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Series Title	
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Keywords	Foreign language acquisition - Cross-cultural awareness - Knowledge unification - Complementarity principle - Integrative approach

Language and Culture Complementarity as a Tool for Creating a Holistic Pragmatically Induced Professional Competence of University Graduates

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Abstract. The present paper deals with the issues of university graduates' competences complying with the contemporary labor market requirements. The main attention is paid to foreign languages (mostly English) acquisition. In the context of globalization (and 'globanglization' as associated process), ESP is an effective tool for social and professional adaptation. The bilateral process of teaching and studying English is inseparably connected with the development of cross-cultural awareness which can be determined as the 'fifth skill' – the ability of learners to be aware of cultural relativity following reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The research objective is of descriptive origin and focuses on determining the most effective ways for achieving language and culture complementarity with university graduates. The harmonization of acquiring language and cultural knowledge is methodologically based on the universal principle of complementarity, which demonstrates the new paradigm of worldview, universalism and the synergistic nature of modern research, education and methodology. The principle of complementarity leads to the development and application of an interdisciplinary and integrated approach to the analysis of language and cultural phenomena in the classroom context.

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1 Introduction

Foreign language contexts are traditionally characterized by lack of ready-made contexts for communication beyond their classroom. They may be obtained through different channels. Being a tool for international communication in transportation, commerce, banking, tourism, technology, diplomacy, scientific research, and other varieties of practical applications, English poses concerns to both teachers and learners.

Using English as a lingua franca and a language of macro communication in various occupational fields requires keeping pace with the new pragmatism. In recent scholarly writings, there is a considerable evidence of appeals to view research questions from interdisciplinary perspective. Interdisciplinary studies enhance a universal academic trend to integrate knowledge from different areas of research. The resulting

effect of such kind of investigations leads to emerging academic crossings of different streams and directions. This approach unmistakably assumes receiving valuable and objective results. Current sociopolitical trends have created a unique challenge for university-level ESP programs. Graduates appreciate the importance of English proficiency for survival and adaptation in the work place among colleagues of international teams. In these conditions, English is gradually turning into a kind of 'professional and social pass' enabling recent university graduates to get along with peers and colleagues at higher levels.

Taking this idea as a basic impetus of research, we argue that synergy of language and culture can be a useful tool of reconsidering both a mental and professional picture of university graduates. Language and culture complement each other in every societal setting. They play an utmost role in educational processes as well. For university teachers and students, the linkage between language and culture turns to be a critical issue not exclusively from the intercultural interaction but mostly from the socially pragmatic one. The present research objective is of descriptive (mostly qualitative) origin and focuses on determining the most effective ways to achieve language and culture complementarity with university graduates. Cross-cultural pragmatics tends to discover patterns of language-as-action across diverse groups and interculturally across diverse groups [1, 2]. Interactional sociolinguistics focuses on intercultural interaction [3]. Intercultural discourse vests sources for pedagogical implications in foreign language teaching and learning practices [4, 5].

2   Literature Review

Since late 1950s and through the ongoing decades of the 20th century, scholars have proposed a plethora of multi-faceted and polychromic studies and observations concerning foundations for classroom practices, contexts of teaching of English for specific purposes (ESP), designing and implementing classroom techniques, integrating 'four skills' paradigm into teaching a foreign language and suggesting a lifelong learning practice [6–8]. A critical sociopolitical contextual consideration should be taken into account by all stakeholders of the educational process. As far as language policies and social climate dictate the status accorded to a foreign language as a subject, cultural issues come into play.

Cross-cultural awareness in language learning is regarded as a 'fifth skill', i.e. the ability of learners to be aware of cultural relativity following reading, writing, listening and speaking. Kramsch points out: "If …language is seen as social practice, culture becomes the very core of language teaching. Cultural awareness must then be viewed as enabling language proficiency… Culture in language teaching is not an expandable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading and writing" [9, p. 8].

