azerbaijan. Our *national model* consists of four main components: attitudes, linguistic communication skills, knowledge, and skills (Figure 3). In our view, the *Attitudes* component of intercultural competence leads to an openness to individual communication, resulting in the emergence of necessary knowledge-based skills. The attitude should be based on being open to relations with other cultures, learning them, showing interest, being impartial, respecting the native national culture and other cultures.

First of all, the student should acquire knowledge of ways to reflect the counterpart’s and his own native national cultural characteristics, value system, and language skills to express all this correctly in both native and foreign languages.

Communicative linguistic component – means of presenting the values of a certain culture in the studied language, selection of language norms, presenting native cultural values in one’s native language, expressions reflecting the meaning of native cultural values in a foreign language, and discursive knowledge about diversity in the structure of speech acts.

Knowledge. The *skill* component is establishing a mutual relationship, reaching the level of mutual understanding, intercultural adaptation or compatibility, presenting the culture of the native country, interpreting cultural facts and circumstances from the position of one’s personal value system, correctly expressing the values of the native culture in a foreign language, applying the above-mentioned knowledge in practice to reflect adequately the cultural values of both the learned language and native language. We

envisage that these components of intercultural competence should be implemented within the framework of teaching foreign languages (English).

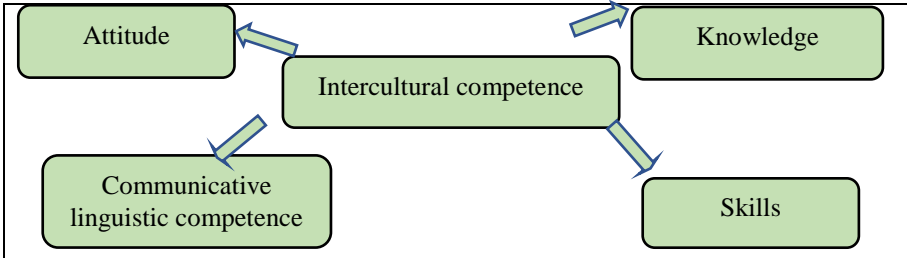


Figure 3.
A national model of intercultural competence

Determining the level of formation of intercultural competence allows to connect the content of education, the ability of students to master it, and the time allocated to study the subject. We can show as an example a role-playing and business game conducted within the framework of intercultural trainings conducted with groups in the course of English language teaching at Azerbaijan University of Languages in order to prepare students for the situations they will encounter in their future professional careers. While performing the following tasks with the second-year students of the Faculty of International Relations, the students were highly motivated. Each student in the group was given a card with the name of a country written on it, and the student was asked to act as a diplomat of that country.

Theme: *Country*

Task 1. The future diplomat student prepares the flag of the country he will represent. During the didactic game, students approach their fellow student by identifying which country's diplomat is represented by the flags, and ask questions in English about that country (nationality, religion, language, territory, population, geographical and physical location and culture).

Task 2. In the second task, as a continuation of this task, the diplomat student answers questions, gives information about the

appearance and character of the people of the country they represent, their customs, and their interests.

Task 3. In the third task, students were divided into small groups and grouped the countries participating in the game by continents, separated Anglophone, Francophone, Russophone, and Turkophone countries, and investigated the similarities and differences in their cultures. They prepared a presentation on their ideologies, approaches, attitudes to internationalism, friendship, independence, equality, cooperation, rules of coexistence in the globalized world, respect for differences, and the benefits of intercultural relations.

Task 4. At the end, each student gave information in English about his native country, Azerbaijan, and our culture. This assignment covers both general and specific cultural types of intercultural training. Not just any specific culture, but the concept of culture in general, issues ranging from cultural differences are touched upon.

Task 5. After informing the students about the culture of the Japanese, that the Japanese people never say “no”, you can give the following task: Students are divided into pairs. One of the pair is Japanese and the other is European. The European asks the Japanese about something very important. A student playing a Japanese role must act according to Japanese culture.

The work on the authentic text “Sweden step ahead on ethnic harmony” from “The World’s Daily Newspaper” for the book “Reading the news” gives great opportunities to compare the Azerbaijani model of multiculturalism with the situation in European countries. After analyzing the text, students can be asked to present the questions related to multiculturalism from the questions presented above and to prepare material for a presentation or discussion on this topic.¹⁹

Such training should take into account the students’ future fields of activity, age characteristics, the level of language and

¹⁹ Sharma, P. Reading the News International Herald Tribune: Cengage Learning, Heinle Elt: – 2007. – 112 p. // <https://www.livelib.ru/book/1000861451-reading-the-news-pete-sharma>

cultural knowledge they have acquired, and should be conducted systematically based on specific real situations.

The last paragraph of chapter III is called “*Methods of evaluation of intercultural competence in language specialized higher schools*”. This paragraph deals with the direct and indirect methods which might be used for determining the level of intercultural competence of students who study English for professional purposes, their pros and cons, the problems and difficulties encountered during their use, and as well as the ways to solve the challenges according to the offered national model.

To assess intercultural competence, western researchers mainly refer to the institutional descriptors we mentioned above. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL) is a common framework for developing textbooks and exams and language programs, listing the knowledge and skills necessary for effective communication. The evaluation tools offered by this institution, which help to determine the level of progress and competence formed at any age, at each stage of education, cannot be applied in the same way for every nation, culture, specialty, audience, and context. Western scholars suggest that other countries adapt and develop national assessment models suitable for their own cultures.

Terms that determine the suitability of assessment materials for use in teaching or research are:

1. Compliance of the content of the assessment tool with the purpose of teaching and research;
2. Placing the guidelines and scale for open use by authors without the requirement to undergo essential certification to use the assessment tool;
3. Use and validity of the tools in the appropriate research area.

The relevant researches on most widely used tools for determining the level of intercultural competence formation have been conducted in American educational institutions. By ranking the identified results from most to least, the appropriate sequence was obtained: 1) *interview* (89%); 2) *term thesis or presentation* (79%); 3) *observation* (68%); 4) *portfolio* (56%); 5) *subjective evaluation*

*method by the teacher (56%); 6) test method (56%); 7) questionnaires for self-evaluation independently prepared or adapted by the educational institution (33%); 8) commercial-type, paid surveys for self-assessment (22%).*²⁰

The result of the study proves that the use of direct method is prerogative. But researchers recommend combining methods to get complete, objective and comprehensive results. 70 percent of the foreign scholars who participated in the survey confirmed that it is better to combine several different methods to carry out evaluation work.²¹ Such combined methods always include tests and questionnaire-based survey.

