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Linguocultural Approach in Teaching Russian at University to the Prospective Teachers of Russian

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ABSTRACT

The article explores the concept of linguocultural competence as a key component of the professional expertise of a future philology teacher. Various approaches to its definition are analyzed, and our own interpretation of this phenomenon is given. It is concluded that a high level of linguocultural competence of a future Russian language teacher is a condition for its effective professional activity. A mandatory component of a philologist teacher's professionalism is linguocultural competence, the formation of which implies awareness of language as a form of expression of national culture, the relationship between language and the history of the people, the national and cultural specifics of the Russian language and speech behavior, the Russian language picture of the world, mastery of nationally marked language units, speech etiquette, and the culture of interethnic communication. The article discusses how to work on the formation of linguocultural competence of students, names methodological techniques, tasks, exercises, and other types of work that contribute to the implementation of a linguocultural approach to teaching students the Russian language. In addition, the study demonstrates the results of questionnaire regarding the learning about target language culture. It highlights various aspects, such as the significance of cultural knowledge in language acquisition, learners' perceptions of cultural content

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in their studies, and the impact of cultural awareness on language proficiency.

Keywords: Russian Language; Linguoculturology; National-Oriented Vocabulary; Linguocultureme

1. Introduction

At present, the primary objective of research in the field of teaching Russian language methodology is to address the issue of developing linguistic and cultural competence, which is a crucial aspect of the professional and communicative abilities of students studying philology. This is in line with the new educational standards that are being implemented across all universities in the country. The field of teaching Russian has undergone significant transformations in both theory and practice, particularly due to the growing need for innovative methods in language instruction and acquisition. This was evident in the choice of language materials and the revision of the training objectives, with a particular emphasis on teaching communication in Russian in the context of cultural exchange.

Linguocultural competence is one of the main indicators that allow determining the readiness of a Russian language to further professional and personal development. A modern Russian language teacher can creatively approach the organization of the educational process, take into account the needs of a particular school or class, is able to quickly navigate the information space, and constantly improves their intellectual potential. From this point of view, the focus is not on the formal belonging to the profession of philologist, but on the professionalism of the Russian language teacher, that is, the specialist's compliance with the requirements of professional pedagogical activity. Therefore, linguistic and cultural competence is an essential aspect of a philologist's professional expertise. Developing this competence requires an understanding of language as a manifestation of national culture, the interconnectedness between language and the history of a people, the unique cultural and national characteristics of the Russian language and communication patterns, the Russian language's worldview, proficiency in culturally specific language units, and the art of intercultural communication.

communication.

Linguocultural competence is a complex and multifaceted characteristic. From the point of view of linguistics, its formation is associated with the assimilation and awareness of language norms that have historically developed in all branches of linguistics (phonetics, orthoepy, spelling, vocabulary, semantics, grammar, stylistics), their adequate application in any activity in the process of using the Russian language^[1]. From the point of view of cultural studies, linguoculturological competence is the ability to navigate issues of culture as an integral phenomenon, to understand the relationship between different spheres of culture, and to recreate samples of the epoch in direct creative activity^[2].

In the process of forming linguocultural competence, the philologist teacher also masters the system of internally acquired knowledge (rules) of the functioning of the Russian language, which is manifested in their use in speech-thinking activities. In Russian language classes, this activity is provided by the analysis of lexical units, stylistic features of the creative handwriting of word masters. In this way, the teacher increases the cultural level of students, logically leads them to independently search for interesting language and literary material, teaches them to draw appropriate conclusions, develops intelligence, and promotes conscious assimilation of the material.

The cultural component is a prerequisite for cross-cultural communication, which requires understanding the similarities and differences between the cultures of the native country and the country of the language being studied. The cultural barrier that arises when a native culture collides with "foreign" cultures is often much more dangerous and unpleasant than the language barrier. Cultural mistakes can be perceived much more painfully than language mistakes, and often make a negative impression.

During the process of training, it is crucial to anticipate, clarify, and prevent any inappropriate connections

that may arise due to cultural, historical, socio-psychological factors, and the uniqueness of national culture. Understanding another culture, in this case the Russian culture, not only enhances one's proficiency in the Russian language and culture but also serves as a means of gaining a deeper understanding of one's own culture. The student is aware of their national values, learns to understand and respect the values of another culture, another way of life, overcomes stereotypes and biased attitude to another culture, which helps to achieve mutual understanding when communicating in a foreign language.

