

## SCOTTISH AND BELARUSIAN HISTORICAL PERSONALITIES AS THE NATIONAL PRIDE

**Introduction.** Studying history is essential because it allows us to learn about the past which, in turn, is helpful to appreciate the present. If we want to learn how and why the world is like this today, we have to look back at history to get the answers. According to the Collins Dictionary, historical personalities are “people who played a crucial role and have significant impact on the broad currents of thought and social change” [1].

The current situation proves that the world is globalizing: people are moving from one country to another for a number of reasons, for example, education, job, recreation and meeting family members. As a result, there is a mixture of cultural environments and, therefore, people are intensively involved in cross-cultural communication. The notion of intercultural communication means “verbal and non-verbal communication between people from different cultures that is influenced by cultural values and attitudes.” It can be such values as privacy, hospitality, respect of traditions, patriotism, etc. The challenges in intercultural contacts can be re-evaluated when looking at history lessons in order to trace the development of the nation’s specific traditions. Hopefully, such a study will enable a better understanding of the reasons for cross-cultural conflicts and successful communication. History can provide us with insight into cultures of origin as well as less familiar cultures, thereby increasing cross-cultural awareness and respect.

**Main part.** The subject of research is Scottish and Belarusian historical personalities as the national pride. The term pride is “a feeling of satisfaction which you have because you or people close to you have done something good or possess something good” [1]. While the notion of national pride is regarded as “the positive affect that the public feels towards their country as a result of their national identity” [1]. So, the essence of this research is to investigate the national pride of the Scots and Belarusians in the historical aspect, namely historical personalities.

This research is based on the theory of communication. In this study we will find common and distinctive features between two cultures in terms of topic choice.

As pre-service foreign language teachers we need it because it will help our future learners of English understand who the Scots admire and are proud of, and, in perspective, provide the basis for interesting engaging cross-cultural conversations, and therefore successful communication. The goal of research is to trace how the activities of historical personalities influenced the formation of national identities and the value systems in modern Scottish and Belarusian cultures. The objectives of the study include: (a) to find out who the Scots and Belarusians are proud of; (b) to do a comparative analysis of the qualities which are admirable by the Scottish and Belarusian people; (c) to give recommendations for pre-service foreign language teachers as cultural mediators.

To implement the research goal and objectives, we used survey and a narrative interview as research methods. It was hypothesized that if the value systems of Scottish and Belarusian people have something in common, it will be easier to find the common ground for intercultural interaction.

The present research was done in March 2020 and organized in 3 stages. The goal of the first stage was to find out which historical figures are thought as the national pride in Scotland and Belarus. For this reason, such social networks as Messenger and Instagram were used and five people from Belarus and Scotland were asked to name three people who fought for independence and who they are proud of. Having analyzed the obtained data, we got the following results.

Table 1 — The contemporary views on historical personalities as the Scottish national pride

| Historical personality | Scottish culture, % |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. William Wallace     | 100                 |
| 2. Robert the Bruce    | 100                 |
| 3. Mary Queen of Scots | 40                  |
| 4. Winnie Ewing        | 40                  |

As it can be seen from Table 1, the most famous personalities in Scottish culture are William Wallace (1270—1305) and Robert the Bruce (1274—1329): the number of references to them is 100 % of respondents. Mary Queen of Scots (1542—1587) and Winnie Ewing (1929—present time) were chosen by 40 % of the Scots.

Table 2 — The contemporary views on historical personalities as Belarusian national pride

| Historical personality | Belarusian culture, % |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Tadeusz Kosciuszko  | 100                   |
| 2. Kastus Kalinovsky   | 100                   |
| 3. Aloiza Pashkevich   | 40                    |

As for Belarusian culture, the most famous personalities are Tadeusz Kosciuszko (1746—1817) and Kastus Kalinovsky (1838—1864): the number of their references is 100 % of the respondents; 40 % of the interviewees named Aloiza Pashkevich (1876—1916) (Table 2).

