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Mu Dan

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMPATHIC SKILLS AMONG ADVANCED  
CHINESE PHILOLOGY STUDENTS IN RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN  
LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

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## INTRODUCTION

Currently, there is an increased interest of scientists in the study of empathy, the field of application of which has expanded from psychology to pedagogy and linguistics, in particular, to foreign language teaching.

Empathy first originated in the field of aesthetics and was later considered as a psychological category. Gradually, this category was considered in other fields of knowledge, for example, philosophy, linguistics, pedagogy, etc. There are many approaches to the definition of empathy.

1) Empathy as a psychological mechanism: to be in a state of empathy means to perceive the inner world of another accurately, with preservation of emotional and semantic nuances. "It is as if one becomes this other, but without losing the sense of "as if"" [Rogers 1975: 10].

2) Empathy as a human quality: empathy is the specific ability of a person to respond to the experiences of another, whether human, animal or anthropomorphic object [Gavrilova 1977: 4].

3) Empathy as an ability, skill in communication: empathy is a person's ability to involuntarily experience the emotions that arise in another person in the process of communicating with him [Kondakov 2000: 122].

In this paper we define empathy as the process of understanding and responding to the experience of another, as the ability to step into the shoes of another, to experience the emotions and feelings of another, as well as to express them verbally in communicative interaction with the aim of psychological support of the interlocutor.

It is important to teach empathy in the educational process, particularly in foreign language teaching. Nowadays, with the rapid development of information technology, personal communication between people has decreased, and more and more people are experiencing depression and loneliness in life. Although artificial intelligence has emerged with the development of science and technology, it helps people solve many life problems, but it cannot have emotional communication with

people. Empathy, as an important ability, can increase understanding and trust among people, as well as create a culture of co-operation and mutual assistance. This ability cannot be replaced by technology. The formation of empathy in the educational process is of great importance for the further development of students' career and personal life. Among the important goals of foreign language teaching are practical goal, educational goal, educational goal and developmental goal. Formation of students' worldview, system of moral values, emotional and evaluative attitude to the world is the educational goal of foreign language teaching [Zhukova 2020: 5]. With the advent of the digital age and the popularisation of artificial intelligence, it is becoming easier and easier for people to master the linguistic means of a foreign language, but in the process of intercultural communication, good language training does not guarantee successful speech interaction in the target language with native speakers of the foreign language. The lack of skills to identify and understand the emotional state of the interlocutor, the ability to respond to the emotional state of the interlocutor within the framework of another culture is currently one of the obstacles for many students of Russian language as a foreign language at the advanced stage in successful intercultural interaction and establishment of deeper relations with native speakers of the Russian language.

The FSES (Federal State Educational Standard) contains clear provisions on the formation and development of intercultural communicative competence of students at the advanced stage of Russian language teaching: the Master's programme in the direction of "Philology" provides for the formation of intercultural competence (the student is able to analyse and take into account the diversity of cultures in the process of intercultural interaction) [FSES 45.04.01 Philology: 2020]. Intercultural communicative competence as a special type of communicative competence implies the ability to empathy. In modern studies in the structure of communicative competence, in particular intercultural communicative competence, many scholars highlight the emotive competence, which is defined as "the ability to carry out emotive communication, effectively using all available linguistic and speech means of expressing emotional states" [Pershutin 2017: 32]. [Pershutin 2017:

32]. Empathy is a part of emotional competence [Valiullina 2021: 95]. The formation of empathic skills in Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage of studying Russian language as a foreign language can become a reliable way to effectively perceive Russian speech with emotive components in an authentic language environment, to identify and understand the emotional state of the Russian-speaking interlocutor, to respond correctly to his emotional state. This will help Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage of studying Russian language as a foreign language to get psychologically closer to representatives of Russian culture, to establish relations of mutual understanding and mutual trust with Russian-speaking interlocutors and to become popular communicators in intercultural communication in specific situations of communication.

The question of forming empathic skills in teaching Russian language as a foreign language has not yet been developed, although some scholars have tried to consider it in the context of Russian language as a foreign language. In the research work of L. N. Nelipa (2008) speech acts of empathic type and their implementation in the communicative act are analysed. The research paper by A. A. Kuznetsova (2010) analyses the speech sphere of empathy expression. The research paper by L. A. Aznabaeva and A. A. Anishchenko (2017) singles out the empathetic speech act of negative prediction, which is associated with the empathetic strategy "For the good". According to the above - mentioned scholars, in linguistics empathy is considered as a property of personality, manifested in situations of communication and interaction, in which the humanistic orientation is actualised [Nelipa 2008: 74]; understanding of the other's feelings; striving to provide psychological support to the interlocutor [Kuznetsova 2010: 12]; empathic response of the reacting communicator to the experiences or joy of the interlocutor in the form of a speech utterance with the purpose of consoling in grief or sharing joy [Aznabaeva, Anishchenko, 2017: 265]. The ambiguity of the interpretation of the concept leads to the need to systematise, specify, structure and develop a model of empathy training.

In the textbooks by A. A. Akishina, N. I. Formanovskaya, T. E. Akishina (2016),

D. G. Kovrizhkina (2019), exercises for mastering certain means for expressing empathy are investigated. But in this aspect there are methodological problems that have not received a comprehensive scientific development: the problem of defining empathy and its components in the methodology of teaching Russian language as a foreign language, the problem of selecting language material and creating language minimums for foreign students, the problem of organising the teaching material and activating the process of learning the teaching material on the topic "empathy".

Thus, empathy is an integral part of emotive competence, and thus of intercultural communicative competence, but the problem of forming empathic skills in foreign students remains unexplored and requires methodological development.

The **relevance** of this study is determined by the need to resolve the following pedagogical contradictions.

1. The contradiction between the necessity of forming empathic skills in foreign students of the advanced stage of teaching Russian language as a foreign language and the lack of systematic views on this process.

At present, in the field of foreign language teaching, scientists' researches are mainly aimed at justifying the importance of developing students' empathy in the classroom and considering some educational games and exercises for developing students' empathy. There are few studies on the methodology of empathy formation in foreign language teaching, especially in teaching Russian language as a foreign language. Studies on the definition, content of empathic skills, the process of formation of empathic skills, are still missing in teaching Russian language as a foreign language. This paper considers the concept of "empathic skills" and the process of their formation.

2. The contradiction between the requirements of the FSES to the formation of empathic skills of students and the lack of development of principles and methods of their formation.

The FSES contains requirements for improving intercultural communicative competence of students at the advanced stage of Russian language proficiency.

Empathy is an integral part of intercultural communicative competence, it should be formed in the process of teaching Russian language as a foreign language. However, so far there has been no research on the principles and methods of forming empathic skills in teaching Russian language as a foreign language. On the basis of the definition and content of empathic skills in the Russian language as a foreign language classes, this paper develops principles and a systematic methodology for the formation of empathic skills (empathic listening skills, empathic understanding skills and empathic response skills).

3. The contradiction between the need to include empathy in textbooks and manuals and testing materials on Russian language as a foreign language and the lack of recommended minimums for expressing empathy.

Currently, there are a number of teaching and reference books that present language means selected for teaching the expression of empathy based on the language minimum (mainly speech clichés) [Akishina, Formanovskaya 2016]; [Kovrizhkina 2019]; [Zakharova, Lukyanov, 2019], etc., where language and speech material on the topic "Empathy" is not systematised, is presented in fragments, there are no recommended minimums for expressing empathy. In the test materials, the test of empathic skills is mainly focused on individual questions of the oral part of the test, and more comprehensive test tasks are absent. In this paper we select and systematise linguistic means of expressing empathy, develop tests to check the level of empathic skills of students in Russian as a foreign language.

The above-mentioned provisions condition the formulation of the dissertation topic «Formation of empathic skills in Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage of teaching Russian language as a foreign language».

**Degree of scientific development of the problem:** scientific works of Russian and foreign scientists are devoted to the research topic. Important for the study are:

1. Studies devoted to the definition and levels of empathy in psychology: S. R. Rogers (1975), T. P. Gavrilova (1975), V. A. Labunskaya (1975), T. P. Gavrilova (1977), L. P. Strelkova (1987), N. N. Obozov (1990), L. P. Vygovskaya (1991), Yu. B. Hippenreiter, T. D. Karyagina, E. N. Kozlova (1993), I. M. Kondakov (2000), T.



F. Kram (2000), V. A. Labunskaya (2001), V. V. Boyko (2006), M. A. Ponomareva (2006), V. V. Znakov (2010), M. V. Alaeva (2011), V. I. Dolgova, E. V. Melnyk (2014).

2. Studies on the definition of empathy in linguistics and pragmatics: He Ziran (何自然) (1991), L. N. Nelipa (2008), A. A. Kuznetsova (2010), T. D. Karyagina (2013), L. A. Aznabaeva, A. A. Anishchenko (2017).

3. Studies devoted to the study of tasks and exercises for the formation of empathy in the process of teaching foreign languages: E. V. Sapiga (2006), Li Xinhua (李新华) (2008), G. V. Solovyova (2012), R. A. Absalyamova, N. V. Voytik (2016), Y. I. Zemlyankina (2017), T. V. Tyuleneva (2017), O. A. Frolova, V. V. Lopatinskaya (2018), N. V. Gritskova (2019), A. S. Belousov (2020), M. S. Sheveleva (2021), etc.

**The object** of the study is the process of formation of empathic skills in intercultural communication among Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage of learning Russian as a foreign language.

**The subject** of the study is the methodology, methods, conditions and teaching materials of teaching Chinese students of philology empathic skills in the process of teaching Russian as a foreign language at the advanced stage of education.

**The aim** of the research is theoretical substantiation, development and experimental verification of the methodology of formation of empathic skills in Chinese students of philology at advanced stage in the Russian language course.

Achievement of the set goal implies solving the following **tasks**:

1. To consider the concepts of "empathy", "empathic skills", to identify the role and place of empathy in the process of formation of intercultural communicative competence.

2. Describe the main characteristics of empathy, sufficient and necessary for the formation of empathic skills in the context of teaching Russian as a foreign language.

3. To consider the existing methodology of formation of empathic skills.

4. To substantiate the selection of the content of empathy training at the

advanced stage of teaching Russian as a foreign language.

5. To develop a system of principles for teaching empathy, corresponding to the communicative, person – centred and competence – based approach.

6. To develop a model of formation of empathic skills in Chinese advanced students of philology at practical Russian language classes and a set of exercises.

7. To select teaching materials for the formation of empathic skills among Chinese students of philology in the process of Russian language teaching.

8. Experimentally verify the effectiveness of the proposed teaching methodology aimed at the formation of empathic skills in Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage of education, conduct a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the results obtained.

The study is based on the **hypothesis** that the teaching model forming empathic skills in Chinese students of philology will be effective if:

- the educational process is carried out taking into account the knowledge of theoretical and methodological foundations of empathy development in teaching foreign language communication;

- authentic materials reflecting the specifics of empathic communication among native speakers of Russian are used as training materials;

- learning methods (role-playing, brainstorming, case studies) based on dialogue communication are used;

- step-by-step development of empathic skills of Chinese students of philology in foreign language communication is realised.

**The scientific novelty** of the research results consists of:

1. in substantiating the importance of developing empathic skills in the process of teaching Russian as a foreign language;

2. in identifying the definition and content of empathy and empathic skills in the field of foreign language teaching, in particular teaching Russian as a foreign language;

3. in the development of a teaching model that implies the gradual formation of empathic skills in students: the skill of empathic listening (the ability to pay attention

to the emotional state of the interlocutor), the skill of empathic understanding (the ability to understand the emotional state of the interlocutor at the cognitive and emotional level), the skill of empathic response (the ability to build an empathic dialogue with the interlocutor);

4. in the experimental substantiation of the training model aimed at the formation of empathic skills in Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage of education Russian as a foreign language.

**The material** of the study consists of:

1. research literature devoted to the study of empathy in psychology, linguistics and pedagogy as a theoretical basis for the study (188 works in total);

2. linguistic means of expressing empathy, which made up the minimum of linguistic ways of expressing empathy, selected on the basis of analysis of a number of textbooks [Lvova, 2005; Akishkina, Akishkina, 2016; Mikhalkhuk, 2016; Kovrizhkina, 2019; Zakharova, Lukyanov, Paretskaya, 2019], reference book [Formanovskaya, Shevtsova, 1992], dictionaries [Dahl's Comprehensible Dictionary of the Russian Language (modern version). 2000; Big Russian Encyclopaedic Dictionary, 2009; Dmitriev's Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language, 2003] and speech material in social networks and the media.

**The research methods** were determined in accordance with the aim and objectives of the study and include:

Theoretical methods:

– Analysis of philosophical, psychological, pedagogical, linguistic and methodological literature;

– simulation;

Diagnostic methods:

– testing;

Empirical methods: analysis of scientific and methodological literature on foreign language teaching; analysis of educational and methodological literature on Russian as a foreign language;

– pedagogical observation;

- pedagogical experiment;
- comparison;
- description;

Qualimetric methods:

- expert judgement;
- mathematical statistics.

**Theoretical significance** of the work consists of:

- clarifying the concept of "empathy" in foreign language teaching methodology;
- in identifying and validating core empathic skills in Chinese advanced learners;
- in the development of a training model aimed at the formation of empathic skills;
- in the compilation and selection of teaching materials for the formation of empathic skills in Russian as a foreign language classes;
- to develop a system of principles for the formation of empathic skills and ways to implement these principles in the learning process.

Theoretical provisions will contribute to the methodology of formation of empathic skills.

**The practical significance** of the work is determined by the fact that:

- the theoretical provisions contained in the study can be used in lecture courses on foreign language teaching methodology;
- the developed language minimums, principles and techniques of empathic skills formation can be used in teaching foreign students of different training profiles when creating training materials for them;
- the author's special course for the development of empathic skills "Teaching empathic communication to Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage" allows to successfully implement the process of empathic skills formation among Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage of education.

**Experimental base of the study:** first year of Master's programme at the

Department of Russian as a Foreign Language of St. Petersburg State University.  
Discipline – "Russian as a foreign language, practical training (Optional)".

The experimental group (EG) consists of 12 Chinese students (3 males and 9 females). All students speak Russian at the B2 level.

The control group (CG) consists of 12 Chinese students (4 males and 8 females). All students speak Russian at the B2 level.

### **Structure of the study:**

The dissertation research consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a list of used literature, and appendices.

The **Introduction** presents the rationale for the relevance of the chosen topic, defines the purpose, objectives, object, subject, methods of research, formulates the hypothesis, characterises its scientific novelty, theoretical and practical significance of the study.

The **First chapter** deals with the theoretical basis for the formation of empathy in the process of teaching Russian as a foreign language.

The **Second chapter** presents a model of teaching empathic skills to Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage of teaching Russian as a foreign language, which is based on exercises using authentic culture – oriented audio, video, printed, illustrative materials. The training model will be built taking into account the specific means of forming empathy in language intercultural communication for Chinese students of philology at the advanced level in the process of teaching Russian language.

In the **Third Chapter** the experimental verification of the proposed methodology of formation of empathic skills in the process of teaching Russian as a foreign language is realised, the aim, tasks and conditions of the experiment are stated, the methodology and participants of the experiment are described, the pre-experimental and post-experimental diagnostics of subjects is carried out in order to reveal the effectiveness of the tested methodology and to identify the final level of formation of empathic skills in students.

**The Conclusion** summarises the results of the study and provides general

conclusions confirming the validity of the hypothesis put forward.

**The list of references** consists of 187 sources on the topic under study.

**The appendices** contain input and final tests for diagnosing students' empathic skills, materials of the training experiment.

**Approbation and implementation of the research results.** The main results of the present study were presented at international scientific conferences: 50th International Scientific Philological Conference named after L. A. Verbitskaya (St. Petersburg State University, 15 March 2022), V distance International Student Scientific and Practical Conference "We Speak the Same Language" (Russian State Hydrometeorological University, 22 April 2022), International Scientific and Practical Conference "Text, Speech Culture, Speech Behaviour in Russian Language Teaching Methodology" (Moscow Pedagogical State University, 24–25 March 2023), VIII International Scientific and Methodological Online Conference "Foreign Language Teaching Methodology and Russian as a foreign language: Traditions and Innovations" (Kursk State Medical University, 26 April, 2023. ), V International Conference "Synergy of Languages and Cultures: Interdisciplinary Studies", (St. Petersburg State University, 05–07 October, 2023), IX International Scientific and Methodological Conference "Actual Problems of Humanitarian Knowledge in Technical University" (St. Petersburg Mining University, 19–20 October, 2023).

The main provisions and results of the dissertation research are reflected in 10 articles, 4 of which are published in scientific indexed journals of the list recommended by the Higher Attestation Commission of the Russian Federation:

**1. Mu Dan. The importance of empathy formation in foreign students learning Russian to overcome psychological barriers in intercultural communication. Modern pedagogical education. № 11. 2022. p. 55 – 59.**

**2. Antsiferova O. V., Mu Dan. Organisation of educational collective interaction for the formation of empathy in Chinese students of philology. Global Scientific Potential. № 8(149). 2023. p. 44 – 52.**

**3. Mu Dan. The use of works of art for the formation of empathic skills of**

**students in the classes of Russian as a foreign language. Modern Science: Actual Problems of Theory and Practice. Series: Humanities. № 12 – 2. 2023. p. 92 – 96.**

**4. Mu Dan. Formation of empathic skills at the lessons of Russian as a foreign language on the material of confessional dialogues. Education Management (Theory and Practice). № 2 – 2. 2024. p. 248 – 255.**

Other publications:

5. Mu Dan. The importance of empathy formation in intercultural communication in the process of teaching a foreign language. We speak the same language: materials of the X international scientific–practical conference, St. Petersburg. Russian State Hydrometeorological University. St. Petersburg: Russian State Hydrometeorological University, 2022. p. 137–142.

6. Mu Dan. The role of empathy in intercultural communication in teaching Russian as a foreign language. Russian as a foreign language and methodology of its teaching. Issue 33. St. Petersburg State University. Association of Teachers of Russian Language and Literature ("ROPRYAL"). 2022. p. 67–74.

7. Mu Dan. Development of empathy in foreign students using the method of "role play" in the process of teaching Russian as a foreign language. Pedagogy, psychology, linguistics: socio–cultural paradigms: materials of IX All–Russian scientific–practical conference, Ryazan. Limited Liability Company "Publishing House Concept". 2023. p. 94–97.

8. Mu Dan. The emergence and evolution of teaching foreign language culture in foreign language teaching. Methods of teaching foreign languages and Russian as a foreign language: Traditions and Innovations". Collection of scientific papers of VIII International Scientific and Methodological Online Conference dedicated to the Year of Teacher and Mentor in Russia and the Year of Russian Language in CIS countries. 2023. p. 377–381.

9. Mu Dan. Teaching the expression of empathy as a way of developing empathic skills in foreign students. Actual problems of humanitarian knowledge in

technical university. Collection of scientific papers of IX International scientific and methodological conference, St. Petersburg. St. Petersburg Mining University. 2023. p. 305–309.

10. Mu Dan. Teaching the expression of consolation in Russian as a foreign language in order to develop empathic skills. *Language and Culture in a Global World*. Issue No. 3. Collection of articles. SPb: LEMA. 2024. p. 340–346.

Main scientific results obtained in the course of the study:

1. The important function of empathy in intercultural communication is defined. It is proved that empathy as a key component of intercultural communicative competence helps the communicant to overcome psychological barriers, such as stereotype, prejudice, in intercultural communication, contributes to the success of intercultural communication [Mu Dan 2022: 55-59], [Mu Dan 2022: 67-74].

2. The linguistic means of expressing empathy in Russian language are analysed, the algorithm and methods of teaching these linguistic means of expression at the lessons of Russian as a foreign language [Mu Dan 2023: 305-309], [Mu Dan 2024: 340-346] are considered.

3. The effective organisational forms of forming empathic skills in students during teaching at the classes of Russian as a foreign language, including role-playing games, brainstorming, case-tasks, etc., and ways of implementing these activities have been identified [Antsiferova O. V., Mu Dan 2023: 44-52; personal contribution of the researcher: analysis of scientific literature. V., Mu Dan 2023: 44-52; personal contribution of the co-researcher: analysis of scientific literature and description of the research process].

4. The teaching and learning materials that can be used to develop students' empathic skills in the classes of Russian as a foreign language, including films, visual materials, songs, poems from literary works, etc., have been developed, the superiority of these teaching and learning materials in the development of empathy has been demonstrated, and the ways of using them in the teaching process have been analysed [Mu Dan 2023: 92-96].



**Provisions for defence:**

1. Empathic skills are components of the content of teaching Russian as a foreign language. They represent a system of learning units and their description requires a systematic approach.

2. In the methodology of teaching Russian as a foreign language empathy is the process of understanding and responding to the experience of another, as the ability to stand in the place of another, to experience the emotions and feelings of another, as well as to express them verbally in communicative interaction with the aim of psychological support of the interlocutor.

The following empathic skills are emphasised in the methodology of teaching Russian as a foreign language:

empathic listening – the ability to pay attention to the emotional state of the interlocutor when listening;

empathic understanding – the ability to understand the emotional state of the interlocutor on a cognitive and emotional level;

empathic response – the ability to build an empathic dialogue with the interlocutor.

3. In Russian, the expression of empathy is realized through linguistic means used in response to the negative emotions of the communicant (sympathy, consolation, condolences) and linguistic means used in response to the positive emotions of the communicant (sympathy). In the learning process, authentic linguistic examples are used, ways of expressing empathy in Russian are generalized, as well as complex ways of expressing empathy with additional meanings in real communication.

4. The selection of teaching materials is guided by the following criteria: authenticity and relevance, clarity, accessibility, communicativeness and cultural marking. According to these criteria, newspaper texts, poems, speech formulas, audio materials for setting the correct intonation, mini-dialogues, video fragments of films or cartoons, reproductions of paintings and audio materials of songs are selected as teaching materials.

5. The development of empathic skills is a step-by-step process based on the following principles: the principle of clarity; the principle of accessibility and feasibility; the principle of interconnected communicative, cognitive and socio-cultural development of students; the principle of collective interaction; the principle of understanding the Russian language picture of the world; the personality-oriented principle, the principle of reliance on emotional-evaluative communicative situations, etc.

6. The effective development of empathic skills in Russian as a foreign language classes is facilitated by the use of the developed teaching model:

1) creation of linguistic and intonation minimums for expressing sympathy, consolation, condolence, and rejoicing;

2) development of the skill of using the presented linguistic means of expressing empathy;

3) step-by-step development of empathic skills.

– development of the skill of empathic listening;

– development of the skill of empathic understanding (cognitive and emotional level of empathy);

– development of the skill of empathic response (behavioral level of empathy).

7. Formation of empathic skills in teaching intercultural communication occurs most effectively when using game exercises, the basis of which is dialogue training:

1) role play (when working with video clips of Soviet and Russian films or cartoons);

2) brainstorming (when working with reproductions of paintings by Russian artists);

3) case tasks (when working with audio fragments of songs in Russian).

8. Qualitative and quantitative analysis of the obtained data from the training experiment confirmed the effectiveness of the proposed teaching method aimed at developing empathic skills in Chinese philology students at the advanced stage of study.

## **CHAPTER I. THEORETICAL BASES OF EMPATHIC SKILLS FORMATION IN THE PROCESS OF TEACHING RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

### **1.1. Empathy in foreign language teaching**

The term "empathy" first appeared in scientific literature at the beginning of the last century, but empathy as a psychological phenomenon has been given much attention since antiquity. In particular, ancient Greek historians argued that there is a special spiritual commonality between people due to which they sympathise with each other. In Ancient Greece, compassion was valued so highly that it deserved a special object of worship, and in Ancient China, empathy was equated with basic human virtues. In China for centuries, a pedagogical ideal was formed, which provided for the education of the well-read, polite, able to "look deep into oneself (empathy) and establish peace and harmony in one's soul" (empathy) [Pyatkov, Starcheus 2015: 65-66]. Roman philosopher L. A. Seneca believed that education should form an independent personality. "Only one thing makes the soul perfect: the immutable knowledge of good and evil", "One must live for others in order to live for oneself" [Seneca 1977: 680].

In today's society, with the development of digital communication process, the level of personal contact between people around the world is decreasing and the sense of isolation is increasing. Therefore, it is becoming increasingly difficult for people to establish deep relationships with others. Empathy helps to build harmonious and deep interpersonal relationships with foreign – speaking interlocutors. In addition, as the pace of life accelerates, people tend to face mental stress and anxiety frequently, understanding and support from others are particularly important in communication, especially in intercultural communication. Thus, comprehending the place and role of empathy in intercultural communication is one of the problems that require methodological solution. Scientists consider empathy as one of the most important components of intercultural communicative

competence and believe that the ability to empathy is a key factor determining the success of intercultural communication. Empathy is a kind of a link between different cultures and representatives of these cultures entering into speech – foreign language interaction.