The purpose of this article is to study the peculiarities of the formation of linguocultural competence of students in the process of teaching Russian.

2. Literature Review

The relationship between language and culture has been a central topic in language acquisition research, particularly as educators and linguists have increasingly recognized the importance of cultural understanding in learning a second language.

Early models of language teaching emphasized language as a purely structural system of rules and vocabulary, but contemporary approaches highlight the symbiotic relationship between language and culture. According to Krashen [3], the study of culture is not just about learning facts about another society, but about understanding how language reflects the worldview of that culture. She argues that language is a social practice, and language learners must engage with cultural contexts to use the language appropriately in real-world situations.

Recent scholarship also suggests that L2 learners' ability to navigate cultural norms influences their communicative competence. Byram [4] defines intercultural communicative competence as the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately across cultures. This involves not only language proficiency but also an understanding of the cultural frameworks that shape how language is used in different contexts. Risager [5] emphasizes that cultural awareness can be as important as linguistic knowledge in ensuring effective communication, particularly when learners need to decode culturally specific references, idi-

oms, and non-verbal cues in the target language.

Telia [6] defines linguocultural competence as the ability to perceive the cultural and national characteristics of native speakers. Shkatova [7] means the content of linguocultural competence as a system of basic knowledge that is fixed in phrases, phraseological and precedent units that cover all spheres of human activity and allow us to understand non-specialized information in order to freely navigate in the modern world.

Kiseleva [8] defines this term as a set of knowledge, skills and personal qualities acquired in the process of immersion in the system of cultural knowledge of another people. Similarly, Gorodetskaya [9] understands linguocultural competence, which refers to the part of a person's cultural competence that manifests itself in communication and is a set of interrelated ideas about common norms, rules and traditions of verbal and nonverbal communication within a given linguoculture.

Linguoculturology focuses on a new system of cultural values put forward by new thinking, modern life of society, objective interpretation of facts and information about the cultural life of the country [10].

Linguocultural competence is considered as an integrative quality of a person, including knowledge, skills, and abilities related to the selection, assimilation, processing, transformation, and use in practice of information about the linguistic culture, general norms, rules, and traditions of verbal and nonverbal communication within a given linguistic culture [11,12].

The formation of linguistic and cultural competence is one of the mandatory conditions for teaching a student. Linguocultural competence is defined as the ideal speaker/listener's knowledge of the entire system of cultural values expressed in a language [10].

We have identified the following aspects of linguocultural competence:

- national speech etiquette;
- words describing objects of traditional Russian culture and everyday life;
- folklore works;
- names of Russian artists, musicians and scientists.
- use of non-verbal communication mediums (facial expressions, gestures, intonation) [13].

The main task of mastering this competence is to realize that the student understands the phenomenon of the Russian language, its original beginning and originality, and the goal is to understand the spirits of the new world, respect the values of another culture ^[14].

Bashurina's linguocultural competence ^[15] refers to those personal qualities that are acquired by a person in the process of mastering the system of cultural values. The author states that working on linguocultural material contributes to the formation of a secondary linguistic personality of the student, and hence to its successful inclusion in the dialogue at the cross-cultural level. According to Bashurina ^[15], the main elements of linguocultural competence include linguoculturological knowledge (the history of the country, traditions, customs of the nation, religions, features of everyday activities), skills (the ability to understand and use proverbs and sayings of the language being studied), skills and personal qualities of students.

However, in our opinion, the most complete definition of the content of this competence is given by Makarova ^[16], who refers to it, in addition to personal qualities and the system of cultural knowledge, subjective and social experience, linguistic and cultural knowledge, skills and abilities, abilities to implement professional activities, theoretical and applied readiness, and methods of professional development.

Linguocultural competence, according to Makarova ^[16], can be considered as formed on the condition that students have theoretical knowledge of the language and speak the language practically, build speech behavior in accordance with the communicative task, choose adequate language forms depending on the speech situation, have written skills, know how to use the language, and have a good understanding of the language, traditions and customs of the people, peculiarities of the mentality of its bearers.