The research goal of the second stage was to analyze the qualities of the named historical personalities that are important for the respondents. The results are presented in Table 3. According to the Collins Dictionary, these terms can be defined. Intelligence is “the ability to think, reason, and understand instead of doing things automatically or by instinct” [1]. Bravery is brave behaviour or the quality of being brave” [1]. The term leadership skills is “the ability to be a leader or the qualities a good leader should have” [2]. Passion is “a very strong feeling of liking something; a hobby, an activity, etc. that you like very much” [2]. Determination is “the quality that makes you continue trying to do something even when this is difficult” [2]. Fearlessness is “the quality of not being afraid, in a way that people admire” [2]. Confidence is “the feeling that you can trust, believe in and be sure about the abilities or good qualities of somebody/something” [2].

Table 3 — Important qualities of historical personalities

| Qualities of historical personalities | Scots, % | Belarusians, % |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------------|
| Intelligence                          | 33       | 27             |
| Bravery                               | 27       | 20             |
| Leadership skills                     | 20       | —              |
| Passion                               | 13       | —              |
| Determination                         | 7        | 27             |
| Fearlessness                          | —        | 13             |
| Confidence                            | —        | 13             |

According to these data there are three similarities and two differences. In both cultures intelligence, determination, bravery, fearlessness, confidence are similar qualities. Meanwhile, the different qualities are leadership skills, and passion. Predominantly, the qualities identified by Scottish and Belarusian people coincide.

The aim of the third stage of the research was to compare important character traits for the modern Scots and Belarusians. The results are reflected in Figure 1.

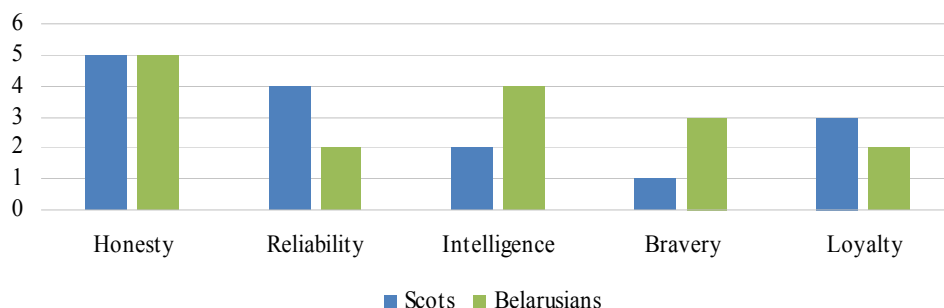


Figure 1 — Important traits for the modern Scots and Belarusians

As it can be seen, the hierarchy of qualities that are significant for Scottish and Belarusian people can be arranged in the following way. In Scottish culture, the most admirable characteristics are: (1) honesty, (2) reliability; (3) loyalty; (4) intelligence; (5) bravery. Meanwhile, the prioritized features of the Belarusians are contrasted as: (1) honesty, (2) intelligence; (3) bravery; (4) reliability and (5) loyalty. It is noteworthy that the qualities of the historical personalities that interviewees identified in the second stage coincide with the results of the third stage, namely intelligence and bravery. Also, in the modern society honesty, reliability and loyalty are seen as distinguishing traits.

**Conclusion.** Therefore, it can be noted that the hypothesis was proved, and people in Scottish and Belarusian cultures have the common ground for successful communication about history, historical films and books.

It can be recommended for University students and pre-service foreign language teachers to study Scottish culture in order to prepare schoolchildren for intercultural communication. Authentic texts about historical personalities can be used to develop cultural literacy.

#### References

1. Collins Online Dictionary [Electronic resource]. — Collins, 2020. — Mode of access: <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/>. — Date of access: 25.03.2020.
2. Oxford Learner’s Dictionary [Electronic resource]. — Oxford University Press, 2020. — Mode of access: <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/>. — Date of access: 25.03.2020.