### **1.1.1. Towards a definition of "empathy"**

In the process of developing a definition of empathy, scientists understand empathy from different sides. In psychology, we can agree that empathy is a psychological process involving many factors, including cognition, emotions and behaviour [Zemlyankina 2017: 127].

Many scientists have studied this category in psychology, in particular, a detailed review of the history of foreign studies of empathy, starting from the times of antiquity to the middle of the last century, was carried out by T. P. Gavrilova (1975). P. Gavrilova (1975), the analysis of approaches to the phenomenon of empathy at the end of the last century is presented in the works of L. P. Strelkov (1987), Y. B. Hippenreiter (1993), T. D. Karyagina (1993), A. M. Kozlova (1993), V. I. Krotenko (1993), etc. The current state of this problem is covered in the works of L. P. Strelkov (1987), Yu. The current state of this issue is covered in the studies of V. A. Labunskaya (2001), I. V. Kashuba (2009), M. V. Alaeva (2011), V. I. Dolgova, E. V. Melnik (2014), L. A. Aznabaeva, A. A. Anishchenko (2017), A. S. Belousov (2020), M. S. Sheveleva (2021), E. V. Shishchenko (2022), and others.

A brief retrospective analysis of the phenomenon of empathy shows that, as mentioned above, the term entered the scientific turnover in the early twentieth century thanks to the psychologist Edward Titchener, the founder of the first psychological laboratory. The term "empathy" was taken from aesthetics, where it was used in the form of the process of understanding works of art and objects of nature, the ability of the observer to identify with the observed object, which is the cause of experiencing the beautiful [Ponomareva 2006: 72]. Since the 50s of the twentieth century, the term has been widely spread. In Russian psychological science the term "empathy" appeared only in the early 70s of the twentieth century.

The concept of empathy continues to evolve through modern research. Initially, scientists defined empathy as a psychological mechanism, e.g.:

To be in a state of empathy means to perceive the inner world of another accurately, with preservation of emotional and semantic nuances. It is as if one were becoming that other, but without losing the feeling of "as if" [Rogers 1975: 10].

Empathy is a unified process directed towards altruistic action, unfolding with adequate functioning of all its links [Strelkova 1987: 56].

Some researchers define empathy as a natural property of a living being: empathy is a specific human ability to respond to the experiences of another, whether human, animal or anthropomorphised object [Gavrilova 1977: 4].

The property that in social psychology is called empathy is the ability to empathise [Kan – Kalik, Nikandrov 1990: 15].

Gradually, a new point of view appeared in the communicative studies of scientists: empathy is an ability, a skill in communication: empathy is a person's ability to involuntarily experience those emotions that arise in another person in the process of communication with him [Kondakov 2000].

In the absence of a communicative component one cannot speak of empathy. An act of empathy can take place only when your interlocutor feels that you understand, see, hear him [Nelipa 2008: 72].

It follows from the above that scientists deepen and expand the definition of empathy, initially considering it only as a psychological category, and then gradually expanding its meaning to the ability to understand and respond in interpersonal communication.

Let us consider the components of empathy in the definitions of empathy. Both Russian and foreign researchers focus on one of three main approaches to the concept of empathy: cognitive, affective, and action – oriented approaches.

**Within the cognitive approach, empathy is seen as:**

– a special form of cognition, the object of which is a human being [Gavrilova 1975: 147];

– the ability of an individual to adequately interpret inarticulate behaviour [Labunskaya 1975: 608];

– a way of understanding another person, aimed at analysing his/her personality, and not only meaningful but also intuitive cognition of her emotional experiences [Vygovskaya 1991: 20];

– the ability of the individual to "accept the role of another person" through "mental reincarnation", "introjection", "adopting the other's point of reference" [Hippenreiter 1993: 61];

– a form of rational – emotional – intuitive reflection of another person [Boyko 2006: 75].

All these definitions indicate, in fact, different forms of empathy manifestation in the cognitive aspect of interpersonal interaction. Thus, it can be argued that empathy determines the cognitive complexity, adequacy and coherence of interpersonal interaction.

**From another perspective, empathy is an affective process seen as:**

– unconditional positive attitude to another person [Znakov 2010: 188];

– emotional responsiveness of a person to the experiences of another, which is carried out in elementary and personal forms (empathy, sympathy, commiseration) [Big Psychological Dictionary 2003].;

– the ability of a person to involuntarily experience those emotions that arise in another person in the process of communication with him [Kondakov 2000];

– an emotional state caused by observing or imagining another person's emotional state, and similar to it, provided that the one experiencing empathic feelings realises the reason for their occurrence under the influence of the other's feelings [Vignemont, Singer 2006: 435];

– affective process aimed at comprehending the emotional states of another person [Ponomareva 2006: 76];

– the ability of an individual to respond emotionally to the experiences of others, to understand their state, feelings and thoughts [Dolgova, Melnyk 2014: 16];

This approach to the consideration of empathy reflects the whole spectrum of its representation in the emotional component of interpersonal interaction.

**There is also an approach that views empathy as a behavioural ability:**

- response to experience [Obozov 1990: 191];

- firstly, the ability to consistently express understanding of the other in speech and/or action; secondly, the ability to flexibly switch from a state of empathic understanding of the other to a sincere expression of one's real feelings, including negative ones, without losing the overall positive acceptance of the other [Gippenreiter, Karyagina 1993: 61-88].

These definitions allow us to speak of empathy as a behavioural ability to provide emotional help.

In addition, there is an approach that defines empathy from all of the above perspectives.

- empathy can be defined as a socio – psychological phenomenon, which consists of the ability to emotionally react and respond to the experiences of another; the ability to recognise the emotional states of another and as if to be transferred into another's thoughts, feelings, actions; the ability to give an adequate empathic response to the experiences of another [Labunskaya 2001: 288];

- is not only the ability to understand and penetrate into the world of another person, but also the ability to convey this understanding to the interlocutor. The act of empathy can take place only when the interlocutor feels: he is heard and understood, which is manifested in the behaviour and phrases of the listener [Alaeva 2011: 104].

In this approach, empathy is seen as a more psychologically profound phenomenon that encompasses all aspects (cognitive, emotional and behavioural) of interpersonal interaction and contributes to achieving mutual understanding between its subjects.

Thus, the generally accepted classification of empathy taking into account the leading component is as follows:

- cognitive empathy;

- emotional empathy;
- behavioural empathy.

Cognitive empathy is based on intellectual processes – comparison, analogy, etc. Emotional empathy is based on the mechanisms of projection and imitation of motor and affective reactions of another person. Behavioural empathy is manifested as a person's ability to predict the affective reactions of another person in specific situations [Kram 2000: 162].

It follows from the above analysis that with the deepening and expansion of research, the concept of empathy has already become multivalent: it not only denotes a psychological process, but can also be a personal quality and communicative skill of a person. In defining empathy, some scholars have provided definitions in terms of the emotional component, the cognitive component and the behavioural component of empathy. Some scholars have combined all these definitions and have given a more comprehensive definition of empathy considering all these three components. We can agree with them that empathy includes not only the emotional component, it is a complex ability consisting of cognitive, emotional and behavioural components. Based on the opinions of scientists, empathy as a process of understanding and responding to the experience of another is defined by us as the ability to step into the shoes of another, to experience the emotions and feelings of another, as well as to express them verbally in communicative interaction for the purpose of psychological support of the interlocutor.

### **1.1.2. The role and place of empathy in intercultural communicative competence**

Intercultural communicative competence belongs to the category of intercultural communication studies. Each type of communication is characterised by special relations between partners, regulated by their goals and objectives. The specificity of intercultural communication lies in the fact that in it the empathic approach, i.e. mental, intellectual and emotional penetration into the inner world of another person, into his feelings, thoughts, expectations and aspirations becomes



determinant [Sadokhin 2005: 51].

B. D. Ruben identifies seven behavioural characteristics that influence the success of intercultural interaction:

- respect;
- attitude in interaction;
- ability to respond to each other, avoiding value judgements;
- knowledge orientation;
- empathy (the ability to put oneself in another person's shoes, think through problems and show empathy for others);
- role behaviour;
- management in interaction;
- tolerance of ambiguity [Ruben 1976: 334].

The ability to get in touch with the emotions of others, intuitive awareness of the interlocutors' thoughts, adequate assessment of the interlocutor's emotional state, adequate response to the interlocutor's emotional state – these are the abilities without which effective intercultural communication is not possible.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the earliest research on intercultural communicative competence focused only on practical issues such as intercultural business counselling and intercultural learning: on the practical issues of people living and working abroad and the establishment of overseas institutions [Ruben 1989: 229]. As the study of intercultural communicative competence developed, definitions of this phenomenon, including broader concepts, began to appear in the scientific literature.

As a rule, definitions of intercultural communicative competence focus on the ability to communicate with representatives of other cultures in a foreign language. Proficiency in a foreign language becomes an important requirement. For example, intercultural communicative competence includes knowledge of speech – behavioural tactics, a set of communicative (reproductive and productive) skills, linguistic means, oral and written speech, etc. [Bystrova 1996: 3].

Intercultural communicative competence is also defined in terms of mutual

understanding of interlocutors – representatives of different cultures, a process that excludes conflicts caused by cultural specificity. For example, intercultural communicative competence is a functional ability to understand the views and opinions of representatives of another culture, to adjust their behaviour, to overcome conflicts in the process of communication, to recognise the right to the existence of different values, norms of behaviour, is becoming the most demanded for a modern specialist " [Pluzhnik 2003: 326].

Analysing the above definitions, we can conclude that the formation of the ability to understand a foreign language interlocutor and express one's understanding in a foreign language is the key to the formation of intercultural communicative competence.

Formation of communicative competence is a necessary step in the formation of intercultural communicative competence. Intercultural communicative competence is built on communicative competence [Koroleva 2018: 33]. Communicative competence is not a separate competence, its formation is based on other competences. Scientists identify different components of communicative competence. For example, orientation in social situations, identification of personal characteristics and emotional state of other people, establishment of psychological contact, culture of speech [Vvedensky 2003: 27]; linguistic, linguistic, speech, sociocultural, social, strategic, discursive, subject, professional [Shchukin 2006: 140–142]; depending on the professional orientation of future specialists: motivational, cognitive, emotional–sensual, behavioural [Agafonova 2009: 26], etc.

In modern studies, many scholars include emotive competence in the communicative competence, which is defined as linguistic and psychological knowledge that allows a linguistic person to verbally express and denote their own and others' emotions in certain emotional situations of communication [Pavlyuchk: 1999]. For example, emotive competence is an important component of communicative competence, permeating all its components, which allows us to single it out as another subcompetence [Pershtutin: 2017]. In real communication, the lack of emotive competence in speech partners leads to communicative failures.

Empathy is contained in the composition of emotive competence. According to S. V. Chernyshov empathy is part of emotional intelligence, which is an important component of emotive competence in communicative competence [Chernyshov 2014: 136-139]. Therefore, the formation of empathy is a necessary part of the formation of intercultural communicative competence.

In the process of formation of intercultural communicative competence, the stage of preparation for intercultural communication after the stage of formation of communicative competence is also distinguished. To this end, the formation of personal qualities takes place [Korzennikova 2018: 20]. In intercultural communication, a popular communicator is more likely to become a person of culture with personal qualities that promote mutual understanding and mutual trust. Education of a person of culture implies enrichment of personality at the expense of cultural values and acquisition of personal qualities (tolerance, empathy, independence) that allow changing stereotypes of behavior and prepare for the strategy of dialogue with representatives of other cultures [Korzennikova 2018: 20-21]. Unfavourable psychological states of communicators in intercultural communication, such as anxiety, distrust, wariness can become an insurmountable barrier in the process of intercultural speech interaction and lead to communicative failures [Mu Dan 2022: 56]. Empathy as an important personality trait helps communicators to build confidence in intercultural communication and contributes to their successful and effective intercultural communication. Consequently, that the formation of empathy ability is also necessary at the stage of intercultural communication training in the process of becoming intercultural communicative competence.

Based on the above, we can conclude that in the process of formation and development of intercultural communicative competence there are two important stages: the stage of formation of communicative competence and the stage of preparation for intercultural communication. Formation of empathy plays an important role both at the stage of formation of communicative competence and at the stage of preparation for intercultural communication. Thus, empathy is a key

component of intercultural communicative competence.

### **1.1.3. Linguodidactic foundations of the category "empathy"**

Empathy as an integral component of intercultural communicative competence should be formed in the process of teaching Russian as a foreign language.

The question of the possibility of empathy formation has been studied many times. Scientists hold the following views on the issue of teaching empathy:

- empathy can be developed at any age with the appropriate organisation of training [Kan–Kalik 1984: 123];
- the development of empathy is the result of a person's life experience, his interaction with others [Andrienko 2001: 365].

The above-mentioned opinions of scientists affirm the learnability of empathy.

Empathy and communication are interrelated and interdependent, developed empathy contributes to the balance of interpersonal relations [Kashuba 2009: 126]. By developing the ability of empathy, one can better understand others and increase the effectiveness of communication. Empathy is an emotional and cognitive process that depends on the level of emotional intelligence and social cognitive abilities. By observing, listening and putting oneself in the shoes of others, one can empathise, sympathise with emotions and understand the point of view and needs of the interlocutor. Hence, empathy can be shaped and speech interaction is one of the significant ways to build empathy.

Although there is already a clear definition of empathy in psychology, currently there is still no unified definition of empathy in the field of language teaching. Research on empathy by scholars in the fields of linguistics and pragmatics helps us to define empathy more precisely in the field of language teaching.

In pragmatics, empathy means that both parties to a verbal communication are emotionally connected, can imagine and understand the intentions of the other party, and can encode and decode language from the other party's perspective. [He Ziran 1991: 11-12]. In linguistics, scholars have conducted studies to determine verbal empathy. According to linguists speech manifestation of empathy performs a number

of communicative functions aimed at achieving certain goals of communication (promotes the establishment of contact, forms a favourable environment of mutual understanding, etc.) [Kuznetsova 2010: 150]; as a phenomenon of communication, verbal empathy is understood as an empathetic response of the reacting communicator to the experiences or joy of the interlocutor in the form of a speech utterance with the purpose of consoling in grief or sharing joy [Aznabaeva, Anishchenko, 2017: 265].

Based on the definitions of scholars, we can give the following definition of empathy in the field of foreign language teaching: empathy as a process of understanding and responding to the experience of another is defined by us as the ability to step into the shoes of another, to experience the emotions and feelings of another, as well as to express empathy or sympathy for the interlocutor verbally in communicative interaction in order to psychologically support the interlocutor.

The issue of empathy formation in the process of teaching foreign languages remains open. A number of modern studies are devoted to this issue: E. V. Sapiga (2006), G. V. Solovieva (2012), R. A. Absalyamova, N. V. Voytik (2016), Yu. Zemlyankina (2017), T. V. Tyuleneva (2017), O. A. Frolova, V. V. Lopatinskaya (2018), N. V. Gritskova (2019), A. S. Belousov (2020), M. S. Sheveleva (2021), etc.

The issue of forming empathic skills in foreign language teaching is addressed from the following aspects;

1) Some researchers suggest building the educational process with the help of a system of exercises aimed at the formation of empathy: role and business games, cases, sketches, blitz games (O. A. Frolova, V. V. Lopatinskaya); group communication exercises at practical classes (N. V. Gritskova); changing groups, solving situational problems, techniques with game moments: carousel, zigzag, mask (R. A. Absalyamova, N. V. Gritskova); changing groups, solving situational tasks, techniques with game moments: carousel, zigzag, mask (R. A. Absalyamova, N. V. Voytik); methodical games and exercises: "visualisation", "free dance", "portraying emotions", "intonation", "learning to listen and hear" (Y. I. Zemlyankina), etc. Scholars have proposed various teaching methods, but these

methods were not combined with specific linguistic means of expressing empathy in foreign languages, so there are no further developments on this topic.

2) Other researchers show that the following teaching materials can be used in teaching foreign languages: authentic texts (G. V. Solovieva); fiction (T. V. Tyuleneva); dialogic and monologic speech of everyday and artistic discourse (M. S. Sheveleva). Due to the lack of research on the linguistic means of expressing empathy in Russian as a foreign language, research on the selection of teaching materials also needs to be improved: there are no specific studies on what authentic materials can be selected in addition to fiction texts.

From the above, it can be concluded that the study of the issue of empathy formation in foreign language teaching has a certain theoretical basis, but there is no developed practical base, including the necessary language material, logically systematised and classified according to the stages (from simple to complex) of teaching students to express empathy in a foreign language.

## **1.2. Linguistic means of expressing empathy**

There are three levels of empathy: emotional, cognitive and behavioural levels [Kram 2000: 162]. Consequently, empathy involves not only recognising and understanding the emotions and emotional states of others, but also responding correctly to the emotions of others.

To form empathic skills, first of all, it is necessary to give adequate emotional feedback or response, to try on the role of the interlocutor, to experience his/her emotions, and to avoid evaluation, judgement, criticism.

In the process of verbalisation of empathy it is very important to comprehend in the linguistic means of its expression. According to G. P. Grice's definition, empathy as an empathic response represents the speaker's intention to communicate something, to convey a certain subjective meaning in an utterance [Grice 1985: 217]. Speech intention (intentional component) is formed as a strategic intent before the

utterance is realised. Depending on the strategy, the speaker chooses direct or indirect ways of linguistic intension [Moshcheva 2012: 328].

According to A. A. Kuznetsova, empathic response caused by empathy in the process of verbal communication can be a response to the interlocutor's utterance or be the result of a previously known event – a certain presupposition [Kuznetsova 2010: 80]. A. A. Kuznetsova suggested that verbal empathy is represented by two spheres – empathy (about negative events) and soradovanie (about positive events) (Fig. 1). The first sphere unites such speech acts as understanding, sympathy, consolation, and condolence; the speech act of consolation has a hierarchical structure, including illocutionary types of reassurance, encouragement, justification, and dissuasion. The sphere of sympathy is represented by speech acts of congratulation, praise, compliment [Kuznetsova 2010: 75].

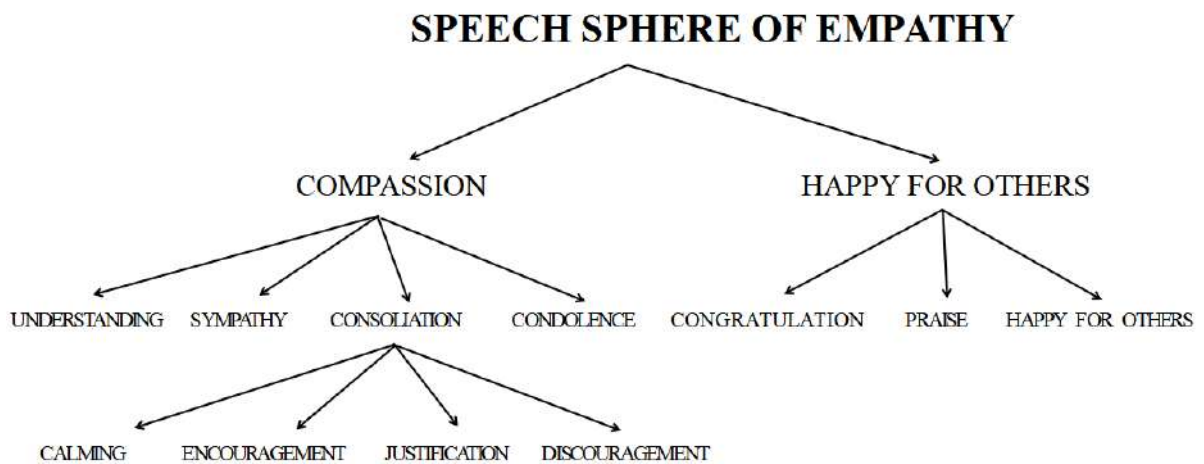


Figure 1. Speech sphere of empathy (A. A. Kuznetsova)

A. Kuznetsova in this issue, but taking into account another significant criterion: negative emotional experiences of another person (grief, sadness) more actively cause empathy than positive ones (for example, joy or pleasure) [Legkaya 2020: 125-128]. Therefore, in this paper we pay more attention to the analysis of linguistic means used when responding to negative emotions of the communicant (sympathy, consolation, condolence), and less attention to the analysis of linguistic means used when responding to positive emotions of the communicant (happy for others).

All the studied examples of the speaker's linguistic means are authentic. We

analysed and classified authentic language examples, generalised ways of expressing empathy in Russian, as well as complicated ways of expressing empathy with additional meanings in real communication.

### 1.2.1. Language means of expressing sympathy

Empathy – compassion arising due to the ability to imagine oneself in the position of a person in a difficult life situation. Usually compassion is generated by the desire to help such a person or at least to express one's feelings to him [Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Psychology and Pedagogy 2013].

Expressing empathy helps to create an emotional space in which people can be honest and open about their experiences. Empathy helps us to better perceive and understand the emotional experiences of others and improves our interactions with them. It allows us to understand ourselves more deeply. When we show empathy to others, we understand ourselves, our level of emotionality and our ability to empathise.

Empathy plays an important role in expressing empathy. It helps us to establish a deep connection with others, to express care, to show support.

In the Russian language there are direct and indirect ways of expressing sympathy [Nesterova 2011: 76]. Direct ways of expressing sympathy:

1. Propositions using verbs "to sympathise", "to understand", "to represent", "to share". For example:

– *I sympathise with you so (very) much* [Formanovskaya, Shevtsova 1992: 66]!

– *You know, I understand you, I am your shoulder, I am your shadow* [Rychkov 2019: electronic resource].

– *I can imagine how hard this is for you* [Kanonik 2023: electronic resource].

– *I share your sadness* [Formanovskaya, Shevtsova 1992: 67].

2. The subjunctive mood. For example:

– *I would feel the same way if I experienced what you are going through* [Canonical 2023: electronic resource].



– *If this happened to me, I would be angry/disappointed/single...* [Canonical 2023: electronic resource].

3. Sentences using the noun "sympathy" (such sentences are used in more formal situations). For example:

– *Allow me to express to you my sincere sympathy* [Lvova 2005: 54].

Indirect ways of expressing sympathy:

1. Propositions with emotional–expressive expression. For example:

– *Yes, it is serious, very serious* [2023: electronic resource].

– *My poor girl* [Spivakova 2002: 75]!

– *Poor girl* [2019: electronic resource].

– *So everything is still the same. How sad it is* [Chernykh 2015: electronic resource].

2. Propositions with the expression of pity or regret. For example:

– *Pity. Pity.*

– *I'm very sorry for what happened.*

– *I am very sorry.*

– *Believe me, I am very sorry* [Mikhalchuk 2016: 228].

3. Clarifying questions. For example:

– *Trutnev broke his leg...*

– *And how did it happen* [Sundeev 2014: electronic resource]?

– *How, now? Heartache* [Fragment from the film "Fracture"]?

The research conducted by collecting and analysing numerous authentic materials has confirmed that the expression of sympathy can be complicated by additional meanings:

1. Expression of sympathy + confirmation of the negative nature of what happened. For example:

– *Poor boy, I feel very sorry for you. What kind of people didn't come and congratulate you* [2023: electronic resource].

2. Expression of sympathy + manifestation of optimism. For example:

– *Eh, I sympathise with you. But maybe not everything is lost yet...and what do*

*you like to do* [Ibid]?

3. Expression of sympathy + assurance of a favourable outcome. For example:

– *I'm sorry. Remember that everything will pass* [Ibid].

4. Expression of sympathy + a wish. For example:

– *I sympathise with your losses. I don't know how to ease the pain, but I wish you mental strength. Life goes on* [Ibid.]

On the basis of the performed analysis it can be stated that sympathy is connected, first of all, with the attitude to emotional openness and complicity in each other's inner life. Expression of sympathy can effectively mitigate negative emotions of the interlocutor. The ways of expressing sympathy can be divided into direct and indirect. The analysis of authentic materials confirms the assumption that the expression of sympathy, as a rule, is accompanied by additional meanings: expression of optimism, hope, wishes, etc.

### **1.2.2. Language means of expressing consolation**

Consolation is the actions, reasoning of a person, which help him/her to treat difficult life situations reasonably, calmly [Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Psychology and Pedagogy 2013].

Consolation plays an important role in the expression of empathy. The communicative function of consolation is to weaken or eliminate the negative emotional state in which the addressee is [Yankina 2012: 184]. Consolation can be especially important in situations when people experience deep pain and need support and understanding.

In Russian there are the following ways of expressing consolation:

1. The imperative inclination of the corresponding verb [Formanovskaya, Shevtsova 1992: 64]:

For example:

– *Calm down.*

– *Do not worry* [Ibid: 66].

2. An expression of justification. For example:

– *You are not to blame.*

– *It is not your fault* [Lvova 2005: 54].

3. An expression of assurance of the interlocutor that what happened is not as catastrophic as he (she) imagines.

For example:

– *(It's) nothing.*

– *It is not serious* [Formanovskaya, Shevtsova 1992: 66–67]!

4. An expression of the thought of the inevitability of life's troubles. For example:

– *Everything happens (in life)* [Ibid: 66].