3. Methodology

This research is carried out on the basis of a comprehensive study of the concepts of "linguoculturology" and "linguocultural competence", as well as views on the process of forming linguoculturological competence. Us-

ing mixed methods, this research includes theoretical analysis of scientific and pedagogical literature on the stated research topic, analysis and synthesis of the information obtained as well as a questionnaire on topics regarding the benefits of learning about culture.

3.1. Data collection

The study used a questionnaire conducted among students of Atyrau University in Kazakhstan. The questionnaire aimed to investigate if the participants of this study became more aware of the target culture's characteristics, their attitude towards the target culture as well as the contribution of conducted culture classes at school to the participants' prospective teaching profession.

3.2. Participants

The participants in this study were 37 students (30 females and 7 males ranging between 20- 22 years of age). The 37 participants are Kazakh student-teachers studying at the Russian Language Teaching Department of Atyrau University, completing a school-based internship during the last year of their training to become Russian language teachers. They are graduates of either private or state secondary schools from all over Kazakhstan. Therefore, they share common cultural characteristics. Most of them plan to be teachers of Russian following their graduation.

3.3. Data analysis

The responses of the participants were statistically analyzed, observing frequencies of values and their percentage. Results and their interpretations are presented in tabular form, referring to each question included in the questionnaire.

4. Results

4.1. What Are the Components of Linguistic and Cultural Competence of Students?

Students' awareness of the value bases of Russian culture is promoted by educational texts in Russian, compiled taking into account certain lexical, grammatical, and

stylistic means. Texts convey cultural values, are sources of cultural information, and also serve as material for assimilation and consolidation of language knowledge. They help to understand the peculiarities of Russian identity, develop their own attitude to “foreign” traditions and customs, give an idea of important phenomena of Russian reality, develop an attitude to the history of culture as a way of understanding modernity, and consider complex problems of modernity through the prism of cultural history.

The formation of linguistic and cultural competence occurs when working with various national and cultural units, which, being carriers of knowledge about national culture, cause particular difficulties for Russian language learners. For example, the Russian phraseology *vyносит’ sor iz izby* (to take out the trash from the hut) has the following meaning, recorded in the dictionary: “To disclose information about some troubles concerning a narrow circle of people”, and cultural information is deeply hidden here - this is a Slavic archetype: it is impossible to take out trash from the hut, because by doing so we weaken “our” space, make it vulnerable and can harm our family members, and it is unworthy for a person to engage in weakening others. Therefore, the mark “disapproval”, which is available in most modern phraseological dictionaries, becomes a marker of cultural information in a phraseological unit.

In order to form the cognitive and cultural space necessary for the dialogue of cultures in the language consciousness of the student, we work with *linguocultures*, which are defined by Vorobyov^[10] as the dialectical unity of linguistic and extralinguistic (conceptual and subject) content and include linguistic meaning and cultural meaning.

The following educational and speech units can be distinguished:

1. Non-equivalent vocabulary that reflects the realities that exist in Russian reality and do not correspond to the reality of a foreign language.

Material and Spiritual Culture: *Izba* (traditional wooden house), *kosovorotka* (traditional Russian shirt), *bliny* (pancakes), *maslenitsa* (a pre-Lenten festival), *borodinskiy khleb* (bread), etc.

Historicisms: *Krepostnoye pravo* (serfdom), *tata-*

ro-mongol’skoye igo (Mongol-Tatar yoke), *dekabristy* (Decembrists), etc.

Sovietisms: *Samizdat* (self-published literature), *GU-LAG* (Soviet labor camp), *nomenklatura* (the Communist Party elite), etc.

Folklore Vocabulary: *Baba-yaga* (mythical witch), *domovoy* (household spirit), *bogatyry* (epic hero), etc.

Neologisms and Speech Neoplasms: *Postperestroynyy period* (post-perestroika period), *novyy russkiy* (new Russian, often used pejoratively), *sovok* (pejorative term for Soviet mentality), etc.

Phraseological units: *Bit’ v nabat* (to raise the alarm), *do posledney kapli krovi* (to fight to the last drop of blood), etc.