Direct methods are: Portfolio, interview, observation, student diary analysis method and subjective evaluation method by the teacher. The student himself does not directly participate in the assessment process conducted by these means. At this time, information about the level of intercultural competence is obtained only on the basis of the student's behavior. For example, behavior during role-playing games, speeches during group discussions, responses to questions during an interview.²²

Before analyzing the methods we listed, let's try to determine their general characteristics: unlike indirect methods, direct methods assess the student's development and achievements qualitatively rather than quantitatively. That is why the information about the level of the formed competence obtained by the direct method is, as a rule, more detailed and is carried out as a result of an individual approach. This is mainly the advantage of direct methods. On the other hand, compared to direct assessment methods (tests, questionnaire-based

²⁰ Vervoort, M.J.H. Assessment and Development of Intercultural Competence of a Study Abroad: Master of Arts Thesis / M.J.H.Vervoort. – Arkadelphia, Arkansas: Ouchata Baptist University, – 2010. – p.135.s.33; Deardoff, D.K. The identification and assessment of intercultural competence as a student outcome of internationalization at institutions of higher education in the USA // Journal of Studies in International Education. – 2006. №10, – p.241-266.s.135

²¹ Doughty, C., Pica T. Information gap tasks: Do they facilitate second language acquisition? // TESOL Quarterly, – 1986. №20, 2, – p.305-325.

²² White, J., Lightbown P.M. Asking and answering in ESL classes // Canadian Modern Language Review, – 1984. № 40, – p.28.

surveys), these tools require more time to obtain, analyze and process information, and prepare it.

Currently, intercultural competence around the world is traditionally assessed mainly through translated western measurement tools. That is, the ethical approach described above prevails. Tests and questionnaires are based on the model of intercultural competence developed in the West. A disadvantage of such measuring tools is that the concept of competence does not match between the culture of the scale developer and the other culture. This definitely affects the quality of the result obtained through such a measure.

The most widespread tests that designed to check the level of intercultural competence formation are divided into the following groups: 1) *cognitive tests*, 2) *psychometric tests*

The first type of tests assess the cognitive content of competence or include general questions about a specific culture. Multiple-choice tasks, accurately identifying many characteristics of students, are very useful for assessing the level of formalization of appropriate habits of students.²³

Specifically, it is notable to mention the psychometric tests used for the assessment of intercultural competence. In recent decades, an increase in the number of studies devoted to the dependence of intercultural competence on personal characteristics or temperament is noticed. Similarly, the results of tests that determine the parameters of the dimensions of cultures (for example, the “collectivism/individualism parameter”) are used to reveal the similarities between the subject’s individual culture and the national culture of another country.²⁴

There are different opinions on the validity and effectiveness of such tests for assessing intercultural competence. Leading experts argue over the idea that it is incorrect to assess intercultural

²³ Prechtl, E., Davidson, Lund A. Intercultural Competence and Assessment: Perspectives from the INCA Project // Handbook of Intercultural Communication / H.Kotthoff, E.Spencer-Oatey. – Verlag: Mounton De Gruyter, – 2007. – p.467-490.

²⁴ Bennett, M.J. Considering the Measurement of Cultural Phenomena and Intercultural Competence / – Berlin: – 2004. – p.9-17.

competence through both types of tests which are intended to measure the parameters of culture in.²⁵

Another evaluation method is answering survey questions, where the student should independently assess the level of his/her intercultural competence. Self-assessment tools enable students to activate their critical thinking and reflection process, to understand their responsibility for the results of their studies, and to better understand their own behavior in communication situations.

Despite the fact that tests and questionnaires seem simple and easy at first sight, their use is accompanied by a number of difficulties. The existing difficulty in distinguishing the structural parts of intercultural competence is related to the problem of determining which component of intercultural competence is assessed in the use of questionnaires and test materials. The opinions like such questions “*When I talk to people from other cultures I try to keep personal space*” in questionnaires act as an indicator of qualities such as the ability to adapt, because a positive answer to this question indicates that the respondent is able to follow and adapt to the conditions of communication that are convenient for the interlocutor. At the same time, this idea is an indication of the great ability to observe, as well as the quality of concentration. The respondent who answered positively to this question has already accepted non-verbal signals about the personal distance that is comfortable for the interlocutor.

In addition, the test and questionnaire format in itself limits the possibilities of evaluating intercultural competence.²⁶ In general, researchers believe that it is impossible to differentiate the level of development of students’ intercultural competence and other important nuances based on the results achieved only by indirect

²⁵ Bennett, M.J. Considering the Measurement of Cultural Phenomena and Intercultural Competence / – Berlin: – 2004. – p.9-17; Byram, M. Teaching and learning Language and culture / M.Byram, C.Morgan. – Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd, – 1994. – p.90.

²⁶ Deardoff, D.K. The identification and assessment of intercultural competence as a student outcome of internationalization at institutions of higher education in the USA // Journal of Studies in International Education. – 2006. №10, – p.241-266., p.30

methods. It is recommended to use test questions and other methods of assessment concordantly to achieve accurate and objective assessment results.

In addition, it is necessary to use methods suitable for students' levels in the assessment of intercultural competence. In the choice of methods, the cultural characteristics of the audience should be taken as the main condition. It is important to distinguish between the methods of translation and adaptation when discussing the transfer of tools used to determine the level of intercultural competence from one culture to another. Due to the fact that many Universities cannot afford to obtain some existing tools at a higher price, they independently translate or adapt the tests and questionnaires to the profile of their higher education institution.

Chapter IV of the thesis called **“Experimental work on checking the quality of the national model of evaluation of the formation of intercultural competence in language-qualified higher school students”** consists of four paragraphs. The first paragraphs of this chapter is called **“Principles of training in the formation of intercultural competence in students in English language teaching”**. The principles used in teaching foreign languages: The following principles are indicated in the recommendations for the implementation of the second foreign language (English) subject curriculum for secondary schools of the Republic of Azerbaijan: 1) *linguistic*; 2) *communicative principles (communication, cooperation, problem solving, application)* 3) *socio-cultural*; 4) *the principle of training organization*.²⁷

We recommend to use the following principles for promoting students' intercultural competence in English language classes:

1. *The principle of dialogue of cultures*. This principle recommends to create a connection between students' native culture and the target culture they are exposed to. In teaching cultural elements in English classes, the best method is to compare the

²⁷ Recommendations of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Institute of Educational Problems of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the implementation of the second foreign language (English) subject curriculum for secondary schools of the Republic of Azerbaijan / – Baku: – 2015. – 88 p.

sociocultural and pragmatic norms of native and foreign languages. Teachers should act as cultural mediators by explicitly explaining cultural diversity using metalanguage. Teaching material used in the process of developing intercultural competence should be designed in connection with native language and culture. The principle of selecting and distinguishing the cultural component in both native and foreign languages (English) is inherent in the nature of the objective culture concept of students, to understand the reason why their verbal and non-verbal behavior is perceived in a negative way by the carriers of foreign culture and to respond correctly to this negative perception. This comparative study should be a basis for eventually acquiring a third culture. When native culture meets foreign culture in the educational process, students' respect and love for their native culture increases.

