Intercultural Communicative Competence in the Development of Students' Linguistic Skills

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Abstract---Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) is a component of the general concept of communicative competence, which refers to the ability to establish effective communication with representatives of different social-cultural regions. The role of ICC is growing significantly with the intensification of globalization processes. The purpose of the present academic paper is a comprehensive research of intercultural communicative competence of students-philologists while studying a foreign language at university. To achieve the purpose outlined, the following methods have been used, namely: analysis; synthesis; generalization; ascertaining experiment; the method of formative experiment; comparison. As a result of the research conducted, a diagnostic model has been developed in order to determine the level of ICC formation in students of foreign philology (based on English); a tactic of stimulating the initially diagnosed level of students' ICC by conducting a formative experiment with subsequent secondary diagnostics for measurement of efficiency of the offered technique. It has been determined that the factors that have influenced the results are as follows: the complexity of the methodologies applied, the duration of the formative experiment, the intensity of work on improving ICC, individual

features of participants (motivation, attitude to learning in general, etc.). It has been determined that there is a direct link between ICC and the development of students' language skills. ICC lies in the plane of practical application of a set of acquired linguistic skills and the acquisition of personality traits of transcultural communicative literacy. Comparison of the results of primary and secondary diagnostics according to the diagnostics model developed by us has revealed that the average increase in the result of the formation of ICC was 2.4% in the group of 20 respondents, which is a variant of positive dynamics. Intercultural communicative competence is closely linked to the development of students' linguistic skills; there is a strong interdependence between them.

Introduction

In light of the rapid development of intercultural communication and global transformations taking place in the world with the advent of Information (Digital) Age, there is a need to develop a communicatively competent person with a set of competences essential for effective and full functioning in a multicultural world. Today, both for the successful fulfillment of professional duties and for daily personal needs, it is no longer enough to just possess a set of knowledge and qualities exclusively within the framework of professional training. The very concept of professional training inevitably implies education and training in the degree-seeking student of high or at least sufficient communicative competence. In particular, the point at issue is the competence-based knowledge of a foreign language by students – philologists. Fundamentals and virtuoso mastery of skills of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) allow following innovations within one's profession and in the spheres of personal life (for instance, leisure), participating in international symposia, conferences, establishing friendly relations and partnerships, working in transnational teams. By the way, ICC is an important component of vocational university education for students of foreign philology.

The formation of ICC in professional terms is an indicator of more than just knowledge of a foreign language in the classic four types of language activity (listening, reading, speaking, writing). It is the ability to establish contact with bearers of another culture, to achieve mutual understanding with foreign colleagues (or any other communicators in accordance with the pragmatic goals of the individual), who work in the same field, but culturally represent a different society, other cultural principles of collective and individual worldview. That is why mastering the skills of intercultural communication is critical for the modern degree-seeking student (Boonkit, 2010). Intercultural competence is formed in the process of learning a foreign language and during direct communication with representatives of other cultures. It certainly presupposes a conscious attitude to one's national cultural identity, forasmuch as the process of cultural exchange inevitably takes place in the process of speech interaction between

communicators. Intercultural competence involves control, tolerance; it is often an abstract view of one's own cultural values in order to avoid encroachment on the opponent's cultural communicative values while maintaining oneself in the zone of personal communicative comfort.

In Europe, the standards of communicative competences' formation in the context of learning are regulated by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages as the main directive document in language learning. Based on this reference document, a number of derivatives are formed, specializing in certain aspects of language learning. Speaking of intercultural communicative competence, then the section of Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) is devoted to this issue (Council of Europe, 2020a). The reference document – Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC): Competences for democratic culture in higher education is of particular importance (Council of Europe, 2020b). The Council of Europe has set up the European Center for Modern Languages (ECML) in order to further develop students' intercultural competences. The RFCDC defines ICC as openness to cultural otherness (Council of Europe, 2020b) and a process of meaning-making via communication and interaction across cultures (Council of Europe, 2020b). The communication skills (Competence model "butterfly") represented in the above document can be divided into settings and skills related to the worldview of the diversified modern world, and communicative competences. They constitute in conjunction the semantic components of ICC, the study of which, along with the mechanisms of ICC formation is the subject of the present scientific research.

The purpose of the present academic paper is a comprehensive study of intercultural communicative competence of students – philologists while studying a foreign language at university. The objective outlined involves the implementation of the following research tasks, namely:

- to carry out a theoretical analysis of the concept of ICC;
- to develop a diagnostics model for determining the level of ICC formation in students of foreign philology (based on the material of the English language);
- to propose a methodology of stimulating the initially diagnosed level of ICC in students by conducting a formative experiment with subsequent secondary diagnostics in order to measure the effectiveness of the implemented method;
- to identify the factors that have influenced the results, outline ways to further work on the formation of ICC;
- to find out the connection between ICC and the development of students' linguistic skills.

Literature review

Current investigations on the topic of ICC concern the nature, structure, scope and content of ICC concept, the interconnection of ICC with linguistic skills and pragmatic skills, finding effective models for determining the level of ICC formation, problems of stimulating ICC in students of higher educational institutions (HEI), etc (Nehe et al., 2018; Kanca et al., 2021). Sykes (2017), draws

attention to the fact that the underdevelopment of ICC inevitably leads to incorrect decoding of the content of what is said and heard (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004; Van Dinther et al., 2011). Forasmuch as metalinguistic and generally non-verbal communication patterns often play an important role in the pragmatics of speech, they mainly lie in the plane of the communication culture, which is nationally and even ethnically determined. Elboubekri (2017), explores the role of digital education for the development of ICC. The research perspective of Pikhart (2018), is original: ICC is considered in connection with the concept of Multilingual Competence, while English is justifiably positioned as a lingua franca – shared tool for communication. Based on the issue outlined, the author investigates ICC in the paradigm of communication through ICT, rather than a direct communicative act. Aguilar Pérez (2018), also uses an innovative vector of ICC representation, emphasizing the role of English-medium Instruction (EMI) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in modern European education. As a result of the study, the author concludes that ICC should become a learning outcome in ESP and EMI courses, with an emphasis on ESP. Such research vector is innovative; it needs further development, especially taking into account its acute relevance (Coniam, 2001; Prachanant, 2012).

