

**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

# Improving The Methodology Of Developing Students' Intercultural Communicative Competence In Russian Language Lessons

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## Abstract

In the context of globalization and increasing intercultural interaction, the development of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) has become one of the key objectives of modern language education. Teaching Russian as a foreign or second language requires not only the formation of linguistic skills but also the ability to understand and appropriately respond to cultural differences. This article examines theoretical foundations and practical approaches to improving the methodology of developing students' intercultural communicative competence in Russian language lessons. The study analyzes the components of ICC, explores effective teaching methods, and proposes methodological strategies aimed at integrating cultural content into language instruction. The findings emphasize the importance of culturally oriented tasks, authentic materials, and interactive teaching techniques in fostering intercultural awareness and communicative effectiveness.

## KEY WORDS

Intercultural communicative competence, Russian language teaching, methodology, culture-based learning, communicative approach.

## INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of international relations, academic mobility, and multicultural societies has significantly increased the importance of intercultural communication skills. In modern education, learning a foreign language is no longer limited to mastering grammar and vocabulary; it also involves understanding cultural norms, values, and patterns of communication characteristic of native speakers.

In this context, Russian language lessons play a crucial role in developing students' intercultural communicative competence, especially for learners studying Russian as a foreign or second language. Russian culture, with its rich history, traditions, and social conventions, presents both opportunities and challenges for learners. Therefore, improving the methodology of

teaching Russian with a focus on intercultural competence is an urgent pedagogical task.

The purpose of this article is to analyze existing methodological approaches to developing intercultural communicative competence and to propose effective ways of improving Russian language teaching practices. The article addresses the theoretical foundations of ICC, examines its structure, and explores practical methods for its formation in the classroom.

The Concept of Intercultural Communicative Competence

Definition of Intercultural Communicative Competence

Intercultural communicative competence is commonly defined

as the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people from other cultures. According to M. Byram, ICC includes not only linguistic competence but also sociolinguistic, pragmatic, and cultural components that enable learners to interpret and relate cultural meanings.

In the context of Russian language education, intercultural communicative competence implies the ability to:

- understand Russian cultural norms and values,
- interpret verbal and non-verbal behavior of native speakers,
- compare one's own culture with Russian culture,
- communicate respectfully and effectively in intercultural situations.

## Components of Intercultural Communicative Competence

Most scholars identify the following main components of ICC:

1. Linguistic competence – knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and phonetics of the Russian language.
2. Sociolinguistic competence – ability to use language appropriately in different social contexts.
3. Cultural competence – understanding of cultural traditions, customs, values, and worldviews.
4. Pragmatic competence – ability to interpret meaning in context and achieve communicative goals.
5. Attitudinal component – openness, tolerance, and respect toward other cultures.

Effective methodology should address all these components in an integrated manner.

## The Role of Culture in Russian Language Teaching

### Language as a Cultural Phenomenon

Language is not only a system of signs but also a reflection of culture. Russian lexical units, idioms, proverbs, and forms of address often contain cultural meanings that cannot be fully understood without cultural knowledge. For example, forms of politeness, the use of patronymics, and speech etiquette are deeply rooted in Russian cultural traditions.

Teaching Russian without cultural context may lead to communicative failures, even if students possess sufficient grammatical knowledge. Therefore, cultural content must be an integral part of Russian language lessons.

### Cultural Barriers in Intercultural Communication

Learners of Russian may encounter various cultural barriers, such as:

- differences in communication styles,
- indirect vs. direct expression of opinions,
- norms of politeness and emotional expression,
- attitudes toward authority and hierarchy.

Methodology aimed at developing ICC should help students recognize and overcome these barriers through guided practice and reflection.

### Methodological Approaches to Developing Intercultural Communicative Competence

#### Communicative Approach

The communicative approach remains one of the most effective frameworks for developing ICC. It focuses on real-life communication and meaningful interaction rather than mechanical language practice.

In Russian language lessons, this approach can be implemented through:

- role plays and simulations,
- dialogues based on everyday situations,
- problem-solving tasks involving cultural dilemmas.

Such activities encourage students to use language as a tool for intercultural interaction.

#### Cultural-Oriented Approach

The cultural-oriented approach emphasizes the systematic inclusion of cultural information in the teaching process. This includes:

- traditions and holidays,
- social norms and values,
- historical and literary references.

For example, studying Russian holidays such as Maslenitsa or New Year can be combined with vocabulary learning, reading texts, and discussing cultural similarities and differences.

#### Comparative Approach

The comparative approach involves comparing the learners' native culture with Russian culture. This method promotes

cultural awareness and critical thinking.

Students can be asked to:

- compare forms of greeting and address,
- analyze family traditions,
- discuss attitudes toward time and punctuality.

Such comparisons help students better understand both cultures and avoid stereotypes.

## Teaching Methods and Techniques for Improving ICC

### Use of Authentic Materials

Authentic materials play a vital role in developing intercultural competence. These include:

- newspaper articles,
- videos and films,
- interviews with native speakers,
- literary excerpts.

Authentic materials expose students to real language use and cultural contexts, making learning more engaging and meaningful.

### Interactive and Student-Centered Activities

Interactive methods foster active participation and reflection.

Effective techniques include:

- group discussions,
- debates on cultural topics,
- project-based learning,
- case studies of intercultural situations.

For example, students may analyze a communicative misunderstanding between people from different cultures and propose solutions.

### Role of Digital Technologies

Modern technologies significantly expand opportunities for intercultural learning. Online platforms, virtual exchanges, and multimedia resources allow students to interact with native speakers and explore Russian culture directly.

Digital tools can be used to:

- watch and analyze video blogs,
- participate in online discussions,

- complete web-based cultural projects.

### The Teacher's Role in Developing Intercultural Competence

The teacher plays a key role in shaping students' attitudes toward other cultures. A teacher of Russian should act as:

- a cultural mediator,
- a facilitator of dialogue,
- a guide in intercultural reflection.

Teachers must demonstrate tolerance, cultural sensitivity, and openness while encouraging students to express their views and ask questions about cultural differences.

### Assessment of Intercultural Communicative Competence

Assessing ICC is a complex task, as it involves not only knowledge but also attitudes and behavior. Traditional tests are insufficient for this purpose.

Alternative assessment methods include:

- portfolios,
- reflective journals,
- project presentations,
- observation of communicative behavior.

Such methods allow teachers to evaluate students' progress more comprehensively.

### Challenges and перспективы (Prospects) of ICC Development

Despite its importance, the development of intercultural competence faces several challenges:

- limited classroom time,
- lack of culturally rich teaching materials,
- insufficient teacher training.

However, integrating ICC into Russian language teaching offers significant перспективы, including:

- improved communicative effectiveness,
- increased learner motivation,
- better preparation for real-life intercultural interaction.

## CONCLUSION

Improving the methodology of developing intercultural communicative competence in Russian language lessons is a

vital task in modern education. Language learning must go beyond linguistic structures and incorporate cultural understanding, intercultural awareness, and communicative skills.

This article has shown that effective ICC development requires an integrated methodological approach combining communicative, cultural-oriented, and comparative methods. The use of authentic materials, interactive activities, and digital technologies significantly enhances the learning process.

By fostering intercultural communicative competence, Russian language education contributes to the formation of tolerant, culturally aware, and globally competent individuals capable of successful communication in a multicultural world.

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