

**THE STUDY OF RUSSIAN CLASSICAL LITERATURE IN AN
INTERCULTURAL CONTEXT**

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Abstract. The article examines the problem of studying Russian classical literature under conditions of intercultural interaction. The relevance of the topic is determined by globalization, the internationalization of education, migration processes, and the need to prepare teachers for work in multinational classrooms. The peculiarities of the perception of Russian literary works by students from different cultures are analyzed, and linguistic, socio-psychological, and cultural difficulties are identified. Special attention is paid to methodological strategies that contribute to the formation of intercultural competence, as well as to the role of Russian classics as a means of intercultural dialogue. The conclusion is drawn about the necessity of combining philological, cultural, and communicative approaches in literature teaching.

Keywords: Russian classics, intercultural interaction, philological education, national culture, dialogue of cultures, bilingualism, cognitive barriers.

Introduction

Modern education is developing under conditions of globalization, which leads to intensive intercultural exchange. Universities in many countries are becoming multinational spaces where Russian literature is studied by students from different cultural backgrounds. This creates unique opportunities for intercultural dialogue, but at the same time poses new pedagogical challenges.

Russian classical literature occupies a special place in the world's humanitarian heritage. It is characterized by the depth of psychological analysis, philosophical reflection, moral inquiry, and the pursuit of absolute ethical values. Such aspects as the exploration of personal freedom, the problem of good and evil, the conflict between the individual and society, and the spiritual quest of human beings are universal and understandable to representatives of different cultures. However, for a full understanding of the text, students need knowledge of Russian reality, everyday life, religious and historical context, and the value system of Russian society of the nineteenth century.

The relevance of this study lies in the need to develop methodologies that ensure high-quality teaching of Russian literature in an intercultural classroom. Such methodologies should take into account differences in thinking, cultural norms, literary traditions, and students' language proficiency. The purpose of this work is to investigate the specifics of how Russian classical literature is perceived by students of different cultures and to identify the most effective methodological approaches to its study in an intercultural context.

Theoretical foundations of intercultural literary analysis

Russian classical literature represents an integral system of values that reflects the spiritual experience of the nation. The works of Pushkin, Gogol, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and Chekhov

reveal philosophical and moral issues such as freedom, responsibility, faith, compassion, and duty to oneself and society. Through the literary text, the following are transmitted:

the historical memory of the people; religious tradition; cultural norms and customs; social relations; the worldview of a particular epoch.

For students from another culture, literature becomes a window into an unfamiliar world that requires explanation and interpretation.

The Concept of Intercultural Communication in Education

Intercultural communication presupposes the ability of participants in the educational process to understand cultural differences and take them into account in teaching. A literature teacher becomes a mediator between cultures, ensuring: accurate explanation of cultural realities; removal of cognitive and emotional barriers; development of the ability to compare and interpret cultural differences; formation of tolerance through art. Thus, teaching Russian literature goes beyond the boundaries of philology and turns into a cultural dialogue.

Peculiarities of the perception of russian classics in an intercultural classroom. Linguistic Difficulties:

Russian classical texts contain: complex periodic syntactic structures; archaisms and historicisms; unusual metaphors; philosophical abstractions.

For students for whom Russian is not a native language, difficulties are caused by: nature descriptions rich in epithets; dialogues with emotionally colored vocabulary; authorial digressions saturated with philosophical reflections.

For example, Tolstoy's complex syntax or Dostoevsky's philosophical terminology require special commentary. As noted by D. B. Gudkov in *Theory of Intercultural Communication* (2013), worldview is shaped under the influence of cultural codes, which determines how a reader interprets a literary text.

Cultural and mental differences are especially noticeable in classrooms where students of various nationalities study together, for example, Uzbek students. Their perception of literary themes is often shaped by traditional values, family upbringing, and social norms, which makes their interpretation of literary images different from that of students from more individualistic or Western cultures.

First, religiosity and spirituality for Uzbek students are not abstract concepts but an important part of culture and everyday life. Therefore, characters who demonstrate humility, an inner struggle between good and evil, and respect for higher powers evoke greater sympathy. They perceive the spiritual motifs of Russian classics more easily than students from fully secular societies. At the same time, excessive doubt, loss of spiritual guidelines, or the nihilism of some characters may be perceived as an inner crisis requiring explanation.

Second, the attitude toward fate and free will in Uzbek culture is often associated with the idea of *taqdir* (destiny) and respect for predestination. Therefore, a hero who accepts trials as destined by fate may be considered wise and mature. Active resistance to fate, a challenge to society, or attempts to radically change one's life at any cost are sometimes perceived as rash or ill-considered.

Third, the place of the individual in society is more often associated with duty to family, community, and parents. Therefore, characters such as Bazarov or Pechorin, who place personal aspirations above social norms, provoke ambiguous reactions: on the one hand, admiration for the strength of character; on the other, incomprehension of their deliberate detachment from society. For students from individualistic cultures, this is, on the contrary, a symbol of freedom.

The conflict between generations also plays an important role. In Uzbek culture, relations with elders are based on respect and obligation. Therefore, sharp confrontations between parents and children, as in *Fathers and Sons*, may be perceived as excessive or even painful. Students are surprised by the freedom of expression of young characters in Russian classics and tend to explain their behavior by the spirit of the era rather than by personal impudence.