2. *The principle of conscious activity* means to be independent, active and purposeful in understanding new knowledge about language and culture in a socio-cultural context, different and similar aspects in a conscious manner during teaching through various teaching methods. According to this principle, the teacher's role is to encourage the students to feel cultural diversity. It is the process of self-analysis and self-awareness of the student's own behavior, activity, speech, internal and emotional psychological state. They also need to think about the consequences of their choices regarding their communication behavior in the context of intercultural relations. According to this principle, as a main part of the process of forming intercultural competence, the student must understand how he/she is perceived by the interviewer, what impression he creates, and how he/she is influenced by the outsider during communication.

3. *Language and culture should be taught simultaneously.* It is almost impossible to learn any language outside of the culture it belongs to. Language develops as a part of culture. From the second half of the 20th century, foreign language teachers noticed that teaching students only linguistic information, grammatical and phonetic rules of the language did not bring the desired result. The misunderstandings, conflicts and contradictions that occur in our time are proof of this.

4. *The principle of interaction of cognitive, affective (emotional) and communicative-behavioral aspects of intercultural competence.* Each of these components is of great importance because it methodically determines the stages of the formation of intercultural competence: knowledge-understanding-action. The manifestation of a person's emotions and communicative behavior is impossible without knowledge, and communication is also impossible without emotions.

5. *The principle of cross-cultural comparison.* Intercultural competence refers to the ability to compare native and other cultures and to consider these cultural differences in the communication process. The ability to compare native and foreign cultures is a key component of intercultural competence, and therefore methods of its formation should be included in the teaching model of intercultural communication. While learning language and culture, the student should feel and understand the different and similar features of his own and other cultures and acquire the necessary skills in intercultural communication.

6 *The principle of four-stage formation of intercultural competence:* a) informative; b) comparative; c) adaptation; d) application.

The second paragraph of chapter IV of the thesis is called ***“Formation of intercultural competence through national model and authentic materials”***. E.V.Novosovich classifies the requirements that culture-based teaching material for higher schools should meet as follows: *“1. Theme should be interesting for learners; 2. It should be suitable for the students' age; 3. Educational significance; 4. Information must be new; 5. Presentation of different forms of speech; 6. Naturalness of characters and environment; 7. The material should evoke a mutual emotional reaction; 8. It should reflect real models of written or spoken language”*.²⁸

A problem of choosing between authentic and non-authentic materials for universities, especially language-specialized

²⁸Nosonovich, E.V. Methodical authenticity of the educational text / Thesis of Doctor of Philosophy in Pedagogy: 13.00.02./ 1999. Retrieved from <https://www.dissercat.com/content/metodicheskaya-autentichnost-uchebnogo-teksta>

universities in Azerbaijan is a serious one. Textbooks on foreign languages are divided into two groups: “international” and “local”. International textbooks are intended for the international market and specific cultural content and elements. The authentic materials provided in these textbooks are prepared by native speakers and do not take into account the cultural and moral values, national identity, psychological features and students’ age factor.

Unlike textbooks prepared by foreign authors, local or teacher prepared textbooks contain materials that inspire students to love their native culture and language, allow them to compare the language with the culture of other nations, and reveal differences and similarities. From this point of view, it is appropriate to use a proper combination of authentic materials and teaching materials prepared by local teachers.

Authentic materials should be used very carefully and in a planned way in the teaching process. The cultural information contained in authentic materials may not be appropriate to the level of the audience, and random use of these materials may not help achieve the desired results. The teacher should review the material used and present it to the student.

Due to the fact that a certain part of our research work was conducted in the online learning process during the COVID-19 Pandemic, the theoretical and practical problems, advantages and disadvantages of distance learning are also examined in this paragraph based on work experience.

In order to investigate the trend of distance learning of English at universities, an online survey was conducted using a quantitative research method and non-probability sampling method based on existing materials and literature with the participation of 33 teachers teaching English at the foreign language departments of the Azerbaijan University of Languages.

According to the survey results, the majority of respondents believe that integrating culture into foreign language teaching is important in terms of better understanding other cultures and cultural differences. The formation of intercultural competence plays a major role in the acquisition of language skills.

Distance learning opens up wide opportunities for the use of the following interactive methods in the formation of intercultural competence in students during English language teaching:

1. Creative tasks - independent research of ways to solve a specific problem, whether it concerns a national or other culture. This could be a thematic presentation, situational dialogue, etc.

2. Work with small groups - students are divided into small groups, prepare video clips based on intercultural communication, conduct thematic discussions, and complete a common task.

3. Work with the whole group - collective discussion of cultural topics, events such as "round tables", debates.

4. Educational (didactic) games are role-playing games that simulate various life situations. These games allow students to apply previously acquired theoretical knowledge about intercultural competence in practice.

5. Using social networks and public resources - establishing online communication with foreigners, holding webinars, online conferences, and various other meetings

6. Discussion of home reading - analysis and discussion of cultural, intercultural differences, similarities, and dialogue aspects reflected in the national literature samples that students read during extracurricular hours, as well as the people whose language they are learning.

7. Working with video and audio materials – watching online documentary or feature-length thematic films together, listening to audio materials and holding discussions.

As a conclusion, we would like to bring to your attention some methodological guidelines for the successful development of the distance education system in Azerbaijan:

1. To examine the current public attitude, demand, and perspectives of learners and teachers, as well as the real situation and prospects for this educational format, which is relatively new for Azerbaijan.

2. To study the experience of developed countries in the relevant field and the main approaches to this issue.

3. To study and prepare scientific-methodological,

pedagogical, and educational support for developing intercultural competence through distance education in Azerbaijan.

4. To prepare a national development program for the development of distance education.

5. To develop special programs of culturally based teaching materials for the distance education system.

6. To conduct special trainings for teachers and methodologists on the formation of intercultural competence in the distance education system.

7. To design methods and assessment tools for the formation of intercultural competence in accordance with the distance learning format.

8. To integrate joint lessons, events, and various activities with representatives of other countries and cultures into the educational process. In this regard, it is recommended to conduct a series of empirical studies on the methods and effectiveness of distance education in achieving the goal of developing intercultural competence among Azerbaijani higher education students.

The paragraph 3 of chapter IV is called “*Analysis of the results related to the formation of intercultural competence*”. First of all students’ intercultural competence level was determined.

The existing assessment models for the formation of intercultural competence in the educational system of Azerbaijan were theoretically studied and a new national model was created on the basis of our national culture, and diagnostic ways and methods were developed.