The problem of insufficient formation of ICC will remain relevant until the development of ICC is reinforced in university curricula and agreed with the teaching of a set of disciplines aimed at learning a foreign language (Deardorff & Arasaratnam, 2017; Gregersen-Hermans, 2017). Byram & Wagner (2018), make an appropriate differentiation of the concepts of intercultural and international dialogue and the corresponding competences necessary for the constructive and productive organization of this very same dialogue. It has been emphasized that in the modern integrated world, a person very rarely remains to act within the narrow national context, of which he is from birth, in the process of professional activity and satisfaction of personal life needs. A modern person, who learns a foreign language for any purpose, should be communicatively ready to be engaged in intercultural dialogue. Teaching a foreign language today should certainly be integrated with all other academic disciplines. This will stimulate ICC. Developing the statement outlined, Gholami Pasand & Ghasemi (2018), have conducted an investigation of textbooks on English language learning in Iran for sufficient attention to the development of ICC and to the representation of multicultural material in general (Hashemi, 2011; Noytim, 2010). It has been revealed that the range of multicultural topics, even in the latest textbooks, which are often the main source and means of teaching English, is extremely narrow. Conclusions indicate the need to include a wider range of topics on intercultural communication in textbooks.

Douglas & Rosvold (2018), highlight miscommunication between students and between students and teachers as the problem of an insufficiently high level of ICC formation among students of average universities; consequently, it is connected with cultural misunderstandings. In particular, the authors consider the key problem of ethnocentrism and perception of students' behavior through the prism of cultural differences. Guntersdorfer & Golubeva (2018), define emotional intelligence as an important factor in the development of foreign language's ICC.

Nabila (2020), emphasizes the effectiveness of using authentic literary texts in order to present to a student the culture of the language community to which he joins while learning a foreign language. The imagery and metaphorical nature of a literary text helps the reader subconsciously join the cultural communicative world represented in the work of literature than at least partially compensate for the lack of communication in an authentic cultural foreign language environment. A similar position is held by Castillo Losada et al. (2017), demonstrating the effectiveness of this method on the example of Colombian Language School. The study of Lenkaitis et al. (2019), has a practical nature; it demonstrates experimentally (on the example of Mexican university and U.S. university) the effectiveness of videoconferencing for the development of ICC. Zhang & Zhou (2019), based on a review of work on ICC have identified four sub-types of pedagogical intervention to stimulate ICC, namely: culture-based teaching materials, classroom activities, teaching strategies and integrated intercultural programs. However, the so-called overseas immersion (immersion in a foreign cultural communicative context) most effectively influences ICC. Similar insights are also found in the work of Maharaja (2018), on the impact of studying abroad on intercultural competence and students' personality development. In the work of de Hei et al. (2020), there is a similar opinion about the development of ICC through the tactics of collaborative learning at international higher educational institutions, which create a model of a multicultural society (Roblyer et al., 2010; Lambrechts et al., 2013).

Deardorff (2019), represents a specialized *Manual for developing intercultural competencies* with differentiated approaches to the organization of dialogue with representatives of different cultural regions by means of English. Effective Intercultural Training Tools are as follows: simulations, role plays, case studies, group activities (games, discussions, structured learning exercises), online tools, coaching. Dalib et al. (2017), uses a phenomenological approach to assess ICC. In particular, it is investigated how students perceive the picture of their own intercultural competence act at the level of self-reflection. The study is based on the interview method taking into account intercultural experiences in Malaysia. It has been established that a conscious and abstract attitude to one's own ICC level makes it possible to adequately assess strengths and identify prospects for improvement. The analysis of scientific papers on the topic of ICC not only has made it possible to identify the current areas of research on ICC; it has also exacerbated the problem of the lack of diagnostics methods for measuring the level of ICC formation, as well as insufficient elaboration of the pedagogical conditions, means, methods of ICC development, taking into account modern requirements when teaching students a foreign language in classroom and when applying extracurricular types of educational activities.

Material and Methods

To achieve the purpose of the present investigation and the implementation of research objectives, the following methods have been used, namely:
- analysis of EU normative documents on the formation of ICC in the framework of university education;
- a method of theoretical analysis of the concept of ICC;

- a method of studying and summarizing scientific publications on the topic for the last five years;
- a method of ascertaining experiment;
- a method of formative experiment;
- a comparative method for comparing the results of primary and secondary diagnostics of the level of ICC formation;
- a method of generalization (when formulating conclusions from the study).

The theoretical representation of the ICC concept lies in the basis of the ICC diagnostics model developed by us, a theoretical model of ICC diagnostics developed by us; it has been proposed by Lázár et al. (2007), in a scientific work published by the Council of Europe Publishing. The level structure of ICC and the features of each ICC level, which have become the theoretical basis for further ascertaining and shaping the experiment, are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Dimensions of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

Level of ICC	Theoretical background of ICC	ICC skills
Assessing intercultural knowledge	Knowledge / possession of information about the diversity of lifestyles, worldviews of people – representatives of different cultures, knowledge of the social-cultural context of the community of people within which the language is used.	It concerns the understanding, awareness of the differences between the community from which the speaker originates (as a bearer of national culture), and the community to which the speaker joins in order to achieve communicative personal or professional goals. *Skills to identify, describe.*
Assessing intercultural know-how	Degree-seeking students are able to function linguistically in the environment of target language, that is, to interact with other communicators in different life situations. The speaker's theoretical knowledge of the basics of how to adapt verbally and non-verbally to different types of communication. Development of skills in order to coordinate communicative interaction in accordance with one's own communicative and foreign language communication skills from the environment of professional activity to leisure area.	Practical abilities and skills to use a variety of communicative tools (verbal and nonverbal) for effective communication with speakers of other cultures. *Skills to discuss, debate, solve problems and play roles.*

| Assessing intercultural being | Acquirement, accommodation of models of relationships and attitudes, motivational mechanisms, values and beliefs, cognitive style (mental component) inherent in another culture, at the level of connections and identity of the individual. It is based on cultural consciousness and understanding of other cultures. It is transformed into critical competence. | At this level of ICC, the goal lies in leading the degee-seeking student to self-identification as a cultural mediator, especially in situations of tension, misunderstanding or conflicts between the involved communicants. *Skills to compare, write an essay, solve a critical incident and justify their opinions.* |