5. An expression of assurance of a favourable outcome. For example:

– *Everything will (end) well!*

– *Everything will be all right* [Ibid: 66]!

6. Paremiia (proverbs, povorovu Russian as a foreign language and quotations from the classics). G. D. Sidorkova singled out soothing as a speech attitude, which can be carried out when using proverbs [Sidorkova 1999: 47]. For example.

– *Patience and labour will heal everything.*

– *It will heal before the wedding!* (colloquially, jokingly).

– *All troubles are gone, they fell into the water.*

– *What tortures you, teaches you.*

The conducted research, collection and analysis of numerous authentic materials confirmed that in Russian language the expression of consolation, as a rule, is extended by additional meanings:

1. Expression of sympathy + expression of consolation. For example:

– *I understand and sympathise with you. But do not get upset* [Akishkina, Akishkina 2016: 71].

2. Expression of consolation + suggestions. For example:

– *You should not blame yourself for what happened. The feeling of guilt prevents you from fixing problems, and so you should not get depressed* [Valov 2021:

electronic resource].

3. Expression of consolation + assurance of a favourable outcome. For example:

– *Don't worry so much. When some opportunities leave, others always appear*

[Ibid].

4. Expression of consolation + expression of support.

– *If there is one joy for all, there is one trouble for all. I will always give you*

*my shoulder, my friend* [Ibid].

On the basis of the performed analysis we can state that consolation is a verbal support expressed to the interlocutor after comprehension of the situation in which the interlocutor finds himself. Consolation is an important way of expressing empathy. There are many ways of expressing consolation in the Russian language, such as statements in the form of an inductive inclination, stating statements, statements in the form of stable word combinations, and others.

### **1.2.3. Language means of expressing condolence**

Condolence is a feeling of compassion for another's grief, trouble, another's suffering, usually expressed in words of regret [Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Psychology and Pedagogy 2013].

Condolence plays an important role in the expression of empathy. Showing condolence shares the pain of others and creates a space for empathy and support.

Expression of condolence is necessary in difficult life situations, mainly related to irreparable loss, loss of loved ones. It gives a feeling of support, promotes mental healing. Condolence can be called a reactive genre with a perfective perspective, since it appears in speech as a reaction to a sad event (death of a person), which precedes the genre in time of occurrence [Mitina 2012: 56].

As in the case of expressing sympathy, there are direct and indirect ways of expressing condolence [Trofimova 2015: 43].

Direct ways of expressing condolence:

1. Sentences using the verbs "to condole", "to mourn", "to grieve", "to share", etc. For example:

– *I sympathise with you sincerely (deeply, from the bottom of my heart)*

[Formanovskaya, Shevtsova 1992: 67].

– *I grieve with you* [Ibid.]

– *I share your deep sorrow* [Ibid.]

2. Propositions with the use of the noun "condolence". In this case, "condolence" is used in the plural form – condolences. For example:

– *Please accept my condolences* [Mikhailchuk 2016: 53].

– *Please accept my deepest condolences* [Ibid : 54].

– *I would like / I would like / I would like / I would like to express my condolences to you* [Formanovskaya, Shevtsova 1992: 67].

Indirect ways of expressing condolences are expressive. For example:

– *What a (terrible, irreparable, great) grief (misfortune)!*

– *What a terrible (irreparable, great) loss (loss)!*

– *What a loss has befallen you* [Formanovskaya, Shevtsova 1992: 68]!

The research of numerous authentic materials, conducted by collecting and analysing them, has confirmed that in Russian the expression of condolence is often accompanied by additional meanings:

1. Expression of condolence + emotional evaluation of the situation.

– *Horror! How could they not see that it was a large foetus and not do a caesarean? Sorry for the husband and children, I am sorry! Mum is not coming back! I'm crying with you!* [2023: electronic resource].

2. Expression of condolence + expression of support.

– *It is very hard to lose such a dear person. I share your grief. How can I help you? You can always count on me* [Besedovalva 2017: electronic resource].

3. Expression of condolence + expression of promise of moral support.

– *This is a huge loss and a terrible tragedy. I grieve together with you. I pray and will always pray for him* [ibid].

4. Expression of condolence + expression of hope.

– *Life is never fair. But such a beautiful and clever Anastasia is needed in heaven is visible. Now she will always be near her relatives, but most importantly*

*she is not in pain and she does not suffer anymore ...Eternal memory, let the star burn now in the sky. Condolence to relatives and friends* [2024: electronic resource].

On the basis of the performed analysis we can state that condolence (empathic response) is a special type of expression of sympathy, which is used in situations of irreplaceable loss. Ways of expressing condolence are divided into direct and indirect, their choice depends on the speech situation.

#### **1.2.4. Linguistic means of expressing happy for others**

Verbal empathy is represented by empathy (for negative events) and rejoicing (for positive events) [Formanovskaya, Shevtsova 1992: 68].

When the interlocutor experiences positive emotions, such as delight, joy it is necessary to express happy for others. Soradovanie is a form of assistance, empathy with someone else's joy, joy together with someone else, together [Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language (modern version) 2000: 601].

Empathy is an important component of empathy, as it allows us not only to understand the emotional state of another person, but also to share it. The basis of expressing empathy is a positive emotion – an expression of joy, and the event itself is seen as a benefit for the listener [Kuznetsova 2010: 133]. By expressing happy for others, people can strengthen the emotional connection with other people, create an atmosphere of trust and harmonious relations.

In Russian there are the following ways of expressing happy for others.

1. Propositions with the words "happy", "glad". For example:

– *Glad for you* [Kovrizhkina 2019: 35].

– *Finally, I am very happy for you! You are made for each other* [Kovrizhkina 2019: 22].

2. Propositions with verbs "to rejoice", "to imagine", "to share", etc. For example:

– *I am happy, I rejoice for you* [Travkina 2012: electronic resource]!

– *I imagine how happy you are* [2013: electronic resource]!

– *You know, I quite share your joy* [Galitsky 2000: electronic resource].

3. An expression of congratulation. For example:

- Congratulations! It should be celebrated [Akishkina, Akishkina 2016: 42].
- Accept my congratulations [ibid.: 49].

4. Emotional (indirect) ways of expressing commiserations. For example:

- *Great! Tell me more about it* [Kovrizhkina 2019: 22].
- *Wow! That's great news* [Ibid.].
- *Oh! Thank God* [Ibid: 21].
- *Oh, it brings me to tears. Love and care works wonders* [2024: electronic resource]!

Research conducted through the collection and analysis of numerous authentic materials confirmed that in the Russian language the expression of happy for others is often accompanied by additional meanings:

1) Expression of happy for others + expression of congratulation. For example:

- *Natash, glad for your mum! Congratulations* [2001: electronic resource].

2) Expression of happy for others + expression of emotional evaluation of the situation. For example:

- *Congratulations, it is worth a lot* [ibid].

3) Expression of happy for others + expression of approval. For example:

- *Well done! I am happy for our guys! They played great* [Akishkina, Akishkina 2016: 48].

4) Expression of happy for others + expression of wish. For example:

- *Congratulations!!! Much strength and health to your mum* [2001: electronic resource].

On the basis of the performed analysis, it can be stated that soradovanie translates the interlocutor's joyful mood caused by the situation of communication. In Russian there are many ways to express soradovanie. The analysis of authentic materials has shown that in real communication, sympathy is accompanied by additional meanings.

Consequently, sympathy, consolation, condolence and soradovanie form the basis of empathy. When the interlocutor experiences such negative emotions as

sadness, anxiety, anger, fear, etc., it is possible to express sympathy, consolation, condolence to the interlocutor in accordance with the real situation; when the interlocutor experiences such positive emotions as delight, joy, etc., it is important to express sympathy. The conducted research has confirmed that in order to express empathy more effectively, a certain set of linguistic means should be used to expand what is said with additional semantic nuances.

### **1.2.5. Intonational means of expressing empathy**

Intonation not only forms an utterance, but also reveals its meaning and emotional – expressive content, serves as a means of aesthetic impact on the listener [Baichinov 2020: 174].

When we show empathy, our intonation can reflect our sincere attention and warmth to another person. In addition, changing our intonation in response to another person's utterances can help us express our emotional response. For example, we may intonate delight or joy, compassion or regret.

The following intonation constructions are used when expressing empathy.

1) When expressing sympathy, IC – 1, IC – 2 are used.

$\overset{2}{\text{I sympathise}}$  /  $\overset{1}{\text{I sympathise with you}}$  /  $\text{you sympathise with me: Poor!}$   $\overset{1}{\text{I sympathise with you}}$ . It is difficult without the support of loved ones.

$\overset{2}{\text{I understand you/you!}}$   $\overset{1}{\text{I understand you!!!}}$   $\overset{1}{\text{I had such problems too}}$ .

The word "as" is used to emphasise sympathy and  $\overset{2}{\text{IK - 2}}$ ,  $\overset{3}{\text{IK - 3}}$ ,  $\overset{5}{\text{IK - 5}}$ :

$\overset{2}{\text{How sad!}}$   $\overset{3}{\text{How I sympathise with you!}}$ ;  $\overset{5}{\text{How I understand you!}}$  [Zakharova, Lukyanov, Paretskaya, Shakirova 2009: 31].

**2) IC – 1, IC – 2 are used when expressing consolation.**

$\overset{2}{\text{Don't worry about it, you'll be fine..}}$



1 2  
 Things will work out and you will still be happy.

2 2  
 Did you miss your train? It's okay, don't worry. You'll take the bus. [Zakharova,  
 Lukyanov, Paretskaya, Shakirova 2009: 31 - 32].

### **3) When expressing condolences, IC - 1, IC - 2 are used.**

1  
 I'm sorry.

1  
 My condolences.

2  
 My sincere condolences.

### **4) IC-1, IC-2, IC-5 are used when expressing commiseration.**

2  
 I'm really glad you two found each other!

1  
 I sincerely congratulate you on a successful election campaign.

2 2  
 Bravo! I congratulate you, well done!

5 2  
 What a joy! You did a great job.

Studies have shown that IC-2, IC-3 and IC-5 are actively used to express empathy. In real communication, using the right intonation depending on situations is also an important way of expressing empathy.

#### **1.2.6. Criteria for selecting linguistic means of expressing empathy for teaching purposes**

Language material in foreign language teaching methodology is traditionally selected according to certain principles. At present, the selection of teaching content is made taking into account the purpose and stage of learning on the basis of two principles: 1) necessity and sufficiency of the content to achieve the set learning goal. 2) accessibility of learning content for its assimilation [Shchukin 2006: 123]. In

order to form empathic skills in learners, these two principles should also be used as a basis for the selection of learning materials, in particular, the selection of language material. In conjunction with the learning objective and the language level of the learners, the following criteria should be observed when selecting language material in order to form learners' empathic skills:

– **language relevance;**

The object of study in this research paper is Chinese advanced level students of Russian as a foreign language. The students have a Russian language proficiency level corresponding to Russian as a foreign language level–2 and aim to pass the third certification level of Russian as a foreign language level–3. The "Requirements for the III level of general proficiency in Russian as a foreign language" clearly defines the content of communicative and speech competence – when solving communicative tasks within this level, a foreigner must provide psychological comfort of communication with complicated forms of speech etiquette: compliment, courtesy, condolence, sympathy, etc. [Andryushina, Zhorova, Makova, Noreiko 2014: 7]. Therefore, teaching the expression of sympathy, consolation, condolence and happy for others in the process of forming empathic skills is an important goal of teaching Russian as a foreign language at this stage.

– **language accessibility;**

Language material should be selected that is appropriate to the level of the students in terms of complexity and volume. In terms of complexity, a few complex expressions can be selected according to the requirements of the C1 language level. There are different ways of expressing sympathy, consolation, condolence and happy for others. Some complex expressions can be used in teaching materials. For example, when teaching the expression of consolation, one can select such means of expression with Russian specificity: "It will heal before the wedding!", one can also select proverbs such as "Patience and labour will heal everything.". When teaching expressions of sympathy, sentences with the subjunctive mood can be selected: "I would feel the same way if I experienced what you are going through." As for the volume, depending on the level of students' language proficiency at the C1 stage, the

volume of linguistic means can be expanded by introducing not only simple constructions, but also complex ones (compound, compound–subordinate sentences, with determinative, explanatory, circumstantial adjectives, etc.) into the process of teaching a foreign language at a certain stage.

– **authenticity of the language material;**

Authentic materials are especially important when teaching Russian as a foreign language [Sheiko 2019: 22]. It is necessary to use authentic materials in the process of forming students' empathic skills.

Authentic materials can not only increase the authenticity of linguistic expression, but also help students to understand the peculiarities of linguistic thinking of native speakers of Russian in the process of learning.

Authentic materials are materials created by native speakers not for teaching purposes [Ibid]. Krichevskaya calls such materials as fiction, folk art (folklore), visual and musical art, real – life objects (e.g., furniture, clothes, toys, dishes, etc.) and their visual representations as authentic [Krichevskaya 1996: 14].

On the basis of this principle, materials of everyday and everyday character are allocated to the group of pragmatic materials (questionnaires, questionnaires, announcements, labels, maps, etc.), with the help of which learners can "immerse" in the environment of the native speakers of the target language. The researcher evaluates pragmatic materials "an order of magnitude higher" than authentic teaching aids, despite the superiority of the latter in volume.

As expressive samples of modern foreign language, authentic and pragmatic materials create an illusion of students' participation in the real life of native speakers, which, in turn, significantly increases their motivation [Krichevskaya 1996: 15].

– **variation and differentiation of language material.**

In order for learners to maximise their mastery of linguistic means that contribute to communicative practice, language material should be variable and differentiated. First of all, language cliches have a variation character. With the help of language cliches, learners should be able to use as many linguistic means of expression as possible. For example, when teaching the expression of gladness,

learners can be given as many language cliches as possible.

For example, sentences with the words "glad", "to rejoice", "to present", "to share"; the expression of congratulation, etc. Differentiation of language material requires giving learners language means to use in different situations (formal and informal situations). For example, when teaching the expression of sympathy, students can be provided with language means for formal situations (sentences using the verbs "to sympathise", "to understand", "to represent", "to share"; the subjunctive mood; sentences using the noun "sympathy") and language means for informal situations (sentences with emotional – expressive expression; clarifying questions).

Thus, the following important criteria should be observed when selecting language material for the formation of empathic skills in Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage of teaching Russian as a foreign language: relevance, accessibility, authenticity, variation and differentiation.

In this paper, language materials from dictionaries, textbooks and mass media are mainly used to teach empathic skills.

Language materials are created on the basis of authentic text materials. The language examples are mainly selected from textbooks, appropriate for the level of study (B2-C1): "Emotions and Opinions. Expressing feelings in Russian: a manual for the development of Russian oral speech" (A. A. Akishkina, T. E. Akishkina, 2016), "Expressing your emotions in Russian: a manual for foreign students" (D. G. Kovrizhkina, 2019), "Russian speech etiquette: a workshop. Tutorial" (T. G. Mikhalchuk, 2016); from the reference book: "Speech etiquette (Russian – English correspondences)" (N. I. Formanovskaya, S. V. Shevtsova, 1992); from dictionaries: "Dahl's Comprehensible Dictionary of the Russian Language (modern version)" (V. I. Dal, 2000), "Big Russian Encyclopaedic Dictionary" (2009), "Dmitriev's Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language" (D. V. Dmitriev, 2003); from correspondence in social networks.

The selection of these textbooks, reference books, dictionaries and correspondence in social networks ensures that the language materials are appropriate to the learners' level. The classification and analyses that we made on

the basis of these language examples ensure variation and differentiation of language materials.

### **1.3. Ways of forming empathic skills in the process of teaching Russian as a foreign language to Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage**

For the effective development of empathic skills in Chinese students of philology at the lessons of Russian as a foreign language in order to form intercultural communicative competence of students it is necessary to pay attention to the specificity of the skills to be formed, as well as to the national characteristics of students. It is important to take into account the peculiarities of teaching the Russian language to Chinese students of philology and to investigate the ways of forming empathic skills at the lessons of Russian as a foreign language in the Chinese audience.

#### **1.3.1. Empathic skills in foreign language teaching**

Currently, there is no unified definition of empathic skills in the field of foreign language teaching.

E. V. Sapiga conducted a study of empathic skills in foreign language teaching and identified the components of the teaching content important for the development of empathic skills in foreign language communication among students – translators:

1. Ability to listen, perceive and understand foreign language speech;
2. Ability to interact with a foreign – speaking person;
3. Ability to use etiquette forms of communication;
4. Ability to respond adequately (verbally and non-verbally) to the statements of a foreign-speaking interlocutor [Sapiga 2006: 9].

Currently, most scientists believe that empathy includes three levels: cognitive, emotional and behavioural. Thus, emotional empathy is based on the mechanisms of projection and imitation of motor and affective reactions of another person;

cognitive empathy is based on intellectual processes – comparison, analogy, etc.; behavioural empathy is a form of empathy expressed in specific actions towards another person [Prokofieva, Romanova 2018: 4].

When learning a foreign language, many foreign learners tend to automatically use the language means they have learnt in real communication. In real communication, such automatic reactions lack cognitive and emotional understanding and create an impression of carelessness and insincerity in the interlocutor. This is not conducive to establishing contact with interlocutors in intercultural communication. Therefore, we believe that for the formation of empathic skills in foreign language classes it is necessary to take into account the cognitive and emotional levels of empathy. In addition, we agree with E. V. Sapiga that listening is an important component of the formation of students' empathy when teaching foreign languages. Empathy at both cognitive and emotional levels should be based on active listening. Only by learning to listen can learners correctly perceive their speech partner on the cognitive and emotional levels.

Consequently, we believe that empathic skills in foreign language teaching include empathic listening, empathic understanding and empathic responding.

1. Empathic listening is the ability to pay attention to the interlocutor's emotional state when listening.

If one ignores the emotions of the interlocutor while talking, the cognitive and emotional understanding of the interlocutor will not be realised and hence there will be no empathic response in communication. Thus, empathic listening is a defining step in empathic communication.

To achieve empathic listening, it is necessary to learn to pay attention to non-verbal means of expression, verbal means of expression and intonation of the interlocutor in the process of communication, and not only to the information expressed at the level of words. During the listening process, it is important to use non-verbal means, such as eye contact and head nods, to express your attention and understanding of the interlocutor.

2. Empathic understanding – the ability to understand the emotional state of the

interlocutor on a cognitive and emotional level.

In the process of forming empathic skills it is important to develop students' understanding of negative and positive emotions of the interlocutor at the cognitive and emotional level. This means, firstly, it is necessary to understand the situation at the cognitive level in which the interlocutor is and to identify the emotions of the interlocutor based on the situation, events, etc. In order to better understand the interlocutor, students need not only to use their everyday experience but also their own cultural and country knowledge so that they can rationally analyse the situation in which the interlocutor is and the reasons for such emotions.

Secondly, it is necessary to put oneself in the interlocutor's shoes, to understand the interlocutor emotionally and to be ready to provide the interlocutor with emotional support. The key point here is emotional empathy with the interlocutor and the ability to put oneself in the interlocutor's shoes, thus increasing the readiness to provide emotional support to the interlocutor.

3. Empathic response – the ability to build an empathic dialogue with the interlocutor.

The behavioural level of empathy requires people to support the interlocutor on the basis of cognitive and emotional understanding of the interlocutor. To meet this requirement, the most important thing at the lessons of Russian as a foreign language is the formation of students' ability to use linguistic means for adequate response to the interlocutor's emotions. The methodology sets the task of teaching an adequate response to a speech message" [Asimov, Shukin]. [Asimov, Shchukin 2009: 10].

Adequate response to the interlocutor's emotions helps to express understanding to the interlocutor, to show care for the interlocutor and provide him/her with emotional support, promotes mutual understanding and mutual trust between interlocutors, which is the highest form of empathic communication. In our opinion, at the lessons of Russian as a foreign language mainly teach the use of linguistic and intonational means to respond to the emotions of the interlocutor. Non-verbal means of expression are used as additional teaching material.

To summarise, empathic skills in foreign language teaching include empathic

listening, empathic understanding and empathic responding. Effective empathic response in a foreign language should be based on empathic listening and empathic understanding.

### **1.3.2. Analysing the peculiarities of learning Russian by Chinese students**

Formation of empathic skills in the Chinese audience implies taking into account the national specificity of this audience:

#### 1. The phenomenon of anxiety in the formation of speaking and listening skills.

There are three main aspects of anxiety experienced by Chinese learners in the process of learning foreign languages:

- over-expectation anxiety (doubting their ability to achieve their expected foreign language learning goals);
- anxiety in class (fear of answering the teacher's questions, of appearing "funny" because of a grammatically incorrect answer);
- oral exam anxiety (due to getting used to written exams) [Liu Jianda 1996: 9].

Due to cultural peculiarities, Chinese students tend to listen more to the teacher and are not inclined to express their opinions (which is further complicated by difficulties related to the development of listening and speaking skills) [Aksenova, Konyshva, Charchoglian 2020: 30]. Thus, the phenomenon of anxiety can be observed in the process of formation of Chinese students' speaking and listening skills at the lessons of Russian as a foreign language.

In the process of forming students' empathic skills, the focus is on the training stage. Anxiety will affect the quality of students' oral communication at the lesson and reduce the desire of students to verbally express their own emotions and respond to the emotions of interlocutors. Therefore, in the process of formation of students' empathic skills at the lessons of Russian as a foreign language it is important to eliminate students' anxiety.

#### 2. Lack of communicative practice in traditional teaching.

Due to the peculiarities of Chinese teaching methods, students are capable of



memorising and reproducing a very large amount of information, but are not inclined to its creative processing [Aksenova, Konysheva, Charchoglian 2020: 29]. Therefore, Chinese learners sometimes memorise foreign language materials such as words, phrases, sentences, etc. exclusively by heart, but separately from the context. Besides, in order to avoid language errors, Chinese students of philology tend to use those expressions in which they are sure, so their speech behaviour is often characterised by a certain unwillingness to use expressions characterised by a wide lexical composition in communication.

In practice, Chinese students' language anxiety in the form of fear of communication is often manifested in the following: in classes, Chinese students refuse to actively participate in discussions and dialogues in Russian; as a rule, students dare to answer only after the teacher addresses them; students prefer to conduct a conversation/dialogue often in the form of question – answer. Chinese students hardly express their opinion about any topic, problem, question, almost do not use detailed argumentation of their point of view, do not take part in role-playing games, brainstorming, discussions and other forms of learning activities that are typical within the framework of using communicative methodology of teaching a foreign language. In the course of retelling / describing a text, Chinese learners usually resort to memorising the text by heart, and when answering questions about the text they usually read out the whole sentence / phrase from the text, avoiding to construct their own answer based on the information they have read [Qiyang 2023: 272].

3. The needs for personal improvement and career development are an important motivation in the learning process.

Nowadays, knowledge of foreign languages is becoming more and more valuable and in demand on the labour market. Russian, being one of the world's leading languages, offers students a wide range of opportunities for employment and career development. It is important for employers that Chinese students of philology have professional foreign language skills in the field of intercultural communication. Educational institutions should adjust the teaching model to meet social needs,

emphasising the development of practical skills and the ability to apply them, as well as the enhancement of professional competences, of students to increase their competitiveness [Wang Jie 2019: 10-11]. It can be seen that personal and career development are important motivations for Chinese language students to study Russian as a foreign language.

Based on the performed analysis, it can be stated that in the process of learning Russian, Chinese students face such problems as the phenomenon of anxiety in the process of training speaking and listening skills, insufficient communicative practice in the classroom. Personal improvement and career development are important motives of learning Russian for Chinese students of philology.

### **1.3.3. A set of approaches for the formation of empathic skills of Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage of training Russian as a foreign language**

Taking into account the peculiarities of Chinese students' Russian language learning, the content and goals of teaching empathic skills in the classes of Russian as a foreign language, the following approaches are predominantly used in the learning process: personality-oriented, communicative and competence-based.

#### **1. Personality-oriented approach.**

In order to reduce the anxiety of students when studying Russian as a foreign language in the classroom it is important to organize the learning process in accordance with the personality – oriented approach.

Personality-oriented approach prioritizes the identity of the student, his or her self-value, and the subjectivity of the learning process. Personality-oriented education is not just taking into account the peculiarities of the subject of learning, it is a different methodology of organizing learning conditions, which implies not "taking into account" but "including" his/her own personal functions or demanding his/her subjective experience [Talysheva, Pegova 2020: 7]. In order to use the person-centered approach to form empathic skills in students, the following key points should be taken into account in the teaching process:

### 1) Creating a benevolent atmosphere in the classroom.

A welcoming atmosphere in the classroom and a trusting relationship between teacher and students are key to building student-centered lessons. A welcoming classroom environment enhances students' willingness to express themselves in oral communication, promotes students' emotional expression in oral communication, and increases their ability to perceive and respond to the emotions of others. Teachers should try to prevent learners from perceiving the classroom as a place where they often make mistakes, as excessive disclosure of shortcomings may lead to learners' frustration, loss of confidence and anxiety [Liu Jianda 1996: 9].

### 2) Arrangement of teaching material from simple to complex.

In order to alleviate the anxiety of Chinese students' lack of confidence in their skills, it is necessary to arrange the teaching material from simple to complex. Classes begin by explaining material that will be easy for students to understand, and then gradually increase the complexity of the material. The formation of empathic skills cannot be achieved all at once.

### 3) Using confessional dialogues for emotional immersion.

Confessional dialog is complaining, emotional accounts of experiences. The most trustful communication in confessional dialog is with friends, in it communicators are extremely frank, strive to share their feelings and experiences with them [Lemyaskina, Sternin, 2000: 64]. The use of confessional dialogues in Russian as a foreign language classes can be a very effective way to immerse students emotionally in the language environment. Confessional dialog shows mutual trust, mutual understanding and mutual support between interlocutors and is an important example of empathic communication for learners in Russian as a foreign language [Mu Dan 2024: 250].

## 2. Communicative approach.

The communicative approach is aimed at the formation of students' semantic perception and understanding of a foreign language, as well as mastering the language material for the construction of speech utterances [Perevyshko, Yushkevich 2021: 176]. In order to use the communicative approach to form empathic skills in

students, the following key points should be taken into account in the teaching process:

1) The training is communication-oriented.

In the process of teaching empathic skills, the emphasis is on developing the ability to speak, listen, read and write in Russian in real communication situations. C. F. Shatilov proposed the principle of taking into account the positive influence of different types of speech activity on each other. Besides speaking, listening, such types of speech activity as reading and writing also greatly contribute to the development of empathic skills.

When forming the system of exercises, the communicative-practical or practical orientation of training should be taken into account. C. F. Shatilov distinguished the following types of exercises: non-communicative, conditionally-communicative and genuinely-communicative [Shatilov 1986: 61].

**Non-communicative exercises.** Non-communicative (formal, analytical, linguistic) exercises are exercises performed for the purpose of comprehension and conscious assimilation of language material (grammatical, lexical, phonetic) in different types of speech activity [Shatilov 1986: 61]. Such exercises allow students to consolidate basic linguistic knowledge and develop students' speech skills, thus providing a full – fledged language preparation for subsequent types of exercises.

**Conditional-communicative.** Conditionally (educationally)-communicative exercises are exercises that imitate and simulate communication for educational purposes, for the students to master the language material, i.e. aspectual speech skills [Shatilov 1986: 61]. Role-playing games can be used predominantly as such type of exercises in the learning process. Role-playing games are an extremely valuable method of teaching a foreign language, they encourage thinking and creativity, allow students to develop speech skills and practice using a foreign language in an environment as close to real life as possible [Chudaykina, Loginova, Kostovarova 2017: 83].

**Genuinely-communicative exercises.** Genuinely(naturally)-communicative exercises are exercises in which the communicative function of a foreign language

and the teaching of communicative skills is realized [Shatilov 1986: 61]. Brainstorming and case exercises are used as genuine-communicative exercises. Brainstorming and case-tasks are important exercises for organizing students' collective interaction, which has a significant impact on the atmosphere in the classroom, stimulates students' inner initiatives, forms the ability to put oneself in another's place, express one's emotions and thoughts, support the interlocutor [Antsiferova, Mu Dan 2023: 46 – 47].

## 2) Teaching on the basis of speech situations.

Situation is such a dynamic system of relationships between communicators, which due to its reflection in the human consciousness generates a personal need for purposeful activity [Naumenko 2008: 105]. Situativity is a key aspect of communication-oriented teaching of empathic skills. When teaching empathic skills, it is important to take into account specific situations in which interactions between people occur.

## 3) Use of authentic materials.

Authenticity of materials implies the use of materials created by methodologists with the orientation on the educational audience with the preservation of the properties of authentic material (such as coherence, informative and emotional richness, visualization, taking into account the needs of students and the interests of the intended recipient, the use of natural language, etc.), as well as the authenticity of application of educational materials in the classroom [Sheiko 2019: 14-15]. In the context of developing empathic skills, the use of authentic materials will help learners to better understand the cultural peculiarities, mentality and emotions of native speakers.

J. G. Gebhard offers the following classification of authentic materials:

- 1) Authentic audiovisual materials (e.g. TV commercials, feature/documentary films, cartoons, TV shows, etc.);
- 2) Authentic audio materials (Russian audiobooks, Russian songs, radio programs, etc.);
- 3) Authentic visual materials (paintings by Russian/Soviet artists, slides, photos,

postcards of Russian landmarks, etc.);

4) Authentic printed materials (newspaper/magazine articles, excerpts from Russian fiction, song lyrics, etc.);

5) Realia (material objects) (e.g., Russian coins, toys, utensils, etc.).

### 3. Competency-based approach.

Competence is a personality property based on competence [Shchukin 2006: 139]. Empathic skills are closely related to competence. The competence approach, which is leading nowadays in education, involves a significant effort of practical orientation of education, is aimed at achieving a new, holistic educational result (development of personal qualities, learners), correlates with humanistic values of education [Pavlova 2005: 103]. In order to use the competence approach to form empathic skills in students, the following key points should be taken into account in the learning process:

1) Formation of empathic skills is aimed at the development of positive personal qualities.

The formation of empathic skills should be aimed at the development of students' personal qualities such as respect for differences, tolerance of others, etc., which constitute an important content of emotional intelligence. To achieve this goal, the teacher should act as an example for students, demonstrating respect, tolerance for students, readiness to help them. Positive samples of teacher's behavior contribute to the formation of positive qualities in students.

2) Organizing group activities to develop students' ability to cooperate.

Formation of students' empathic skills is of great importance for increasing their ability to cooperate. Empathy promotes a better understanding and perception of other people's emotions, needs and motivations, which helps students to interact effectively in a team.

Group activities such as role-playing, brainstorming, and case assignments allow students to work together on common tasks and achieve joint goals. This fosters the ability to listen and respect others' points of view. Conflicts and disagreements may arise in the group, which is an integral part of cooperative

learning. The ability to compromise, respect differences and find common ground with other group members is important in developing the ability to cooperate. In a group, students can support and help each other, which builds trust and empathic skills.

## **CONCLUSIONS OF CHAPTER ONE**

Empathy occupies an important place in the process of intercultural communication and is the key to the successful formation of intercultural communicative competence, so it has an important theoretical and practical significance in the process of teaching Russian as a foreign language.

The concept of empathy first appeared in psychology, and then gradually began to be applied in linguistics and communication theory, in particular, intercultural communication. Scientists deepen and expand the definition of empathy, initially considering it only as a psychological category, and then gradually expanding its meaning to personal qualities and an important ability in interpersonal communication.

In modern research, empathy not only denotes a psychological process, but can also be a personal quality and communicative skill of a person, it includes not only an emotional component. Empathy is a complex ability consisting of cognitive, emotional and behavioral components. Empathy helps communicators to overcome anxiety, prejudice and stereotype when communicating with people of different cultural backgrounds, as well as to show patience and respect for others in intercultural communication.

As a special type of communication, the participation of empathy is necessary in intercultural communication. In the process of formation of intercultural communicative competence there are two important stages: the stage of formation of communicative competence and the stage of preparation for intercultural communication. Empathy is an important component of communicative competence and an important personal quality for preparation for intercultural communication.

Therefore, empathy plays an important role in the formation of intercultural communicative competence.

It was also revealed that the issue of empathy in foreign language teaching has remained unexplored in modern scientific literature. This mainly concerns the lack of systematicity and classification of linguistic means that express empathy, unformed vocabulary of the linguistic minimum of empathic vocabulary.

Based on the results of linguistic research, we believe that the linguistic means of expressing empathy in Russian can be divided into sympathy, consolation, condolence and soradovanie. To make an expression containing empathy more convincing, it is necessary to combine several empathic expressions (for example, expressions of sympathy and consolation). When expressing empathy it is important to use intonation constructions, which at the non – verbal level also contributes to the establishment of the necessary contact with the communication partner. The selection of language material for the formation of empathic skills in Chinese students of philology of the advanced stage of teaching Russian as a foreign language can be based on the following criteria: relevance of the material, accessibility of the material, authenticity of the material, variability and differentiation of the material. The language teaching material is selected from textbooks, reference books, dictionaries and mass media according to these criteria.

Currently, there is no unified definition of empathic skills in the field of foreign language teaching. Based on the research conducted, it can be argued that empathy in foreign language teaching is not a separate ability, but a set of communicative skills, which include empathic listening, empathic understanding and empathic responding. Taking into account the characteristics of Chinese students of philology as well as students of other specialties, the person – centered approach, communicative approach, and competence approach can be used in the process of forming empathic skills. In this paper, the author proposes specific teaching methods corresponding to these teaching approaches.



## CHAPTER II. METHODOLOGY OF FORMING EMPATHIC SKILLS IN CHINESE STUDENTS OF PHILOLOGY IN THE PROCESS OF TEACHING RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

### 2.1. Principles of teaching empathic skills

Principles of learning are the initial provisions that, in their totality, determine the requirements for the learning process as a whole and its components (goals, objectives, methods, means, organizational forms, learning process). They are among the basic categories of methodology [Shchukin 2006: 147]. The process of forming empathic skills in foreign students is based on the following principles of teaching Russian as a foreign language: didactic, linguistic, psychological and methodological principles proper.

#### 2.1.1. Didactic principles

These principles reflect the main provisions of the theory of education and learning developed in didactics [Shchukin 2006: 149]. In the process of teaching empathic skills it is important to rely on the following didactic principles.

**Principle of visibility.** Visualization-based learning contributes to the formation of students' ability to perceive and correctly identify verbally and non-verbally expressed emotions of native Russian speakers through observation. The use of authentic materials such as (audio)visual materials (movies, videos, paintings, photographs), printed authentic materials (newspaper/magazine articles, fragments of fiction texts) is especially important when studying verbal and non-verbal means of expressing empathy. For example, when expressing sympathy, Russian people use such non-verbal means of expression as hugging, stroking on the shoulder. Only by demonstrating visual teaching materials to students, we achieve adequate perception and effective assimilation of transmitted knowledge.

On the other hand, the illustrative fund can be widely used in the system of exercises aimed at developing empathic skills. Illustrative means evoke empathic

reactions in students through visual stimulation, give them an opportunity to immerse themselves in the communication situation under consideration and prepare for empathy on an emotional level. In addition, a great deal of country and cultural knowledge is also included in these teaching materials. After viewing and analyzing the visual materials, students confidently reach the level of conditional communication by composing and acting out dialogues to reinforce the ways of expressing empathy.

**Principle of accessibility and affordability.** In order to realize this principle, first of all, the teacher needs to convey new material to the students by explaining it in a well thought – out and understandable way. For example, the MS TEAMS platform can be used for homework so that students can work with the learning materials at their convenience. According to this principle, the learning materials used for the formation and development of empathic skills should correspond to the students' Russian language proficiency level (C1). This means that when selecting teaching materials it is necessary to be guided by the teaching complexes of the corresponding level (Russian as a foreign language – 3), and by the tests of the corresponding certification level (aspects of speaking and listening (Russian as a foreign language – 3). The "Requirements for III Level of General Proficiency in Russian as a Foreign Language" defines the requirements for speech skills, in particular, for listening and speaking: when controlling listening skills, the volume of the text–dialogue is 270-400 words, when controlling dialogic speech in the aspect of speaking, the number of replicas is 6-10 or more [Andryushina, Zhorova, Makova, Noreiko 2014: 12, 16]. Therefore, when selecting teaching materials and developing a system of exercises, it is necessary to take into account the specifics and the volume of the content of test tasks in speaking and listening of the third certification level.

**Principle of interrelated communicative, cognitive and sociocultural development of students.** The basis of interrelated communicative, sociocultural and cognitive development of students should be the ability to consciously use the

studied language as a means of communication and self-expression and knowledge of the most important subsystems of the studied language [Galskova, Gez 2004: 336]. The aim of teaching Russian as a foreign language is integrative. In order to form students' empathic skills in intercultural communication, it is important not only to form students' linguistic skills in the learning process, but also to form students' sociocultural ability and such personal qualities as tolerance, tolerance, flexibility, etc., which are important conditions for interaction with representatives of foreign – language culture. In addition, in the learning process, attention should also be paid to the development of students' abilities of logical thinking, imagination, the ability to use various strategies (grouping, deduction, repetition, outlining, memorizing key words, etc.) [Faizrakhmanova 2017: 17] for the conscious assimilation of language material.

Consequently, in the process of forming empathic skills in students, it is important for the teacher to pay attention to the fact that students can compare and find similarities and differences in the expression of emotions, in particular, empathy in their native culture and in the culture of the target language. When selecting teaching materials, it is important to use authentic country texts, confessional dialogues, feature films, etc. When composing exercises aimed at the development of empathic skills, it is necessary to use question – and – answer work to check students' cultural knowledge (elements of the author's biography of the art works used (literature, painting, music; brief content of the work; cultural commentary on it). In addition, in the process of mastering language material it is important to teach students to consciously generalize and memorize language clichés. When forming empathic skills, it is necessary to focus on developing students' imagination and logical thinking skills by asking them to imagine a dialog situation and tell about an event that occurred in the dialog.

**The principle of teamwork.** Educational collective interaction is one of the effective ways to implement the communicative approach at foreign language lessons and in extracurricular activities, because the most effective is learning to

communicate within the framework of specially organized communication [Kirillova 2016: 117].

The essence of the technology of collective interaction is that learners communicate and cooperate in the process of performing tasks. To implement this teaching principle, group discussion can be organized at the stage of introducing language knowledge, at the stage of forming and developing learners' skill of using the presented language knowledge and empathic skills (role-playing games, case-tasks, brainstorming). Learners are divided into several groups to compose dialogs. The technology of collective interaction can be maintained in extracurricular activities (homework), which allows to fully mobilize the enthusiasm of students in the learning process, has a positive impact on the atmosphere of the learning process, stimulates the internal initiatives of students, promotes empathy, i.e. forms the ability to put oneself in the place of another, to express their emotions and thoughts, to support the interlocutor. Collective interaction is aimed not only at the formation of empathic skills, but also at the formation of the ability to interact, cooperate, jointly achieve goals, which is useful for the future professional activity of students.

### **2.1.2. Linguistic principles**

Linguistics, analyzing a specific linguistic material, gives it a scientifically based interpretation, which is of great importance for teaching methodology [Suleimenova, Sadykova, Lozenko, 2015: electronic resource]. The following linguistic principles underlie the process of forming empathic skills in foreign students.

**Systemic principle.** In contrast to the traditional interpretation, in the process of forming empathic skills, the principle of systematicity includes a number of specific features:

– Systematicity of the teaching content is expressed in the coherence of topics, tasks, language material, united by a common goal and objectives. At the beginning of lessons it is necessary to use activation techniques to bring students to the realization of the necessity of mastering new material. Then the stage of introduction

of new material is realized with subsequent practice and consolidation, providing control of the level of formation of empathic skills. These stages of the lesson (and the learning process as a whole) are interrelated, the whole learning process is complete, which contributes to the progressive development of students' empathic skills.

– Systematicity of exercises and tasks. In order to ensure the gradual development of empathic skills in the process of learning Russian, exercises should also be systematic. After the introduction of new knowledge, language exercises are usually carried out to check whether the students have mastered the language clichés. When forming the students' skill of using the presented language knowledge, conditional-communicative exercises are offered, such as supplementing responses, performing tasks after reading dialogues, composing dialogues according to the model. When developing students' empathic skills, it is necessary to include purely communicative tasks, such as composing dialogues based on visuals, presented situations, etc.

**Principle of language minimization.** The principle of language minimization consists in the selection and dosage of linguistic and speech means. First, it is necessary to give learners the language minimum of means of expressing empathy (expressions of sympathy, consolation, condolence and sympathy), including phonetic, lexical, grammatical minimums and so on. If there are enough linguistic means of expression, learners will be able to express empathy to their interlocutors in conversation. Secondly, it is necessary to provide students with the necessary knowledge of country studies. Empathic conversations of foreign students in Russian most often take place in the process of intercultural communication. Understanding the cultural differences between the country of the target language and the native country helps foreign students to communicate successfully.

**The principle of comprehension of the Russian linguistic picture of the world.** The linguistic picture of the world is a set of ideas about the world, a certain way of conceptualization of reality, historically formed in the everyday consciousness of a given linguistic group and reflected in the language [Jarussian as

a foreign language [2021: 103]. In order to form empathic skills in the classes of Russian as a foreign language, students need not only to master linguistic knowledge, but also to understand the way of thinking of native speakers of Russian and have ideas about the Russian linguistic picture of the world. Students should understand the values, traditional customs, ways of expressing emotions of Russian language speakers, etc., which are reflected in the formation of the Russian language.

In the process of forming empathic skills, it is especially important for students to understand a number of features of the Russian linguistic picture of the world, such as the obviousness of expressing emotions, the desire for kindness, compassion, sincerity, emphasis on the importance of interpersonal relations and closeness of the soul. When introducing new linguistic material it is necessary to explain key concepts, for example, how Russians understand the concept of "Sympathy", to give synonyms and antonyms to this word, to explain how, in what situations Russian speakers express sympathy. When working with culturally Marussian language as a foreign material it is advisable to analyze historical, cultural and author's peculiarities reflected in the material.

### **2.1.3. Psychological principles**

Psychological principles reflect the determining importance of psychology in the construction and formation of students' speech activity when teaching a foreign language.

**The principle of taking into account the phasing in the formation of skills and abilities.** In the process of formation of empathic skills the initial moment of training is the formation of knowledge. The final result of training is the formation of necessary empathic skills in intercultural communication.

When realizing this principle, four stages are distinguished for the formation of students' speech activity:

- Introductory (communication of empathic knowledge, introduction of speech formulas for expressing empathy),
- standardizing (formation of speech skills through language exercises –

composing sentences according to speech formulas, inserting words in the correct form),

- varying (through conditional–communicative exercises and work with dialogues with the expression of empathy, improving speech skills and the formation of speech skills),

- creative (development of speech skills by independently composing and acting out dialogues and organizing group discussions on the basis of culturally Marussian as a foreign language materials (video fragments of films or cartoons, reproductions of paintings, songs).

**Person-centered principle.** According to this principle, in the classes of Russian as a foreign language on the formation of empathic skills, such characteristics of students as character, desires, interest, age features, learning habits, language level, etc. are taken into account. As teaching materials can be selected that encourage students to put themselves in the places of others, to understand and help others, for example, dialogs with empathic elements, photos illustrating different human emotions. The learning process should take into account the national specifics of students, for example, Chinese students prefer to know the lesson/learning plan in advance and have a habit of working according to the traditional scheme: from the teacher's explanation to the system of exercises. In addition, a comfortable, trusting atmosphere should be created in the learning process, allowing students to express their opinions, learn to listen and hear each other.

#### **2.1.4. Methodological principles proper**

Methodological principles proper reflect the peculiarities of teaching a foreign language as an academic discipline [Shchukin 2006: 165]. The following methodological principles can be used in the formation and development of empathic skills in foreign students.

**Principle of situational and thematic organization of training material.** This principle implies such an organization of teaching material that would reflect

the specifics of functioning of the selected language material in life situations and topics [Fedotova 2013: 170].

The formation of empathic skills and abilities is more effective if the learning conditions are as close as possible to the real communicative conditions in the learning process, and tasks imitating real communicative scenes, such as role-playing games, case – method analysis are widely used in the classroom. The learning process should be organized on the material of topics and situations that arouse empathy and genuine interest in students. For example, situations that contain problems that are relevant for undergraduates: sessional period, interpersonal relations, student life, etc.

Thus, the formation of empathic skills in Chinese students of the advanced stage of learning Russian as a foreign language at the lessons of Russian as a foreign language requires the observance of certain principles of teaching, which reflect the provisions of the theory of education and learning, linguistics, psychology and methodology of teaching foreign languages. Taking into account the presented teaching principles the selection of teaching materials, the system of exercises is created and the step-by-step realization of training aimed at the formation and development of empathic skills is carried out.

**Principle of communicativeness.** The principle of communicativeness is the leading methodological principle of teaching. The purpose of forming empathic skills in foreign students is to increase the level of intercultural communicative competence, the formation of empathic response skills should also be realized in communicative exercises, so in the learning process it is necessary to adhere to the communicative orientation of learning.

The principle of communicativeness in the selection of teaching material and organization of the learning process provides for the communicative importance of:

- a) the educational materials for the development of empathic skills include authentic audio and printed materials that will familiarize students with real communicative situations of expressing empathy;
- b) in the process of organizing the assimilation of the teaching material of



Russian as a foreign language the importance of communicative practice is emphasized, with the help of which students will learn to express empathy (sympathy, consolation, condolence, sympathy, happy for others) in order to perform communicative tasks.

**The principle of reliance on emotionally evaluative communicative situations.** Emotionality is considered to be one of the features of Russian communicative culture, so learning Russian as a foreign language is unthinkable without comprehension of its emotional code and verbal forms of emotional interaction in society [Vakhrusheva, Ionova 2021: 4]. To form students' empathic skills in the classes of Russian as a foreign language it is necessary to provide students with emotional-evaluative communicative situations that are as close as possible to real communication. Emotional-evaluative communicative situations are characterized by the emotionality of communication, which can immerse students in a situation full of emotional expressions with Russian specifics and stimulate students' empathic listening and empathic understanding. Thus, learners can learn to assess the interlocutor's emotions in specific situations and use the mastered linguistic means to respond to different emotional states of interlocutors in specific communication situations.

To realize this principle, authentic teaching materials containing emotional and evaluative situations, such as confessional dialogues, etc., should be used in the teaching process. By imitating and analyzing such dialogues, students can gradually form empathic skills necessary in the process of communicating with native speakers of Russian. When setting exercises, it is also necessary to provide students with as many emotional and evaluative communicative situations as possible, so that students can develop the ability to build an empathic dialog with interlocutors in various situations.

## **2.2. Development of a model for teaching empathic skills to Chinese advanced Chinese students of philology Russian as a foreign language**

At present, two models of empathy formation are realized in the process of foreign language teaching:

The model of the first type combines the development of empathy with the development of foreign language communication skills for the purposes of professional training. The formation of students' empathic skills takes place in the following order:

- ability to listen, perceive and understand foreign-language speech;
- ability to interact with a foreign-speaking person;
- ability to use etiquette forms of communication;
- ability to respond adequately (verbally and non-verbally) to the statements of a foreign-speaking interlocutor [Sapiga 2006: 118].

According to this model, the formation of empathic skills in teaching foreign language communication is most effective when using methods that are based on dialog training (communicative exercises, language game, video lessons, computer training) [Sapiga 2006: 11]. According to the presented model of teaching, empathic competence is formed when teaching foreign languages, in particular, English language.

The model of the second type was developed in order to teach foreign students to express emotions by means of the Russian language (advanced stage). Empathy and emotion are closely connected with each other. According to this model, in the course of teaching Russian as a foreign language, students of the advanced stage master lexico – grammatical and syntactic means of expressing emotions and ways of responding to them. In order to achieve the greatest efficiency in the formation of students' empathy skills as the main content of foreign language teaching, the author singles out the most common emotions that foreign students may encounter in life: the emotion of joy, the emotion of admiration, the emotion of surprise, the emotion of indignation. The author's tasks include the allocation of a catalog of ways of

expressing emotions with the help of linguistic means for foreign students of advanced learners, as well as the development of communicative exercises focused on the development of learners' skills of expressing various emotions [Kovrizhkina 2015: 5].

Based on the above two teaching models and taking into account the three levels of empathy (cognitive, emotional and behavioral), we developed a model for teaching empathic skills to Chinese advanced undergraduate students of Russian as a foreign language (Fig. 2).

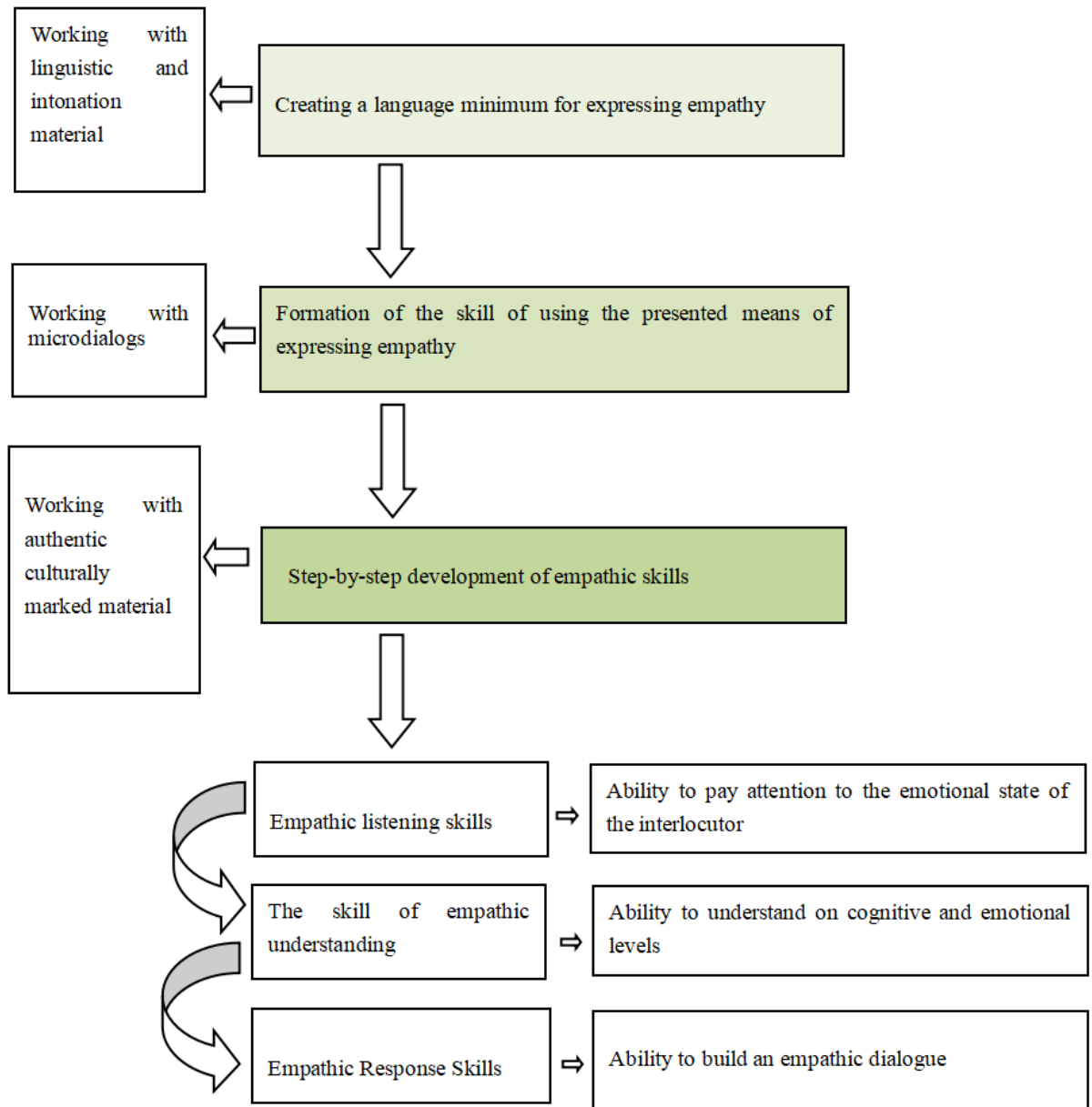


Figure 2. Model of teaching empathic skills to Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage of education Russian as a foreign language

The main characteristics of the presented training model are:

1. Creation of linguistic (including intonation) minimum for expressing sympathy, consolation, condolence, happy for others.
2. Formation of the skill of using the presented means of expressing empathy.
3. Step-by-step formation of empathic skills:
  - 1) formation of empathic listening skill;
  - 2) formation of empathic understanding skill (cognitive and emotional level of empathy);
  - 3) building empathic response skills (behavioral level of empathy).

Formation of empathic skills implies mastering the linguistic means of expressing empathy. At this stage, students get acquainted with linguistic formulas for expressing empathy, with intonation constructions characteristic for expressing empathy, and then perform linguistic exercises that allow them to form the skill of using the means of expressing empathy in speech.

Formation of empathic skills should be carried out in the following order: movement from empathic listening and understanding to empathic response. At this stage of training it is important to:

1. When forming the skill of empathic listening it is important to pay attention of students to the emotional background of communication.
2. The process of forming empathic understanding passes in two steps:
  - the first step – formation of the ability to analyze the situation of communication (cognitive level of empathy);
  - the second step – formation of the ability to analyze the emotions of interlocutors (emotional level of empathy).
3. On the basis of the first two skills it is possible to form in pupils the skill of empathic response to the words of the interlocutor (behavioral level of empathy).

It is worth noting that students need to analyze what they have heard at the cognitive and emotional levels, and then it is possible to use the linguistic and intonational minimums they have mastered for empathic response. This is due to the fact that only in case of correct understanding of the emotional background of

communication the choice of linguistic and intonational means of expressing empathy will be accurate. If there are no skills of empathic listening and empathic understanding, students will use the learned samples automatically, hence, unemotionally.

In the process of developing students' empathic skills, various teaching materials can be used to stimulate students' senses such as sight and hearing. In teaching foreign languages, the effectiveness of learning depends on the extent to which all human senses are involved in perception. The more diverse the sensory perceptions of learning material are, the more firmly it is learned [Ivanova, Zheleznyakova 2016: 89]. Art is an important carrier of the national culture of the country. In the communication of people through art the appropriation of artistic and cultural values takes place, aesthetic needs and abilities for aesthetic activity, aesthetic ideals are formed [Belyaeva 1989: electronic resource]. On the basis of the conducted analysis, it can be argued that various works of art can be useful for the formation of empathic skills. Therefore, we believe that the above-mentioned empathic skills (empathic listening skills, empathic understanding skills and empathic response skills) can be formed with the help of art samples.

Films, reproductions of paintings and songs can be used to build students' empathic skills.

Watching films or cartoons in Russian provides students with the opportunity to visualize different situations or characters' experiences and express their emotions. Analyzing and interpreting images allows students to carefully consider and identify facial expressions, gestures, and other details that can convey emotion. Discussing works of visual art in Russian as a foreign language also helps students broaden their cultural horizons and their understanding of Russian cultural phenomena. Songs can evoke a variety of feelings and moods, so it will be interesting for students to discuss what emotional response each song evokes. Also, analyzing the lyrics of songs in the class Russian as a foreign language helps students to interpret the emotional state of the character and analyze the corresponding ways of expression in Russian [Mu Dan 2023: 93-94].

Examples of assignments:

1. What emotions will you hear in a fragment of a movie / notice on a reproduction / hear in a song? (A task for forming empathic listening.)
2. Describe the situation in the fragment of the movie / on the reproduction / in the song. (A task for building empathic understanding at the cognitive level.)
3. Do you have a similar experience? Do you sympathize with the hero? / Do you want to express sympathy, consolation / condolences? Are you happy for the hero? Why? (A task for building empathic understanding on an emotional level.)
4. How would you express sympathy / consolation / condolence / sympathy for the hero? (Assignment to form empathic response.)

Further, to help students form empathic skills, communicative tasks are offered:

**Role-playing game.** A role play is used to work with a fragment of a movie (cartoon).

Role play can widely familiarize learners with different language variants, language styles, language functions and language structures and develop their ability to use language correctly in different situations [Antsiferova, Mu Dan 2023: 47].

Students work in pairs, imagine themselves as the heroes of a movie fragment, make dialogues with empathic elements based on the movie plot and play them out in the classroom. Teachers can organize the role play in three stages: preparation stage, implementation stage and evaluation stage.

**Brainstorming session.** Brainstorming is used to work with reproduction.

Brainstorming is a technique for stimulating creative activity and productivity, based on the assumption that during the usual methods of discussing and solving problems, the emergence of new ideas is hindered by the control mechanisms of the mind, which constrain the flow of these ideas under the pressure of habitual, stereotypical forms of decision – making [Asimov 2010: 212].

The teacher organizes a general discussion of the story in the form of brainstorming. With the help of brainstorming, students can obtain objective information and note the details of speech interaction, form the skill of recognizing emotions, accepting different points of view, i.e. they can increase their tolerance in

communication [Antsiferova, Mu Dan 2023: 47]. During brainstorming, students can not only give their own answers based on the studied expressions, complement and inspire each other, but also practice empathic listening and responding.

**Case assignments.** A case is a problematic situation offered to students as a task to analyze and search for a solution. It gives an opportunity to get closer to practice, to get into the position of a person who actually makes decisions. Cases visually demonstrate how theoretical material is applied in practice [Kiseleva, Skvortsova 2017: 4]. Case tasks are used to work with the song.

Case tasks can be organized according to the following algorithm:

1. Setting the task within the framework of the case – task. After listening to the song, a situation based on the content of the song is proposed.

2. Analyze the situation, diagnose the problem. Pupils can be divided into groups for discussion. Pupils in each group should analyze the above situation, find out the problems faced by the characters, determine their emotional state, think from the point of view of others and analyze the reasons for the emotions.

3. Making a final decision. After the analysis, students in each group need to combine their opinions and come up with the most appropriate empathic dialog for the situation.

This set of tasks is aimed at forming empathic skills.

On the basis of the performed analysis it follows that the formation of empathic skills of pupils at the lesson Russian as a foreign language can be carried out according to the following model:

- creation of linguistic and intonational minimums for expressing empathy;
- forming the skill of using the presented means of expressing empathy;
- skills of empathic listening, empathic understanding and empathic response are formed through authentic art materials.

### **2.3. Description of experimental materials**

Linguistic means of expressing empathy are presented in some teaching aids

for teaching Russian as a foreign language. For example, "In the World of People. Vol. 2. Audition. Speaking: textbook" (M. N. Makova, O. A. Uskova, 2019); "Let's Talk?: Manual for Conversational Practice: Advanced Stage" (T. I. Popova, E. E. Yurkov, 1999); "Emotions and Opinions. Expressing feelings in the Russian language: a manual for the development of Russian oral speech" (A. A. Akishkina, T. E. Akishkina, 2016); "Expressing your emotions in Russian: a manual for foreign students" (D. G. Kovrizhkina, 2019); "Russian speech etiquette: a workshop. Tutorial" (T. G. Mikhalechuk, 2016); "Speech etiquette (Russian - English correspondences)" (N. I. Formanovskaya, S. V. Shevtsova, 1992); "Etiquette expressions in Russian." (A. A. Akishina, N. I. Formanovskaya, T. E. Akishina, 2016); "Training Tests in Russian as a Foreign Language B2 - C1. Issue 4. Audition. Speaking." (A. I. Zakharova, E. N. Lukyanov, 2019).

These teaching aids present the content of expressing sympathy, consolation and joy for the interlocutor, expressing the desire to reassure, etc., which is related to teaching empathy to students. However, the volume and organization of empathy material are insufficient for the formation of empathy skills. It turns out that the mentioned teaching aids do not generalize the linguistic means of expressing empathy, there is no knowledge about the joint use of linguistic means of expressing empathy and other linguistic means. According to our teaching model, empathic skills include not only the ability to express empathy, but also the skills of empathic listening and empathic understanding. Therefore, according to the purpose of our study, special teaching materials for the teaching experiment are designed.

In the process of selecting training materials, we were guided by a number of criteria:

– **authenticity of the training material and its relevance;**

The use of authentic materials in the teaching process contributes to the improvement of students' Russian language proficiency and also helps students to understand the thinking of native speakers of Russian. Dialogue situations in these authentic materials should also be frequently encountered in real communication, which guarantees the relevance of the teaching materials.



Authenticity and relevance require that the teaching materials should be taken from authentic teaching materials as much as possible, and these materials should reflect real life situations. According to this criterion, the following are used as learning materials:

1) texts of modern Russian mass media (excerpt from the text in the newspaper "Petersburg Diary" for 13. 11. 11. 2023; an excerpt from the text in Gazeta "Pravoslavnaya Vera" No. 04 for 13. 03. 2017);

For example, such a text is offered with a picture (Fig. 3):

A talented surgeon



Figure 3. P. K. Yablonsky

*Peter Yablonsky performed the first successful bilateral lung transplantation in the country – a very complicated operation. However, the surgeon does not consider his profession heroic.*

*"First of all, it is meekness, accuracy, humanity. And very big, honest and sincere work. A huge desire to help," he says.*

*The surgeon is convinced that it is possible to teach to do surgery many, but to show sympathy – not everyone.*

*"It is very important for a doctor to have empathy", – believes Peter Yablonsky. St. Petersburg Diary newspaper for 13.11.2023*

2) famous poems by Russian poets ("If life deceives you...", A. S. Pushkin; "You don't need an occasion for warm words", T. A. Novitskaya);

For example, the following text is suggested:

***If life deceives you...***

*If life deceives you,  
Don't be sad, don't be angry!  
On the day of despondency, humble yourself:  
The day of cheerfulness, believe it, will come.  
The heart lives in the future;  
The present is gloomy:  
It's instantaneous, it'll pass;  
What will pass will be sweet.*

*A. S. Pushkin*

3) famous Soviet and Russian films and cartoons ("Kashtanka", 1952; "The Irony of Fate, or Easy Steam!", 1975; "White Bim Black Ear", 1976; "Sluzhestvenny Romanov", 1977; "Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears", 1979; "Mumu", 1987; "Ice", 2018);

4) famous songs in Russian ("Infinity", 2018; "I'm Walking on Moscow", 1964; "Birches", 2002; "You're Forever with Me", 2021)..

**– visualization of training material;**

Visual teaching materials help students to practice the ability to observe the interlocutor's emotions, evoke empathic reactions in students through visual stimulation, and give them the opportunity to immerse themselves in the communication situation under consideration. Therefore, visualization is an important criterion in the selection of teaching materials.

As visual teaching materials in the learning process we use photographs to show the expression of emotions by mimicry of Russian language speakers, fragments of the above - mentioned Soviet and Russian films and cartoons, illustrations of dialogues, and reproductions of paintings by Russian artists: "Unequal Marriage", V. V. Pukiryov. V. Pukiryov, 1862; "Alyonushka", V. M. Vasnetsov, 1881; "Old Parents at the Grave of their Son", V. G. Perov, 1870; "The Son Has Returned", S. V. Gerasimov, 1947.

For example, a reproduction of the painting "Unequal Marriage" (Fig. 4) and questions are offered for comprehension and comment:

- 1) What emotions do you notice in the painting?
- 2) Look at this picture carefully, characterize the situation presented by the artist.
- 3) Do you sympathize with the girl in the painting? Why?
- 4) Let's think of ways in which we could sympathize with her.



Figure 4. "Unequal Marriage", V. V. Pukiryov, 1862

**– accessibility of training material.**

In accordance with this principle, teaching materials used to develop students' empathic skills should correspond to the students' Russian language proficiency level (C1). This means that when selecting teaching materials it is necessary to use the content specified in the textbook (Russian as a foreign language –3) and on the basis of certification tests in speaking and listening (Russian as a foreign language – 3).

According to the "Requirements for III Level of General Proficiency in Russian as a Foreign Language", the means of expressing sympathy, consolation, condolence are listed as the main subject of teaching language means of expression to ensure the psychological comfort of communication. Besides, the "Requirements for III Level of General Proficiency in Russian as a Foreign Language" defines the requirements for speech skills, particularly speaking: when practicing speaking dialogic speech, the number of replicas is 6-10 or more. Therefore, dialogues with appropriate lines are selected from fragments of films or cartoons.

**– communicative nature of the training material;**

To ensure the communicative nature of learning materials, language materials in learning materials should be able to be used in real communication. The teaching materials should be able to stimulate learners' motivation and desire to communicate, and improve their ability to interact and cooperate with others.

According to this criterion, Russian poems that stimulate students' motivation and desire to communicate empathically in Russian ("If life deceives you...", A. S. Pushkin, 1825; "You don't need a reason for warm words", T. A. Novitskaya, 2023) are selected as teaching materials. The poems demonstrate to students the power of words to influence people's emotions, stimulating learners' willingness to express their empathy for others through words. In addition, fragments of movies and cartoons, paintings by artists and songs in teaching materials describe situations that learners often encounter in real – life interactions with native speakers of Russian. They help students to create communication situations that are as close to reality as possible and enhance their ability to use Russian for empathic communication.

**– culturological Marussian language as a foreign language teaching material.**

The criterion of culturological Marussian language as foreignness of teaching material implies the selection of information that is directly related to a certain cultural phenomenon of the national picture of the world of the target language [Korsakova 2014: 139]. In intercultural communication communicators come from different cultures, it is especially important to integrate cultural knowledge into the learning process. Cultural knowledge in teaching materials helps students to overcome stereotype and prejudice in intercultural communication and to form empathic skills.

In accordance with this criterion, films and cartoons, reproductions of paintings are selected as teaching materials. These teaching materials contain rich cultural and country – specific knowledge. For example, a fragment of the movie *Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears* tells that Katya failed the USE (in Soviet times there was no USE, just university entrance exams) because she lacked two points. After watching

a fragment of the movie "Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears," students can learn about the system of university entrance exams in Soviet times. After watching a fragment of the movie "The Irony of Fate, or Easy Steam!" students learn about the Russian tradition of going to the bathhouse on New Year's Eve and the interesting fact that houses in every city in Soviet times were very similar to each other. After observing the painting "The Son Has Returned," which describes the situation of a son returning to his hometown to meet his mother after the end of the Great Patriotic War. The paintings allow students to understand the joy of Russian people for the great victory.

The conducted research has shown that, taking into account the studies of modern scientists, the developed training model, goal, objectives, selection of training materials are based on the following criteria:

- authenticity of teaching material and its relevance;
- visualization of the teaching material;
- accessibility of educational material;
- communicativeness of the teaching material;
- culturological Marussian as a foreign language cultural relevance of the teaching material.

In accordance with these criteria we selected and developed teaching materials for the formation of empathic skills in Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage of education Russian as a foreign language.

## **CONCLUSIONS OF CHAPTER TWO**

To form empathic skills of students in the learning process it is necessary to follow a number of teaching principles, including the principle of visibility, the principle of accessibility and feasibility, the principle of interrelated communicative, cognitive and socio-cultural development of students, the principle of collective interaction, the principle of systematicity, the principle of language minimization, the principle of comprehension of the Russian language picture of the world, the

principle of taking into account stages in the formation of skills and abilities, personality-oriented principle, the principle of situational and thematic organization of teaching

Following these principles of teaching and based on the existing model of formation of empathic skills in foreign language classes, we have developed a new model of formation of empathic skills in the classes of Russian as a foreign language in accordance with the three levels of empathy (cognitive, emotional and behavioral levels).

According to the developed model of teaching, to form empathic skills in students, first students need to master linguistic and intonational ways of expressing empathy, then the formation of students' skill of using the presented means of expressing empathy, and then on the basis of educational materials fragments of films or cartoons, reproductions of paintings and songs gradually form in students the skills of empathic listening (ability to pay attention to the emotional state of the interlocutor while listening), empathic pony skills, and the skills of empathic listening.

Forming empathic skills in the classroom during the formation of empathic skills on the material of fragments of films or cartoons, reproductions of paintings and songs, in addition to setting questions for the separate formation of empathic listening, empathic understanding and empathic response skills, it is also necessary to establish more complex tasks for complex training of all empathic skills, in particular: the use of role-playing games during the formation of empathic skills with the help of fragments of films or cartoons, reproductions of paintings and songs, in addition to the formation of empathic listening, empathic understanding and empathic response skills, it is necessary to establish more complex tasks for the complex training of all empathic skills.

Currently, there are no teaching materials on the topic of forming empathic skills in the classes of Russian as a foreign language, so we have developed teaching materials specifically designed to form empathic skills in students according to the

following criteria:

- authenticity of the training material and its relevance;
- visualization of the training material;
- accessibility of educational material;
- communicative nature of the teaching material;
- culturological Marussian language as a foreign language.

In accordance with the above criteria, newspaper texts, poems, speech formulas, audio materials for correct intonation, mini-dialogues, video fragments of movies or cartoons, reproductions of artists' paintings and audio materials of songs are selected.

In accordance with the above-mentioned teaching principles, teaching models and with the help of the developed teaching materials, students develop empathic skills in intercultural communication.

### **CHAPTER III. EXPERIMENTAL VERIFICATION OF THE METHODOLOGY OF FORMING EMPATHIC SKILLS IN CHINESE ADVANCED STUDENTS OF RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

The training experiment is based on the previously developed training model and developed training materials, it represents a practical test of the investigated training methodology. The following key points can be emphasized in the training experiment.

#### **3.1. Purpose, objectives and conditions of the experiment**

Purpose of training: formation of empathic skills in Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage of studying Russian as a foreign language in order to realize successful empathic communication in Russian and increase the effectiveness of intercultural communication.

The developed special course "Teaching empathic communication to Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage" serves as a form of training.

The main objectives of the experiment are as follows:

1. To identify the level of empathic skills of students in the experimental and control groups.
2. To verify the effectiveness of the proposed teaching methodology based on the developed teaching model, selected teaching materials, compiled system of exercises.

Varying conditions of the experiment:

– teaching means;

The experimental group (hereinafter referred to as EG) used the training manual developed by the author of the study, and the control group (hereinafter referred to as CG) used texts on empathy:

- «What is empathy and how to develop it?»
- «On empathy. What is the right way to empathize with someone who is



upset?»

- «The linguistic aspect of empathy».

- system of exercises and tasks;

A system of exercises and tasks was developed for the EG on the basis of teaching materials, taking into account the peculiarities of Chinese students in the aspect of learning Russian as a foreign language: the phenomenon of anxiety in the formation of speaking and listening skills; insufficient communicative practice in traditional teaching; the need for personal improvement and career development in the learning process. In the control group (hereinafter referred to as CG), questions and tasks on the content of texts are used to check students' understanding of the content of texts;

- Teacher;

In EG and CG classes are taught by different teachers. In EG classes are taught by the author of this paper. In the CG classes are taught by a teacher of the Department of Russian as a Foreign Language at St. Petersburg State University.

- Emotional background of the learning interaction.

In the EG the attention is focused on creating a trusting emotional background in the classroom, which is necessary for the development of empathic skills, as well as on the speech activity of students in the group.

Non-variable conditions of the experiment:

- Learning objective;

The purpose of training in both EG and CG is to form empathic skills in Chinese advanced philology students of Russian as a foreign language in order to improve the quality of intercultural communication.

- Total number of academic hours;

The number of academic hours for EG and CG is the same, both amounting to 24 academic hours.

- Test materials.

Entrance and final tests in the EG and in the CG to check students' empathic skills are identical.

### 3.2. Methodology of the experiment

The training experiment was conducted on the basis of St. Petersburg State University from November 16, 2023 to December 21, 2023. The duration of the experiment is 24 ac. hours: 20 hours – training classes and 4 hours – entrance and final testing.

There are 12 Chinese students in the EG, including 3 males and 9 females. All students know Russian at the level of B2.

In CG – 12 Chinese students, including 4 males and 8 females. All students have Russian language skills at the B2 level.

The experiment is divided into three stages:

1) ascertaining stage;

On this stage, the empathic skills of students in EG and in CG are tested by means of input test tasks.

2) The training stage in the experimental (according to the new training model) and control groups;

On this stage, a training experiment is conducted in the EG on the basis of the developed teaching methodology and training materials. In the CG, ready-made teaching materials and other teaching methodology are used.

3) control stage.

On this stage empathic skills of students in the EG and in the CG are tested by means of final test tasks.

In the process of processing the results of the entrance and final test, the average score of the EK, CG and the coefficient of empathic skills of Chinese advanced philology students of Russian as a foreign language were calculated according to the following formulas:

$$\delta = \frac{m}{K} \times 100\% \quad (1)$$

Where  $\delta$  – percentage of correct answers for the test block,  $m$  – number of points received by the test taker for the test block,  $K$  – total number of points for the test block.

$$X = \frac{\sum_i^n a}{N} \quad (2)$$

Where  $X$  is the average score of a group or block of tasks,  $a$  (i) is the score obtained for a test or block of tests,  $n$  is the number of answers distributed over different scores,  $N$  is the total number of examinees.

$$S_a^2 = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - x_0)^2}{N} \quad (3)$$

Where  $S_a$  is the standard deviation,  $n$  is the number of answers distributed in different scores,  $X$  is the total score of each subject obtained for the test,  $N$  is the total number of subjects.

The  $t$  – Student's criterion is used to verify the results obtained after the entrance and final tests:

$$T = \frac{\overline{X}_a - \overline{X}_b}{\sqrt{\frac{S_a^2}{N_a} + \frac{S_b^2}{N_b}}} \quad (4)$$

Where  $S_a$  – standard deviation of the data of group a,  $S_b$  – standard deviation of data of group b, where  $\overline{X}_a$  – average score of group a, where  $\overline{X}_b$  – average score of group b, where  $N_a$  – total number of subjects in the group a,  $N_b$  – total number of subjects in the group b.

$$d_f = N_1 + N_2 - 2 \quad (5)$$

Where  $d_f$  – (number) degrees of freedom.  $N_1$  – total number of subjects in the group 1,  $N_2$  – total number of subjects in the group 2.

Table 1

Student's t-test values at a significance level of 0.05

Degrees of Freedom-f	Parameter t	Degrees of Freedom-f	Parameter t	Degrees of Freedom-f	Parameter t
1	12.706	11	2.201	22	2.074
2	4.303	12	2.179	24	2.064
3	3.182	13	2.160	26	2.056
4	2.776	14	2.145	28	2.048
5	2.571	15	2.131	30	2.042
6	2.447	16	2.120	35	2.032
7	2.365	17	2.110	40	2.021
8	2.306	18	2.101	50	2.009
9	2.262	19	2.093	100	1.984
10	2.228	20	2.086	$\infty$	1.960

Student's t – criterion value at the significance level of 0.05 is used to determine the statistical significance of differences in mean values.

Before starting the training experiment, an entrance test was conducted.

### Entry testing

In order to find out the levels of empathic skills of the subjects before the beginning of the training experiment, the tasks for the entrance test were compiled. The entrance test consisted of 6 blocks.

The **first block** tests the ability to identify and understand people's emotions from photographs (by their non-verbal means of expressing emotions), which is important for the formation of empathic listening skills.

Subjects were offered multiple choice tasks with 5 questions (2 points for each

correct answer).

For example:

Task 1. Identify the emotions of these people.



- A. anger
- B. contempt
- C. fear

The **second block** tests students' empathic understanding skills: identifying and understanding people's emotions through words (by their verbal means of expressing emotions).

Task 2: Identify the emotions of these people.

"I'm so scared! I'm terribly afraid to answer the exam!"

- A. indignation
- B. contempt
- C. fear

The **third block** tests the subjects' empathic response skills (the ability to distinguish between expressions of consolation, condolence, support, sympathy and empathy).

Task 3. Read the phrases and write what they express:

A. consolation, B. condolence, C. support, D. sympathy, D. commiseration.

- 1) How I understand you!
- 2) It happens in life.
- 3) I'm always here to help you.
- 4) It will heal before the wedding.
- 5) Yes, it's sad.

- 6) You have my deepest condolences.
- 7) Everything will get better!
- 8) I'm so happy for you!
- 9) I grieve with you.
- 10) No harm without good.

The **fourth block of** tasks tests the students' familiarity with the topic "Empathy" (4 points for a correct answer).

Explain the following concepts in your own words.

1) Empathy

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2) Sympathy

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3) Consolation

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4) Condolence

---

5) Happy for others

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Table 2

Evaluation criteria for the fourth block

Evaluation parameters	Evaluation criteria
4 points	Correctly and independently explain the basic meaning of concepts using complete finished sentences.
2 points	Correct understanding, but inaccurate formulation of the basic meaning of concepts.
0 point	The meaning of the concept is not explained at all.

The **fifth block** of tasks tests the ability of empathic response (the ability of test takers to give examples of using empathic expressions) (3 points each for a correct answer).

Task 5. Give examples of expressions of sympathy, consolation, condolence, and happy for others.

Table 3

Evaluation criteria for the fifth block

Evaluation parameters	Evaluation criteria
3 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– empathy is expressed according to the situation;</li> <li>– empathy is expressed correctly (in combination with other linguistic means);</li> <li>– there are no lexico–grammatical errors in the expression.</li> </ul>
2 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– empathy is expressed, but the expression is illiterate.</li> </ul>
1 point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– imprecise expression.</li> </ul>
0 point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– lack of options;</li> <li>– wrong option.</li> </ul>

**The sixth block** tests the subjects' empathic response skills.

Test takers were asked to react to situations – to give responses (4 points each for a correct response).

Task 6: Respond to the interlocutor's replica.

- Can you believe it's been a week since I got better? Fever, cough, throat...

–

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Evaluation criteria for the sixth block

Evaluation parameters	Evaluation criteria
4 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– empathy is expressed according to the situation;</li> <li>– empathy is expressed correctly, fully, richly (in combination with other linguistic means);</li> <li>– there are no lexico-grammatical errors in the expression.</li> </ul>
3 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– empathy is expressed according to the situation;</li> <li>– empathy is expressed correctly and completely;</li> <li>– there are no lexico-grammatical errors affecting communication.</li> </ul>
2 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– empathy is expressed according to the situation;</li> <li>– empathy is expressed partially;</li> <li>– there are no lexico-grammatical errors affecting the communication.</li> </ul>
1 point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– empathy is not expressed according to the situation;</li> <li>– empathy is expressed partially;</li> <li>– there are no lexico-grammatical errors in the expression that affect communication.</li> </ul>
0 point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– empathy is not expressed;</li> <li>– there are many lexico-grammatical errors in the expression.</li> </ul>

### The results of the survey

The results obtained when performing the entrance test by EG pupils are presented in table 5.



Table 5

## Results of the entrance test by students of the EG

	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4	Block 5	Block 6	Total score
Student 1	8	10	0	7	0	10	35
Student 2	10	8	18	6	7	14	63
Student 3	10	10	16	11	11	14	72
Student 4	8	6	10	4	2	5	35
Student 5	10	4	14	3	3	20	54
Student 6	10	4	10	8	4	13	49
Student 7	6	4	14	12	9	12	57
Student 8	10	12	10	7	2	11	52
Student 9	4	4	4	17	12	18	59
Student 10	6	6	10	6	11	18	57
Student 11	10	4	16	6	10	14	60
Student 12	2	8	12	7	6	20	55
Average score	7,83	6,67	11,17	7,83	6,42	14,08	54

The results obtained when performing the entrance test by CG pupils are presented in table 6.

Table 6

## Results of the entrance test by students of the CG

	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4	Block 5	Block 6	Total score
Student 1	6	4	16	12	9	12	59
Student 2	2	8	8	6	5	14	43
Student 3	6	4	10	10	7	12	49
Student 4	4	6	12	14	9	16	61
Student 5	6	6	10	9	5	19	55
Student 6	4	10	8	4	6	18	50

Student 7	6	4	8	8	8	13	47
Student 8	8	6	10	7	9	18	58
Student 9	6	4	8	10	8	14	50
Student 10	8	6	12	6	7	15	54
Student 11	6	8	4	7	6	8	39
Student 12	8	6	12	14	8	12	60
Average score	5.83	6	9.83	8.92	7.25	14.25	52.08

The correct percentage of each subject's answers in each block was calculated using formula 1. Then the average percentage of correct answers of all examinees in each block and the average percentage of correct answers of all examinees in the test were calculated using formula 2.

The comparison of the average percentages of correct answers of EG and CG test takers in each block of tasks is shown in the Fig.5.

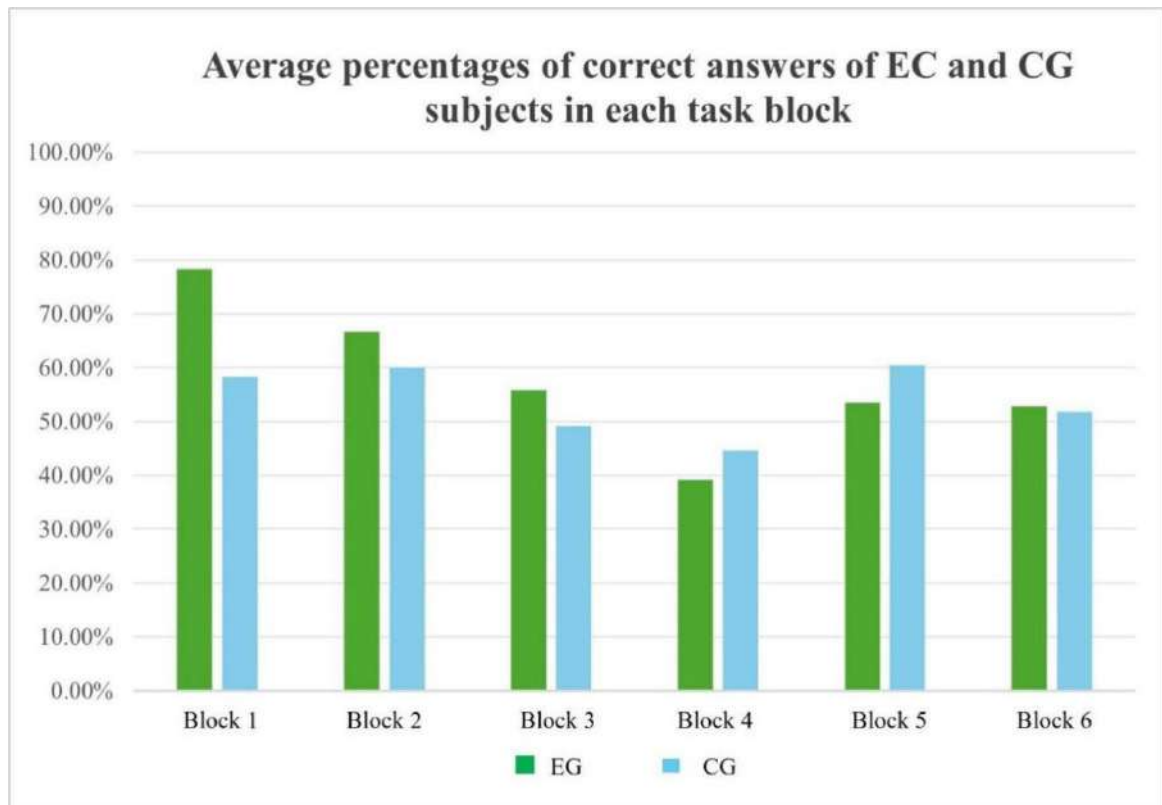


Figure 5. Average percentage of correct answers of subjects in the EG and CG in each block of tasks

The average percentage of correct answers of EG test takers is 54%, while the average percentage of correct answers of CG test takers is 52.08%. The comparison

of the average percentage of correct answers of EG and CG test takers is shown in the Fig.6.

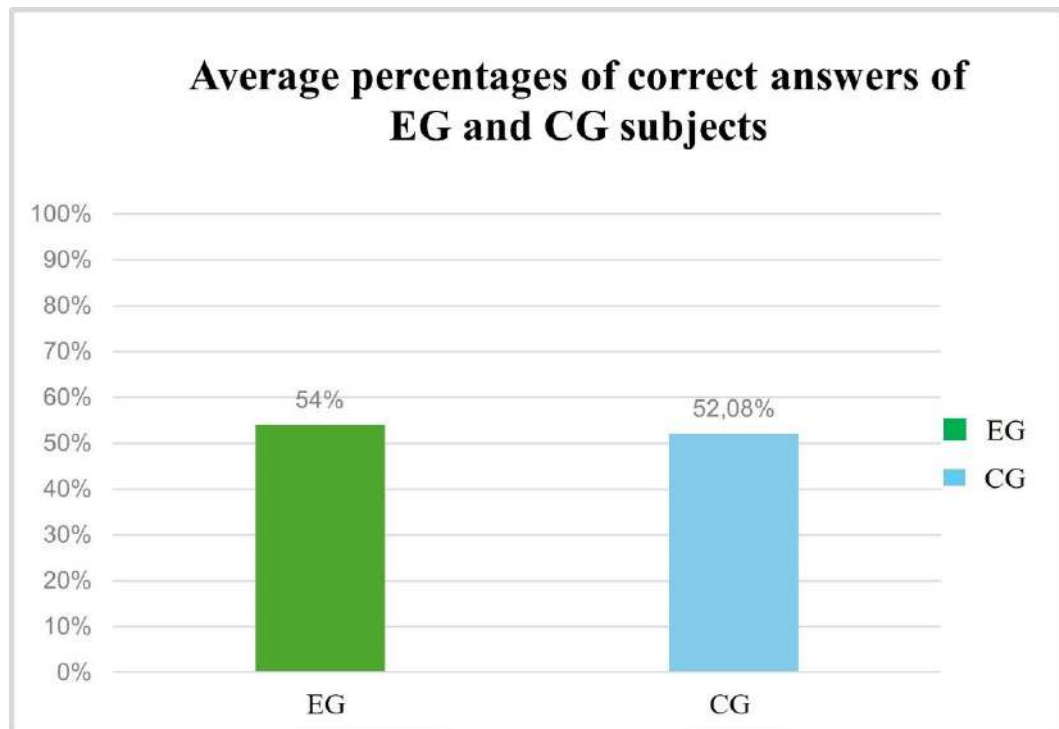


Figure. 6. Average percentage of correct answers of subjects in the EG and CG

Hypothesis testing for EG and CG input test with consideration of confidence region  $\alpha(\text{alpha}) = 0,05$ :

null hypothesis  $H_0$ : the results of EG and CG input test are the same (there is no difference in the level of students before training);

alternative hypothesis  $H_1$ : the results of the EG input test are better than the CG input test (there is a difference in the level of students before training).

Calculation of mean and variance, T - value. Mean score  $X$  (EG) = 54, variance  $S_a = 103$ ; Mean score  $X$  (CG) = 52.08, variance  $S_b = 53.49$ . Using formula (4), we calculated  $T=0.532$  and checked by table (t - student's criterion),  $P - \text{value}=2.074$  with a degree of freedom of 22.  $T (0.532) < P (2.074)$ , the null hypothesis is true. There is no difference in the levels of empathic skills of subjects in EG and CG before the training experiment.

Having analyzed the students' answers to specific questions, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The examinees' ability to determine the interlocutor's emotions is formed in

comparison with other skills tested in the test: examinees normally determine other people's emotions both by non – verbal expressions and verbal expressions;

2. examinees distinguish linguistic means of expressing empathy and can give their own examples of expressing empathy in Russian, but they do not always accurately define the concepts related to empathy, including the concept of empathy itself, the concept of sympathy, the concept of consolation, the concept of condolence and the concept of sympathy;

3. the linguistic means of expressing empathy cause difficulties for the examinees.

Typical mistakes of pupils in understanding these concepts are highlighted here:

Answer variant: sympathy is to feel sad because of someone else's sorrow.

Definition of sympathy in the dictionary: Sympathy is a responsive, sympathetic attitude to the experience, misfortune of others [Ozhegov's Explanatory Dictionary. 1949-1992].

It can be seen that sympathy consists not only in being sad because others are sad, but also in having a sympathetic attitude to the experiences of the interlocutor.

Answer choice: to rejoice very much.

Definition of soradovanie in the dictionary: to rejoice together, together [Dal,1863].

Here the understanding is wrong.

4. Students' ability to express empathy in specific situations is not formulated.

The main problems in students' answers in Block 6 are as follows:

1) The expression is incorrect. For example:

– My cat is sick, I'm very worried about her! We are going to the doctor today.

– \_\_\_\_\_

Student response option:

– *I sympathize with you.*

Here the student wants to express sympathy, and this is the correct intention. But the learner has used the wrong grammatical form: sympathize + whom (dative case).

Another example:

– Sorry, I received a sad message: my uncle passed away. I'm very upset.

–

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Student response option:

– *I want to express my condolences.*

In Russian, the plural form of the word "soboleznovanie" is usually used in this case, for example, "My deepest soboleznovanie". The answer here does not correspond to the norms of the modern Russian literary language.

2) Responses in conversation that do not use empathic expressions cause a feeling of indifference and indifference in the interlocutor. For example:

– In an hour to the chief with a report to go. I'm so nervous! My hands are shaking!

–

---

Student response options:

– *You are an adult, there is nothing to worry about, you need to be brave!*

– *You're too timid, you need to practice in the future.*

– *Fortunately, I won't be reporting today.*

Here in the answers there is no expression of empathy, only condemnation, indifference and indifference, it shows that students have not formulated the skill of empathic response to the emotional state of the interlocutor.

3) There is no argumentation of one's point of view in the answers. For example:

– I have given so much time and effort to my work, and my boss only criticizes me.

–

---

Student response options:

– *Very sad.*

– *I sympathize.*

– *Everything will get better.*

Although such answers are correct in meaning and grammatical form, they use general, universal means of expression and lack argumentation of their point of view.

Therefore, such phrases cannot convincingly express empathy.

From the subjects' answers to the entrance test we can find out that in intercultural communication, especially in situations of communication where emotions dominate, if the communicator cannot detect and evaluate the interlocutor's emotions, or does not understand the interlocutor at the cognitive and emotional levels, or does not know how to use the linguistic means of the Russian language to express empathy to the interlocutor, then he/she lacks emotive competence in foreign language communication, he/she cannot show personal qualities that contribute to intercultural communication, and this greatly hinders the communicator's ability to communicate with the interlocutor.

### 3.3. Description of the training experiment

On the basis of the developed training model, taking into account the specifics of Chinese advanced Chinese students and the developed teaching materials, an experimental course "Teaching Empathic Communication to Chinese Advanced Chinese Students of Philology" was created. The teaching experiment was conducted in EG and CG, and the duration of the teaching experiment was 24 academic hours in both EG and CG, including 2 ac. hour for the teaching period and 2 ac. hour for the control period.

The content of learning in EG is represented by the topics: "Sympathy", "Consolation", "Condolence", "Happy for others". Classes on each topic are conducted according to the developed training model. Table 7 is the training program in the EG.

Table 7

The curriculum of the EG

Course Sections	Training content	Number of academic hours	Learning Objectives
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Introductory part	Introductory lesson	2 ac. hours	Explanation of the concept of empathy, rules of empathic communication and course review.
Main part	First lesson: topic «Sympathies»	4 ac. hours	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creating a linguistic (including intonation) minimum of expressing empathy.</li> <li>2. Formation of the skill of using the presented means of expressing sympathy.</li> <li>3. Formation of empathic skills of students to show empathy in communication.</li> </ol>
	Second lesson: topic «Consolation»	4 ac. hours	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creating a linguistic (including intonation) minimum of consolation expression.</li> <li>2. Formation of the skill of using the presented means of consolation expression.</li> <li>3. Formation of empathic skills of students to show consolation in communication.</li> </ol>
	Lesson three: Topic «Condolence»	4 ac. hours	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creating a linguistic (including intonation) minimum of condolence expression.</li> <li>2. Formation of the skill of using the presented means of condolence expression.</li> <li>3. Formation of empathic skills to show condolence in communication.</li> </ol>

	Lesson four: topic « Happy for others»	4 ac. hours	<p>1. Creating a linguistic (including intonation) minimum of expressing sorority.</p> <p>2. Formation of the skill of using the presented means of expressing happy for others.</p> <p>3. Formation of empathic skills of pupils to show happy for others in communication.</p>
Final part	Repetition lesson	2 ac. hours	Formation of empathic skills to show sympathy, consolation, condolence, sympathy in communication depending on situations.

Training in CG is organized according to the usual regime. Table 8 is the program of training in CG.

Table 8

## The curriculum of the CG

Course Sections	Training content	Number of academic hours	Learning Objectives
Introductory part	Introductory lesson	2 ac. hours	Explanation of the rules of empathic communication and course review.



Main part	Lesson one: text «What is empathy and how to develop it? »	4 ac. hours	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. defining the concept of empathy, identifying the function of empathy.</li> <li>2. Familiarization with the levels of empathy.</li> <li>3. Presentation of ways to develop empathy in adults.</li> </ol>
	Lesson two: text «On empathy. How to properly empathize with a distressed person? »	4 ac. hours	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. understanding the concept of empathy.</li> <li>2. Discuss a situation in which empathy should be expressed.</li> <li>3. Recognizing what not to do with an upset person.</li> <li>4. Learning how to properly empathize with an upset person.</li> </ol>
	Lesson three: Text «Linguistic aspect of empathy »	4 ac. hours	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Familiarity with the speech domains of empathy.</li> <li>2. Learning different linguistic (including intonational) means of expressing empathy.</li> </ol>
	Lesson four: empathy training .	4 ac. hours	Formation of skills of using the learned knowledge about empathy, linguistic and intonational means of expressing empathy in communicative situations.
Final part	Lesson repetition	2 ac. hours	Consolidation of the learned material.

Based on the shown curricula, it follows that EG and CG use different teaching

algorithms and teaching materials, but the learning objectives in both groups are the same: the formation of empathic skills of students in intercultural communication in the classes of Russian as a foreign language. The teaching process is organized according to the developed teaching model. The teaching plan of each lesson in EG is shown in table 9.

Table 9

## The teaching plan for each lesson in the EG

Training content	Distribution of content and academic hours
Introductory lesson	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Purpose and objectives of the course (10 minutes)</li> <li>2. Explanation of the concept of empathy (10 minutes).</li> <li>3. Introduction to the rules of empathic communication (40 minutes).</li> <li>4. Familiarization with the speech sphere of empathy in the Russian language (30 minutes).</li> </ol>
First lesson: topic «Sympathies»	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction to the theme of sympathy on the material of an excerpt from the newspaper "Petersburg Diary" for 13.11.2023 (10 minutes).</li> <li>2. Creation of linguistic (including intonation) minimum of expression of sympathy (40 minutes).</li> <li>3. Formation of the skill of using the presented means of expressing sympathy on the material of micro - dialogs (30 minutes).</li> <li>4. Working with a video fragment of the movie "Service Romance" (35 minutes).</li> <li>5. Working with a reproduction of the painting "Unequal Marriage" (30 minutes).</li> <li>6. Work with the song "Infinity" (30 minutes).</li> </ol>

	<p>7. Summarizing the lessons and explaining the homework (5 minutes).</p>
<p>Second lesson: topic «Consolation»</p>	<p>1. Introduction to the theme "Consolations" on the material of A. S. Pushkin's poem "If Life Deceives You" (10 minutes).</p> <p>2. Creation of the linguistic (including intonation) minimum of consolation expression (40 minutes).</p> <p>3. Formation of the skill of using the presented means of expressing consolation on the material of micro - dialogs (30 minutes).</p> <p>4. Working with a video fragment of the movie "Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears" (35 minutes).</p> <p>5. Working with a reproduction of the painting "Alyonushka" (30 minutes).</p> <p>6. Working with the song "Birches" (30 minutes).</p> <p>7. Summarizing and explaining the homework (5 minutes).</p>
<p>Lesson three: Topic «Condolence»</p>	<p>1. Introduction to the theme "Condolence" on the material of the excerpt from the newspaper "Orthodox Faith" № 04 (576) (10 minutes).</p> <p>2. Creation of the linguistic (including intonation) minimum for expressing condolence (40 minutes).</p> <p>3. Formation of the skill of using the presented means of expressing condolence on the material of newspaper texts (30 minutes).</p> <p>4. Working with a video fragment of the cartoon "Mumu" (35 minutes).</p> <p>5. Working with a reproduction of the painting "Old</p>

	<p>Parents at their Son's Grave" (30 minutes).</p> <p>6. Working with the song "You are always with me" (30 minutes).</p> <p>7. Summarizing and explaining the homework (5 minutes).</p>
<p>Lesson four: Topic «Happy others»</p> <p>for</p>	<p>1. Introduction to the theme "Compassion" on the material of the poem "You don't need a reason for warm words" (10 minutes).</p> <p>2. Creation of the linguistic (including intonation) minimum of expressing joyfulness (40 minutes).</p> <p>3. Formation of the skill of using the presented means of expressing sympathy on the material of micro - dialogs (30 minutes).</p> <p>4. Working with a video fragment of the movie "The Irony of Fate, or Easy Steam!" (35 minutes). (35 minutes).</p> <p>5. Working with a reproduction of the painting "The Son Has Returned" (30 minutes).</p> <p>6. Work with the song "I'm walking across Moscow" (30 minutes).</p> <p>7. Summarizing and explaining the homework (5 minutes).</p>
<p>Repetition lesson</p>	<p>1. Repetition of all linguistic (including intonation) means of expressing empathy (45 minutes).</p> <p>2. Composition of empathic dialogs based on situations given by the teacher (45 minutes).</p>

According to the above EG training plan, the EG training algorithm is described as follows.

**1. Introduction to a new topic (10 minutes).**

To stimulate students' interest in learning a new topic and, consequently, in speech interaction, it is necessary to organize an emotional immersion in the topic of the lesson. It is important to start the introduction to the topic with a text. Pupils are offered an authentic text on the topic (poem, newspaper) and then discuss it with the help of a system of questions.

## **2. Creating a linguistic (including intonation) minimum for expressing empathy (40 minutes).**

The aim of this stage is to familiarize students with the concepts of sympathy / consolation / condolence / happy for others and their definition, linguistic means of expression. Learners should be given speech formulas and their combinability in real communication. The new speech formulas of expression were given to the learners in advance before the lesson and they were asked to compose sentences based on the speech formulas. In this way, the learners, in class, can quickly learn the new language expressions. Here, it is also important to play back the audio in class and allow the learners to generalize the intonational means of expressing sympathy / consolation / condolence / happy for others. This is followed by exercises to test the students' mastery of intonational means of expression.

## **3. Formation of the skill of using the presented means of expressing empathy (30 minutes).**

Students are given 4-5 mini-dialogues containing the learned means of expression. Pupils perform the following tasks:

1) Listen (read) the text and say what emotions are expressed by the communicators in the mini-dialogues. Why? Make an assumption.

2) Create a mini-dialogue based on the model. Such conditional-communicative tasks are aimed at primary consolidation of the studied language units and expressions.

## **4. Working with a video fragment of a movie (cartoon) (35 minutes).**

Algorithm of work:

1) Introduction to the author of the movie (cartoon) and the time of its creation (2 minutes).

- 2) Introduction to the characters of the movie (cartoon) (4 minutes).
- 3) Removing lexico – grammatical difficulties (4 minutes).
- 4) Watching a video clip to practice empathic listening (4 minutes).
- 5) Watching a video clip to describe the situation and identify the emotional component (6 minutes).
- 6) Role-playing (15 minutes).

Videos can be used as instructional materials to build empathic skills in students. Watching Russian movies containing learned ways of expressing empathy can allow students to experience more intuitively the use of empathy in authentic dialogues, allowing students to become more immersed in conversation situations. In order to build students' empathic skills in Russian as a foreign language classes, videos can be used in the following way. It is necessary to select a fragment from a movie or cartoon (2-3 minutes) depending on the content of each topic.

A detailed description of the stages of learning is provided.

- 1) Introduction to the author of the movie (cartoon) and the time of its creation.

The teacher first motivates the students to communicate, builds a dialog with the students based on the infographics of the film or cartoon (title, history of creation, main plot), so that the students could assimilate the necessary cultural knowledge related to the film. This knowledge is presented to students in the form of pictures and a small amount of descriptive text. The use of visuals here can stimulate learners' interest in the video segment and help learners understand the plot of the video segment.

The following infographics are presented (Fig.7):



Figure 7. Infographics of the movie « Moscow does not believe in tears »

## 2) Familiarization with the characters of the film (cartoon).

Familiarization with the main characters of the movie on the material of frames from the movie. This is done so that pupils can understand the social status and personal characteristics of the film's heroes, which will help them understand the content of the dialog in the video fragment.

For example, while working with the video fragment of the movie "Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears", the following frames from the movie are presented (Fig. 8, Fig. 9, Fig. 10, Fig. 11, Fig. 12).



*Katerina Alexandrovna Tikhomirova, fitter, later director of the chemical plant.*

Figure 8. Frames from the movie « Moscow does not believe in tears »



*Lyudmila Sviridova, bakery worker, later a dry - cleaner.*

Figure 9. A still from the movie « Moscow does not believe in tears »



*Antonina (Tosya) Buyanova, plasterer at a construction site.*

Figure 10. A still from the movie « Moscow does not believe in tears »



*Georgy Ivanovich (Gosha/Goga/Zhora/Yuri), Katerina's lover, a mechanic at a research institute..*

Figure 11. A still from the movie «Moscow does not believe in tears»





*Rodion (Rudolf) Petrovich Rachkov, a TV cameraman from «Ostankino».*

Figure 12. A still from the movie « Moscow does not believe in tears »

### 3) Relieving lexico – grammatical difficulties.

Pupils are invited to work with the supporting vocabulary of the video clip in the pre – textual stage.

### 4) Watching the video clip to develop the skill of empathic listening.



When watching a movie, students should not only pay attention to the content of the main characters' conversations, but also focus on identifying the emotional state of the communicators. The following task is suggested: What emotions of the characters did you notice while watching the video fragment?

5) Viewing a video fragment in order to describe the situation, identifying the emotional component.

This is a training of empathic understanding skills (on the cognitive and emotional levels of empathy) of students. After watching the movie, it is important for students to first describe the objective situation of the main character in the movie and then empathize with the main character's situation and resonate emotionally with

the main character.

Then put themselves in their shoes and resonate emotionally with the main character. The following assignments are suggested:

Describe the situation of this part of the dialog (who is talking to whom, what their relationship is, what they are talking about);

Determine Katya's emotional state and tell why she has such emotions? Do you sympathize with her? Why?

#### 6) Role-play.

Pupils work in pairs, imagine themselves as characters of the movie fragment, make dialogues with empathic elements based on the plot of the movie fragment and play them out in the classroom. Teachers can organize the role play in three stages: preparation stage, play stage and mutual evaluation stage.

#### Preparation stage:

The teacher explains to the students the rules of the game and the evaluation criteria – students should listen attentively to the interlocutor during the dialog and respond to the interlocutor's words with words based on identifying and understanding his/her emotions. When reacting to the interlocutor's emotions, it is necessary to pay attention to the correct use of speech formulas, the correct use of intonation, to combine learned linguistic means of expressing empathy with other linguistic means of expression to make the expression as rich and convincing as possible. Then the students are divided into pairs and begin to prepare for the role play.

#### Role-play stage:

In the role-playing stage, each group of students act out their dialog. Students first introduce the role they are playing and then proceed to present the dialog. During the presentation, students should immerse themselves in the situation as much as possible, visualize themselves as the characters in the movie, and pay attention to the use of verbal and non-verbal expressions appropriate to the character's personality, social status, and gender. Other students should listen attentively and take notes on the advantages and disadvantages of the performance

in time to prepare a mutual evaluation.

Mutual evaluation stage:

At this stage, students can give their own opinions about the performances of each group of students. Students can first be asked to talk about problems in the performance (lexical and grammatical errors, errors with intonation, problems with the use of modes of expression, problems with the actors' involvement in the play, etc.), then to talk about the advantages of the performance, and finally to give their own suggestions. In the process of mutual evaluation, students practiced active and sincere listening skills and practiced empathic communication in real practice. At the end, the teacher summarizes the students' role play activities.

### **5. Work with reproduction (30 minutes).**

Work algorithm:

- 1) Familiarization with the author of the painting and the time of its creation (2 minutes).
- 2) Tasks for empathic listening (non-verbal means of expression) (5 minutes).
- 3) Tasks for describing the situation, identifying the emotive component (8 minutes).
- 4) Brainstorming (15 minutes).

Exercises for the development of empathic skills based on paintings by Russian artists are more complex than those based on movies. Since the movie will present the plot of the dialog, it provides students with a lot of information for further exercises; the movie also has verbal and nonverbal expressions of the characters, which gives students examples for further practice of empathic dialog. Compared to movies, paintings show students the emotions and plots of the characters in a static form, so students need to observe the painting carefully and use their imagination based on the historical background of the creation of the painting and cultural knowledge to complete the tasks.

Work with paintings by famous artists is realized in the following way.

- 1) Familiarization with the author and time of creation of the artwork.

The teacher first introduces the students to the basic information about the

painting, including the author, year and history of creation. Such information is useful for students to analyze the content of the painting and understand the emotions of the characters in the paintings.

The introduction is accompanied by visuals (Fig. 13, Fig. 14):



Figure 13. V. M. Vasnetsov, "Alyonushka", fragment (1881)



Figure 14. C. V. Gerasimov, "The Son Has Returned" (1947)

2) Training tasks for the formation of empathic listening (by non – verbal means of expression).

The aim of the tasks is to teach students to determine the emotional state of interlocutors by non – verbal means. Pupils can practice their ability to recognize emotions of Russian speakers by non-verbal means by looking at reproductions. The following task is suggested: What emotions does Alyonushka feel? Mother? Son?

3) Tasks for describing the situation, identifying the emotive component.

This is the formation of the skill of empathic understanding (on the cognitive and emotional levels of empathy) of students. Here students need to objectively analyze the personalities of the heroes of the picture, their relationships and the plot described in the picture, then emotionally understand the emotions of the heroes of the picture and be ready to express emotional support for the hero.

The following tasks are suggested:

Look at this picture carefully, characterize the situation presented by the artist.

Are you rejoicing together with your mother in the painting? Why?

4) Brainstorming.

The teacher organizes a general discussion in the form of brainstorming in class asking students to discuss which character in the painting can be expressed empathy and how you would express empathy to him or her.

In order for everyone to speak freely, the following rules should be formulated:

first, not to talk in private so as not to cause distraction;

second, not to interfere or comment on others' speeches: everyone speaks only his or her own thoughts;

third, express your opinion simply, clearly, speak only one opinion at a time.

During brainstorming, it is advisable for the teacher to record successful answers on the blackboard. After the brainstorming task is over, the teacher and students discuss together how to find the best variant or several variants to express empathy and explain the reasons for it.

## **6. Working with a song (30 minutes).**

Algorithm of working with a song:

1) Familiarization with the author of the song and the time of its creation (2 minutes).

2) Empathic listening practice (4 minutes).

3) Tasks for describing the situation, identifying the emotive component (6 minutes).

4) Case exercises (18 minutes).

The melody and lyrics of songs can convey different emotions of people and

are very contagious, Russian songs also contain important cultural knowledge, so songs are important teaching materials for Chinese students to develop empathic skills.

Compared with movies and paintings, it is more difficult for learners to perform empathic skill development exercises based on listening to songs. While movies develop learners' empathic skills through visual and auditory stimulation, and paintings develop learners' empathic skills through visual stimulation, listening to songs allows learners to develop empathic skills only through auditory stimulation. In this process, students' ability to listen actively and sincerely will be practiced to the greatest extent possible.

Work with songs is realized in the following way.

1) Familiarization with the author of the song and the time of its creation.

Mastering the basic information of the song can enrich the students' country knowledge, it is also useful for the students' understanding of the content of the song. The following information graphic of the song « Birch Trees » is suggested.



« Birch Trees » (also known as "Why Do Birches Make Such a Noise in Russia?") is a song by the Russian band Lyube to music by Igor Matvienko. The song was first performed in the album "Let's go for...", which was released in 2002. The song's lyrics were written by Tomsk poet Mikhail Andreyev.

Figure 15. Songs advertising poster «Birch Trees»

2) Empathic listening exercises.

When listening to songs, students should pay special attention to conveying

emotions in songs, which trains students' empathic listening skills.



The following task is proposed: What emotions did you hear from the song?

3) Tasks for describing the situation, identifying the emotive component.

It is important for students to visualize the situation and event described in the song, based on its content, and then emotionally connect with the main character of the song. Students are presented with the following tasks:

Characterize the situation presented in the song.

Do you co - create with the protagonist of the song? Why?

4) Case assignments.

Due to limited class time, mini-cases are usually organized.

Case assignments can be organized in the following steps.

a. Formulation of the case assignment. After listening to the song, the teacher proposes a situation based on the content of the song. For example, Masha has been preparing for the exam for many days, but on the day of the exam she suddenly got a headache and got a C. She is now very depressed. Have an empathic conversation with her to try to ease her negative emotions.

b. Analyze the situation, diagnose the problem. Students can be divided into groups for discussion. Students in each group should analyze the above situation, find out the problems faced by the characters in the question, identify the emotional state of the characters, think from the others' point of view and analyze the reasons for the emotions they feel.

c. Making a final decision. After the analysis, students in each group need to combine their opinions and come up with the most appropriate empathic dialog for

the situation.

d. Presentation of group solutions and general discussion. Finally, the teacher can ask each group to present the dialog and students in other groups should listen carefully. After each group's presentation, classmates can discuss the pros and cons of the composed dialog and make suggestions for improvement.

### **7. Summarizing the lesson and explaining the homework (5 minutes).**

This stage is based on a system of questions that allow assessing the level of learning new material by the content and emotionality of answers. The following questions are proposed:

List the linguistic means of expressing sympathy.

List the intonational means of expressing sympathy.

Give answers (3 tasks).

Homework will allow pupils to apply the skills they have learned in new situations. It is advisable to ask students to watch the new video clips and perform the exercises. The following tasks are suggested:

Watch the movie "Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears" to the end. Watch a fragment of the movie (Katya lost Gosha). Answer the following questions:

What emotions did you notice while watching the video clip?

Describe the situation in the video clip.

Do you want to comfort Katya? Why?

Make a dialog: imagine that you are Katya's friend. How will you comfort her?

(In the dialog, each interlocutor should have at least 6 lines).

The above is a description of the process of the learning experiment. EG and CG use different learning algorithms and training materials respectively. The teaching materials and teaching algorithms in the EG correspond to the developed teaching model.

### **3.4. Analyzing the results of the training experiment**

The last stage of the training experiment is the control stage. In order to check



the effect of the teaching experiment in the control cutoff, an Eton test was conducted in the EC and in the CG.

### Final testing

The tasks of the final test are divided into a written part and an oral part, and aim to test students' empathic skills after training.

The written part of the final test consists of five blocks.

The **first block** tests the subjects' ability to explain concepts related to empathy (5 tasks, 2 points for each correct answer).

1 Explain the following concepts in your own words.

1) Empathy is ...

---

2) Empathy is ...

---

3) Consolation is ...

---

4) Condolence is ...

---

5) The commiseration is. ...

---

Table 10

#### Evaluation criteria for the first block

Evaluation parameters	Evaluation criteria
2 points	Correctly explain the basic meaning of concepts in their own words, using complete sentences without lexicogrammatical errors.
1 point	The essence of the concept is explained, but the

	expression is incomplete and there are lexico-grammatical errors.
0 point	The meaning of the concept is not explained at all.

The **second block** tests the ability to identify and understand people's emotions from photographs (by their non - verbal means of expressing emotions), which is important for the formation of empathic listening skills.

Test takers were offered multiple choice tasks consisting of 2 questions (3 points each for the correct answer).

For example:

Identify the emotions of these people and think of a situation that could happen to them.



- A. fear
- B. outrage
- C. sadness
- D. tiredness

What do you think happened to her?

---

The **third block** tests students' empathic listening and empathic understanding skills: identifying and understanding people's emotions through words (through their verbal means of expressing emotions).

Test takers were offered multiple choice tasks consisting of 3 questions (3

points each for a correct answer).

For example:

Identify these people's emotions and think of a situation that could happen to them.

"No, no, don't talk me into it! I won't get up to downhill skiing!"

A. sadness

B. shame

C. fear

What do you think happened to her?

---

The **fourth block** tests the examinees' ability to distinguish between linguistic means aimed at expressing empathy (1 point for each correct answer).

Read the proposed expressions and determine which phrases convey:

A. consolation, B. condolence, C. sympathy, D. commiseration.

1) What news! That's just great!

2) Don't worry. You'll be fine.

3) You poor thing! Yes, it's very serious.

4) My deepest condolences.

5) Be patient, it'll pass.

6) I grieve with you.

7) I understand you so much! I had a similar story.

8) It's not your fault at all for what happened. Don't take it personally! Calm down!

9) I'm so glad you found each other!

10) Cheer up! Next time it'll work out.

The **fifth block** tests the ability of subjects' empathic response to the interlocutor's words. Test takers were offered 7 situations and asked to respond to them (task 1, task 2, task 3, task 5, task 6, task 7: 3 points for each task, task 4 is

rated at 2 points). For example:

Keep the dialog going.

1) – Alas! I only got fourth place. It's a shame! Just two points short of victory!

Comfort her:

– \_\_\_\_\_

2) – I am over the moon! I finally found my dog! I've been worried about her

for so long.

Cheer for her:

– \_\_\_\_\_

Table 11

### Evaluation criteria for the fifth block

Evaluation parameters	Evaluation criteria
3 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– empathy is expressed according to the situation;</li> <li>– empathy is expressed correctly, fully, richly (in combination with other linguistic means);</li> <li>– there are no lexico-grammatical errors in the expression.</li> </ul>
2 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– empathy is expressed according to the situation;</li> <li>– empathy is expressed correctly and completely;</li> <li>– there are no lexico-grammatical errors in expression that affect communication.</li> </ul>
1 point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– empathy is expressed according to the situation;</li> <li>– empathy is expressed partially;</li> <li>– there are no lexico-grammatical errors affecting the communication.</li> </ul>
0 point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– empathy is unexpressed;</li> <li>– there are many lexico-grammatical errors in the expression.</li> </ul>

The oral part of the final test consists of five blocks.

The **first block** tests the test takers' empathic listening and empathic response skills. For example:

Task 1 (positions 1-4). Imagine that you and your friends have been in the following situations. Your points of view are the same. Say a similar opinion using other words (3 points for each correct answer).

(Cue lines.)

– Tomorrow we were supposed to go to the sea, but because of bad weather all flights were canceled.

– I sympathize, it's really sad. I've been in that situation too. Just have to wait it out.

– ...

Empathic listening skills. (1 point)

Table 12

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	The subjects express a similar opinion
	1 point

Empathic Response Skills. (3 points)

Table 13

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	Testees correctly expressed empathy in linguistic ways	Testees expressed empathy with correct intonations
	2 points	1 point

The **second block** tests subjects' empathic listening and empathic response skills. For example:

Task 2 (positions 5-8). Support the dialog. (3 points for a correct answer).

– I'm so sad I feel like crying. I was downsized at work. When they offered me the job, I couldn't believe my ears.

– (Express sympathy.)

Empathic listening skills. (1 point)

Table 14

## Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	The expression of the subjects corresponds to the content heard
	1 point

Empathic Response Skills. (2 points)

Table 15

## Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	Test takers correctly and richly expressed empathy in linguistic ways	Testees expressed empathy with correct intonations
	1 point	1 point

The **third block** tests subjects' empathic listening and empathic response skills in different situations. For example:

Task 3 (items 9 – 11). You are talking to a friend who has lost her bank card but has finally found the card in her bag. Express sympathy, comfort, and commiseration to her (3 points each for a correct response).

(Cue lines)

– Masha, I'm so upset today. I lost my bank card when I was walking home.

– ...

– I'm very worried, especially because of the possibility of fraud.

– ...

In two hours...

– Oh, Masha, I found my bank card! Imagine, it's in my bag, and I just didn't notice it!

– ...

Empathic listening skills. (1 point)

Table 16

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	The expression of the subjects corresponds to the content heard
	1 point

Ability to respond to the emotions of the interlocutor. (2 points)

Table 17

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	Test takers correctly and richly expressed empathy in linguistic ways	Testees expressed empathy with correct intonations
	1 point	1 point

The fourth block tests the subjects' skills of empathic listening, empathic understanding, empathic responding with the help of video clips. For example:

Task 4 (positions 12 – 15). Watch video fragments of the cartoon "Kashtanka", based on the story of the same name by A. P. Chekhov, and perform the following tasks.



12. Describe the emotional states of the character in these video clips. (2 points)

Table 18

## Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	The students correctly name the emotional states of the hero in different situations.
	2 points

13. Watch the video clips again and describe the situations the character in the movie finds himself in. (3 points)

Table 19

## Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	Testers clearly, logically describe the events in the movie fragment	The subjects' expression is clear, complete, there are no lexico-grammatical errors in expression that affect communication
	2 points	2 points

14. Do you want to express empathy for the character? Why? (1 point)

Table 20

## Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	Testers show a willingness to express empathy for the hero in the picture
	1 point

15. Tell me how you would express empathy for the character in each situation here. (4 points)

Table 21

## Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	Test takers correctly and richly expressed empathy in linguistic ways	Testers expressed empathy with correct intonations
	2 points	2 points



The **fifth block** tests subjects' empathic listening, empathic understanding, and empathic response skills with the help of visual materials. For example:

Task 5. Tell about one of the proposed pictures (7 points).



«Another D»  
(Ф. P. Reshetnikov, 1952)



«A sick friend»  
(I. A. Tykhiy, 1955)



«Orphans in a cemetery»  
(B. G. Perov, 1846)



«Moving to a new apartment»  
(A. I. Laktionova, 1952)

16. Give a description of the emotional state of the main character (2 points).

Table 22

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	Test takers correctly name the emotions of the character in the picture	The expression of the subjects is clear, complete, there are no lexico -
---------------------	---	--

		grammatical errors in the expression that affect communication
	1 point	1 point

17. Look at the painting and characterize the situation presented by the artist (2 points).

Table 23

## Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	Testers clearly, logically describe the event in the movie fragment	The subjects' expression is clear, complete, without lexico - grammatical errors affecting communication
	1 point	1 point

18. Do you want to express empathy for the character? Why? (1 point).

Table 24

## Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	Testers show a willingness to express empathy for the hero in the picture
	1 point

19. Tell me how you would express empathy for a character in the painting here. (2 points).

Table 25

## Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	Test takers correctly and richly express empathy in linguistic ways	Testers expressed empathy with correct intonations
	1 point	1 point

## Results of the control section

The results obtained when performing the final test by EG pupils are presented in the table 26.

Table 26

## Results of the final test by students of the EG

	The written part of the test					Oral part of the test					Total score
	block 1	block 2	block 3	block 4	block 5	block 1	block 2	block 3	block 4	block 5	
Student 1	6,5	5	4	7	17	11	9	11	10	6	86,5
Student 2	10	5	5	10	20	12	8	11	9	6	96
Student 3	10	5	5	9	18,5	12	8	11	9	7	94,5
Student 4	7,5	5	4	6	18,5	11	8	11	9	7	87
Student 5	6,5	4	5	9	12	11	7	9	7	5	75,5
Student 6	9,5	5	5	9	20	12	9	10	7	4	90,5
Student 7	9,5	5	5	10	20	11	9	12	9	7	97,5
Student 8	8	4	5	6	17	10	6	11	7	5	79
Student 9	10	4	3	1	20	11	7	12	6	4	78
Student 10	9	5	4	9	19	12	7	11	10	5	91
Student 11	5	5	5	9	17	11	8	11	8	4	83
Student 12	7,5	3	3	10	19	11	9	9	7	5	83,5
Average score	8,25	4,58	4,42	7,92	18,17	11,25	7,92	10,75	8,17	5,42	86,83

The results obtained when performing the final test by CG pupils are presented in table 27.

Results of the final test by students of the CG

	The written part of the test					Oral part of the test					Total score
	block 1	block 2	block 3	block 4	block 5	block 1	block 2	block 3	block 4	block 5	
Student 1	7	4	2	8	9	9	7	8	5	5	64
Student 2	3	4	5	9	7,5	9	7	5	7	4	60,5
Student 3	4	3	3	9	10,5	5	5	6	6	4	55,5
Student 4	5	4	5	9	14	8	5	6	8	2	66
Student 5	5	5	4	6	11,5	2	4	7	6	3	53,5
Student 6	7	3	5	6	15	12	7	8	8	5	76
Student 7	7	5	5	7	12	6	5	6	5	4	62
Student 8	7	5	5	8	19	10	6	9	10	5	84
Student 9	7	5	5	9	13	4	7	9	7	3	69
Student 10	6	4	4	8	14	9	5	7	8	6	71
Student 11	5	3	5	7	13	9	7	6	7	4	66
Student 12	7	3	4	6	10,5	6	5	5	6	5	57,5
Average score	5,83	4	4,33	7,67	13,28	7,42	5,83	6,83	6,92	4,17	65,42

The correct percentage of each subject's answers in each block was calculated using formula 1. Then the average percentage of correct answers of all examinees in each block and the average percentage of correct answers of all examinees in the test were calculated using formula 2.

The comparison of the average percentages of correct answers of EG and CG test takers in each block of tasks is shown in the Fig.16.

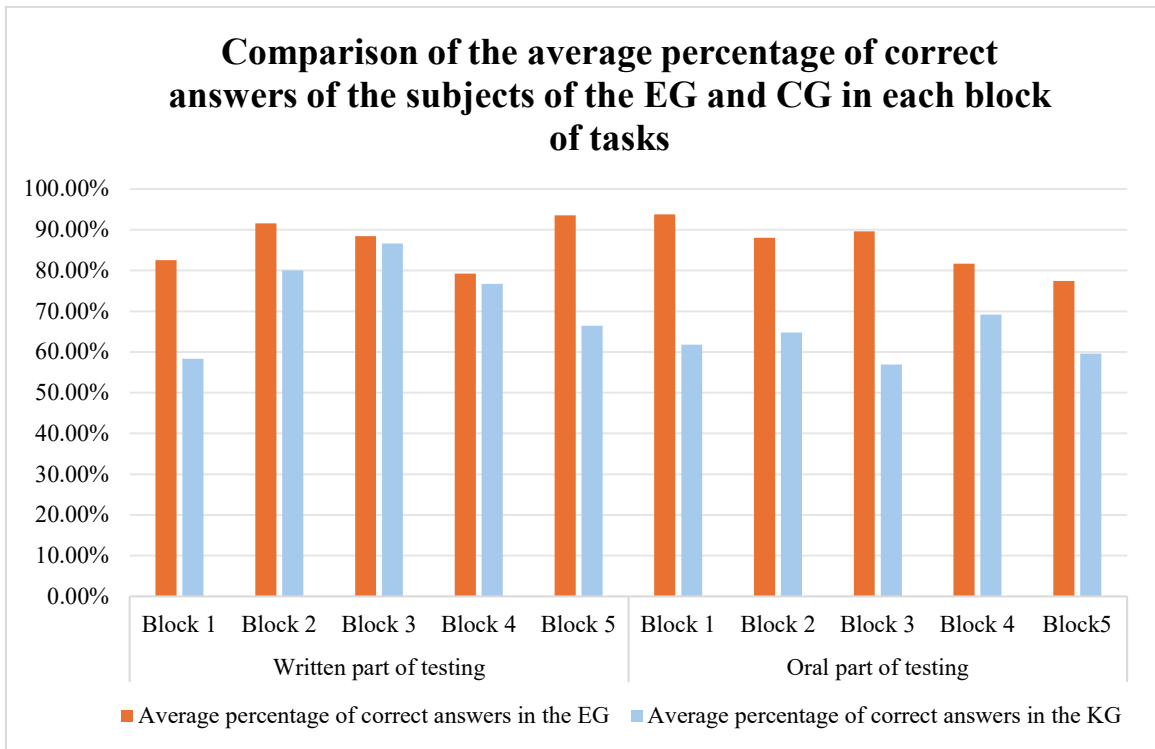


Figure 16. Average percentage of correct answers of subjects in the EG and CG in each block

The average percentage of correct answers given by EG test takers is 86.83%, while the average percentage of correct answers given by CG test takers is 65.42%.

Comparison of the average percentages of correct answers of EG and CG pupils is reflected in the Fig.17.

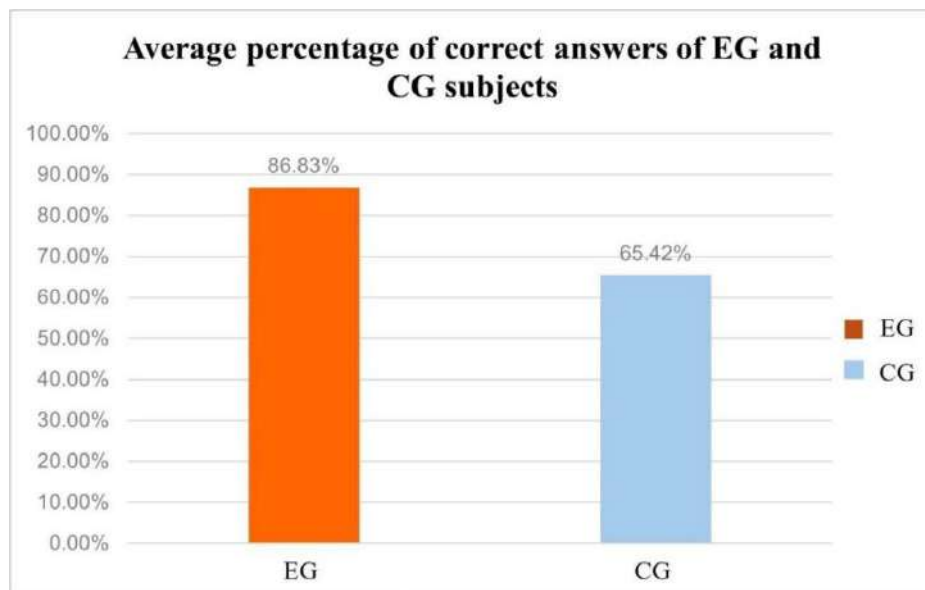


Figure 17. Average percentage of correct answers of subjects in the EG and CG

The comparison of the average percentages of correct answers among EG and CG students in the survey and the control survey is shown in Fig. 18.

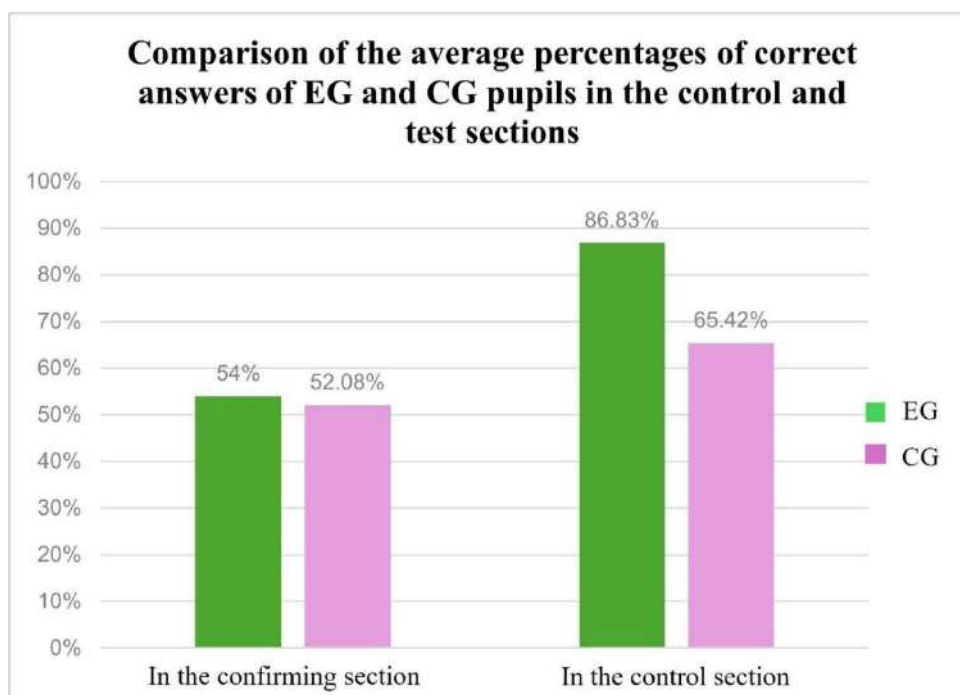


Fig. 18. Average percentage of correct answers among students in the EG and CG at the ascertaining stage and the control stage

Hypothesis testing for the final test of EG and CG taking into account the confidence region  $\alpha$  ( $\alpha$ ) = 0,05:

null hypothesis  $H_0$ : there is no difference between EG and CG results at the final test (teaching in EG does not improve academic performance);

alternative hypothesis  $H_1$ : EG results on the final test are better than CG results on the final test (teaching in EG improves academic performance more effectively).

Calculation of mean and variance, T - value. Mean score  $X$  (EG) = 86.83, variance  $S_a = 48.43$ ; Mean score  $X$  (CG) = 65.42, variance  $S_b = 84.29$ . Calculated by formula (4),  $T = 6.43$ , look at the table ( $t$  - student's criterion), in the table of degrees of freedom (5) - 22,  $P$  - value = 2.074.  $T (6,43) > P (2.074)$ , the alternative hypothesis is true, the results of EG on the final test are better than the results of CG on the final test, it means that teaching in EG is more effective in improving the performance of the test subjects.

Analyzing the subjects' answers at the final test, we can state that the subjects have basically mastered the necessary skills for empathic communication in Russian: they can pay attention to the interlocutor's emotional state in foreign-language communication, understand the interlocutor emotionally and cognitively, and build

an empathic dialogue with a foreign-language interlocutor. The empathic skills of the experimental group subjects improved more significantly. At the final test, the EG subjects' answers showed their ability to assess the interlocutor's skills by their verbal and non-verbal means of expression, the ability to understand the interlocutor's emotions and the ability to use the correct lexico-grammatical forms and intonation means to create an empathic dialog with native Russian speakers.

Compared to the EG subjects' answers on the entrance test and to the CG subjects' answers on the final test, the EG subjects' answers on the final test were more accurate in assessing the interlocutor's emotions, and they could better explain the concepts related to empathy. During the empathic dialog, their answers had fewer lexical, grammatical, and intonation errors, and the expressions they used were more relevant to the specific situation. In addition, they were more able to convincingly argue their point of view and display their personal qualities such as tolerance and flexibility in empathic dialog in Russian. Here are some examples from the responses of EG and CG subjects.

– Two days ago we had a fight with my girlfriend, and yesterday she suddenly told me she was leaving me. It's so sudden. I'm really depressed.

EG subject's answers:

– *Oh my poor baby, I understand you so much! I will support you in any way I can. I am always here with you, you can come to me to pour out your soul, cry, yell, go to a disco, do whatever you want. Text me or call me whenever you want.*

– *It's totally understandable that you're in a bad mood right now. Take the time to make yourself feel better. Don't blame yourself, you're a wonderful, strong person, I'm sure you'll find your true love. What can I do to help? You can always rely on me.*

CG subject's answers:

– *This is a really sad story. Be strong!*

– *Calm down. It will all pass, it's not serious at all.*

By comparison, it can be found that although all the answers of EG and CG subjects are correct, these answers have different communicative effects in

intercultural communication. Although CG students have memorized the linguistic means of expressing empathy, they have not formed the skills of empathic listening and empathic understanding, their mastery of linguistic knowledge remains at the stage of mechanical giving answers, so their ability to use these linguistic means depending on specific situations is relatively weak.

From the above analysis we can affirm that after special training the levels of empathic skills of EG and KG students improved, and the level of empathic skills of EG students improved more significantly. According to the results of the final testing, it can be seen that the formation of empathic skills is an important factor for the formation of intercultural communicative competence of the subjects. Test takers with formed empathic skills can use Russian in various situations to achieve mutual understanding, mutual trust and establish deep relations with interlocutors, and can also show tolerance, flexibility and other personal qualities that contribute to intercultural communication. They are popular communicators in intercultural communication.

Through the above final test in the control cutoff and the above analysis, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The level of empathic skills of pupils was increased due to specialized teaching of Russian as a foreign language, it shows that it is possible to form empathic skills of pupils in the process of teaching Russian as a foreign language.

2. According to the results of the final test, it follows that teaching in EG is more conducive to the formation of students' empathic skills.

3. In the process of teaching in EG students have formed the following empathic skills: the skill of empathic listening, the skill of empathic understanding (at cognitive and emotional levels), the skill of empathic response.

4. empathy is a key component for improving intercultural communicative competence. Students who have developed empathic skills demonstrate higher level communicative competence and good preparation for intercultural communication.



### CONCLUSIONS OF CHAPTER THREE

In order to verify the effectiveness of the proposed teaching methodology, a teaching experiment was conducted in the experimental group and in the control group. The experimental group uses the teaching method based on the developed teaching model and the developed teaching materials. The control group uses the habitual teaching methodology and having teaching materials in the form of three articles: "What is empathy and how to develop it?," "About empathy. How to empathize with an upset person?," "The linguistic aspect of empathy".

The process of the training experiment includes the ascertaining stage, the training stage and the control stage. When processing experimental data, several formulas are used to calculate percentage of correct answers for a test block,  $\bar{X}$  – average score of a group or a block of tasks,  $S_a$  – standard deviation,  $d_f$  – (number of) degrees of freedom. Student's  $t$  criterion value at the significance level of 0.05 is used to determine the statistical significance of differences in mean values.

In order to determine the empathic skills of the subjects before the training experiment, an entrance test was conducted in the experimental group and in the control group in the controlling section. According to the quantitative results of the input test of the experiment there is no difference in the levels of empathic skills of the subjects in the EG and in the CG before the training experiment. On the basis of the performed analysis of the qualitative results of the input testing of the experiment, it can be stated that the lack of empathic skills leads to a low level of the subjects' communicative competence in intercultural communication and the lack of good preparation for intercultural communication, which leads to a low level of intercultural communicative competence of the subjects.

The process of the training experiment is carried out according to the curriculum in the experimental group and in the control group. The content of training in EG is represented by the themes: "Sympathy", "Consolation", "Condolence", "Happy for others". In the process of forming empathic skills video fragments of movies (cartoons), pictures of artists and songs are used to form the

skills of empathic listening, empathic understanding and empathic response, set what tasks as role-playing games, brainstorming and case-tasks, which allow students to form empathic skills in the process of cooperation and interaction are used.

To compare the effectiveness of training in the experimental group and in the control group, as well as to compare the changes in the levels of empathic skills of the subjects before and after the training experiment, a final test was conducted in the control section. According to the results of the input and final testing after the training experiment, the levels of empathic skills of the subjects in both EG and CG increased, which proves that it is possible to form empathic skills in students at the classes of Russian as a foreign language. Comparing the data of subjects in EG and in CG at the final test in EG and in CG it is possible to find out that the results of EG are better than the results of CG, it means that the method of teaching in EG more effectively forms empathic skills of subjects. Based on the performed analysis on the qualitative results of the final testing of the experiment, it can be stated that empathy is a key component for improving intercultural communicative competence. The subjects who have formed empathic skills demonstrate higher level communicative competence and good preparation for intercultural communication.

Through quantitative and qualitative analysis of the results of the experiment, it can be stated that the empathic skills of students can be formed when teaching Russian as a foreign language; in the process of teaching, it is important to form the skills of empathic listening, empathic understanding and empathic response in intercultural communication; the formation of empathic skills contributes to improving the level of intercultural communicative competence.

## CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation work is an attempt to form empathic skills in Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage of learning Russian as a foreign language. The relevance of this topic is due to the important role of empathy in intercultural communication and unexplored research on the formation of empathic skills in foreign language classes.

The study shows that the development of intercultural communicative competence is an important task of teaching Russian as a foreign language, and the formation of empathy is the key to improving intercultural communicative competence. There are two important stages in the process of formation of intercultural communicative competence: the stage of formation of communicative competence and the stage of preparation for intercultural communication. Empathy acts as an important component of communicative competence and an important personal quality to prepare for intercultural communication. Therefore, empathy plays an important role in the formation of intercultural communicative competence. In intercultural communication, empathy helps people overcome psychological obstacles such as anxiety, stereotype and prejudice in intercultural communication, allowing people to learn to think from the other party's point of view, pay attention to the interlocutor's emotional state and give the interlocutor an emotional response. Empathy reduces the psychological distance between communicators of communication, help people to establish a deep and stable relationship with the interlocutor and become a popular communicator in intercultural communication.

Empathy is divided into three levels: cognitive level, emotional level and behavioral level. According to the generalization of scientists' research results, most scientists believe that the formation of empathy should be carried out simultaneously at these three levels. In other words, first it is necessary to learn to use the mind to identify and record the emotions of the interlocutor and find out the reasons for the appearance of these emotions, then it is important to think emotionally, to be ready to show the interlocutor their care and understanding and, finally, to use words and

other behaviors to provide emotional support in communication.

Currently, there are studies on the linguistic expression of empathy from the perspective of linguistics. The studies believe that the expression of empathy in Russian predominantly includes linguistic response to positive emotions of the interlocutor and negative emotions of the interlocutor. Based on the views of the scholars of these studies, this paper summarizes the main linguistic means for expressing empathy in Russian: expressions of sympathy, expressions of consolation, expressions of condolence and expressions of happy for others. Examples from authentic materials were used to describe the linguistic ways of expressing empathy. In addition, intonation is also categorized by the author as an important means of expressing empathy.

According to the three important levels of empathy, this paper identifies three important empathic skills that can be taught in the lessons of Russian as a foreign language, as follows:

- empathic listening – the ability to pay special attention to the emotional state of the interlocutor while listening;
- empathic understanding – the ability to understand the interlocutor on cognitive and emotional levels;
- empathic response – the ability to build an empathic dialog with the interlocutor.

Based on the typical characteristics of Chinese students at the advanced stage of learning Russian as a foreign language, in combination with the teaching content, the teaching approaches are analyzed: personality-oriented approach, communicative approach, competency – based approach. In accordance with the teaching approaches, teaching methods, teaching tools, principles of selection and use of teaching materials, as well as ways of creating a system of exercises are considered.

The paper analyzes the specific teaching principles that should be adhered to in the formation of empathic skills in Chinese students of philology at the advanced stage of teaching Russian as a foreign language from the standpoint of didactics,

linguistics, psychology and methodology of teaching Russian as a foreign language: the principle of visibility, the principle of accessibility and feasibility, the principle of interrelated communicative, cognitive and socio – cultural development of students, the principle of collective interaction, the principle of systematicity, the principle of minimization, and the principle of the development of empathic skills in Chinese students of the advanced stage of teaching Russian as a foreign language. Taking into account these principles, on the basis of the existing two teaching models, a new model of empathic skills formation at the lessons of Russian as a foreign language was developed.

Taking into account the lack of existing teaching materials, new teaching materials were compiled based on the developed teaching methodology and the requirements for III level of general proficiency in Russian as a foreign language. The teaching materials are divided into four parts according to the thematic situations: sympathy, consolation, condolence and commiseration. Each part of the training materials consists of linguistic (including intonation) means of expression, microdialogues, fragments from Soviet and Russian films (cartoons), reproductions of paintings, songs in Russian and is provided with appropriate exercises.

Based on the new teaching model and using new teaching materials, a training experiment was conducted to test the proposed teaching methodology in the experimental group. The training experiment was conducted in the EG and CG respectively and consists of the test, experimental and control sections. Analyzing the data in the EG and in the CG in the ascertaining and control sections, it is possible to assert that due to systematic teaching at the lessons of Russian as foreign language the students' empathic skills have improved. The improvement of empathic skills in the experimental group was more noticeable. The teaching experiment proved the effectiveness of the proposed teaching methodology, and the teaching materials used, and also confirmed the hypothesis put forward at the beginning of the study.

This dissertation emphasizes the importance of forming empathic skills in Chinese advanced students of Russian as an INNOVERNMENT, demonstrates the possibility of forming empathic skills in Russian as a foreign language, offers a

systematic teaching methodology and teaching materials to ensure the formation of empathic skills in Russian as a foreign language. This work is a new attempt to form empathic skills of students at the lessons of Russian as a foreign language, there are still shortcomings in it. We believe that a promising direction of research on this topic will be to identify the role of empathic skills in increasing students' motivation to learn a foreign language and the effectiveness of the educational process.

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**APPENDICES****Appendix 1: Entrance Test**

Dear students!

You are invited to participate in a learning experiment. All data will be used for scientific purposes only.

The time to complete the test: 40 minutes.

Thank you!

Specialty:

Course:

Group:

Gender: m. w. (Must be underlined) Name:

Age:

1. Identify the emotions of these people

(1)



- A. pleasure
- B. embarrassment
- C. frustration

(2)



- A. surprise
- B. jealousy
- C. anxiety

(3)



- A. resentment
- B. joy
- C. contempt



(4)



- A. anger
- B. contempt
- C. Fear

(5)



- A. anger
- B. contempt
- C. fear

2. Identify the emotions of these people.

1) "I'm ready to fly with happiness! I finally got my driver's license!"

- A. surprise
- B. admiration
- C. joy

2) "I've been fired! Yesterday, my boss informed me that I've been out of the firm since the first of December. I'm shocked."

- A. contempt
- B. sadness
- C. embarrassment

3) "Eh! That's too bad! I really wanted to go to this ballet."

- A. anger
- C. pity
- D. surprise

4) "Do you have a conscience? She's done so much for you!"

- A. indignation
- B. surprise
- C. fear

5) "I'm so scared! I'm terribly afraid to answer the exam!"

- A. indignation
- B. contempt
- C. fear

3. Read the proposed expressions and identify which intents they convey: A. consolation, B. condolence, C. support, D. sympathy, D. commiseration.

- 1) How I understand you!
- 2) It happens in life.
- 3) You are not alone in this. I'm always here to help you.
- 4) It will heal before the wedding.
- 5) Yes, it's sad.
- 6) You have my deepest condolences.
- 7) Everything will get better!
- 8) I am always in your rear.
- 9) I grieve with you.
- 10) There is a silver lining in every bad thing.

4. Explain the following concepts in your own words.

1) Empathy

---

2) Sympathy

---

3) Consolation

---

4) Condolence

---

5) Greeting

---

5. Give examples of expressions of sympathy, consolation, condolence, and happy for others.

---

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6. Give the answers.

1) - My cat is sick, I'm very worried about her! We're going to the doctor today.  
Make her feel better:

- \_\_\_\_\_

2) - Two days ago we had a fight with my girlfriend, and yesterday she suddenly told me she was leaving me. It's so sudden. I'm really depressed.  
Feel sorry for him:

- \_\_\_\_\_

3) - Anna, can you believe it? I won a car!  
Cheer for your friend.:

- \_\_\_\_\_

4) - I have a report to give to the chief in an hour. I'm so nervous! My hands are shaking!  
Please comfort her:

- \_\_\_\_\_

5) - Sorry, I got a sad message: my friend passed away. I'm very upset.  
I'd like to offer my condolences:

- \_\_\_\_\_

6) - I put so much time and effort into my job, and my boss does nothing but criticize me.  
Feel sorry for her:

- \_\_\_\_\_

7) - I'm in a great mood! I finally bought a ticket to see Swan Lake!  
Cheer up for him:

- \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 2: Final test**

## Written part

Dear students!

You are invited to participate in an experiment. All data will be used for scientific purposes only.

Time to complete the written test: 40 minutes.

Thank you!

Specialty:

Course:

Group:

Gender: m. w. (Must be underlined) Name:

Age:

1. Explain the following concepts in your own words.

1) Empathy is ...

---

2) Sympathy is ...

---

3) Consolation is ...

---

4) Condolence is ...

---

5) Greeting is ...

---

2. Identify the emotions of these people and think of a situation that could happen to them.

(1)



A. fear

B. outrage

C. sadness

What do you think happened to her?

---



- A. surprise
- B. anxiety
- C. confidence

What do you think happened to her?

---

3. Identify the emotions of these people and think of a situation that could happen to them.

1) "Oh, what a cute puppy! What a cute puppy! I've been wanting a dog for a long time! Thank you so much! I'm over the moon!"

- A. joy
- B. pride
- C. inspiration

What do you think happened to her?

---

2) "What an outrage! Agreed to meet a friend, waited for her for an hour, she never showed up! Didn't even call or apologize afterwards!!! "

- A. sadness
- B. indignation
- C. anxiety

What do you think happened to her?

---

3) "No, no, don't talk me into it! I'm not getting up to downhill skiing!"

- A. sadness
- B. shame
- C. fear

What do you think happened to him?

---

4. Read the given expressions and identify which phrases convey: A. consolation, B. condolence, C. sympathy, D. commiseration.

- 1) What news! It's just great!
- 2) Don't worry. You'll do fine.
- 3) You poor thing! Yes, it's very serious.
- 4) My deepest condolences.
- 5) Be patient, it'll pass.
- 6) I grieve with you.
- 7) I understand you so much! I had a similar story.
- 8) It's not your fault at all for what happened. Don't take it personally! Calm down!
- 9) I'm so glad you found each other!
- 10) Cheer up! Next time it'll work out.

5. Support the dialog.

1) – Yesterday I broke up with my favorite girl. I am very upset.

Sympathize with him:

– \_\_\_\_\_

2) – Alas! I only got fourth place. It's a tearful shame! Just two points short of victory!

Comfort her:

– \_\_\_\_\_

3) – I am so happy! The teacher told me that I don't need to come for credit because I wrote all the test papers well and went to all the classes.

Cheer for a friend:

– \_\_\_\_\_

4) – You know, on December 14, Abram Movshevich — one of the creators of color television in the USSR — passed away at the age of 96.

Express your condolences to Abram Movshevich's relatives:

– \_\_\_\_\_

5) – I've been living at work lately, trying to get everything done and on time, but my boss is threatening to fire me. I'm desperate.

Make him feel better:

– \_\_\_\_\_

6) – I spent all evening yesterday preparing a presentation on an assigned topic, and I was

never asked today.

Feel sorry for her:

— \_\_\_\_\_

7) – I am over the moon! I finally found my dog! I've been worried about her for so long.

Cheer for her:

— \_\_\_\_\_

### Oral part

**Task 1 (positions 1–4). Imagine that you and your friends have been in the following situations. Your points of view are the same. Say a similar opinion using different words.**

#### (Cue the lines)

1. – We were supposed to go to the sea tomorrow, but due to bad weather all flights have been canceled.

– I sympathize, it's really sad. I've been in that situation too. You just have to wait.

– ...

2. – It's been a week since the fall and I still can't walk properly. My leg hurts and that's it!

– Of course it hurts! You hit it so hard! Be patient! It'll go away! As they say, it'll heal before the wedding!

– ...

3. – Yesterday morning my favorite and only cat died, he passed away on his 12th year. I am so sad.

– My deepest condolences to you. I will always be by your side to help you out.

– ...

4. – I won the Russian language Olympiad!

– I am so happy for you! May this award always be an incentive for further successes!

– ...

#### **Task 2 (items 8–11). Support the dialog.**

5. – I'm so sad I want to cry. I was downsized at work. When they told me to quit my job, I

couldn't believe my ears

– (Express sympathy.).

6. – I graduated from the Faculty of Economics, but for a whole year I can't find a suitable job.

– (Express your consolation.).

7. – I'm so upset. My favorite dog died yesterday. She was 14. I can't accept that she's not with me. She was my shadow and always by my side.

– (Express your condolences.).

8. – I'm so happy! I got into the university!

– (Express your joy.) .

**Task 3 (items 9–11). You are talking to a friend who has lost her bank card but has finally found the card in her bag. Express sympathy, comfort, and encouragement to her.**

(Cue the lines)

9. – Masha, I'm so upset today. I lost my bank card.

– ...

10. – I've looked everywhere but can't find the card. I'm very worried, especially because of the possibility of fraud.

– ...

Two hours later....

11. – Oh, Masha, I found my bank card! Can you imagine, it's in my bag, and I just didn't notice it!

– ...

**Task 4 (items 12–15). Watch video clips of the cartoon "Kashtanka", based on the story of the same name by Anton Chekhov, and perform the following tasks.**

12. Describe the emotional states of the character in these video clips.

13. Watch the video clips again and describe the situations in which the hero of the movie finds himself.

14. Do you want to express empathy for the hero? Why?

15. Tell me how you would express empathy for the hero in each situation here.

**Task 5 (items 16–19). Tell about one of the proposed paintings.**





«Опять двойка»  
(Ф. П. Решетников, 1952)



«У больной подруги»  
(И. А. Тихий, 1955)



«Дети-сироты на кладбище»  
(В. Г. Перов, 1846)



«Переезд на новую квартиру»  
(А. И. Лактионова, 1952)

16. Give a description of the emotional state of the main character.
17. Look at the painting and characterize the situation presented by the artist.
18. Do you want to express empathy for the character? Why?
19. Tell me how you would express empathy for the character in the painting here.

**Appendix 3. Photos of the training experiment**



Role-playing game



Brainstorming session



Case assignments