The assessment is carried out by methods such as written assignments, tests, oral answers in traditional training to determine the level of the learner’s intercultural competence: target culture, native culture, attitude to other cultures.

The goals are designed according to the real educational program, to the hours given to the course. The evaluation methods are also in accordance with the teaching methods and reflect the desired result of the teaching process.

The results of the theoretical research are taken into consideration during the development of teaching resources to form

the intercultural competence of students in the relevant faculties of Azerbaijan University of Languages and to implement it during the practical teaching of the English language to assess its level.

For this purpose, we determined the level of elaboration of the intended purpose to obtain individual survey and questionnaire data with university students. Teachers should take into account the cultural aspects of the method and form they use to assess the level of intercultural competence formation, should not randomly apply it to the national audience, should try to eliminate difficulties by knowing the cultural background and characteristics of students, should create balance and compatibility. We also tried to take into account the mentioned factors in designing of national model.

The last paragraph of chapter IV is called ***“Organization, conduct and results of the experiment related to the formation of intercultural competence according to the national model”***.

The material of the experiment. Experimental research was conducted on the basis of texts, tasks, role-playing games, questionnaires and tests developed on the basis of the national model. This work system is included in the training process and extracurricular activities. The experiment was conducted in groups 232B and 239A at the Faculty of Philology of Azerbaijan University of Languages.

The purpose, tasks and organization of the experiment – The purpose of the descriptive experiment during the research is to determine the students’ level of intercultural competence who study English as a foreign language. At this stage, in order to achieve the mentioned goal, the following tasks should be fulfilled:

1. Division of students participating in the experiment into control and experimental groups;
2. Appointment of the expert group at the determining stage;
3. Determination of the main indicators of the students’ level of intercultural competence;
4. Development of the main criteria in a systematic way for the objective evaluation of indicators expressing the students’ level of intercultural competence;
5. Checking the current level of intercultural competence of the

experimental and control groups according to the established basic criteria;

6. Analysis of the results obtained at the determined stage.

These issues mentioned above, studying the level of intercultural competence, determining the levels of intercultural competence of English language teachers through a special test, to find difficulties faced by teachers and students in the learning process (behavior, approach and communication ethics, attitude towards oneself and others, intercultural dialogue, respect for opposing values), taking into account the difficulties, determining the main directions of the formation of intercultural competence, systematization of new ideas on the formation of intercultural competence based on the principle of the analysis of the obtained results carried out stage by stage through the self-assessment test of students on the programs applied at Azerbaijan University of Languages.

The experiment consisted of 3 stages: identifying, training, checking.

During *the stage of determination*, the knowledge and skills of language-qualified higher school students were determined on the formation of intercultural competence, the students' knowledge level, cognitive activity, attitude to other cultures, behavior style were checked with a special self-assessment test and methodology.

Conducting a determinative experiment – second-year students studying at the Faculty of Philology of Azerbaijan University of Languages participated in the determinative stage of the experimental teaching. The purpose of our research is to ensure the formation of intercultural competence by organizing the process of teaching English for professional purposes according to the modern standards in Azerbaijan Universities. A scientifically based national didactic model was developed to the set goal and achieve a more effective result.

The proposed national model can be effectively used at all stages of linguistic universities.

The experiment for the first semester of the 2020-2021 academic year was 30 hours, and in the second semester was also 30 hours.

Experiment (November 05, 2021 - December 07, 2021)

The experiment was carried out on November 5, 2021, with the second year students of Faculty of Philology of Azerbaijan University of Languages, 31 students were involved from the experimental group 232A and 239A. After the organizational part, the diagnostic (or determining) stage of the experiment takes place. At this stage, the following activities have been planned:

- conversation with the course teacher of the group where the experiment is planned;
- conversation with the students of the group where the experiment is planned;
- to interview some students of the group where the experiment is planned;
- to organize survey to study the current situation regarding the problem in the group where the experiment is planned;
- to discuss the course syllabus with the course teacher and students to learn the current situation regarding the problem in the group where the experiment is planned and teach their opinions;
- to study the current situation related to the problem in the group where the experiment is planned, review the topics and studies given in the textbooks and evaluate them together with the course teacher and students;

On November 5, 2021, the second-year students (31 students were involved) of the “Faculty of Philology” of Azerbaijan University of Languages took part at the questionnaire surveys conducted to determine the affective, tolerance, ethnocentrism, cognitive level and the state of using social networks. The results were as follows:

The language of study is English, the survey was conducted in Azerbaijani, in the native language of the students for the purpose of better understanding and to be able to answer correctly.

In order to assess the affective level, questions related to qualities such as being respectful and open to representatives of other cultures, empathy and readiness to accept "other" cultural norms, were formulated (Table 2).

Table 2.**Questions to determine the affective level**

Questions	Absolutely wrong	Probably it is not right	Nearly right	Probably right	Absolutely right
I am interested to be in contact with representatives of other cultures.	5%	5%	10%	20%	60%
I am ready to communicate with representatives of other cultures.	5%	5%	10%	20%	60%
I have a great interest in English language and culture.	5%	5%	10%	20%	60%
I accept the cultural norms of other cultural representatives, even if they contradict my own cultural norms.	34%	36%	10%	10%	10%
I am very interested in foreign culture, customs and traditions, norms and rules.	5%	5%	10%	20%	60%
If some factor such as moral-ethical behavior hinders me in the process of intercultural communication with representatives of other cultures, I calmly react.	24%	26%	10%	10%	30%
I am willing to add new ones to my own personal behavior according to the norms of another culture. (Language, behavior, non-verbal signals)	10%	10%	25%	25%	30%
If representatives of other cultures want to teach me their norms, I will respond positively to it.	10%	10%	20%	30%	30%
I am ready to control my personal behavior and words in the intercultural communication process.	5%	5%	10%	20%	60%
Even if I don't like the rules, norms and customs of another culture, I try to understand them.	5%	5%	10%	20%	60%

The questionnaire conducted for the purpose of assessing the affective level consisted of 10 questions as shown in the table. The answers to the questions of Azerbaijani students who study English for professional purposes were as follows:

90% of students answered positively to questions 1, 2, 3, 5, 9 and 10, 30% of students answered positively to question 4, 50% of students answered positively to question 6 and 80% of students answered positively to questions 7 and 8.

Tolerance is one of the key indicators of intercultural competence. Questions asked to determine its levels.

Table 3.