Source: developed by the authors based on the insights given at Lázár et al. (2007)

In accordance with this, the input ICC diagnostics of a group of 20 students has been carried out with their subsequent involvement in the formative experiment. Second-year students majoring in "Foreign Languages and Literatures, Methods of Teaching Foreign Languages and Foreign Literature (English and Second Western European Language)" of the specialization "Language and Literature" of the Faculty of German Philology of Kyiv National Linguistic University have been selected for testing. The investigation was conducted within two semesters of study of 2019-2020 academic year (input diagnostics – September 2019). Learning outcomes have been measured at the beginning of the third year of study of students involved in the experiment, that is, in the first semester of the 2020-2021 academic year. The ICC diagnostics model involved assessing each respondent according to the Dimensions of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) presented above in accordance with the involved diagnostic methods (Table 2).

Table 2
Model of primary (input) diagnostics of ICC

Level of ICC	Method of diagnostics	Time	Scores
Assessing intercultural knowledge	Quiz Test (Application A)	45 min	100 1 point = 1 correct answer
Assessing intercultural know-how	Oral conversation activity with native speakers (respondents were divided into 4 group; each group contained 5 respondents who communicated together with 2 native speakers on the free topic from everyday life)	30 min / each group	100 points
Assessing intercultural being	Essay writing *"The most acute problems of globalized world: outside and inner world of modern personality"*	90 min	100 points (cultural context + grammar / lexical / stylistic units usage)
		Total Score:	300 points

A formative experiment involving special teaching methods aimed at stimulating ICC has been prepared and conducted as part of the teaching the course "Practice of oral and written speech in English". In the process of teaching the course, special training methods have been used to increase the initially diagnosed level of students' ICC. The manual of Huber-Kriegler et al. (2003), *"Mirrors and windows: An intercultural communication textbook"* was the basis of educational and formative methods, in accordance with the recommendations of the European Center for Modern Languages and the Council of Europe Publishing. It was originally developed by an international team of authors (Hungary, Austria and the Netherlands – the international cultural context of these countries and the countries of the English-speaking world is mostly taken into account) in order to stimulate ICC of degree-seeking students of pedagogical specialties in foreign philology. However, it can also be successfully used to increase the ICC of students of other specialties and other countries, forasmuch as the authors have actively involved the pan-European (+) cultural context in accordance with the seven Units, namely: 1) Rock around the clock; 2) You are what you eat?; 3) Conversation and … silence; 4) Men and women, girls and boys – Gendered identities; 5) All you need is love (?); 6) Bringing up baby; 7) Up in the morning and off to school. When using the manual, the following integrative questions contribute to the involvement of students in the national cultural context, namely: *Are there similar social or religious rites of passage in the cultures you know?* as well as blocks *Reflecting on your own culture,* placed in each Unit.

Work with the manual was carried out gradually during the year with alternating collective, group and individual classroom and extracurricular forms of activities. In addition, weekly work was carried out with original literary texts, songs and films / series with an emphasis on linguistic content and cultural context, presented in cultural texts, audio and video products. Also, a regular full-time and part-time (via Skype, Zoom) involvement of English speakers from different countries took place in the educational process. In this case, these were representatives of Poland, Great Britain, the USA, Germany, who were invited to intercultural dialogue, communication on free topics and who shared their own experience of intercultural communicative interaction by using English in the process of communication.

Forasmuch as the second part of the formative experiment underwent significant organizational changes due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the secondary diagnostics, originally scheduled for the end of June 2020, was conducted in September 2020 (respondents had already started their third-year studies at that time). During summer holidays, online meetings with students via Skype were held on a regular weekly basis, followed by ICC assignments on original cultural texts and audio and video materials, creative assignments (essays-reflections on read literary texts, watched films, etc.). Secondary diagnostics was performed according to the scheme, typologically as close as possible to the model of primary diagnostics, in order to allow only the minimum error (as far as it is possible to speak a priori about concrete and exact measurement of ICC level as a concept of extremely abstract and situationally determined). However, a complication of diagnostics tasks was observed, in particular, concerning the measurement of intercultural knowledge's competence. The basic differences between the model of secondary diagnostics and the model of input diagnostics are as follows:

- at the level of assessing intercultural knowledge, tests of close form were replaced by monologue speeches of the respondent on a cultural topic: this level was the most difficult, not only crossing the boundaries of objective testing, but also getting a creative component;
- at the level of assessing intercultural know-how, oral conversation activity took place with the involvement of 3 intercultural English-speakers, but not 2 native speakers, as previously (this is due to the need for advanced diagnostics of educational achievements of ICC obtained in the context of the formative experiment);
- at the level of assessing intercultural being, the topic of the essay was changed.

Table 3
ICC secondary diagnostics model (based on the results of the formative experiment)

Level of ICC	Method of diagnostics	Time	Scores
Assessing intercultural knowledge	Individual student's speech (monologue speech) on the chosen culturological topic (patterns of everyday communication) with an emphasis on ICC activity and accompaniment in the form of Power Point presentations	10-15 min	100 points
Assessing intercultural know-how	Oral conversation activity with *intercultural English-speakers* (respondents were divided into 4 group; each group contained 5 respondents who communicated together with 3 English-speakers (one native speaker, one English-speaker from Poland and one English-speaker from Germany) on the free topic from everyday life)	30 min / each group	100 points
Assessing intercultural being	Essay writing *"Intercultural unity in the context of Digital Age"*	90 min	100 points (cultural context + grammar / lexical / stylistic units usage)
		Total Score:	300 points

It should be noted that for the purpose of objective assessment at the stage of input diagnostics, the respondents' work at the levels assessing intercultural knowledge and assessing intercultural were encrypted. The works of respondents at the level of assessing intercultural being at the stage of diagnostics of educational achievements as a result of the conducted formative experiment were also encrypted. At the stages of assessing intercultural know-how, the assessment was not carried out by students' teachers, but by native speakers

involved in the diagnostics, who were not previously acquainted with the respondents at all.

