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# «ASEDU-2020: Advances in Science, Engineering and Digital Education»

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## «Teaching EFL through culture»

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# Problem statement

The reforms of education systems, taking place in Russia, set a new priority in establishing partnership agreement with higher education institutes around the world. Therefore, the English language is included into a wide range of academic programs. Higher institutions seek to offer new academic programs for both Bachelor's and Master's Degrees students with the subjects taught in the English language.

Culture being inseparable from languages, language proficiency may fail in a natural environment if the cultural awareness is minimal or non-existent.

Awareness of a foreign language culture is a significant component of learning and teaching. It is a necessity for teachers to include cultural components in EFL teaching.



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# Solution methods

The purpose of the present research is to describe the experience of introducing the Country Studies Course into University curriculum of Baccalaureate students learning EFL as their major in Pedagogical University. The article is focused on providing the example of the discipline curriculum, aimed at a Bachelor in Teacher Education, which can serve as a source of guidance and practical advice for EFL University teachers.

The research was conducted on the basis of Minin Nizhny Novgorod State Pedagogical University, Russia, with the Country Studies Course included into the University curriculum of third and fourth year students of the Bachelor Programmes.



# Results Conclusions

The course is grounded on the idea that language and culture are basically interdependent processes and places this interdependence at the centre of the learning process. The main objective of the course is to encourage self-knowledge and self-awareness in developing cultural sensitivity.

The objectives of the academic course are the following:

- to explore language through culture and culture through language;
- to develop a growing understanding of values and interdependence of language and culture;
- to help in comparing existing knowledge, drawing connections between target culture and home culture;
- to develop the capability to reflect critically on differences between cultures and traditions;
- to become aware of the existing stereotypes, consider linguistic and cultural similarities and differences;
- to develop willingness to interact with people from diverse cultures, show tolerance, take responsibility for contributing to mutual understanding, peaceful dialogue and successful communication.

The course, designed to foster skills, knowledge, attitudes applicable across a wide range of linguistic disciplines, helps compare existing knowledge, draw connections between two cultures. The course, included into University curriculum as a separate discipline, teaches students the historical and cultural heritage of the countries, with the emphasis paid on time and facts, philosophy and values, making it possible to study the wholeness of American and English culture and get rid of existing prejudices.

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