Questions to determine tolerance level

Questions	Absolutely wrong	Probably it is not right	Nearly right	Probably right	Absolutely right
I am sociable and can very easily get in touch with.	4%	6%	20%	30%	40%
I am sociable and can communicate easily with foreigners.	10%	15%	15%	30%	30%
I have no stereotypes against foreigners.	17%	18%	15%	25%	25%
I can understand other people’s feelings.	4%	6%	20%	30%	40%
I am able to respect the feelings of representatives of other cultures.	10%	15%	15%	30%	30%
I feel comfortable when I see foreigners.	14%	16%	10%	30%	30%
I pay attention to my expressions when talking to foreigners.	14%	16%	10%	30%	30%
I feel comfortable when I am in a foreign country.	14%	16%	10%	30%	30%
It is easy for me to start a conversation with foreigners.	14%	16%	10%	30%	30%
I am open to representatives of other cultures.	5%	5%	10%	30%	40%
It is important for me to have friendly relations with representatives of other cultures.	5%	5%	10%	30%	40%
If my friend marries a foreigner, I will react positively.	17%	18%	15%	25%	25%
Communicating with foreigners is not a problem for me.	10%	15%	15%	30%	30%
If a foreigner asks me for help, I will respond positively.	4%	6%	20%	30%	40%
If I travel in a compartment with a foreigner on the train, I will react positively to it.	14%	16%	10%	30%	30%

90% answered positively to the questions 1, 4 and 14; 75% answered positively to the questions 2, 5, and 13; 65% answered positively to the questions 3 and 12,

70% answered positively to the questions 6, 7, 8, 9 and 15; 80% answered positively to the questions 10 and 11 (Table 3).

The replies given by the Azerbaijani youth once more reflect that Azerbaijan is a tolerant country.

Test questions used to determine the level students' ethnocentrism - A high level of ethnocentrism has a negative trend and is an indicator of low intercultural competence and lack of readiness for quality intercultural communication.

Table 4.

Questions to determine the level of ethnocentrism

Questions	Abso- lutely wrong	Pro- bably it is not right	Nearly right	Pro- bably right	Abso- lutely right
Azerbaijan should help other countries.	17%	13%	15%	25%	30%
It is not good for foreigners to wear national clothes while they are in Azerbaijan.	58%	42%	0%	0%	0%
some nations are superior to others	58%	42%	0%	0%	0%
Representatives of other religions are our enemies. (Islam-terror)	58%	42%	0%	0%	0%
I don't see any difference between representatives of different cultures.	4%	6%	20%	30%	40%
Some nations and peoples do not deserve good treatment.	42%	58%	0%	0%	0%
It is difficult for me to imagine that I can be friends with representatives of other peoples and religions.	43%	47%	3%	3%	4%
It is better to marry a representative of your own culture.	43%	47%	3%	3%	4%
I think that Azerbaijanis are more intelligent and developed than other nations.	43%	47%	3%	3%	4%
I think that Azerbaijanis living abroad have no right to consider themselves Azerbaijanis.	49%	51%	0%	0%	0%

10 questions asked to determine the level of students' ethnocentrism. The students' answers were in the following way: 70% answered positively to the question 1; 0% answered to the questions 2, 4, 6 and 10; 10% answered positively to the questions 3,7, 8 and 9; 90% answered positively to the question 5 (Table 4).

Questions for initial assessment of cognitive level – covers the skills and habits that are important for building quality intercultural interaction.

Table 5.
Questions for the initial assessment of cognitive level

Questions	Abso- lutely wrong	Pro- bably it is not right	Nearly right	Pro- bably right	Abso- lutely right
I can communicate with representatives of foreign cultures on various topics.	3%	7%	20%	35%	35%
I do not do any unpleasant actions with other cultural representatives in accordance with their cultural norms with my behavior and clothing.	3%	7%	20%	35%	35%
I can adapt my behavior to the behavior of representatives of other cultures.	12%	13%	20%	25%	30%
I see and accept the similarities and differences between my culture and other cultures.	13%	12%	23%	27%	25%
I use certain behavioral strategies to facilitate the intercultural communication process.	11%	14%	20%	25%	30%
I can constantly improve my foreign language and cultural knowledge and apply them.	3%	7%	20%	35%	35%

For the initial assessment of cognitive level, students were asked 6 questions, results of the given answers are: 90% answered positively to the questions 1, 2 and 6; 75% answered positively to the questions 3, 4 and 5 (Table 5).

Observations, conversations and discussions with both teachers and students at various language-specialized faculties of Azerbaijan University of Languages, as well as surveys conducted at the

departments of Philology, International Relations and Regional Studies and Education proved that, although the youth growing up in the society of Azerbaijan, being a tolerant country, includes many cultural and ethical qualities, there are still gaps in students' intercultural relations and dialogue, communication skills, and intercultural competence issues.

Interviewees in cross-cultural interaction can differ more from each other in terms of values-based outlook, lifestyle, and verbal and non-verbal communication patterns. In this regard, as a result of numerous studies, it is possible to place the important qualities of intercultural competence in this order according to the level of importance: intercultural awareness, respect for other cultures, self-awareness, communicative skills, empathy, correct orientation, knowledge of a foreign language, adaptability.

We also tried to monitor the dynamics of our students' development for two months as a result of the given activities and assignments (Table 6).

Table 6.

Comparison of the experimental and control groups' indicators

	KQ.№1	EQ.№1	KQ.№2	EQ.№2	KQ.№3	EQ.№3	KQ.№4	EQ.№4	KQ.№5	EQ.№5	KQ.№6	EQ.№6
Before experiment	40,2 %	41,6%	42,3 %	43,9%	37,3 %	39%	35,9 %	38%	43,9 %	34%	43,6 %	30,8%
After experiment	45,3 %	55,4%	44,4 %	55,1%	43,7 %	59,5 %	46,9 %	63,8 %	49,3%	55,8%	51,6 %	60,2%
Difference	5,1 %	13,8%	2,1 %	11,2%	6,4 %	20,5 %	11 %	25,8%	5,4 %	21,8 %	8 %	29,4%

As a result of systematic, purposeful, and continuous work with experimental groups, their performance was relatively high (Table 7).

Table 7.**Comparison of the experimental education indicators**

Conducted experiment	II-year students of the Faculty of Philology (students participating in the experiment)	Result with percentage (%-)	Date of experiment
1. Listening to an unknown text about cultures and discussion	2 groups (31 students)	Before experiment 31,8%	05 November, 2021
		After experiment 37,5%	07 December 2021
2. A comparative analysis of both cultures on the given theme	2 groups (31 students)	Before experiment 43,9%	05 November 2021
		After experiment 47,7%	07 December 2021
3 Display of communication skills relevant to the topic	2groups (31 students)	Before experiment 51,8%	05 November 2021
		After experiment 59,5%	07 December 2021
4. Demonstrating multicultural values and the ability to respect different cultures	2 groups (31 students)	Before experiment 51,9%	05 November 2021
		After experiment 63,8%	07 December 2021
5. Comparative analysis of behavior in terms of subject (native and foreign)	2 groups (31 students)	Before experiment 51,8%	05 November 2021
		After experiment 61,8%	07 December 2021
6. Display of the ability to participate in cross-cultural dialogue on the topic	2 groups (31 students)	Before experiment 50,8%	05 November 2021
		After experiment 60,2%	07 December, 2021

The students of Philology faculty studied topics such as “National stereotypes: truth or myth?” [p.14], “Taking a risk” [p.30], “Breaking news” [p.50], “Music festivals” [p.53], “Great cities” [p.63], “Swedes step ahead on ethnic harmony” [p.83], ‘Modern Manners’[p.36],], “ Being Polite from Culture to Culture” [p.55], “The Mystery of Okinawa” [p.34], “Manners: Past and Present” [p.34] and others (in the Appendix) and the formation of intercultural competence related to the topics in the mentioned book was kept in

mind and compared. The purpose of the experiment is to teach English to students according to the syllabus prepared by us as the course teacher of the group using the book “New English File” and to observe the dynamics of development in the group during 5 weeks, as well as to observe and put forward certain proposals in order to eliminate deficiencies and gaps.

During the educational experiment, the appropriate methodology was applied for the formation of students’ intercultural competence. In the experimental validation phase, the effectiveness of the teaching methodology used to develop intercultural competence in students was determined, and the evaluation of the students’ competence levels was carried out using the methods presented in the research.

The comparative results of the pedagogical experiment’s defining and teaching phases allowed for an increase in the level of formation of all components of intercultural competence in students during the validation phase.

As a result, in a general form, we addressed the following questions to students of the Philology, International Relations and Regional Studies and Educational Faculties of Azerbaijan University of Languages studying English for professional purposes. The quantitative method of research was used in the survey conducted during the experiment. 39 students participated könüllü in the online test survey in Google. After considering the various questionnaires, tests, evaluation tools, relevant literature on the assessment of intercultural competence applied in the research, a questionnaire consisting of five questions was prepared based on our national culture, the role of foreign languages and culture in communication, the importance of intercultural competence in modern society.

Question 1: *What should be done in order to avoid culture shock?*

- a) Speak foreign language;*
- b) Know your culture;*
- c) Acquire knowledge about other cultures.*

Mədəniyyət şoku yaşamamaq üçün nə etmək lazımdır?

39 responses

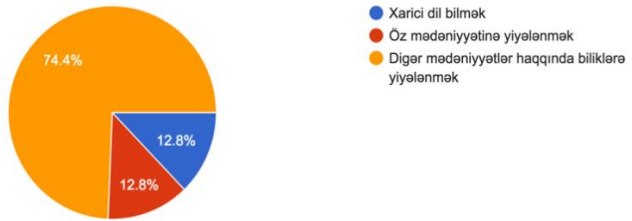


Diagram 2.

The first question is about how to deal with culture shock. The vast majority of the participants mentioned that it is important to have knowledge about the culture in order to prevent this unpleasant situation (Diagram 2).

Question 2: *Choose 3 most important skills for the proper communication with representatives of other cultures.*

- Speak English fluently;*
- Acquire some knowledge on grammar rules;*
- Be sincere during conversation;*
- For being an interesting interlocutor have a broad outlook;*
- Have some knowledge of the culture of the person with whom you communicate);*
- If communication is a business type, keep a close distance with the interlocutor).*

Diger mədəniyyət nümayəndələri ilə düzgün ünsiyyət qurmaq üçün 3 ən mühümbacarıqı qeyd edin:

39 responses

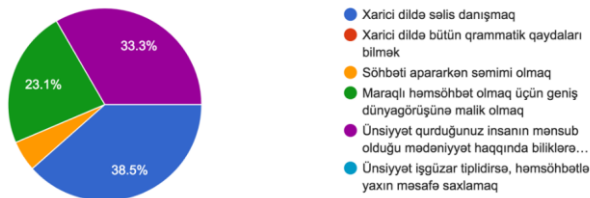


Diagram 3.

The second question is to choose 3 effective ways to communicate effectively with people from different cultures. According to the results, about 40% of the participants said that if the communication is related to business, then close communication is important. One-third respondents believe that they are acquainted with the culture they are communicating with (Diagram 3).

Question 3: *What do you pay more attention to while talking to the interviewer?*

- a) *The tone of the voice;*
- b) *Less hand movements;*
- c) *Speak a foreign language correctly.*

Müşahibinlə söhbət edərkən mədəniyyət nümayəndəsi ilə nəyə daha çox fikir verirsiniz?
39 responses

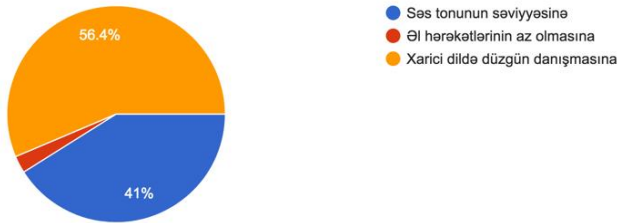


Diagram 4.

One of the issues that attract attention is about skills to be considered while facing an interview. The results show that about 60% of the respondents think that the correct use of foreign languages is in the first place (Diagram 4).

Question 4: *What are the criteria for the formation of intercultural relations?*

- a) *Take into account behavioral difference;*
- b) *Show tolerance;*
- c) *Master the traditions of the target language.*

Mədəniyyətlərarası münasibətlərin formalaşması üçün lazım olan meyarlar hansılardır?
39 responses

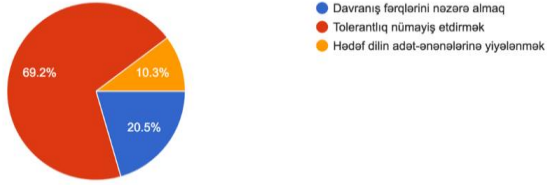


Diagram 5:

Various factors play a role in the formation of intercultural relations. About 70% of the respondents said that it is important to show tolerance for establishing intercultural relations (Diagram 5).

Question 5: *What are the 3 main factors that create the basis for intercultural dialogue?*

- Respect the opposite side;*
- Pay attention to the national mentality;*
- Knowledge about native and foreign cultures;*
- consider one's own culture as the main one;*
- consider other people's culture as the main one;*
- Support multicultural values).*

Mədəniyyətlərarası dialoqun qurulmasına zəmin yaradan əsas 3 amil hansılardır?
39 responses

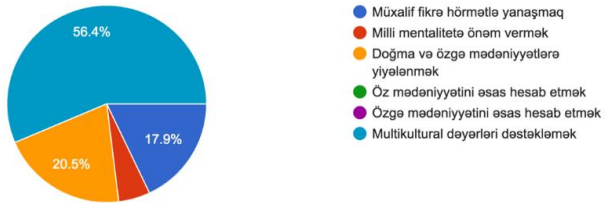


Diagram 6.

The most important factors contributing to the development of intercultural dialogue are multicultural values, and 56% of the participants chose this variant (Diagram 6).

Finally, in order to determine the general communication skills of the students and the level of the social networks use, they were asked the following questions:

1. Do you use social media? (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram?) How often? Answer: 95% of students stated that they regularly spend a lot of time on social media

2. What is your purpose for using social media? How connected are you with social media sites? Answer: 65% of students stated that they use social media to get information, to conduct research, to complete assigned tasks, and 35% of students stated that they use it for various purposes (entertainment, games, hobbies, interest, acquaintance).

3. Have you used social media to learn more about the country, its culture and traditions while studying language? What interactions? With whom? What did you learn? Answer: 60% of students said that they used social media to learn about English-speaking countries, their culture and art, and 40% to learn about countries in general.

4. Do you notice that the use of social media has helped you to become more prepared to adapt to the culture of the target language? Answer: 75% students said yes, 25% students said it helped partially.

5. Do you notice that the use of social media helps to eliminate stereotypes against the culture of the target language? Answer: 65% students said yes, 35% students said partially.

6. Do you notice that the use of social media helps you to make friends with the target language country? How about friends from other nationalities? Answer: 95% students answered yes to both questions.

7. Have you experienced culture shock in target language country, and how has social media helped you overcome it? Answer: "We learned the differences that we didn't come across and didn't learn during education through social media and watching English-language movies through YouTube channel". 85% students stated.

8. Do you feel satisfied after using social media? Explain. Answer: 65% of students said yes and 35% of students pointed out that there is unnecessary material that can misguide the youth.

9. What are pros and cons of social media are in general? Answer: 65% of students noted pros are : saving time, the ability to find the information you want, establishing relationships, getting to know other cultures, and 35% of students mentioned cons are many unnecessary materials and affect the characterless people.

10. How does social media affect you to feel about your native culture? Answer: 85% of students noted that “by comparing their differences with other cultures, I developed my evaluation skills”.

11. Is there anything else you would like to say about social media and cross-cultural adaptation? Answer: 70% of students stated that there is a need: to control materials; to upload educational materials instead of unnecessary materials; for materials that serve education, culture, cooperation, friendship, and intercultural dialogue, rather than unnecessary games and negative issues.

The experiment has determined, first of all, that the lack of vocabulary among students prevents them from fully expressing their ideas. Problems in listening and understanding have been revealed in some students. Some students have faced difficulties in expressing their attitude towards certain cultural differences.

To overcome these problems a number of issues should be taken into consideration in teaching:

- a) selection and adaptation of texts;
- b) to create comfortable condition for listening and for communication;
- c) texts should have new and interesting information about cultures;
- d) texts should formulate a foundation for the formation of intercultural competence in students;
- e) texts should serve to form intercultural dialogue.

According to modern approaches, though the textbook is the main teaching tool, the use of additional teaching materials, Internet resources suitable for digital learning in accordance with the topic, provides students with a broader spectrum of the topic and a comprehensive discussion.

As it can be seen, all observations for the purpose of creating a national model of the formation and assessment of intercultural

competence of students who study English for professional purposes in linguistic universities, conversations with teachers and students, monitoring of the lessons, surveille students' online and offline activities along with classroom and out-of-classroom activities, questionnaire surveys on virtual communication, social networking, activities in digital learning, the study of affective, tolerance, ethnocentrism, and connotative levels, use of social network and mathematical calculations and statistical analysis determined the creation of a national model for the formation of intercultural competence in Azerbaijan.

The experiment revealed, first of all, the fact that students are not able to express their thoughts clearly due to the limited vocabulary. Some students have problems in listening and understanding. Others have difficulties in expressing their attitude towards certain cultural differences. To overcome these problems, a number of complex issues should be considered in teaching:

- a) selection and adaptation of texts;
- b) creating conditions for listening and communication;
- c) texts should contain new and interesting information about cultures;
- d) texts should create a basis for the formation of intercultural competence in students;
- e) texts should serve the formation of intercultural dialogue.

The scientific results obtained in the thesis are **conclusion** as follows:

1. This research aims to develop the intercultural competence of students of Azerbaijan University of Languages, who study English for professional purposes, to determine their knowledge and skills related to intercultural competence (etiquette, nationality, cultural views, differences and diversities, similarities, behavior, tolerance, respect), to get acquainted with the experience of promoting students' intercultural competence, to achieve the efficiency of the work carried out in this field, to determine effective methods and ways of forming students' intercultural competence in English classes, to develop a didactic model for teaching and evaluating the level of formation of intercultural competence in

specialized faculties and gave an opportunity to carry out experiment, to analyze and systematize the results obtained from the experiment in the field of teaching intercultural competence in specialized faculties.

2. The methodological level of the research aims to determine the prerequisites and existing contradictions for improving the quality of the professional training of the students of Azerbaijan University of Languages, to analyze the main ideas and provisions, justify their relevance, goals and tasks, object and subject and made it possible to formulate the hypothesis of the work, to present intercultural competence as a complex three-component phenomenon. The methodological basis of the research is made according to humanization of education. The set of skills, communicative, cultural, ecological, system-activity and various approaches allowed to reveal the essence and content of the considered competence, as well as the features of the process of its formation. The model, created for the formation of students' intercultural competence in the process of teaching professional communication in English at Azerbaijan University of Languages helps to form a professionally important personality, ensures the development of students' intercultural competence.

3. The theoretical level allows to consider the students' intercultural competence as a multi-dimensional phenomenon, it creates a foundation for future specialists to demonstrate professional skills that serve intercultural dialogue in various fields. The theoretical analysis also defines the hierarchical structure of intercultural competence and its criteria and indicators.

A model of intercultural competence formation consisting of interrelated parts: theoretical-methodological, content-technological and result-evaluative, was developed at the theoretical level.

4. Goals, tasks and main directions of the created theoretical model have been determined according to the methodological approaches and principles. Proposed technological support of the theoretical model harmoniously combines traditional learning and innovative knowledge. Technologies based on the integration of professional content (project technologies, discussions, case analysis,

technology for working with mobile devices, educational technologies) help to increase students' interest in the formation of intercultural competence in English classes.

5. The technological level of the research is represented by an effective system and the necessary technological support for the implementation of the process of students' intercultural competence formation is provided.

6. Established appropriate digital teaching in linguistic universities provides a successful formation of intercultural competence of students learning English for professional purposes.