Results

The results of ICC diagnostics at the initial (input) stage are presented in Table 4, according to the tested ICC levels for each respondent.

Table 4
Results of the Input Diagnostics of the ICC

No. of the respondent	Assessing intercultural knowledge *Max 100 points*	Assessing intercultural know-how *Max 100 points*	Assessing intercultural being *Max 100 points*	Total Score *Max 300 points*	% of ICC
1	97	88	86	271	90.3%
2	85	78	69	232	77.3%
3	79	74	71	224	74.7%
4	81	80	75	236	78.7%
5	82	79	72	233	77.7%
6	77	75	68	220	73.3%
7	94	90	89	273	91.0%
8	98	94	92	284	94.7%
9	100	98	93	291	97.0%
10	94	92	89	275	91.7%
11	83	82	80	245	81.7%
12	82	80	77	241	80.3%
13	79	76	76	231	77.0%
14	81	79	72	232	77.3%
15	98	96	94	288	96.0%
16	97	95	90	284	94.7%
17	77	73	69	219	73.0%
18	88	84	85	257	85.7%
19	85	81	79	245	81.7%
20	81	74	70	225	75.0%
Averagely	86.9	83.4	79.8	250.1	83.4%

Regarding the interpretation of the results obtained at the stages of observational and formative experiments, the percentage of 90-100% will be considered as high level of ICC formation, 82-89% – very good, 75-81% – good, 64-74% – acceptable, 60-63% – satisfactory. All results lower than 59% are considered unacceptably low under the condition of using authors` model of ICC diagnostics developed and require serious intervention. Thus, 7 respondents demonstrated a high level of ICC, 4 respondents – a very good level, 7 respondents – a good level, 2 respondents – an acceptable level of ICC formation. Initially, as a result of competitive selection at the stage of the admission campaign, students with a high level of knowledge of English as a subject with the highest coefficient in the calculation of the entrance score were selected for the competitive proposal of Kyiv National Linguistic University (according to the official results of the resource

vstup.osvita.ua for 2018, when the respondents, tested by us, entered the specified HEI, the total average rating score of all applications of entrants was 166.04 points out of 200 maximum).

Also, the planned work on the formation of ICC was systematically carried out with students during the first year of study in the process of teaching the curriculum. This aspect may explain the complete lack of satisfactory and low level of ICC among the tested respondents. However, a considerable space among respondents is observed towards improving the diagnosed level of ICC. Based on the results, it can also be concluded that the most difficult level of ICC is the intercultural being; it is the least formed level among three components of ICC. There is also a significant difference in percentage among the respondents, namely: the difference was 24% between the highest result and the lowest one. Therefore, training efforts in the formative experiment will also be aimed at leveling the ICC indicator in the direction of its maximization. The results of the secondary diagnostics performed after the formative experiment according to the tactics described in the previous section are reflected in Table 5.

Table 5
Results of ICC Secondary Diagnostics (based on the results of the formative experiment)

No. of the respondent	Assessing intercultural knowledge *Max 100 points*	Assessing intercultural know-how *Max 100 points*	Assessing intercultural being *Max 100 points*	Total Score *Max 300 points*	% of ICC
1	98	90	90	278	92.6%
2	84	79	74	237	79.0%
3	85	78	77	240	80.0%
4	82	85	85	252	84.0%
5	84	87	77	248	82.7%
6	86	77	70	233	77.7%
7	95	93	94	282	94.0%
8	95	96	96	287	95.7%
9	99	98	95	292	97.3%
10	98	93	91	282	94.0%
11	87	84	86	257	85.7%
12	79	76	75	230	76.7%
13	83	77	84	244	81.3%
14	82	83	79	244	81.3%
15	98	97	96	291	97.0%
16	96	96	95	287	95.7%
17	78	77	76	231	77.0%
18	90	85	85	260	86.7%
19	86	88	89	263	87.7%
20	77	70	65	212	70.7%
Averagely	88.1	85.5	84.0%	257.5	85.8%

Interpretation of the results makes it possible to draw the following conclusions, namely: high level of ICC – 7 respondents (no change), very good – 6 respondents (+2 compared to the input diagnostics), good – 6 respondents (-1), acceptable – 1 respondent (-1 compared with input diagnostics). In general, the increase in indicators at all diagnosed levels of ICC is observed, although, it is not very significant. However, the results of the respondent No.15 remained unchanged, as well as the level of intercultural know-how of the respondent No.9. According to all levels, the ICC indicators of the respondent No.12 and the respondent No.20 decreased. The success of the intercultural knowledge of respondents No.2, 8, 16 decreased (it should be clear that this level was the most complicated at the stage of secondary diagnostics). A more detailed comparative description of the results of input and secondary diagnostics is reflected in Table 6.

