

## THE ROLE OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN MODERN RUSSIAN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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**Abstract:** The growing importance of intercultural communication in globalized educational and professional contexts has significantly influenced modern Russian language teaching methodology. This article examines the role of intercultural competence as a key component of communicative competence in Russian language education. The study analyzes theoretical approaches to linguocultural integration and explores pedagogical strategies aimed at developing learners' cultural awareness, pragmatic skills, and communicative appropriateness. The findings indicate that the systematic incorporation of intercultural content, communicative tasks, and digital resources enhances learners' ability to engage in effective and culturally sensitive communication in Russian.

**Keywords:** intercultural competence, Russian language teaching, linguocultural approach, communicative competence, cultural awareness, pragmatic competence, digital technologies, foreign language methodology

The increasing globalization of education and professional communication has significantly expanded the objectives of foreign language teaching, including Russian language instruction. In modern linguodidactics, language proficiency is no longer limited to grammatical accuracy or lexical knowledge; instead, it encompasses the ability to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries. As a result, the development of intercultural competence has become a key methodological priority in contemporary Russian language teaching.

Intercultural competence in Russian language education is understood as the ability of learners to interpret, compare, and appropriately respond to culturally specific patterns of communication. This competence includes knowledge of cultural norms, values, traditions, and discourse conventions, as well as the skills required to apply this knowledge in real communicative situations. Modern methodology emphasizes that language and culture are inseparable, and effective communication in Russian requires an understanding of both linguistic forms and their cultural meanings.

The theoretical foundations of intercultural-oriented Russian language teaching are closely linked to sociolinguistic and linguocultural theories, which view language as a reflection of social interaction and cultural identity. From this perspective, language learning involves acquiring not only structural elements but also culturally embedded meanings expressed through speech behavior, pragmatics, and discourse strategies. Consequently, teaching Russian as a foreign language increasingly incorporates authentic texts, cultural narratives, and discourse analysis to expose learners to real communicative practices.

## Language-Centered vs Intercultural-Oriented Russian Language Teaching

Aspect	Language-Centered Approach	Intercultural-Oriented Approach
Teaching goal	Linguistic accuracy and fluency	Culturally appropriate communication
View of language	System of grammar and vocabulary	Language as a cultural and social phenomenon
Cultural	Secondary or optional	Integral and systematic

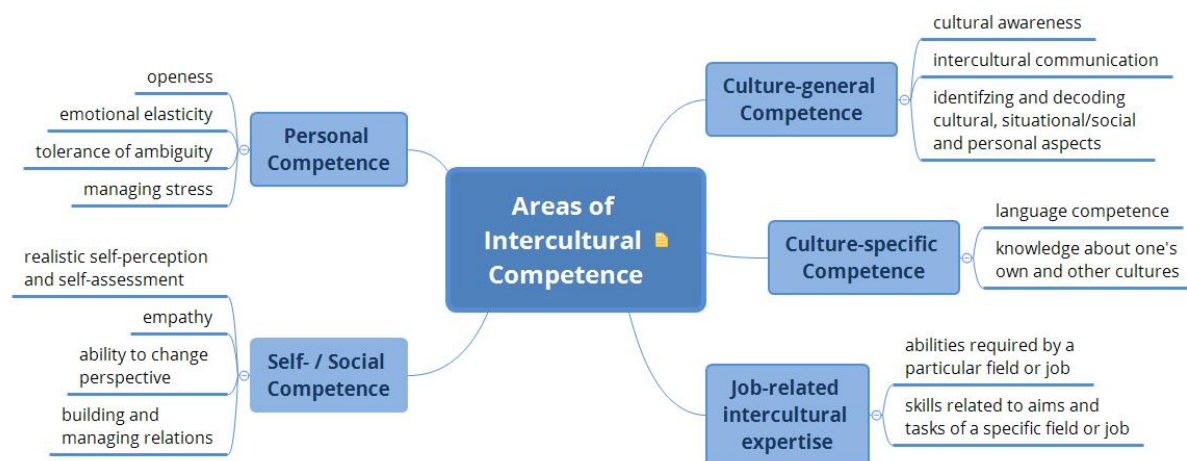


component		
<b>Learning focus</b>	Forms and structures	Meaning, context, and cultural norms
<b>Teaching materials</b>	Textbooks, adapted texts	Authentic texts, media, cultural discourse
<b>Classroom activities</b>	Drills, translation, exercises	Role plays, case studies, cultural comparison
<b>Learner role</b>	Language learner	Intercultural communicator
<b>Teacher role</b>	Knowledge transmitter	Cultural mediator and facilitator
<b>Assessment focus</b>	Language correctness	Pragmatic and intercultural competence
<b>Learning outcome</b>	Linguistic competence	Intercultural communicative competence

The theoretical foundations of intercultural competence in modern Russian language teaching are based on interdisciplinary approaches that integrate linguistics, sociolinguistics, cultural studies, and educational psychology. Contemporary language pedagogy recognizes that effective communication in a foreign language requires not only grammatical and lexical knowledge but also an understanding of culturally conditioned patterns of meaning, behavior, and interaction. Within this theoretical framework, language is viewed as a sociocultural phenomenon inseparable from the cultural context in which it functions.