The new Millennium scholars develop conceptual ideas of philosophers, sociologists of language and cognitivists of the previous century. A short summary of the materials lists the main reasons to focus on a specific additive role of cultural inputs into a teaching and learning process. Thus, one of the sub-categories of culture interprets acquisition and socialization of language-as-competence and as social

practice [10]. Goodenough [11] and Hutchins [12] saw culture as socially distributed knowledge. The idea of culture as communication was depicted by Lévi-Strauss [13]. Vigotsky [14] considered language as a tool of symbolic mediation. In accordance with Bourdieu's theory of practice [15], culture is seen as "a bundle of socially sanctioned, historically developed, internalized dispositions for institutionalized, routinized socio-discursive practices" [10, p. 458].

In the context of high international mobility, it is now common to discuss the acquisition of 'intercultural citizenship', which "focuses on competences rather than identities" [16, p. 157]. Intercultural competence can be defined as involving 'attitudes', "skills of interpreting and relating' and 'skills of discovery and interaction" [16, p. 157] and can be achieved by means of intercultural education. This area of education is often linked to language teaching and learning. In fact, language study can be considered a place of 'tertiary socialization' [17], which embodies the idea that "teachers and others can help learners to understand new concepts (beliefs, values and behaviors) through the acquisition of a new language, new concepts which, being juxtaposed with those of the learners' other language(s), challenge the taken-for-granted nature of their existing concepts" [16, pp. 113–114].

3 Materials and Methods

The concept of creating a holistic pragmatically induced professional competence of university graduates is important in advancing our understanding of how language and culture coexist as a particular and shared tool in academic discourse and evolve through the years at the university. However, this concept seems to be troublesome and not easy to understand. As Ochs insightfully notes, "Culture is not only tied to the local and unique, it is also a property of our humanity and such expected to assume some culturally universal characteristics across communities, codes and users. (…) there are certain commonalities across the world's language communities and communities in practice in the linguistic means to constitute certain situational meanings" [18, p. 425].

Apparently, due to modern social, political and economic contexts, teaching and learning practices currently encounter new interpretations. Thus, educators are on a constant quest: what characteristics would a globally competent student possess? What does this student know upon graduation day that a student without this sort of education does not? Potential answers might include the following: a globally competent university graduate has a diverse and knowledgeable worldview; s/he comprehends international dimensions of his/her major field of study; communicates effectively in English for specific purposes and/or cross-culturally; exhibits cross-cultural sensitivity and adaptability; carries global competencies throughout life [19].

Thus, in the course of integrated learning of ESP, the students of the Institute of Economics, Management and Environmental Studies of Siberian Federal University (Krasnoyarsk, Russia) are taught to consider culture as one of the main didactic and methodological principles of their University journey. At the same time, they try to verify for themselves both the role of the internationalized English as a tool for upward mobility and career growth. In other words, language learning takes place in a multidisciplinary way bypassing the barriers of traditional academic areas. Teachers

challenge a choice of optimal and pragmatically induced way to practice professionally and/or culturally related English. One of the first decisions teachers need to make is whether or not they prefer the traditional, one-on-one, real-time TPD (teacher professional development), in a classroom with students, or if they consider they can thrive professionally to the even more extent in a virtual environment [20].

Wurr [21] argues that one of the most effective approaches most likely implies the so-called 'blended' learning arrangement that combines online, real-time, face-to-face interaction and off-line, asynchronous teaching and learning, which is often carried out via electronic platforms, on which course readings can be posted, questions posed, and written responses to the readings shared. This particular standpoint demands a kind of rethinking of the phenomenon of literacy pedagogy, because "to be literate today is being reshaped to include not only traditional literacies, that is, reading and writing in print-based environments, but also the knowledge, skills, and strategies needed for comprehending and communicating via technologies" [20, p. 243].

There is no universally accepted set of research methods within the humanities. Methodologies associated with foreign languages acquisition are predominantly of reflexive nature; they closely deal with the taught disciplines and could be defined as qualitative ones including phenomenological, hermeneutic, axiological, ethnographic, holistic, naturalistic, descriptive, experiential, and dialectical strategies [22]. The study implies the results from contributive efforts of multidisciplinary approach to analysis of syntactic structures, lexical semantics of the core professional glossary items, and wider cultural contexts. The research is mainly based on cross-cultural pragmatics and interlanguage pragmatics principles for analyzing speech acts realization. From the qualitative research perspective, we are pointing out misconceptions and socio-pragmatic failures of Russian students whose major is International Economics and International Management at Siberian Federal University. When academic English is used as a metalanguage, sometimes cultural and linguistic peculiarities tend to become counter-effective due to miscomprehension of alien culturally centered and professionally induced contexts.