2. Incomplete equivalent (background) vocabulary – words in which the semantics partially coincide and partially diverge in the background parts of conceptually equivalent words (north, south, west, east, region, capital, province, university, bell, shirt, etc.).

3. *Paremia* (Proverbs and Sayings). Russian proverbs often reflect cultural values and ways of thinking, and they can be challenging for learners due to the unique historical and cultural context.

- *Moscow does not believe in tears* (a Russian proverb meaning that action is more important than complaining).

- *What is healthy for a Russian, is death for a German* (referring to the idea of cultural differences in what is considered acceptable or normal).

4. Quotes, winged words (*Motherland calls; Live in truth; Do not understand Russia with your mind; O light bright and redly decorated Russian land! O great, mighty, truthful and free Russian language!* etc.).

5. Nationally recorded symbols (*Mother earth, bread and salt, tricolor, Kremlin, Tsar Bell, Kulikovo field*, etc.).

6. Linguistic and cultural concepts (community, will, freedom, honor, home, work, wealth, poverty, power, love, family, happiness, beauty, fear, violence). The concept, as Stepanov^[17] points out, does not exist in the human mind in the form of clear concepts, but is a “bundle” of ideas, concepts, knowledge, associations, and experiences. According to Demyankov^[18], when teaching for-

eign languages ... we assume, that “those” languages have approximately the same concepts, but often the concepts about them are different. The concepts of Russian culture are not developed individually, but are integrated into the overall system of work.

Due to the fact that national and cultural units are both signs of reality and units of language, they require special attention. Their cultural semantics, formed on the basis of the interaction of language and culture, is revealed through etymology, interpretation in Russian and English, through explanation in the text itself, with the help of cultural commentary, through ways of use, word formation nest, compatibility.

A necessary part of the methodological apparatus is visual visibility, which acts as a means of semantization and activation of national and cultural language units. Illustrations of paintings by Russian artists, photographs of the realities of Russian reality, drawings, posters are used in the manual as visual stimuli, visual supports. They reflect significant portions of the lexical background. The juxtaposition of lexical meaning with visual image helps the formation of linguoculturological competence.

4.2. How to Work on the Formation of Linguistic and Cultural Competence of Students?

Here are some methods, tasks, activities, and other forms of work that support the implementation of a cultural-linguistic approach to teaching Russian to students.

(1) Analysis of texts in Russian about the culture of Russia, its history, the national identity of the Russian people, the spiritual and material riches, the beauty of Russian nature, and people who have made a great contribution to the development and prosperity of the country.

(2) Analysis and linguocultural commentary of statements by writers, poets, prominent figures in science, art, and other famous people that contain value judgments about the Russian language. Writers, poets, and artists have always called for careful treatment of the language as a national treasure, its social memory. An effective task is the selection of statements about the Russian language by students themselves.

(3) Analysis of the linguocultural context of proverbs

and sayings.

Among the numerous proverbs and sayings, a special place is occupied by those that characterize the language and speech from the point of view of content, communicative expediency, relevance, conciseness, imagery, expressiveness. When studying these qualities of speech, it is appropriate to use such proverbs:

Yazyk igly ostreya (The tongue is sharper than a needle). This proverb emphasizes the sharpness or impact of speech, suggesting that words can hurt more than physical objects.

Yazyk ne strela, a pushche strely razit (The tongue is not an arrow, but it strikes harder than an arrow). Similar to the previous proverb, this illustrates the potential danger of words. It can be discussed in terms of how language can have far-reaching consequences.

Rech' – kak mech', sechot i pravogo i vinovatogo (Speech is like a sword, it cuts both the right and the guilty). Here, the metaphor of a sword shows that words can affect anyone, regardless of whether they are right or wrong. The grammatical structure of the sentence can also be analyzed in terms of how complex sentences function in Russian.

Krasnuyu rech' khorosho i slushat' (Red speech is good to listen to). This refers to eloquent or beautiful speech, with “red” symbolizing something fine or admirable. The syntactic structure could be studied as it is a simple yet effective use of language.

Khoroshaya rech' slashche myoda (A good speech is sweeter than honey). This is a simile, where the comparison of speech to honey emphasizes the sweetness of well-chosen words. The morphological analysis would focus on the adjective “khoroshaya” (good), showing its agreement with the noun “rech” (speech).

As you know, the language space of Russian proverbs is quite wide. They can be used as illustrative material in the study of morphological and syntactic categories and meanings. At the same time, their linguistic and cultural context is of no small importance. For example, when studying:

Proper names:

Yazyk do Kiyeva dovedot (The language will bring them to Kiev).

This saying could be used to discuss the significance of language in social mobility or communication. “Kiev” can also be examined as a cultural reference, tied to the historical and geographical context of Russia.

U lenivoy Dar’i tselyy den’ avarii (Lazy Dana has a whole day of accidents).

The name “Daria” here is used generically, but it reflects a cultural association with laziness, a feature of the stereotype in Russian folk speech.

Vsyak Yeremey pro sebyarazumey (Every Eremey understands himself).

This reflects a cultural understanding of the name “Eremey,” which is often associated with a person who is self-centered or too focused on his own opinions. This proverb could be used to explore how names carry cultural connotations and their influence in forming stereotypes.

Adjectives:

U lenivoy pryakhi i dlya sebya net rubakhi (A lazy spinner doesn’t even have a shirt for herself). Here, the adjective “lenivoy” (lazy) emphasizes the consequence of laziness in the proverb, offering a vivid image of neglect. It can be analyzed for the use of the negative form and how adjectives convey character traits.

Koren’ ucheniya gorek, da plod yego sladok (The root of the teaching is bitter, but its fruit is sweet).

The adjectives *gorek* (bitter) and *sladok* (sweet) are opposites, showing a contrast between the difficulty of learning and the rewards it brings. This can be examined in terms of comparative structures and oppositional adjectives.

Dobryy chelovek dobru i uchit (A good person teaches good things).

The adjective “dobryy” (good) is used to highlight the moral quality of the person. The proverb reflects the idea that a virtuous person will impart positive values. This provides an example of how adjectives are used to express moral judgments.

Pronouns in proverbs can convey a sense of ownership, responsibility, and identity:

Yazyk moy - vrag moy (My language is my enemy).

This uses the possessive pronoun “moy” (my) to emphasize personal ownership and responsibility over one’s speech. The proverb suggests that one’s own words can be

as harmful as an enemy.

Pro yego sovest’ mozhno skazat’ povest’ (And there’s a proverb about your arrogance).

The pronoun “yego” (his) refers to someone else, conveying how a person’s behavior or arrogance can be the subject of gossip or judgment. This could be studied to understand possessive pronouns in Russian.

I pro tvoyu spes’ poslovitsa yest’ (You can tell a proverb about his conscience).

This also uses pronouns (“tvoyu” for “your”) to refer to another person’s character or conscience, emphasizing how individual qualities shape societal perceptions.

Categories of condition:

Bol’nomu serdtsu gor’ko i bez pertsu (A sick heart is bitter even without pepper).

This illustrates how physical or emotional suffering can amplify even the smallest discomfort. The structure of this proverb can be analyzed as an example of conditional relationships.

Gde rabota, tam i gusto, a vlenivom dome pusto (Where there is work, it is dense, but the lazy house is empty).

The use of the conditional “Gde...tam” (Where...there) creates a cause-and-effect relationship between work and abundance.

I pro tvoyu spes’ poslovitsa yest’ (You can tell a proverb about his conscience).

This also uses pronouns (“tvoyu” for “your”) to refer to another person’s character or conscience, emphasizing how individual qualities shape societal perceptions.

V dolg brat’ legko, a otdavay’ tyazhelo (Borrowing is easy, but giving back is hard).

The proverb contrasts two actions using the construction “a” (but) to show the difference between them, offering a clear conditional structure.

(4) Discussions on the content of linguistic and cultural texts of an entertaining and popular scientific nature, on the content of statements about various phenomena of language and speech.

Mastering the Russian language as a means of communication and mastering cultural values, students comprehend its lexical and grammatical richness and diversity, imagery, expressiveness, beauty, and euphony.

In Russian language lessons, you can use texts and utterances dedicated to the description of individual language phenomena. Conversations on the content of texts and statements of this kind will help students to become more aware of the phenomena they are studying, relate them to the realities of reality, and help expand their horizons and develop their language sense.