One of the central theoretical concepts underlying intercultural-oriented Russian language teaching is communicative competence. Modern interpretations of this concept emphasize its multidimensional nature, including linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic, and intercultural components. Intercultural competence extends communicative competence by focusing on learners' ability to interpret cultural meanings, adapt speech behavior to diverse communicative contexts, and mediate between different cultural perspectives. This theoretical view challenges purely structural models of language teaching and supports methodologies that prioritize contextualized and culturally informed language use.

Linguocultural theory provides an essential theoretical basis for integrating culture into Russian language instruction. From this perspective, language reflects national mentality, cultural values, social norms, and historical experience. Linguistic units such as phraseological expressions, discourse markers, and speech formulas carry culturally specific meanings that cannot be fully understood without cultural interpretation. Teaching Russian within a linguocultural framework therefore involves systematic exposure to culturally marked language units and the development of learners' ability to decode implicit cultural information embedded in texts and communication.



Sociocultural theory further contributes to the theoretical background of intercultural competence development by emphasizing the social nature of learning and language acquisition. According to this theory, language learning occurs through interaction and mediation within a cultural environment. In Russian language classrooms, intercultural learning is facilitated through dialogic interaction, collaborative tasks, and engagement with authentic discourse. Social interaction serves as a mechanism through which learners internalize both linguistic forms and culturally appropriate communicative strategies.

Constructivist learning theory also plays a significant role in shaping intercultural approaches to Russian language teaching. Constructivism posits that learners actively construct knowledge through experience, reflection, and meaning-making. In intercultural language education, this theoretical stance supports the use of reflective tasks, comparative cultural analysis, and experiential learning activities. Learners are encouraged to relate new cultural knowledge to their existing cultural framework, thereby developing critical cultural awareness and interpretive skills. The concept of intercultural communicative competence further expands the theoretical foundation by highlighting attitudinal and affective dimensions of language learning. This concept emphasizes openness, tolerance, empathy, and the ability to manage ambiguity in intercultural interactions. In the context of Russian language teaching, this theoretical orientation justifies the inclusion of tasks that promote cultural comparison, perspective-taking, and critical reflection on cultural stereotypes and assumptions.

Digital pedagogy has introduced additional theoretical considerations into intercultural Russian language teaching. The integration of digital environments aligns with socio-constructivist theories that view learning as a collaborative and interactive process. Online communication platforms, multimedia resources, and virtual exchanges provide learners with access to diverse cultural representations and real communicative experiences. These theoretical assumptions support the use of technology as a means of expanding intercultural exposure and facilitating authentic communication beyond the traditional classroom.

Modern instructional approaches emphasize the integration of intercultural content into communicative language teaching. Classroom activities such as role plays, case studies, comparative discussions, and analysis of cultural scenarios encourage learners to reflect on differences and similarities between their native culture and Russian culture. These activities promote critical cultural awareness and help learners develop tolerance, empathy, and adaptability—qualities essential for successful intercultural communication.

Digital technologies play a crucial role in supporting the development of intercultural competence in Russian language teaching. Online platforms, multimedia resources, virtual exchanges, and social networks provide learners with opportunities to engage with authentic Russian-language content and interact with native speakers. Digital environments facilitate exposure to contemporary cultural practices and diverse communicative contexts, thereby enhancing learners' pragmatic awareness and cultural sensitivity.

Assessment of intercultural competence requires methodological approaches that go beyond traditional language testing. In modern Russian language pedagogy, formative assessment tools such as reflective journals, portfolios, project work, and self-assessment tasks are widely used to evaluate learners' intercultural development. These methods focus on learners' ability to analyze cultural phenomena, demonstrate appropriate communicative behavior, and reflect on their own learning experience.

The integration of intercultural competence into Russian language teaching also has important implications for teacher education and curriculum design. Teachers are expected to possess intercultural awareness and methodological skills that enable them to guide learners through culturally complex communicative situations. Curricula increasingly emphasize intercultural



learning outcomes, ensuring alignment with international educational standards and the needs of multicultural learning environments.

In conclusion, intercultural competence represents a fundamental component of modern Russian language teaching methodology. By integrating linguistic instruction with cultural analysis, communicative practice, and digital technologies, contemporary pedagogy prepares learners for effective participation in intercultural communication. This methodological orientation not only enhances language proficiency but also contributes to the development of globally competent individuals capable of navigating diverse cultural contexts through the Russian language.

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