4   Results

At the current period of human civilization history, the research thought and didactic practice in various fields of scientific, engineering and humanitarian knowledge as well as the mandatory creative processes of science and education, culture and art demonstrate an obvious tendency towards unification, which is the radically opposite tendency to the long-lasting and therefore traditional tendency towards specialization. It is known that the knowledge specialization primarily originated in the ancient times in the context of universal and comprehensive philosophy and then lasted over thousands of years. The innovative turn to information unification convincingly testifies to a new and undeniably evolutionary informational turn of the humanity. Thus, in the 1950s there appeared the works rightly criticizing the specialization of science. Among the most famous works devoted to scientific unification are Bertalanffy's research papers [23], which reflect one of the author's versions of the general theory of systems. The author strongly calls for scientific unification and advocates the creation of a single

(unified) scientific terminology for all branches of scientific knowledge within the framework of general systematology. The researcher's works consistently defend a point of view that the use of unified scientific terminology would allow scientists conducting research in various fields of modern knowledge to overcome the disciplinary limitations and fragmentation of certain branches of science easily and effectively. Progressive ideas of scientific unification by Bertalanffy were further developed by Midgley [24], who considers it possible to allocate a universal unit of science in the near future and approached the consideration of the issue of scientific integration from the point of view of systematology. Assuming the universalism of modern scientific, engineering and humanitarian knowledge, we agree that the traditional division of abovementioned information areas into several separate groups reflects not the qualitative, but only the quantitative side of the information spaces of modern scientific fields.

The unification undoubtedly demands generic methodology. Moreover, one of the generic methodological principles is the principle of complementarity formulated by Bohr firstly for atomic physics and then for human knowledge in general [25]. This principle vividly demonstrates a new paradigm of worldview, universalism and the synergistic nature of modern research, education and methodology and their intersection. The Bohr's principle is considered to be methodological and heuristic principle of modern science that could be applied to describe objects of a certain nature, introducing mutually exclusive classes of concepts, each of which is applicable in special conditions, and their combination allows reproducing the integrity of these objects. In opposing the ideas of scientific isolationism, Midgley has consistently defended the idea of methodological pluralism, allowing research methods to be viewed from the mutual perspective. This research position is in many ways consistent with the well-known methodological Bohr's principle of complementarity, according to which an object of study can be described from several mutually exclusive but not conflicting points of view [26]. The outstanding physicist believed that the idea of complementarity could characterize a substantial situation in science, which has an analogy with general difficulties of creating human concepts arising from the separation of subject and object.

The principle of complementarity leads to the development and application of an interdisciplinary and integrated approach to the analysis of heterogeneous phenomena and, in particular, to the analysis, as mentioned above, of language and culture phenomena. It is also obvious that the cross-sectoral synthesis of humanitarian and natural science knowledge ensures the use of new polyparadigmal approaches in linguistic and cultural studies, and the expansion of perceptions of possible objects and subjects of modern linguistics and culturology. It means that the study of topical issues of language acquisition and cultural studies can also be carried out based on of the principle of complementarity.

The problems of multiple models of scientific knowledge and the problems of creating integrative models of solving scientific problems are currently being discussed in the humanities. A distinctive feature of modern scientific progress is the fact that the most interesting results have been obtained with integrated and integrative approaches that allow for a new look at key scientific problems. Thus, the desire to create an integrative model for the study of language acquisition affected the synergistic dynamic

system and the development of linguasynergetic methodology and specific techniques to study language material. Integrative linguistic theories and techniques are presented in works dealing with the issues of linguasynergetics. The tendency to integrate different fields of knowledge is evident in modern science and leads to specialization not in certain branches of science, but (what is extremely important) in certain scientific problems. Karasik rightly notes that the Bohr's generic principle of complementarity requires the researcher to increase aspects of consideration of the scientific object of interest. Karasik concludes that understanding of language as a cultural phenomenon translates the question of the essence of language, consciousness, and communication from the plan of causal relations to the plan of target-oriented relations [27]. Real methodological pluralism, which is not declarative but effective, can and should contribute to effective solution of the epistemological and ontological problems of modern research science. Methodological pluralism makes it possible to realize one of the main tasks of systemic thinking – to go beyond the fragmented limits of scientific disciplines into a wide and continuous scientific continuum.