Table 6
Comparison of Results of ICC Input Diagnostics and ICC Secondary Diagnostics, Progress Assessments

No. of the respondent	ICC Input Diagnostics		ICC Secondary Diagnostics		Generalization		Progress
	Total Score *Max 300 points*	% of ICC	Total Score *Max 300 points*	% of ICC	Difference		
					Scores	% of ICC	
1	271	90.3%	278	92.6%	+8	+2.3%	↑
2	232	77.3%	237	79.0%	+5	+1.7%	↑
3	224	74.7%	240	80.0%	+16	+5.3%	↑
4	236	78.7%	252	84.0%	+16	+5.3%	↑
5	233	77.7%	248	82.7%	+15	+5%	↑
6	220	73.3%	233	77.7%	+13	+4.4%	↑
7	273	91.0%	282	94.0%	+9	+3%	↑
8	284	94.7%	287	95.7%	+3	+1%	↑
9	291	97.0%	292	97.3%	+1	+0.3%	↑
10	275	91.7%	282	94.0%	+7	+2.3%	↑
11	245	81.7%	257	85.7%	+12	+4%	↑
12	241	80.3%	230	76.7%	-11	-3.6%	↓
13	231	77.0%	244	81.3%	+13	+4.3%	↑
14	232	77.3%	244	81.3%	+12	+4%	↑
15	288	96.0%	291	97.0%	+3	+1%	↑
16	284	94.7%	287	95.7%	+3	+1%	↑
17	219	73.0%	231	77.0%	+12	+4%	↑
18	257	85.7%	260	86.7%	+3	+1%	↑
19	245	81.7%	263	87.7%	+18	+6%	↑
20	225	75.0%	212	70.7%	-13	-4.3%	↓
Averagely	250.1	83.4%	257.5	85.8%	+7.4	+2.4%	↑

Thus, as a result of the formative experiment conducted, at least a minimal (+1 point and 0.3% – lower scale of progress, +18 points and 6% – upper scale of progress) increase in the measured indicators of ICC is observed in 18 out of 20 respondents. The formation of the ICC of two respondents (No.12 and No.20), as it turned out in a direct conversation with them, decreased by 3.6% and 4.3%,

respectively, due to subjective reasons. According to degree-seeking students' data, there is a noticeable decrease in academic performance in all other disciplines. Along with this, they were often absent from classes, and even in case they were physically present, they were often unprepared for classes. However, their achievements were not so critical as to exclude them from the research. The presence of ICC variability only confirms the idea of the dynamism of the tested competence. The percentage progress of respondents' ICC with an initially high level of ICC formation was expected to be minimal (in the range of 0.3-3%). In general, the average increase in the result of the formation of ICC has amounted 2.4%, which is an indicator of positive dynamics. In general, longer time is needed for a more significant growth than the annual period of the formative experiment, as in this case. Along with this, in order to obtain actually qualitative ICC progress, direct practical communicative interaction with English native speakers and other native speakers is required as well as a variety of communicative situations within the official business (professional) and personal life of the communicator (Banu et al., 2021).

The objective of the research was also to establish a link between ICC and the development of students' linguistic skills. The following comparison of the results of the input diagnostics and the formative experiment with the educational achievements of the student-respondents in the disciplines in the area of foreign language learning made it possible to note a stable dependence, namely: from among students who demonstrated an increase in ICC, enhancement in the rating score according to the results of the credit-examination session of the III and IV semesters of study was also observed. And vice versa: two respondents who showed a decrease in the level of ICC, respectively, their average rating score according to the results of educational activities also decreased. Herewith, during the meeting of the department when reporting on the results of the research, teachers noted the positive dynamics of the impact of the applied tactics of stimulating ICC on the range of students' linguistic skills. In particular, it concerns the ability to build communication more freely, feel more psychologically confident during oral monologue and dialogue speech, holistically monitor compliance with literary norms of language, pragmatic features of the communicative process and personal psychological comfort during the communicative act and psychological comfort of other participants in communication (Spahiu & Kryeziu, 2021).

Discussion

In modern educational programs (curricula), foreign language intercultural competence is an integral part of communicative competence, which indicates the ability of self-expression of the individual, his ability to understand culturally and nationally determined concepts for successful participation in the dialogue of cultures (Beacco & Byram, 2007; Camerer, 2014). The obtained results of the research make it possible to interpret them for concretization of the theoretical content of the ICC concept. The formation of ICC provides:

- *at the level of general communication culture:*
  - prompt response to adverse situations of exacerbation or emphasis of cultural contradictions: respect towards cultural diversity and appropriate

adjustment of speech reactions with the modification of speech so as to adapt it to the key goal – to build a constructive intercultural dialogue;
- skills of speech behavior in accordance with the diversification of communicative norms and practices depending on the cultural background: any actions that accompany the communicative situation (including emotional response) may be perceived differently by people belonging to different cultures;
- the ability to take into account differences in communicative behavior (including gestures, intonation, proxemic settings);
- the ability to build an intercultural communicative act on respect towards cultural differences of communicators, however, with an emphasis on similarities or appreciation of mutually beneficial cultural exchange between recipients;
- willingness to offer others and ask for explanations in the process of communication, anticipating the possible risks of communicative misunderstanding in conditions of unclear cultural background of communication.

- *at the level of practical organization of intercultural communication:*
  - a set of knowledge about cultural diversity (primarily – within their cultural region, for instance, Europe, which in this case also involves knowledge of the culture of the Anglo-American cultural space);
  - the ability and skills to understand and adequately use intercultural vocabulary in professional and personal speech in accordance with the communicative goal, taking into account all the features of the organization of the communicative process by representatives of different nationalities;
  - application of knowledge about the culture of native speakers in professionally and personally oriented situations of foreign language communicative contact;
  - the ability to achieve communicative success in terms of professional and personal intercultural communication;
  - the ability to represent their own cultural identity in the process of communication, providing cultural exchange;
  - acquisition of knowledge on psychological features of linguistic culture.

The whole process of experimental research has shown that the diagnostics of ICC should be comprehensive. Accordingly, the approach to the methodological complex for the formation of ICC in the study of a foreign language within the framework of the university program should also be comprehensive. Along with this, it demonstrates the low efficiency of focusing on the assessment of foreign language learning by means of so-called objective testing of knowledge, the most common instruments of which are pen and paper examinations (Lázár et al., 2007). Consequently, the method of multiple-choice testing is inclined to this technique during the initial diagnostics of intercultural knowledge. Secondary diagnostics of the same level by applying a different type of task (oral presentation + PowerPoint presentation) showed a slight equivalent of ICC improvement precisely because the previously used method of diagnosing objective testing showed an inflated, compared to the actual at the time, result. Thus, objective testing can be an adequate diagnostics method only for determining the level at which students have learned certain cultural facts. In the modern sense,

assessing ICC should focus on the level of development of all three dimensions of ICC: not only knowledge but also the skills – "knowing how" and the attitudes "being" (Lázár et al., 2007).

