

CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH: THE BRITISH NATIONAL PRIDE

Introduction. Teaching the issues of intercultural communication has gained significant attention in recent years due to the need for communication skills that provide successful international encounters and eliminate the risk of cultural barriers. Developing these skills is unimaginable without learning different aspects of culture. In order to avoid frustration in intercultural communication one must follow the rules of etiquette, escape taboo topics and take into account the values that conversational partners are proud of. To choose a common topic in an intercultural conversation is a good start to making intercultural communication successful. But what is the topic choice based on? For example, what can we talk about with the British? We suggest that one of the most preferable ways is to touch upon something that is part of their national pride. The above explains the topicality of this research.

Our study will help future foreign language teachers meet the demands of intercultural communication in terms of deepening understanding of the core British national values, which are reflected in verbal interaction with them. The subject of the research is British national pride. Pride is seen as “a feeling that you are proud of something that you or someone connected with you has achieved” [1]. Another definition runs that “the national pride is a feeling of devotion to one’s own country and concern for its defence” [2]. The necessity of researching the indicated subject is determined by insufficient studies of the modern British views on it. It is also determined by certain misunderstanding of the British national pride by Belarusians on the one hand, and the importance of taking into consideration different aspects of the British national pride in interpersonal intercultural encounters on the other hand. It is marked that student English course books that are used in the Belarusian schools contain a lot of topics about the UK, and this research will help to reveal whether they match the widespread opinions about the British national pride or, rather, create some stereotypes which influence on the topic choice.

Main part. Our research is based on the theory of intercultural communication. One of its peculiarities is the need to avoid stereotypes for successful intercultural communication. The study of stereotyping first was published by Katz and Braly in 1933 when they reported the results of a questionnaire completed by students at Princeton University in the USA [3]. They concluded that ethnic stereotypes are widespread and shared by members of a particular social group. Recent research proves that stereotypes are the way of categorizing and processing information people receive about others in their daily life. They may be harmful because they create barriers in intercultural communication [4, p. 34].

The goal of the research is to determine the aspects of the modern British socio-cultural portrait that should be taught in foreign language classrooms in Belarus. This will help learners understand what the British are proud of and, in perspective, to promote successful intercultural interactions. The objectives of the study include:

- to find out the British people’s views on their national pride;
- to determine the topics about the British covered in the student English course books that are used in the Belarusian schools;
- to do a comparative analysis of the British and Belarusian people’s views on the British national pride and finding out the common and distinctive features;
- to suggest topics about the UK to be discussed in foreign language classroom in Belarusian schools.

The above objectives determined the implementation of the following research methods:

- 1) the completion of the sentence “The British are proud of...”;
- 2) the content analysis of English course books used in Belarusian schools;
- 3) the comparison of the areas of the British national pride with the topics about British culture in English course books.

It was hypothesized that if the comparative analysis of the British opinions about the British national pride and the topics about the British in the textbooks shows that there are some new areas which are not touched upon in the course books, it will presumably lead to some limitations in pupils’ future intercultural communication.

The present research was organized in 3 stages. The goal of the first stage was to find out the typical subjects of the British national pride by processing the data obtained via the social net “Facebook”. 55 people were asked to complete the sentence “The British are proud of...”. Having analyzed the answers we found that, in spite of the fact that about 35% of the responders admitted that they were ashamed of being the British, there were 13 areas which they named to be part of their national pride. The results are shown in Table 1.

As one can see, the above areas have different values. The most important values that represent pride for them constitute: the role of the English language in the world, institutions, monarchy, industrial revolution, respect among people and history (50—29%). Less significance include food, inventions and famous people (25—22%). Lastly, they are proud of sport, humour, traditions, and landmarks (19—10%).

T a b l e 1 — The contemporary views on the British national pride

Area	Number of the responders, %
1. Role of the English language in the world	50,07
2. British institutions	40,08
3. Monarchy	37,06
4. Industrial revolution	34,01
5. Respect among people	31,43
6. History	29,01
7. Food	25,05
8. Inventions	25,03
9. Famous people	22,02
10. Sport	19,08
11. Humour	17,03
12. Traditions	15,04
13. Landmarks	10,01

In the second stage of the research, the goal was to analyze the topics of the texts about the UK that are written in the English course books that are used in Belarus [5—8]. We chose the course books for 8—11 forms, because the pupils' level of language competence is sufficient for intercultural communication. The results of our study are as follows: (a) symbols; (b) monarchy; (c) holidays; (d) traditions; (e) universities; (f) schools; (g) sport; (h) landmarks; (i) famous people and (j) the English language.