5   Discussion

Thus, the originally physical principle of complementarity can be applied to the traditionally humanitarian areas of language and culture. In many ways, the relationship between language and culture raises the question of how language and culture organize teaching and learning of a professionally centered language. Cross-cultural and intercultural pragmatics adopts an interdisciplinary approach to examine variable patterns of language-as-action across cultural groups and intercultural encounters. Considering culture as a language-as-competence and social practice enables teachers to interpret culture as socially distributed knowledge. Another perspective represents culture as a system of mediation: it comprises a set of physical and symbolic objects that mediate between people and their professional environment. Language practices are understood as mediating activity for socio-discursive practices. The approaches to intercultural discourse offer powerful tools for teacher education, professional development and transformative pedagogic practice.

The problems of foreign languages learning can reasonably be concerned within the context of the modern linguistic concepts of personality: linguistic, discursive and communicative. In fact, being a personality, a man strikes a balance between all the above-mentioned types of personality. Within linguistics, a linguistic personality is understood as "the complex of human abilities and characteristics determining their creation and perception of texts, that vary in: a) the degree of structural and language complexity; b) the depth and precision of the reality reflection; c) a particular target" [28, p. 3]. The most probable number of linguistic personalities for an individual is estimated by the sum of the basic linguistic personalities developed according to the circumstances of birth and upbringing in the 'native' linguistic and cultural environment, and the secondary linguistic personalities formed as a result of foreign language acquisition in the process of studying, self-education or living in a 'foreign' culture. A communicative personality, in its turn, means a linguistic personality in communication context. A communicative personality meets other participants in the act of

communication. The idea of a discursive personality also derives from the concept of a linguistic personality and suggests creating a particular discourse in the form of a specific message. Active management principles of the work on foreign languages at universities contribute to the creation of a self-developing personality. Initially, these principles are the permanency and continuation of teaching foreign languages in the system of pre-school, secondary and higher education. At universities, these principles are implemented within the two-tier system of teaching and under the system of extended education implying various specially tailored programs. In this context, we can note that the programs of International Economics and International Management are hybrid programs for 196 undergraduate students at the Institute for Economics, Management an Environmental Studies, Siberian Federal University (SibFU). The programs combine virtual courses in Moodle with the support of tutors in face-to-face sessions. The students learn ESP for four years, and due to the evident advantage of combining virtual resources with on-site support, they are taught on the module principle: four modules per one academic year. Such curriculum allows students to concentrate on disciplines without waste of time.

The permanency and continuation in training foreign languages at different levels and through various learning paradigms, which are preferably structured according to the universal complimentary principle (Bohr's principle), support the progress in cognitive activity of students, create and train the self-developing linguistic personality that constantly requires foreign language mastering in the professional cross-cultural communication. An important role in formation of the secondary linguistic personalities is given to non-formal language learning.

6   Conclusion

Following the innovative idea of knowledge unification and relying on the generic methodological principle of complementarity, we assume the language and culture to be heterogeneous teaching objects that form one of the key professional competences for university graduates. Commodification of the English language [29] in the current era of 'globanglization' [30] enhances development of cross-cultural awareness, which can be determined as the 'fifth skill' – the ability of learners to be aware of cultural relativity following reading, writing, listening and speaking. Linguistic and cultural competences provide successful social and professional adaptation of university graduates in any field of sciences and humanities.

The most effective ways for achieving the required language and culture complementarity with university graduates are the following: strengthening the demand for language and culture competences at university; using an intercultural approach to the development of the student's personality and identity in response to the enriching experience of otherness in language and culture: achieving metasynthesis of the culture and language complementarity at EFL and ESP lessons aimed at translingual and transcultural competence; adhering to specific information sources (academic papers, video lectures, visit-professor lectures, etc.); implementing self-study strategies of foreign language and culture learning.

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