(5) Comment on relevant etymological information.

An etymological excursion into the history of the origin of individual words and linguistic phenomena allows students to better understand the origins and main trends of language development. Information about the occurrence of lexical-phraseological and other units is interesting and informative. Brought to the point, they reinforce the linguistic and cultural context of learning the Russian language.

(6) Linguocultural analysis of phraseological units.

The richest source of information about the culture and mentality of the people is the phraseological composition of the language, reflecting ideas about values, customs, rituals, behavior, morals, and habits of the people. Telia ^[6] characterizes phraseological units as “the most culturally significant component of language and reality”.

In the context of the linguocultural approach, the subject of study should be phraseological units that contain the names of objects that characterize the cultural and aesthetic values of the people. For example, the word bread in Russian culture is associated with ideas about such moral qualities of a person as hard work, diligence, hospitality, generosity, cordiality. This connection is evident in various phraseological expressions like *khleb da sol'* (bread and salt), *vstrechat' s khlebom-sol'yu* (to meet with bread and salt), *vmeste khleb-sol' yest'* (eat bread and salt together), all of which emphasize the importance of hospitality and shared efforts.

On the other hand, there are phraseological units like *darom khleb yest'* (to eat bread for nothing), *yest' chuzhoy khleb* (to eat someone else's bread), *posadit' na khleb i vodu* (to put someone on bread and water), and *zhit' na khlebakh* (to live on bread (from someone)), *iskat' logkogo khleba* (to look for easy bread), which describe individuals who are as unwilling to work to contribute. These expressions reflect a negative perception of those who do not earn

their own living.

To sum up, culture classes have a humanizing and a motivating effect on the language learner and the learning process ^[19,20]. They help learners observe similarities and differences among various cultural groups. Today, most of L2 students around the world live in a monolingual and monocultural environment. Consequently, they become culture-bound individuals who tend to make premature and inappropriate value judgments about their as well as others' cultural characteristics ^[21,22]. This can lead them to consider others whose language they may be trying to learn as very peculiar and even ill-mannered, which, in turn, plays a demotivating role in their language learning process.

4.3. The Results of the Questionnaire

We began the questionnaire asking the respondents about the importance of teaching culture in a Russian class (Table 1).

Table 1. How important do you think it is to teach culture alongside language in a Russian class?

Answer	Number of respondents	%
1 Very important	23	62
2 Important	10	27
3 Neutral	3	8
4 Unimportant	1	3
5 Very unimportant	0	0

A majority of respondents (89%) consider teaching culture to be very important or important. This suggests that most students understand the significant role culture plays in language learning, aligning with the growing focus on intercultural communication in second language acquisition research. A smaller percentage of respondents (3%) view culture as secondary, possibly prioritizing grammar and vocabulary.

Many students agree that cultural integration enhances language comprehension (51%), increases motivation (62%), and improves communication skills (49%). This confirms that respondents recognize the value of culture not just as an add-on but as a component that enriches the language learning process. Fewer respondents view cultural content as irrelevant or secondary to language learning (8%), indicating potential gaps in awareness or available

resources (Table 2).

Table 2. In your opinion, how does teaching culture affect students' language learning?

Answer	Number of respondents	%
1 It improves language comprehension	19	51
2 It increases student motivation	23	62
3 It enhances students' communication skills	18	49
4 It helps students understand cultural nuances and idioms	17	46
5 It broadens students' worldviews	16	43
6 It doesn't significantly affect language learning	3	8

Table 3 shows that the majority of students agree that cultural content is as important as (49%), or even more important (24%) than, grammar and vocabulary. However, there is a segment of respondents (19%) who prioritize

linguistic elements, reflecting traditional views in language teaching. This suggests a need for more professional development to help future educators balance language and culture.

Table 3. Do you believe that teaching cultural elements of the target language is as important as teaching grammar and vocabulary?

Answer	Number of Respondents	%
1 Yes, it's equally important	18	49
2 Yes, it's more important	9	24
3 No, grammar and vocabulary are more important	7	19
4 No, it is less important	3	8
5 Not sure	0	0

The most common cultural topics taught by future Russian language teachers include holidays and traditions (68%), media (70%), social norms (54%), and food (49%). These are viewed as more accessible and relatable for

students. Political issues, historical events, and controversial cultural topics are less frequently incorporated, possibly due to sensitivity or a lack of resources (Table 4).