In the structure of formation of foreign language competences, intercultural communicative competence is closely related to the actual linguistic skills of students, which act as direct basic tools for communication (Berti, 2020). Intercultural communicative competence in the paradigm of learning a foreign language begins to form at the initial stages of mastering a particular foreign language (Beacco et al., 2016a; Beacco et al., 2016b). The results of the research have shown that there is a direct interdependent link between ICC and language skills. Intercultural communication should be differentiated from social-cultural competence, which is an indicator of individual awareness of the country of the studied language (Pratt, 2010; Suryasa et al., 2019). After all, intercultural communicative competence is closely related to the individual's awareness of the general and specific features of their own and foreign linguistic culture (Holliday & Macdonald, 2020). In the context of modern requirements towards learning a foreign language, the social-cultural outlook of the student expands and deepens, as well as the awareness, understanding and acceptance of foreign elements of other linguistic cultures (Council of Europe, 2020a). An indisputable condition for the development of ICC is the actual intercultural communication or its educational simulacra (through compensatory modeling of multicultural space). Information and communication technologies provide ample opportunities for ICC stimulation (Elboubekri, 2017; Pikhart, 2018; Aguilar Pérez, 2018). In the process of ICC formation, in view of previous experience, traditions and features of their linguistic culture, the individual tries to understand and recognize the language code of another linguistic culture, which is complicated by awareness, overemphasis on its foreignness and, paradoxically, ignoring it (Beacco et al., 2016a; Björkman, 2017).

In addition, based on the analysis of the literature on the research topic, the results obtained of ICC stimulation and the identified constructive direct interconnection between ICC growth and the development of students' linguistic skills in order to develop ICC during foreign language learning, the following pieces of advice should be taken into account, namely:

- to develop the ability to reflect on one's own culturally determined values, behavior and ways of thinking, the ability to perceive them in an abstract, critical, controlled way, but with respect for one's own national cultural communicative identity;
- to increase students' awareness on intercultural differences in values, patterns of behavior and ways of individual (but mentally determined) and collective thinking;
- to increase students' awareness on culturally conditioned aspects of language use in different social pragmatic contexts;
- to train and improve skills of observation and interpretation in the paradigm of communicative activity, as well as skills of critical thinking;
- to develop cognitive skills and to accept different cultural perspectives on the basis of tolerance, pluralism, attitude to intercultural differences as to cultural wealth;
- to develop skills of recognition of common cultural bases;

- to stimulate the ability to achieve the communicative goal and effectively organize the communicative space taking into account the intercultural determinants of communicators and the situation of the communicative act (environment, purpose, communication format);
- to develop students' empathy, cultural openness and respect for otherness.
- In the paradigm of the applied methodology for stimulating ICC (the program of the Huber-Kriegler et al. (2003) "Mirrors and windows: An intercultural communication textbook" and the set of didactic activities listed in the Material and Methods paragraph), the following components of ICC training can be distinguished, the development of which in the context of foreign language learning is effective and necessary, namely:

  - linguistic and cross-cultural component (lexical denotation and connotation, background and terminological vocabulary, phraseological units in combination with elements of regional studies and the ability to apply them in situations of intercultural communication);
  - social-linguistic component (the correct intercorrelation between the choice of linguistic form and the method of linguistic expression in accordance with the communicative situation);
  - social-cultural component (set of knowledge, skills, abilities and capabilities related to social-cultural features of the country the language of which is studied as a foreign language, the relevant specifics of verbal and nonverbal behavior, the allocation of general and specific features in the culture);
  - general cultural component (awareness and strict implementation of universal norms and rules of communicative behavior);
  - pragmatic component (a set of knowledge, skills and abilities of the student, possession of which opens the way to acquaintance and cultural involvement in national and cultural riches and values of the country the language of which is studied for successful interpersonal and intercultural interaction);
  - thematic metalinguistic component (reading skills "between the lines", which allow perceiving the intercultural information behind the text).

Only the integrity of pedagogical influence on the stimulation of ICC, the principles of systematics and systematicity, stimulating the motivational sphere of students' educational activities, direct involvement of students in communication in a multicultural language environment will contribute to the formation of intercultural communicative competence in the framework of university education (Camerer, 2014; Beacco et al., 2016a; Beacco et al., 2016b). At a low level of ICC formation it is a priori impossible to speak about formation of communicatively mature personality of the speaker.

Conclusions

Learning a foreign language involves joining the language consciousness of the people of the country the language of which is studied. Culture, as you know, is one of the forms of existence of collective consciousness. Thus, effective foreign language learning is impossible without sufficient attention to the formation of

intercultural communicative competence. In order to achieve this, a special role is assigned to university vocational training as part of the acquisition of professional foreign language competences by students. The ICC diagnostics model should include ICC measurements according to all three ICC components, namely: intercultural knowledge, intercultural know-how, intercultural being. Investigations on ICC demonstrate that the process of ICC development is long; it requires perseverance and activity in the selection of effective teaching methods. The higher the level of initial formation of ICC is, the more didactic efforts will be required to achieve its qualitative growth.

Intercultural communicative competence is closely linked to the development of students' linguistic skills, namely: there is a strong interdependence between them. On the one hand, the low development of students' linguistic skills makes it impossible to have a high level of intercultural communicative competence even under the conditions of culturological savvy of the student (formation of other features of intercultural competence, except communicative ones). On the other hand, according to modern standards, the level of linguistic skills of students cannot be considered high if they do not possess formed intercultural communicative competence. For this purpose, the correct development of intercultural communicative competence is exclusively integrated with other university disciplines in the paradigm of learning a foreign language.

