INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND RUSSIAN STUDENT COMMUNITY IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION (ON THE EXAMPLE OF IWEB RUDN UNIVERSITY)

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Abstract. Globalization as a phenomenon can already be considered as an accomplished fact. Blurring of state, national, cultural and other borders takes place in full view of everyone that gives rise to a new reality, to which various institutions and social group of all ages have to adapt. The modern universities don’t stand aside of this process. They pretend to have a global status and create a highly competitive market for educational services. They act as “factories for the production of knowledge” and aggregate intellectual resources from various countries. Universities create a special multicultural environment in which, on the one hand, a dialogue of cultures takes place, and on the other, there is a unification of communication and language practices. In this context, expected questions arise about the readiness of the Russian educational system to compete with the dominant Anglo-Saxon model. In our opinion, this set of issues is still open. In this regard, the purpose of this study is to assess the potential for the development of intercultural communication in the leading
Russian universities with a subsequent increase of internationalization indicators. The subject of study is the student audience as a part of communication and an owner of a number of demographic, psychographic and behavioral characteristics. In view of this, in December 2016, there was conducted the survey of 170 Bachelor's and Master's degree students of the direction “Advertising and Public Relations” in the Institute of World Economy and Business of the Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia (IWEB RUDN University). They were asked to answer anonymously the questions of the survey, which contained several meaningful modules, including describing formal demographic and behavioral characteristics. After the information processing of the survey’s result we noted the key takeaways that allow us to conclude that the part of the Russian students among the respondents demonstrates a high level of opportunities, but a low level of interest in developing their intercultural communication skills.

Keywords: intercultural communication, global university, survey, student community

Introduction
The term “global university” demonstrates how the educational services market has changed over the past half century. Traditionally, in Russia, the development of the university as an educational organization is associated with the improvement of educational practices and the successfully working system of research activity. Besides the key performance indicators are correlated with the availability of state funding and the growth of the number of students in all levels of education: from bachelor’s degree to post-doctoral programs. However, in the modern world, the development of the university in the attempt to achieve a leading position involves first of all the global nature of its activities. It concerns the geography of attracted students and Ph.D. candidates, the internationalization of the teaching staff involved in the educational process and the
multicultural environment of colleges and campuses, which was formed due to the active involvement of students from all over the world (Suresh Canagarajah A., 2003), also the immensity and significance of the scientific research, the formation of international teams for research programs, collaborations with global corporations with an aim to search for solution of the problems of modern humanity.

In October 2010, Kenneth McGillivray, University of Southern California (USC) vice provost of global initiatives and former secretary general of the Association of Pacific Rim Universities, spoke at the symposium “The Global University”, which was held by USC, and explained the meaning of the term: “A global university pays attention to the trends in economics, science, technology, and the movement of goods and people and capital across transnational borders. The institutions that take steps to capture those opportunities are, in my view, global institutions” (Bennett A., 2010).

This existence in a world without borders leads to a meaningful influence on social and economic processes and to a growth of income of the educational organization. Today, a global university is a transnational corporation, whose units operates in various countries and produces an economically significant product. It is no coincidence that the university of the new formation, the so-called University 3.0, in the terminology of Johan G. Wissema (Wissema J.G., 2016), defined as “a new type of university that performs not only educational and research functions, but also functions as an integrator of the main processes within the innovation ecosystem: the university should actively participate in processes related to technological enterprise, business development, and the formation of new markets” (University 3.0, 2016).

The modern global universities are largely consistent with this statement, what makes them the leaders in the educational market. Their leadership is comprehensive. The unprecedented funding yields the results, which allows attracting the best teachers to the
educational process, conducting breakthrough scientific research, and accepting talented students from all over the world. The performance indicators of this approach are obvious: from the growth of income provided by current activities, to strengthening the reputation of the industry leader and the global influence on political, socio-economic and cultural processes.