7. There is a great need to improve textbooks, programs and syllabi. The topics given in the New English File textbook, the teaching materials are enriched with additional materials by the teachers, and it gives an effective result when the discussions are organized. We achieved this while working with students in order to conduct an experiment.

8. The desired result is achieved when effective methods are chosen for the formation and evaluation of intercultural competence in the process of teaching subjects to students who study English for professional purposes in specialized faculties.

9. The characteristics of cultural behavior, the orientation system specific to the native culture, an understanding of the importance of culture, factors encountered in communicative interactions, the impact of verbal and non-verbal communication, and the development of students' intercultural competence, along with the study of cultural values and national stereotypes, the perception of foreign cultures through both authentic and intended teaching materials, and a deeper understanding of communication barriers, national stereotypes and their sources, etc., all play a crucial role in shaping the intercultural competence of students studying English for professional purposes in specialized faculties.

10. In English teaching, it is considered essential to foster friendships with individuals from other cultures, the ability to objectively assess one's own culture, cultural self-awareness, a desire to learn about other cultures, a commitment to improving the world and humanity, and a deep familiarity with at least a few foreign

cultures in order to develop intercultural competence in students.

11. The political, economic, social and cultural changes taking place in Azerbaijan, the implementation of specific tasks and goals in each field, establishing an open civil society in Azerbaijan, using more democratic management tools, expanding international relations with developed countries, creation of opportunities for international economic and market competition, preservation and studying of national moral values and culture, form the desire and ability to acquire intercultural competence and students' readiness for intercultural dialogue in learning the language for professional purposes.

12. Development and enlightening to young people perspectives of national moral values, cultural preservation, expansion of cultural processes, intercultural communication and relations occurring in the world, creation of intercultural dialogue is one of the most important issues today. Students realize that no culture exists without being connected to its roots, and at the same time, the impossibility of national cultures developing in isolation, outside of global processes, they are determined to contribute to this by learning to live in a more civilized way in the world by appreciating national and secular values.

13. The assessment process should be carried out systematically, covering each component of intercultural competence, focusing on the achievements of students rather than their shortcomings, and taking into account both the individual characteristics of students and the specific features of the development of intercultural competence

14. This study allowed to determine the relevant national model and classification for the Azerbaijani audience in order to ensure the formation of intercultural competence of students studying English for professional purposes in specialized faculties.

15. For the promoting intercultural competence of students of Azerbaijan University of Languages in the process of teaching professional communication in a foreign language and the assessment of intercultural competence, the experimental verification of the national model of Azerbaijan, developed according to the

CEFR model, has confirmed its effectiveness and pedagogical expediency.

16. The dynamics of the assessment of the formation of intercultural competence using the established criteria, the ability to solve problems in a communicative way, allows to confirm the effectiveness of the developed technological support. It has been proven that the degree of preparation depends on the level of formation of the considered competence.

It is possible to make the following **recommendations** regarding the research:

1. To establish a development concept for the application of the scientific and theoretical provisions, as well as the professional retraining programs for specialists presented in our research, in other higher education institutions, with a focus on the formation and evaluation of intercultural competence.

2. To include and teach the theoretical foundations of intercultural competence as an elective subject in the blocks of subjects aimed at teaching foreign languages at AUL.

3. To carry out researches in the field of intercultural competence formation in various specialists based on the scientific-theoretical and scientific provisions we have presented regarding the formation and evaluation of intercultural competence in higher education institutions.

4. To use the questionnaires proposed in the research work for assessment of students' intercultural competence level in teaching foreign languages in tertiary.

5. To make changes in the materials, subject programs and syllabuses used in the teaching of the English based on the goal of forming intercultural competence in higher education institutions.

The content, main arguments and results of the research are reflected in the following list of articles published by the applicant:

1. Language policy during the years of independence in Azerbaijan // Cultural Identity of Azerbaijan. Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade, – 2019. Book 2, – p.101-104.

2. Intercultural competence: an assessment method used in teaching English // – Baku: Journal of Baku Engineering University, Philology and Pedagogy, – 2019. Vol.3, No2, – p.85-98.
3. Research history of intercultural competence // – Baku: Scientific Works of Baku Slavic University. – 2019. No.2, – p.86-93.
4. Possibilities of formation and evaluation of intercultural competence in the process of teaching foreign languages in students // – Baku: Azerbaijan University of Languages Scientific News magazine. – 2019. No.3, – p.64-71.
5. Explanation of the terminology used in the field of intercultural didactics // – Baku: Baku Slavic University, Actual Problems of the Study of Humanities,– 2019. No. 6, – p.113-117.
6. Translator training: important intercultural skills // “Problems of translation” Republican scientific-practical conference, – Baku: Azerbaijan University of Languages, – March 15, – 2019, – p.66-68.
7. The role of intercultural competence in the formation of multicultural values // Multiculturalism and Ideology of Tolerance. The 2nd International Scientific Conference dedicated to the 96th anniversary of the National Leader Heydar Aliyev’s birth. – Baku: Azerbaijan University of Languages, – May 6-8, – 2019, – p.222-224.
8. The state of Azerbaijan is the Guarantor of the Security of a Small Number of Nations // Republican scientific conference called “Actual problems of international relations”, – October 25, – 2019, – p.422-423.
9. The essence of the concepts of intercultural competence and discursive experience in teaching English in the globalized world // – Baku: Journal of Baku Engineering University, Philology and Pedagogy, – 2020. Vol.4, No. 1, – p.46-56.
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16. Formation of intercultural competence of students in Azerbaijani higher education institutions: principles and components // International Conference “Issues of modern philology and problems of language teaching methods”, held at the Bryansk University of Russia, – October 16-17, – 2020, – p.180-185.
17. Intercultural competence: The role of media in improving students' competence through English language learning // Bulletin of the Cherkasy Bohdan Khmelnytsky National University. Series Pedagogical Sciences, – 2021. No.2, – p.25-30.
18. Promoting Azerbaijani Students' Intercultural Competence through Distance Education of Foreign Languages // Arab World English Journal (AWEJ), – September 2021. Vol. 12. Number 3, – p.232-241. (WoS)
19. Motivational strategies in the use of language materials during the formation of intercultural competence in English language

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26. The Criteria of Culture Based Foreign Language Teaching Material with the Intercultural Competence Promoting Aspect in Case of Azerbaijani University of Languages // “Actual problems of teaching foreign languages” Republican scientific-practical conference dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev, – Baku: Azerbaijan University of Languages, – December 23, – 2021, – p. 52-53.
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28. The Role of Social Media in the Development of Intercultural Competence among University Students in Azerbaijan // International Journal of Social and Educational Innovation, – 2022. Vol. 9, Issue 17, – p.7-16.
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Address: AZ 1000, Baku, U.Hajibeyli Street, 68

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