The results of the research conducted within the framework of the preparation of the present investigation can practically be used in modeling similar studies on the diagnostics of ICC among students – philologists, drawing up curricula taking into account the development of ICC, organizing highly specialized courses on the accelerated increase in the ICC level, preparing studies on the theoretical generalization of the specifics of ICC. Further researches on the theoretical and practical understanding of the features of intercultural communicative competence of students may relate to testing with further scientific generalization of methods of its development by means of information and communication technologies, multicultural modeling, etc.

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Appendix

Application A

Quiz: "Do you Know English-American General Cultural Context?"

1. Which is the Great Britain capital?
a) New York City b) Bonn c) London d) Moscow
2. What is the national symbol of England?
a) The shamrock b) The rose c) The daffodil d) The tulip
3. What kind of state is the United Kingdom?
a) republic b) monarchy c) democratic party d)parliamentary monarchy
4. What is the name of the London's residence of Queen Elizabeth II?
a) Windsor Palace b) Kensington Palace c) Buckingham Palace d) St. James's Palace
5. What title does Prince Charles, the oldest son of the British Queen, have?
a) Prince of Northern Ireland b) Prince of England c) Prince of Scotland d) Prince of Wales
6. Whose monument stands in the centre of Trafalgar Square?
a) Admiral Nelson   c) Former prime minister Winston Churchill
b) General Washington   d) Abraham Lincoln
7. What is the oldest university of Great Britain?
a) Oxford b) Cambridge c) Exeter d) Governor
8. What river is London situated on?
a) The Nil b) The Volga c) The Themes d) The Mississippi
9. What is a population of Great Britain?
a) 35 mln b) 45 mln c) 55 mln d) 65 mln
10. What are the colours of the British flag?
a) blue, red and white b) blue and red c) blue and white
11. How many pence are there in one pound?
a) 100 b) 90 c) 10
12. What do the English often put in their tea?
a) jam b) milk c) lemon
13. Which holiday is on December 25?
a) St. Valentine's Day b) Easter c) Christmas
14. Where can you always see ravens in London?
a) near the Thames b) near the Houses of Parliament c) near the Tower of London
15. In what city were the famous "Beatles" born?
a) London b) Glasgow c) Liverpool
16. What place was built by King Arthur and the wizard Merlin?
a) Stonehenge b) The Tower of London c) Camelot
17. "It is quite a three-pipe problem". Who said it?
a) Mark Twain b) Hemingway c) Conan Doyle d) G. Bernard Shaw
18. You must go to school in Great Britain...
a) from the age of 5 until you are 16   c) from the age of 7 until you are 18
b) from the age of 6 until you are 17 d) from the age of 3 until you are 14
19. How many letters are there in the English ABC?
a) 33 b)27 c) 26 d) 31
20. "I have measured out my life with coffee spoons". Who said it?
a) Ch. Bronte b) Jane Austen c) T.S.Eliot d) E.Dickinson

21. "If men knew how women pass the time when they are alone, they'd never marry". Who said this remarkable phrase?
a) Edgar Poe b) Washington Irving c) O.Henry d) W.S. Maugham
22. Queen Elisabeth II has got...
a) 4 children b) 3 children c) 2 children d) 1 child
23. Name the English city:
a) Hoboken b) Madrid c) Nice d) Manchester
24. What is the town where William Shakespeare was born?
a) Sheffield b) Coventry c) London d) Stratford-on Avon
25. William Shakespeare was...
a) artist b) doctor c) writer d) sportsman
26. What theatre was organized by William Shakespeare?
a) Globe Theatre b) Old Vic Theatre c) Royal Theatre d) Dall's theatre
27. Who is the architect of the famous ST. Paul's Cathedral?
a) Michelangelo b) Sir Christopher Wren c) Rastrelly d) Admiral Nelson
28. Who was the first Englishman to come to Australia?
a) Admiral Nelson b) Captain Janise Cook c) Captain Drake d) Armstrong
29. What is the nickname of London's Underground?
a) Metro b) Subway c) The Tube d) Underground
30. Translate into English: Вік живи – вік учись.
a) Better late than never.   c) First think, than speak.
b) Two heads are better than one.   d) Live and learn.
31. How many towers does the Tower of London consist of?
a) 13 b) 12 c) 11 d) 10
32. What's the colour of double-deckers in London?
a) red b) black c) yellow d) white
33. Who can you see on the top of the column on Trafalgar Square in London?
a) Richard Grenville b) Francis Drake c) Christopher Columbus d) Admiral Nelson
34. How many bronze lions can you see at the foot of the monument to Admiral Nelson?
a) Five b) Four c) Three d) Two
35. What is the name of the national musical instrument in Scotland?
a) a guitar b) a violin c) a bagpipe d) a drum
36. How many states are there in the USA?
a) 50 b) 52 c) 49
37. Who was the first President of the USA?
a) George Washington b) Abraham Lincoln c) John Kennedy
38. What is the biggest state in the USA?
a) Texas b) Alaska c) California
39. What city is the Statue of Liberty in?
a) Miami b) Washington D.C. c) New York
40. What American holiday is on the fourth Thursday in November?
a) Halloween b) Independence Day c) Thanksgiving Day
41. What is a very famous amusement park near Los Angeles?
a) Marine World b) Malibu c) Disneyland
42. What is the most popular sport in the USA?
a) tennis b) baseball c) basketball
43. What is the name of the state colloquially known as Sunflower State?
a) Kansas b) Illinois c) Indiana d) Nebraska
44. What is the name of the State colloquially known as Bluegrass State?