Also in this case it creates a paradoxical situation. The internationalization of research and educational activity is possible on condition of the monopolization of language practice (Popova N.G., 2017). The global universities by aggregating financial and human resources form the economy of knowledge, often stored in English-language sources. The concept of “intellectual colonialism” is used in the scientific works of a number of authors. The law of objectification of knowledge in the form of ideology, the law of the reproduction of the culture of an educational institution, and the law of the designing of reality become its methodological basis (Sharonova S.A., 2018).

**Objectives/Purpose of the study**

In this context, there are consistent questions about the readiness of the Russian educational system to compete with the dominant Anglo-Saxon model (Weijen D., 2012). How ready are Russian universities to work in conditions of fierce competition and the English-speaking environment in order to take their rightful place in the global market of educational services and to attract as many students as possible, including foreign candidates? How far want students of leading Russian universities to use academic mobility programs and do they have the necessary resources for this? In our opinion, this set of issues is still open.

In this regard, the purpose of this study is to assess the potential for development of the environment for intercultural communication with a subsequent increase of internationalization indicators in leading Russian universities. The study object is the student audience as a subject of communication and the owner of a number of demographic, psychographic and behavioral characteristics.
Methodology
In December 2016, it was conducted a survey of 170 Bachelor's and Master's degree students of the direction “Advertising and Public Relations” in the Institute of World Economy and Business of the Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia (IWEB RUDN University). They were asked to answer anonymously the questions, which included several meaningful modules and also describing of formal demographic and behavioral characteristics. The results of information processing of the answers of students of “Advertising and Public Relations” in the IWEB RUDN University made it possible to fix the findings that allow us to assess the readiness of Russian students for intercultural communication in the context of globalization of the economy and the information space.

Results/Findings
Formalization of the obtained answer gave the following picture:
1. Almost 83% of the respondents identified their membership in the Russian nation. 3.5% of respondents noted that they were Russian citizens. Representatives of other nations and ethnic groups historically living in Russia (the Tartars, the Dagestanis, the Chechens, etc.) was 5.3%. Also among the interviewed students of RUDN University were the Azerbajianis (1.2%), the Armenians (0.6%), the Belarusians (0.6%), the Vietnamese (0.6%), the Georgians (0.6%), the Jewish (0.6%), the Mongols (0.6%), the Ukrainians (0.6%). 2% of the survey participants didn’t answer the question about their nationality.
2. Among the survey respondents were 96.4% of citizens of the Russian Federation, 1.2% from Uzbekistan and others from Belarus (0.6%), Vietnam (0.6%), Kazakhstan (0.6%) and Mongolia (0, 6%).
3. Almost 95% of the surveyed students of the IWEB RUDN University answered the question “What languages can you communicate?” that they can speak Russian. 90% can communicate in English, 16.5% know Spanish, 8.2% speak German, 7.6% know French, 5.3% speak Italian, 2.9% have a
knowledge of Chinese, 2.4% speak Ukrainian, 1.2% can communicate in Ossetian, 0.6% each speak Azerbaijani, Arabic, Armenian, Belarusian, Vietnamese, Georgian, Kazakh, Mongolian, Tajik, Turkish, Uzbek and Farsi. 2% of respondents didn’t answer this question.

4. Almost 96% of respondents noted their love of journey. Only 2.4% said they didn’t like to travel. The rest refused to answer.

5. The number of countries visited by respondents among the students of the IWEB RUDN University is 97. Among the most popular countries were Turkey, Egypt, Italy, Spain, Ukraine, Germany, France, Greece, Czech Republic and Poland.

6. The majority of respondents (53.5%) chose European countries answering the question “What place would you like to return and why”. Among them, they pointed Spain, Italy, Greece, Great Britain, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Austria, Ireland, Sweden and Switzerland. 23.5% of respondents chose Asia and the East. They indicated countries Thailand, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Singapore, China, Israel, Japan, the Maldives, Lebanon and other countries as desired place to visit again. 6.5% of respondents would like to return to America, incl. USA, Dominican Republic, Cuba and Brazil. 2% of the survey participants tilt toward Africa. They were mesmerized by Egypt and Kenya. 0.6% of respondents preferred Australia to all other countries and continents. 5.8% made a choice for Russian cities from Vladivostok to Karelia. However there are those who didn’t want to return anywhere (1.8%).