Cultural differences are particularly evident in the perception of female characters and the role of women. In Uzbek culture, female modesty, devotion to family, and respect for social norms are traditionally valued. Therefore:

- Anna Karenina may be perceived as a person who violated sacred family boundaries;
- Natasha Rostova as a more harmonious female image close to traditional ideals;
- Turgenev's heroines as either too independent or too dependent, depending on the students' cultural background.

Finally, the themes of family and marriage are also perceived through a cultural lens. For Uzbek students, family remains a key value, and marriage is an important social step. Therefore, motifs of leaving the family, divorce, marriage for love against the will of parents, or conflict between love and social duty evoke much deeper emotional reactions than among students from cultures where such decisions are considered normal.

As a result, different cultural perspectives make the discussion of literature diverse and vivid. Uzbek students bring special sensitivity to spiritual, family, and moral issues, which allows classical works to be viewed from a new angle and helps reveal their universality and multilayered nature.

Differences in Literary Traditions

Russian literature is oriented toward psychologism, philosophical depth, and moral problematics. In cultures where literature developed in other directions (for example, epic or poetic traditions), the perception of psychological analysis may be unfamiliar.

In a polyethnic classroom, it is important to take into account that a literary character may be an example of inner freedom for some students and a violation of accepted norms for others. This issue is examined in detail by N. A. Sasina in the monograph *Teaching Literature in a Polyethnic Classroom* (2020).

Methodological approaches to studying Russian classical literature in an intercultural context

Cultural Commentary

A key method that allows students to be “immersed in the epoch” includes:

explanation of historical realities (serfdom, noble culture);

consideration of traditions and customs;

analysis of religious and ethical concepts;

introduction to the Russian behavioral model.

Cultural commentary helps eliminate cognitive barriers.

Comparative Method (Comparativistics)

Students compare: types of characters; models of behavior; concepts of fate, love, family, and duty; literary genres and techniques.

This allows them to: identify universal human values; better understand the specific features of Russian literature; establish a dialogue of cultures.

Project-Based Learning options include: multimedia projects about writers;

research projects such as “Heroes of My Culture and Russian Classics”;

creative interpretations of literary works;

dramatizations and role-playing activities.

Projects foster intercultural empathy and interest in literature.

Interpretative Discussions questions may include:

Which actions of the character are understandable to you?

What causes misunderstanding?

How would a similar situation be perceived in your culture?

Which values does the author consider fundamental?

Discussions help students understand the value system of a literary work.

The role of the teacher in organizing intercultural dialogue

A teacher should possess:

intercultural competence; tolerance;

the ability to adapt educational material;

an understanding of cultural differences;

skills in modernizing classical teaching methods.

The teacher’s task is not only to teach students to read the text, but also to help them understand its cultural dimension.

An example of intercultural analysis

(Based on the novel "Crime and Punishment")

Religious context (Orthodoxy);

Social conditions of St. Petersburg;

The philosophical problem of freedom;

The theme of guilt and repentance, interpreted differently across cultures;

The image of Sonya Marmeladova as an embodiment of mercy, which is especially resonant in Eastern cultures.

Such analysis demonstrates to students that literature is not only a plot but also a cultural layer. The perception of a literary image always depends on the reader's cultural experience (Lotman, *Articles on the Typology of Culture*, 1992).

Conclusion

The study of Russian classical literature in an intercultural context requires the integration of philological and cultural approaches. Successful teaching presupposes consideration of the cultural specificity of the audience, adaptation of methodological techniques, and the creation of conditions for a dialogue of cultures. Russian classics are capable not only of educating but also of uniting people, fostering tolerance, respect for diversity, and a deep understanding of human nature.

For a multinational audience, Russian classical literature serves as a universal cultural bridge that promotes mutual understanding and students' spiritual development. Issues of intercultural interaction in education are examined in detail by I. I. Khaleeva in *Fundamentals of the Theory of Teaching the Understanding of Foreign-Language Speech* (2010), where the necessity of taking students' cultural background into account when analyzing literary texts is emphasized.

Thus, effective teaching of Russian classical literature is possible only through a comprehensive approach that includes linguistic support, cultural commentary, active teaching methods, discussions, and comparisons. A special role belongs to the teacher, who acts as a mediator between cultures, helping students recognize universal values in Russian classical works and understand the significance of literature as a source of intercultural understanding.

By studying the works of Pushkin, Gogol, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Turgenev, Chekhov, and other classical authors, foreign students acquire not only knowledge of Russian culture and language but also broaden their own cultural horizons, learn to respect and accept otherness, and develop the ability to compare literary traditions. Russian classics thus become not merely educational material but a means of forming intercultural communication and a tool for fostering spirituality, morality, and humanistic values.

In the context of globalization and multiculturalism, the role of literature as a factor of intercultural dialogue continues to grow. Therefore, further development of methods for teaching Russian classical literature should be aimed at creating an educational environment in which every student—regardless of nationality, religion, or cultural background—can discover the richness of Russian literary heritage and appreciate its significance for contemporary world culture.

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