a) North Dakota b) Kentucky c) New Hampshire d) New Jersey
45. What is the name of the state colloquially known as Treasure State?
a) Alaska b) California c) Colorado d) Montana
46. What is the name of the state colloquially known as Empire State?
a) Texas b) Illinois c) California d) New York
47. Who discovered America?
a) Christopher Columbus b) George Washington c) The pilgrims
48. Who was the first president of the USA?
a) Abraham Lincoln b) George Washington c) Franklin
49. What is the national symbol of America?
a) The rose b) The bald eagle c) The shamrock
50. Which is the USA capital?
a) New York city b) Los Angeles c) Washington
51. Where is the Statue of Liberty?
a) New York b) Massachusetts c) California
52. The American flag has:
a) 13 stripes b) 30 stripes c) 50 stripes
53. When do Americans celebrate Independence Day?
a) July, 4 b) December, 25 c) February, 14
54. How many states are there in America?
a) 50 b) 52 c) 25
55. The Statue of Liberty was a gift from:
a) Italy b) England c) France
56. Which kind of sport is a typical American invention?
a) Tennis b) Baseball c) Golf.
57. What is the biggest state of the USA?
a) Alaska b) Texas c) Illinois d) California
58. Which of the US Presidents was a Hollywood actor?
a) George Bush (junior) b) Bill (William) Clinton c) Ronald Reagan d) Barak Obama
59. What is the second name of the Washington memorial?
a) "the pen" b)"the pencil" c) "the ruler" d) "the arrow"
60. What is the name of a famous American producer and cartoonmaker?
a) Theodor Seuss Geisel b) Steven Spielberg c) Mark Twain d) Walt Disney
61. Which English King had six wives?
a) Charles I b) Harald Godwinson c) Henry VIII d) Williams III
62. Which island lies between England und Irleand?
a) Isle of Man b) Isle of Skye c) Jersey d) Sheltand Islands
63. What is the capital of Scotland?
a) Aberdeen b) Edinburgh c) Glasgow d) Inverness
64. Where in the UK is the Lake District?
a) England b) Northern Ireland c) Scotland d) Wales
65. In which town is Hyde Park?
a) Dublin b) London c) New York d) San Francisco
66. Who invented the sandwich?
a) Earl of Sandwich b) George Washington c) King Henry VIII d) Queen Victoria
67. What do they celebrate in Britain on 5th November?
a) Guy Fawkes Night b) Halloween c) Notting Hill Carnival d) St. Patrick's Day
68. What is the longest river in the UK?
a) Great Ouse b) Severn c) The Thames d) Trent
69. What is the name of a famous shopping street in London?

a) Broadway b) Fleet Street c) Oxford Street d) Wall Street

70. Which of the following cities does not lie in the Province of Ontario (Canada)?

a) Edmonton b) London c) Toronto d) Ottawa

71. What is the highest mountain in the United Kingdom?

a) Ben Macdhui b) Ben Nevis c) Scafell Pike d) Snowdon

72. What is the name of the guards in the Tower of London?

a) Beefeaters b) Castle Guards c) Security Guards d) Tower Guards

73. Where is Loch Ness?

a) England b) Ireland c) Scotland d) Wales

74. Who built the Tower of London?

a) Henry VIII b) Maria Stuart c) Oliver Cromwell d) William the Conqueror

75. Whose statue is on Trafalgar Square in London?

a) Admiral Nelson b) King George VI c) Queen Victoria d) Winston Churchill

76. What is the highest mountain in the USA?

a) Mount Blackburn b) Mount Elbert c) Mount McKinley d) Mount Whitney

77. When is Independence Day in the USA?

a) 4 July b) 11 November c) fourth Thursday in November d) third Monday in January

78. Where is Ellis Island?

a) in New York Harbor b) in San Francisco Bay c) in Sydney Habor d) on the South coast of Florida

79. What is the hottest place in the USA?

a) Death Valley b) Key West c) The Grand Canyon d) The Great Salt Lake

80. 16 national parks are in which two states of the USA?

a) Alaska and California b) Alaska and New Mexico c) California and Utah d) New Mexico and Utah

81. What is the largest lake in den USA?

a) Lake Erie b) Lake Michigan c) Lake Ontario d) Lake Superior

82. What is the biggest town in the USA?

 a) Chicago b) Los Angeles c) New York d) San Francisco

83. When did Queen Elisabeth I die?

a) 1485 b) 1603 c) 1659 d) 1707

84. What is the flag of the USA called?

a) Maple Leaf b) Stars and Stripes c) Tricolour d) Union Jack

85. How many people live in the USA?

a) 250 million b) 300 million c) 325 million d) 400 million

86. Which state of the USA is called Sunshine State?

a) Arizona b) California c) Florida d) Kentucky

87. What is the capital of the USA?

a) Chicago b) Los Angeles c) New York d) Washington DC

88. It's 10 o'clock a.m. in Berlin. What time is it in Los Angeles?

a) 1 o'clock b) 3 o'clock c) 5 o'clock d) 6 o'clock

89. Where is Alcatraz?

a) in New York Harbor b) in San Francisco Bay c) in Sydney Harbor d) on the South coast of Florida

90. What is the capital of California?

a) Los Angeles b) Sacramento c) San Diego d) San Francisco

91. What is the highest mountain in New Zealand?

a) Mount Cook b) Mount Hopkins c) Mount Ruapehu d) Mount Tasman

92. Which state of the USA is called Cotton State?

a) Alabama b) Missouri c) Oklahoma d) Tennessee
93. Where is Ellis Island?
a) in New York Harbor b) in San Francisco Bay c) in Sydney Habor d) on the South coast of Florida
94. Which island lies between England und Irleand?
a) Isle of Man b) Isle of Skye c) Jersey d) Sheltand Islands
95. Which of the following Indian tribes does not live in the South of the USA?
a) Apache b) Hopi c) Navajo d) Sioux
96. What do children say on Halloween?
a) Pence or Joke b) Sweets or Money c) Sweets Please d) Trick or Treat
97. How many provinces are in Canada?
a) 8 b) 10 c) 12 d) 14
98. Where is the Backbone of England?
a) Cornwall b) East Anglia c) Lake Disctict d) Pennines
99. What is the largest lake in the USA?
a) Lake Erie b) Lake Michigan c) Lake Ontario d) Lake Superior
100. Where in the UK is Dartmoor?
a) England b) Northern Ireland c) Scotland d) Wales