The answers about the reasons of the desire to return to one place or another were following: beautiful – 17.6%, people – 9.4%, atmosphere – 8.8%, heat – 8.2%, culture (including state of mind and traditions) – 8.2%, “I love it” – 7.7%, climate – 7%, tasty food and fruit – 7%, nature – 6.5, sea and/or ocean – 5.9%, calm, quiet and harmony – 5.9%, “nice place” – 4.7%, the homeland or to be born and live in this place – 3.5%, architecture – 3.5%, coziness and comfort – 3.5%, sightseeing – 2.9%, history – 2.9%, a rich country or high standard of live – 2.4%, interesting – 2.4%, “was
with family, friends” – 2.4%, amiability – 1.8%, purity – 1.2%, “I want to live there” – 1.2%, “relatives” – 1.2%.

7. 66.4% of the survey participants answered yes to the question “Do you plan to stay working in Russia”, 25.9% of the respondents answered negatively. The option “as a rough guess” was chosen by 7.6% of respondents. 5.9% of students refrained from answering.

8. At the same time, only 4.1% of the study participants named foreign television shows to the question “What is your favorite TV show”. They included America's Next Top Model (American reality show), The Grand Tour (British car TV show), Kimmel Show (American night talk show), South park (American animated series), The Big Fat Quiz of Everything (British TV show), Through the Wormhole with Morgan Freeman (American documentary non-fiction series).

9. There is only the English-language channel Capital.FM (0.6%) and the Polish-language channel Eska Rock warszauor (0.6%) among the favorite radio stations and radio programs that the respondents noted.

10. CNN (American television channel) and Science (journal of The American Association for the Advancement of Science) were once marked from the English-language media in response to the question “What newspapers and magazines do you buy?” However, RUDN University’s students watch and read Euronews (0.6%), Deutsche Welle (0.6%), Meduza (0.6%) and China's Breath (0.6%).

11. There are no foreign-language Internet sites between the tops of sites visited daily by survey participants, but Meduza (6.4%), Google news (6.4%) and BBC News (2.9%) are present. Only 3.5% of respondents noted their daily visits to English-language sites, including https://www.coursera.org/, www.dailymail.com, https://www.interpals.net/, https://soundcloud.com/, https://worldcosplay.net/.

12. The respondents named Russian-speaking communities when answering the question “In which groups on social networks do you belong or subscribed (name 3 titles)?” The mention of the
community with communication in Russian and English (ASK Kate Dragon) was single.

Discussion
The results of the survey indicate that students of the IWEB RUDN University have a platform for effective cross-cultural communication. A good base for immersion in a different linguistic and cultural environment, including the Anglo-Saxon one, is knowledge of English language at a level sufficient for usual conversation and professional communication, the availability of financial resources and organizational opportunities for traveling inside and outside the native country and studying in University with a high level of internationalization of student ship (Pennycook A., 2009).

However, the surveyed part of Russian students demonstrates a high level of opportunities, but a low level of desire to develop their intercultural communication skills. The first or second visit to other countries attracts the respondents by climate, nature, sea, food or by complicated differentiate sensations, which are expressed through the characteristics “pleasant”, “atmospheric”, etc. Basically communication indicators characterize intercultural communication according by the “Dialogue of cultures” of V.S. Bibler (Bibler V.S., 1991) or E.T. Hall’s context (Hall E.T., 1989), but they are found irrelevant in the paradigm of country values formed by the respondents.

Even respondents with a desire to work outside of Russia practically haven’t interest in affaires in other countries, don’t get to know the publication of foreign media, and don’t communicate with participants of international communities in social networks. In other words they are outside the foreign-language, including English-speaking, information space. By that they deprive themselves of a chance of a seamless linguistic, cultural, social and economic internalization (Crystal D., 2003). Unfortunately, such attitudes don’t allow them to form a number of competencies that could become the basis for competitive advantages in the global labor market.
References