Table 4. What type of cultural content did you incorporate into your lessons? (Select all that apply).

Answer	Number of Respondents	%
1 Holidays and traditions	25	68
2 Popular media (films, music, TV shows, books)	26	70
3 Social norms and behaviors	20	54
4 Historical events	13	35
5 Food and cuisine	18	49
6 Geography and landmarks	16	43
7 Cultural idioms and expressions	15	41
8 Political issues and systems	10	27
9 Fashion and lifestyle	8	22

Table 5 indicates the participants' use of a combination of methods such as videos (62%), texts (54%), and classroom discussions (49%) to introduce cultural content. Authentic materials like films and articles are

also common. The integration of guest speakers, cultural exchange, and field trips, while valuable, are less frequent due to logistical or budgetary constraints.

Table 5. How did you introduce cultural content into your lessons (Select all that apply).

	Answer	Number of Respondents	%
1	Texts or articles	20	54
2	Videos or movies	23	62
3	Guest speakers or interviews	13	35
4	Classroom discussions and debates	18	49
5	Cultural exchange or field trips	10	27
6	Interactive activities (role-playing, simulations)	16	43

Respondents consider developing intercultural communication skills (38%) and enhancing student motivation (24%) as the most important aspects of teaching culture. This aligns with the broader goals of language education,

where culture plays a key role in fostering understanding and communication across different linguistic communities (**Table 6**).

Table 6. What do you think is the most important aspect of teaching culture in Russian language classes?

	Answer	Number of Respondents	%
1	Developing intercultural communication skills	14	38
2	Raising awareness of global issues	7	19
3	Enhancing student motivation	9	24
4	Making language more meaningful and contextual	5	14
5	Building empathy and tolerance	2	5

Regarding the question how students respond to cultural content in lessons, most participants report positive student engagement (38%) with cultural content, with students showing interest (49%) in learning about the culture associated with the language. However, some respondents note neutral (11%) or even negative responses (3%), particularly when students feel disconnected from the culture or find it difficult to relate to the cultural content.

Table 7 includes common challenges such as a lack of time (19%), resistance from students, or difficulties in relating cultural content to language learning objectives (22%). Participants also face the challenge of stereotypes or misconceptions about the target culture (27%), which can hinder the effectiveness of cultural instruction. A smaller number report lack of appropriate resources.

Table 7. Have you encountered any challenges when teaching culture in your Russian classes? (Select all that apply).

	Answer	Number of Respondents	%
1	Students lack interest in cultural content	7	19
2	Cultural content is difficult to relate to language learning objectives	8	22
3	Stereotypes or misconceptions arise about the target culture	10	27
4	Students are uncomfortable with cultural differences	6	16
5	Lack of appropriate materials	12	32

5. Conclusions

Thus, taking into account all the above, it is possible to consider the linguistic and cultural competence of a Russian language teacher as the presence of knowledge that allows them to correctly navigate in the modern space of socio-cultural values, and experience in their imple-

mentation; the ability to act effectively and creatively in interpersonal contacts-situations that involve interaction with other people in a social context, as well as in professional situations; ability to think critically at the stage of designing an educational task.

Linguocultural competence combines knowledge of nominative units of the language with a national and

cultural component, names of objects and phenomena of traditional Russian life, national games, rituals, paintings, folklore, etc. This competence also includes knowledge of non-verbal means of communication, in particular facial expressions and gestures. A significant place in the formation of linguistic and cultural competence is occupied by the texts of fiction not only as a material for exercises and analysis, but also as a means of spiritual and aesthetic education of the individual.

The study's results suggest that a culture class has a substantial positive impact on language proficiency, enhancing cultural awareness, changing attitudes towards native and target societies, and contribution to the teaching profession. The participants in this study emphasized some kind of transformation in their thinking and listed some points as potential contribution of a culture class they experienced. Incorporated in the curriculum, a culture class would prove to be a vital component of language learning and teaching, since as this study illustrates, it has a great deal to offer to the development of communicative competence as well as other skills in the instruction of any language.

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