Some features of the content analysis of the texts are worthy to mention. We noticed that they provide the information only about the Queen Elizabeth II, but other British kings or queens are not mentioned. Meanwhile the Queen Victoria and Elizabeth I are a very important part of the British national pride. In the course books there are many texts about sport and conventional traditions (e. g., 5 o'clock tea). But only 15% of the British people said they are proud of traditions and follow them. Additionally, we admit that the topics about the sights in the course books are very useful to motivate children to teach English, but they are not so much helpful regarding the topic choice with the British, and it is doubtful that they promote intercultural communication.

The goal of the third stage of the study was to suggest new topics, which are not reflected in the course books, to discuss in English classes. The representation of the topics, that reflect the responders' opinions about the British national pride, in English course books that are used in Belarusian schools are presented in Table 2.

T a b l e 2 — Representation of the topics about the British national pride in English course books

Topics about the UK	British views	English course books that are used in Belarusian schools
1. Language	+	+
2. British institutions	+	–
3. Monarchy	+	+
4. Industrial revolution	+	–
5. Respect among people	+	–
6. History	+	+
7. Food	+	+
8. Inventions	+	–
9. Famous people	+	+
10. Sport	+	+
11. Humour	+	–
12. Traditions	+	+
13. Landmarks	+	+
14. Holidays	–	+
15. Symbols	–	+
16. Universities and schools	–	+

We see that the British and Belarusian views on the British national pride do not coincide fully. The English course books do not reflect the information about the British institutions, industrial revolution and inventions. On the contrary, the British are not that proud about their holidays, symbols, universities and schools: the topics which are studied in Belarusian schools. It means that foreign language teachers can underestimate transformations of the social processes that happen in the modern British society. Therefore, we proved the main hypothesis is true: there are some new areas which are not reflected in the course books that it will presumably lead to some limitations in pupils' future intercultural communication.

We assume that it would be logical to discuss in the English classroom the topics which at least 30% of the British responders classified as part of their national pride. The list of them may include:

1. The top British inventions as their national pride (e. g., WWW, steam engine, the theory of evolution, etc.).
2. Queen Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria.
3. The role of the English language in the world.
4. The British historical events (Waterloo, World War I, World War II).
5. The values of the British (democracy, individualism, privacy, equality, etc.).
6. The rules of the British etiquette (politeness, addressing people, etc.).

Conclusion. We suggest the students and future foreign language teachers, to consider the following recommendations.

1. In order to prepare schoolchildren for intercultural communication, it is logical to discuss, in English classes, the authentic texts about the role of the English language in the world, the relationships in the modern British society, British history and the monarchy.

2. To eliminate stereotypes concerning the topic choice in intercultural communication, it's worthy to use texts about British landmarks, traditions, sports and holidays for motivating students to learn English rather than using them to teach intercultural communication.

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LANGUAGE TRAINING OF THE AMERICAN SPECIAL FORCES

Introduction. The Special Forces of the United States Army, or Green Berets, as they are known, are an elite military force that supports various American goals overseas. The motto of the US Army Special Forces is “De Oppresso Liber,” which means to liberate the oppressed. Like other special operations units, Special Forces perform direct action, special reconnaissance, counterterrorism and unconventional warfare.

However, what sets the Special Forces from other special operations units is their use of Foreign Internal Defense, or training indigenous troops to fight for freedom.

Main part. The mission of the Special Forces is quite complex and very wide in scope. They support movements that the United States believe will be beneficial to its goals, and they also offersadvice and diplomatic support during American missions overseas. That's why most members are bilingual and college-educated, and they receive additional diplomatic and cultural training once they are accepted into training.

The United States Army Special Forces Command (USASFC) has set the ambitious goal of having at least one Soldier qualified at levels 2 and 3 in each deploying twelve-man Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA).