

## Dynamics of Acculturation Processes Among Foreign Students in The Multi-Ethnic Educational Environment of the Higher Educational Establishment

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### Abstract

The relevance of the integration process of a foreign student-future teacher is determined by the need for their further effective education in the multinational structure of Tatarstan Republic in the multi-ethnic educational environment of the university. The purpose of the article is to study the dynamics of acculturation processes among foreign students in the multi-ethnic educational environment of the university. Based on the observation and questioning of 145 respondents, the authors analysed topical issues of training foreign students with the major Pedagogical education in Russian universities. The authors studied the factors affecting the effectiveness of the educational process. The features of organizing this process are considered by the example of Elabuga Institute of Kazan Federal University. Its strengths and weaknesses are formulated, as well as a course to improve the process of teaching foreign students in high school.

**Key words:** *acculturation, foreign students, multi-ethnic educational environment, globalization, migration, integration.*

### Introduction

Nowadays Russia experiences rapid development of intercultural contacts, therefore, we are witnessing subsequent changes resulting from cultural exchanges, which proves the viability of the acculturation processes theory in the contemporary world. Modern globalization processes and technological progress encompass not only business entities, but also the system of education. Currently, Elabuga Institute of Kazan Federal University (EI KFU) is rapidly developing the international field of activity, recruiting foreign students to master the profession of a teacher. Today, more than 700 students from five countries of the world study in EI KFU.

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We assume that the process of foreign students' training in a Russian university cannot be isolated from the socio-cultural environment. Therefore, one of the main factors influencing the effectiveness of foreign students' training is their successful acculturation to the new conditions of the educational environment. Acculturation serves a condition of their psychological and social readiness to integrate into the society and culture of Russia, including Tatarstan.

Due to globalization, the process of cross-cultural interaction attracts researchers from all over the world. The anthropologists R. Redfield, R. Linton and M. Herskovits were the first to use the term "acculturation" instead of the concept "cross-cultural interaction" in their book "Memorandum on the study of acculturation" (1936). They were unanimous with some other foreign researchers of the 19<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and understood this term as the result of direct and long-term cultural contact of two groups of individuals and changes in cultural paradigms of both groups. Since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the term "acculturation" has been treated in a broader sense: as a process of interaction between cultures.

For the contemporary Russian scientific world, the term "acculturation" is a relatively new concept. It was used for the first time in the late 1990s in works on ethno-psychology [see, for example, Krys'ko (1999); Lebedeva (1997, 1999); Stefanenko (2000) and others]. Moreover, this researching was not only descriptive, but also investigative. For instance, Lebedeva (1997) studied acculturation of the Russian inhabitants in the former Soviet republics. Acculturation in the Russian ethno-psychology is treated as "the process of mutual influence of people with a particular culture on each other, as well as the result of this influence" (Krys'ko, 1999). This definition is borrowed from the works of Western scientists, engaged in the problems of adaptation to a new cultural environment since the late 30s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Socio-cultural adaptation, as well as acculturation of students, is in the focus of study of a sufficiently large number of scientists abroad, such as Searle and Ward (1990), Ward and Kennedy (1996), Kim and Gugykunst (1988). Others pay special attention to the adaptation of foreign students in educational institutions (Jarrah, 2019; Shamshudinova, 2019; Kosov et al., 2016; Bykanova et al., 2017; Yigit, 2018).

In the 1960s, the Canadian psychologist George Berry, who conducted research in the field of acculturation, determined the factors, underlying acculturation strategies (assimilation, integration, separation and marginalization), which are also possible consequences of cross-cultural contacts for the individual: the maintenance and development of the individual's ethnic identity in the

society and his desire to contact with other ethnic groups (Berry and Annis, 1974; Abikenov et al., 2019; Biserova and Shagivaleeva, 2019).

Contemporary scientists understand cross-cultural adaptation as an individual's adjustment to the conditions of a new socio-cultural environment, in other words, to new values, behavioral norms, traditions, rituals (Kabuldinov et al., 2016; Monni et al., 2017; Bozhkova et al., 2019; Shatunova et al., 2019; Lafer & Tarman, 2019). Adaptation can be considered successful if its methods and techniques are correctly defined, and they let someone achieve social and psychological integration with another culture without losing the value/richness of someone's own culture.

The relevance of the integration process of a foreign student-future teacher is determined by the need for their further effective education in the multinational structure of Tatarstan, in the multi-ethnic educational environment of the university. The ethno-cultural socialization of students in a multinational environment of an educational institution is in the focus of attention for scientists of Elabuga Institute of KFU (2011).

The **goal of the research work** is to identify the dynamics of acculturation processes\* among foreign students in the multi-ethnic educational environment of the higher educational establishment.

The concept of "polycultural education" is defined by modern science as "... education that meets not only the interests of the ethnos, but also the interests of the state, the whole world community" (Emel'anov, 2001). Identical to this concept is the concept of "multicultural education", which is understood as education, which reflects "understanding and adequate appreciation of different cultures and which is adapted to the needs of children from different groups of the population" (Ivanova & Titkova, 1993). The concept of "multi-ethnic educational environment of the university", is part of the educational environment, which is a set of conditions that affect the formation of a personality, ready for effective interethnic interaction, preserving its ethnic identity and striving to understand other ethnic cultures (Carothers, 2018; Kutbiddinova & Eromasova, 2009).

The issues of education and upbringing in a multicultural and multi-ethnic environment from the standpoint of multiculturalism is in the focus of many Russian scientists. In terms of global trends in the development of multicultural education, A.N. Dzhurinsky (2018) considers relevant aspects of school policy, pedagogical theory and practice in foreign countries, such as the USA, Canada and Australia.

The concepts of multicultural education (notions, goals, content models of multicultural education, techniques and methods of teaching in a multi-ethnic environment, etc.) are considered by such scholars as Novikova (2019, Asaliev et al., 2014; Zhuravlev et al., 2018; Voronkova et al., 2019). In Russian science, the problems of students' adaptation is of particular interest (Bykanova et al., 2018). I.V. Shir'aeva (1980) believes that the acculturation of foreign students is "the formation of a stable system of relations to all components of the pedagogical system, ensuring adequate behavior that contributes to the achievement of educational goals". Their adaptation differs from overcoming the didactic barrier by Russian students and changes with each year of study (Houdyshell, 2017; Korableva et al., 2019). At first, they become part of the student environment, learn the norms of the international social group, and work out their own behavioral style. On senior courses, they form strong positive attitude towards their future profession, demonstrating stronger skills in the non-native language, and develop the sense of academic equality. Consequently, the positive dynamics of acculturation processes in the educational environment of the university manifests itself. According to M.A. Ivanova and N.A. Titkova, the psychological atmosphere in the study group and the socio-metric status of a high school teacher are among the factors that determine the success of a foreign student's adaptation. They developed a set of tools to assess the problems of foreign students' acculturation to new socio-cultural conditions. They include: 1) the semi-structured interview "Your life and study at the pre-university courses" (to determine the factors influencing the involvement of a foreign student into the academic process); 2) the patterned interview "Man among the people" (to study the factors of intergroup and interpersonal communication in educational and extracurricular activities); 3) the questionnaire "Learning is your present that will ensure your future" (to evaluate the effectiveness of the educational process, identify the factors hindering successful training, and to determine the degree of readiness of students to continue their training).

Foreign scientists are mainly interested in cultural adaptation, in the importance of religious and cultural factors in adapting to the new environment.

Thus, studies on the adaptation of foreign students are mainly aimed at identifying the difficulties that they overcome when living and studying in another state (Alajmi, 2019). In this paper, an attempt is made to understand the dynamics of acculturation processes and how the model of pedagogical support of adaptation of foreign students in the educational environment of the Elabuga Institute of KFU is practically implemented.

The answer to this question is obtained via the use of research materials of foreign students and observation.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

The authors of the work used a set of complementary research methods reflecting the content of the research problem, the goal, the subject of the study, and the objectives formulated: analysis (interdisciplinary, comparative, semantic) of psychological and pedagogical, philosophical and sociological literature on the outlined issues; theoretical generalization and systematization of scientific-theoretical and experimental data; survey method; observation (direct and indirect, long-term and short-term); methods of mathematical statistics.

As part of the study of foreign students' acculturation processes in a multi-ethnic educational environment of the university, foreign students of Elabuga Institute of Kazan Federal University were asked to answer a set of questions in November 2017 and November 2018. The authors of the article monitored foreign students throughout the entire period of training. The participation in the experiment of respondents with different periods of training at the university and diagnostics with an annual interval between measurements made it possible to investigate the dynamics of acculturation processes.

### **Participants**

The total sample number of respondents is 145 people, aged 18-27 years old, with experience of study in Russia from 1.5 to 5 years. There are three married couples. The majority of respondents (91%) live in the dormitory.

These 145 students make over 20% of the total number of foreign students (700 people) studying at Elabuga Institute of KFU and they are enrolled in the training programme "Pedagogical education", with the major "Russian and English". Most of the respondents are students from Turkmenistan. The educational program mastered by them is aimed at developing acculturation processes by foreign students in the poly-ethnic educational environment of the university.

### **Instrumentations**

The research is based on a survey questionnaire.

The theoretical basis for developing the methodology for evaluating and analyzing the dynamics are system-activity, activity-personal and competence-based approaches to assessing the effectiveness of educational practice. In the process of evaluating acculturation processes in

foreign students, the authors used such research methods as observation of students' behavior, questioning, comparative analysis, methods of mathematical statistics. The authors worked out a questionnaire including 9 questions in 2017 and tried it out to obtain primary data. In the process of assessing the effectiveness of acculturation processes among foreign students in a multi-ethnic educational environment of a higher educational establishment, three levels of formation of a culture of interethnic communication (high, intermediate and low) are specified.

To determine the peculiarities of acculturation processes, the research group also conducted an interview, which included questions concerning the background of the student, the motives of their arrival in Tatarstan, accommodation, training, communication, and culture. The interview was carried out in the Russian and English languages. In the course of tailoring up the tools, the authors took into account the possibility of considering the experience of living and training of foreign students in the new environment.

### **Data Collection**

The students' survey questionnaire for identifying opinions on integration issues was conducted at Elabuga Institute of Kazan Federal University.

During the procedure for processing the received data, the main stages of the work were as follows: a) analyzing levels of formation of interethnic communication levels in the respondents' first and subsequent years of training; b) analyzing changes in the process of formation of intercultural competence throughout the academic year; c) identifying factors of educational and extracurricular activities that determine the nature and dynamics of acculturation processes in foreign students in the educational environment of the university.

The assessment involved observing students in the process of their studies and participation in university activities aimed at developing the culture of interethnic communication, and using the questionnaire worked out as part of this research aimed at checking the formation of the culture of interethnic communication.

In order to test the formation of the culture of interethnic communication, the students were asked to answer the following questions:

- How important do you find a person's national identity in personal communication?
- Representatives of different nationalities study at Elabuga Institute of Kazan Federal University. Do you dislike them? Why?
- What nationalities do you dislike?
- Do they live in a different way of life / speak an incomprehensible language?

- Do they offend people of your nationality?
- Do they treat customs and traditions of other nations disrespectfully?
- Are they people of a religion alien to me?
- Determine the state and nature of interethnic relations in Elabuga Institute.
- Would you like to learn more about the customs, traditions, history of those peoples whose representatives study at EI KFU?

In the result of the ascertaining experiment, the results were analyzed and interpreted.

Processing of the obtained data during the experiment consisted of four stages. At the first stage questionnaire forms with answers of students were studied. At the second stage, the authors analyzed the response data in each proposed situation, and composed a summary table for the group. At the third stage, the percentage of adaptation level of both (first, second, and subsequent years of study) experimental groups was calculated. At the fourth and final stage, the analysis of educational and extracurricular work with foreign students was carried out, which are aimed at increasing the positive dynamics of acculturation processes in students-inophones in the multi-ethnic educational environment of the University.

### **Data analysis techniques**

In the current study, the authors applied a qualitative analysis using a comparative method, since this analysis allows us to determine the dynamics of acculturation processes by observing, talking and comparing the answers to questionnaire questions of foreign students in the first, second, and subsequent years of study.

### **Findings**

In November 2018, we interviewed 145 respondents of the second and subsequent years of study and obtained results that allow tracing the dynamics of acculturation processes among foreign students in the multi-ethnic educational environment of the university. In the first year of study, in November 2017, 169 students took part in the survey; therefore, the data reflect the percentage of the total number participating in the survey. The results of the study, aimed at identifying the developmental level of these processes, are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1***Developmental levels of interethnic communication standards in the years of study*

	Developmental levels of interethnic communication standards	In the first year of study (%)	In the second and subsequent years of study (%)
1	representatives of a high level of interethnic communication standards	11,2 %	15,5%
2	representatives of an intermediate level of interethnic communication standards	59,3 %	65,2%
3	representatives of a low level of interethnic communication standards	29,5 %	19,3%
	Developmental levels of interethnic communication standards in the years of study	In the first year of study (%)	In the second and subsequent years of study (%)

The attitude to the outlined issue was based on receiving the information that determines the respondents' readiness for a cultural dialogue, their interest in interethnic interaction, which makes it possible to identify problems, preventing an interethnic dialogue. The information was obtained from the questionnaire compiled at the previous stage of the study, which, in our opinion, helps to trace the dynamics of the cross-cultural competence of senior foreign students in the educational environment of the university.

The results of assessing the level of interethnic communication standards between second-year students and first-year students show the following differences:

- the number of representatives of a high level of interethnic communication standards increased from 11, 2% to 15, 5%, i.e. the indicator increased by 4, 3%;
- the number of representatives of an intermediate level of interethnic communication standards rose from 59.3% to 65.2%, i.e. the increase indicator is 5.9%;
- the number of representatives of a low level of interethnic communication standards decreased from 29, 5% to 19, 3%.

The factual material analyzed at this stage allows us to state the following: in general, respondents show great interest in various issues of an ethnic nature. More than half of foreign students have a desire to establish cross-cultural contacts, not only in the educational environment of the university, but also in everyday life. 86.7% of respondents are interested in the cultures of other nations, so they willingly get in touch with them. In everyday communication, for 67.3% of foreign students the national identity of the interlocutor plays a large role, 27% of respondents believe that the nationality of the interlocutor is not important, i.e. they do not differentiate the latter by his

nationality. Despite the fact that 82% of respondents closely communicate with representatives of other nationalities in everyday life and consider them to be friends, yet they do not hide the fact that they determine their attitude towards a person by his belonging to one or another nationality. This point of view is explained by the majority of interviewed students (72%) being proud of their ethnicity. The dynamics of cross-cultural contacts can be traced in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*How important is an individual's national identity in personal contacts for you?*

	First year of study	Second and subsequent years of study
Very important	11,2 %	10,1%
Sometimes important, sometimes not	50,1 %	57,2%
Unimportant	27,1 %	27%
Not sure	11,6 %	5,7%

According to 44% of foreign students, interethnic relations in most cases generate political conflicts, and 56% of respondents, on the contrary, are convinced that most interethnic conflicts are created artificially to achieve certain political goals. The results are presented in the following table 3.

**Table 3**

*Representatives of various nationalities study at Elabuga Institute of KFU. Do you dislike them? Why?*

	First year of study	Second and subsequent years of study
Yes	49,4 %	46,3%
No	51,6 %	53,7%

As at the previous stage of the study, the proportions of respondents who like and dislike representatives of other nationalities turned out to be almost equal, since half of them continue to divide the surrounding people into “us” and “them”, despite the fact that senior foreign students have lived in the foreign-language environment for more than a year. For example, for Turkmen “us” are their compatriots (their nationality isn’t very important: it can be both a Turkmen, an Uzbek) or representatives of the Turkic language group. As it can be seen, respondents do not choose people for communication according to their nationality. The respondents’ answers to the question “Which nationalities do you dislike?” are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4***What nationalities do you dislike?*

	First year of study	Second and subsequent years of study
peoples representing external migrants to Russia (the overwhelming majority are peoples of the former Central Asian republics of the USSR)	68,2 %	3,4 %
internal migrants from the republics of the North Caucasus Federal District (NCFD)	27,8 %	-
other peoples-autochthons of Russia and abroad	4,0 %	3,4 %

It can be seen from the table, at the previous stage of the investigation, the majority of respondents indicate external migrants from the North Caucasian republics of the Russian Federation as the object of hostility, and a small number of respondents feel hostility towards other peoples of Russia and foreigners. But students of the second and subsequent years of study lose this hostility. Only 3.4% of respondents considered Tajiks and Iranians, by the way, representatives of the same, Iranian, language group, as objects of hostility.

The respondents explained that they have a feeling of hostility towards specific nationalities by saying that the listed people, though having a linguistic and ethnic affinity, are perceived by them as “them”, because they have a different way of life and a different religion. By agreeing to the statement “They are people of a religion that is strange, unfamiliar, foreign to me,” respondents probably mean, that most Iranians are adherents of another Islamic movement: Shia Islam. The negative attitude of some students from Turkmenistan to this nation is not clear enough, since these countries have a common border, to which four of the five regions of Turkmenistan adjoin, as well as the centuries-old historical, confessional and civilizational affinity. The territory of present-day Turkmenistan became a part of historical Iran several times, and the capital of the legendary Iranian-speaking Parthia, Nisa, was located close to the current capital of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat. Table 5 presents the results obtained from the answers to questions No. 4-7, in comparison with the answers obtained at the previous stage of the study.

**Table 5***Degree of agreement*

Degree of agreement	Questions			
	4. "They have a different way of life, speak an incomprehensible language"	5. "They insult people of your nationality"	6. "They do not respect the customs and traditions of other nations"	7. "They are people of a religion unfamiliar, strange to me"
I agree				
First year of study	42,2 %	41,1 %	9,5 %	7,2 %
Second and subsequent years of study	-	-	-	3,4 %
I rather agree				
First year of study	49,9 %	37,2 %	10,4 %	2,4 %
Second and subsequent years of study	-	-	-	-
I rather disagree				
First year of study	42,7 %	42 %	12,2 %	2,8 %
Second and subsequent years of study	-	-	-	-
I disagree				
First year of study	32,5 %	20,7 %	22,6 %	24,7 %
Second and subsequent years of study	-	-	-	-

Question No. 5, proposed to the respondents at the first stage of the research work to determine the state and nature of interethnic relations at Elabuga Institute, was asked again at its second stage. We received the following answers (presented in Table 6).

**Table 6***Determine the state and nature of interethnic relations in Elabuga Institute*

Opinion	First year of study	Second and subsequent years of study
The situation is calm, peaceful	31,8 %	41,2%
The situation seems calm, but there is some tension	44,3 %	42,8%
The situation is tense, conflicts are possible	12,3 %	9,9%
Not sure	11,6 %	6,1%

The analysis of the results shows that the dominant opinion of the interethnic situation at the university as a whole and for students of the second and subsequent years of study (according to the data of the second phase of the research work) is the average opinion. Although the attitude to the situation as a tense one is also high, which directly reflects the previously described discontent. The number of students assessing the situation as "The situation seems calm, but there is some tension" has increased only by 1.5%, while the number of students assessing the situation "as calm

and peaceful” has increased by 10%. If students have a certain, “normal” level of anxiety about interethnic relations, it indicates not only that there are “threats” to interethnic amity, but also a certain sense of responsibility for the fact that students with different cultural traditions study at the university and their ethno-cultural needs should be taken into account. This point must be considered by all means.

We obtained the following results to question No. 6 “Would you like to know more about the customs, traditions, history of the nationalities whose representatives study in EI KFU?” (Table 7 shows the results in comparison with the previous stage of the study).

**Table 7**

*Would you like to know more about the customs, traditions, history of the nationalities whose representatives study in EI KFU?*

Answers	First year of study	Second and subsequent years of study
Yes, I would like to	77,9 %	86,7%
No, I do not want to	4,9 %	3,6%
Not sure	17,2 %	9,7%

The answers show that students are interested in something new, the customs and traditions, the history of those peoples whose representatives study in Elabuga Institute. Considering the data obtained, the understanding that character-building work in a higher educational institution influences the formation of the future teacher’s readiness to perform the function of an instructor, educator, a large educational and character-building work aimed at expanding the students’ horizons is carried out in our institute.

This comparison revealed the positive dynamics of acculturation, which was affected by:

- the task-oriented work at the university to create conditions for the integration of the foreign student-future teacher into the multi-ethnic educational environment, which is ensured by the effective character-building work of the institute;
- the desire of foreign students-future teachers not only to adapt to the new socio-cultural environment, but also to maintain their own cultural identity; which is manifested in their desire to introduce representatives of other ethnic groups to their cultural values;
- students mostly use acculturation integration strategy, the essence of which is identification with their own culture and with the cultural values and norms of a new socio-cultural space in which a person needs to be involved.

### **Discussion**

Studying and analyzing the answers to the questionnaire, understanding the observation and the results of the interviews with students allowed us to find the most effective forms of developing the standards of interethnic communication in students and to determine the specific content of this work.

The education in Elabuga Institute of Kazan Federal University is based on a dialogue of cultures. The dialogue approach contributes to the study of the unique essence of the most diverse cultures (Russian, Tatar, Kazakh, Tajik, Uzbek, Turkmen), thereby demonstrating that bearers of these cultures cannot think and feel absolutely the same. Thus, intercultural dialogue promotes the growth of tolerance (interethnic tolerance).

The teachers of basic and various general theoretical disciplines from the departments of Elabuga Institute of KFU pay special attention to the dialogue of cultures between representatives of different nationalities. Such interaction is observed not only during the educational, but also during the character-building process. To harmonise interethnic communication and facilitate the process of acculturation, the teacher-training staff of EI KFU includes new training courses into the curriculum; they reflect the cultural heritage and traditions of different peoples. Teaching these disciplines involves modern educational technologies. Thus, the university implements work programs in the following training courses: “Ethnology” for foreign students, “International Management” for foreign students, “Marketing”, “Conflictology”, “Sociology”, which complement the traditional system of education, focus on the formation and development of interethnic communication standards and conflict-related competence. Our teachers published various study guides on the Russian language for foreign students training in Teacher Education. The above-mentioned study manuals are based on the linguo-cognitive approach to their content and structure. Their authors pay special attention to foreign-culture texts. Culture-oriented texts are rich in culturally valuable information in cognitive, educational and character-building terms; these facts reveal the way of life of different nationalities living on the territory of Tatarstan.

Since 2016, foreign students from Elabuga Institute of KFU have been participating in online friendship festivals, organized by the Department of Vocational Guidance and Work with Talented Youth of the M.V. Lomonosov Moscow State University. The Russian Language Department hosts these events for foreign students of Faculty of Sciences, the Faculty of Philology with the technical support of the Center for the development of electronic educational resources for

students, undergraduates, graduate students, interns, studying Russian as a foreign or non-native language. The events in question have various names: The Eighth Online Friendship Festival “Folklore as Confession of the People” (2019), The Seventh Online Friendship Festival “Beauty of the Native Land” (2018), The Sixth Online Friendship Festival “Love for Cinema, Love for Russia” (2017), The Fifth Online Friendship Festival “In the world of Russian Literature...” (2016). Every year foreign students from our institute participate in these festivals and become their winners and laureates.

Each year, the institute holds the Olympiad in Russian for foreign students, organized by the Association of Foreign Students. The purpose of this event is developing and strengthening of foreign students’ interest to the in-depth study of the Russian language. Up to 50 people from the countries of the near abroad (Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) take part in the competition annually.

With the aim of forming high interethnic communication standards and developing the integration process Elabuga Institute hosts various extracurricular activities: national holidays (“Christmas”, “National New-Year Show”, “Nowruz”, “Sabantuy”, “Slavic Writing Day”, “Mother Language Day”), projects dedicated to historically memorable dates (“Victory marked the end of the war”, “Immortal regiment”, Commencement days), jubilees of prominent figures in the sphere of culture, literature, science and popular heroes (the Stakheev readings, the Makhmutov readings, the Khlebnikov readings, The creative work of Razil Valeev), public lectures (Public lecture for students on the topic “Lev Tolstoy’s moral lessons” within the framework of the L.N. Tolstoy’s year in 2018), festivals (Festival of Friendship), contests (a competition of readers, dedicated to the Mother Language Day, a creative competition “Kaury Kalum”, a photo-reports contest “One day at EI KFU”), meetings of the literary club “Planet of the Writer” (within the framework of the year of L.N. Tolstoy in 2018), meetings of the cinema club, different meetings (“Poetic meeting” within the framework of the 7<sup>th</sup> international poetic festival “Ladomir”, Literary drawing-room “The thread connecting times” (meeting with the member of the Russian Association of Writers Tatiana Rolich)), “Rite of passage to the profession” for the 1<sup>st</sup> year students, student teaching school “Start”, “Total dictation” and many others. The events mentioned above also fulfill educational and character-building tasks: training students of universal, civic-patriotic, and national feelings of consciousness and behavioral norms in a higher educational institution. They are aimed at shaping in students not only ideas about culture and traditions of people of different

nationalities, but also forming their ability to comply with universal moral norms and behavior, the willingness to correctly perceive national values, their desire to enrich themselves with knowledge of these values. Active participation of the foreign students themselves in the process of organizing and holding of these events contributes to the elimination of students' negative feelings towards people of other nationalities (Volchik and Maslyukova, 2019).

The creation of the Association of Foreign Students of Elabuga Institute of KFU, the Cinema Club, and the International Friendship Club also had the goal of raising a respectful attitude towards all the peoples, whose representatives study at Kazan Federal University.

The Association of Foreign Students plays an important role in creating favorable conditions for studying and living for foreign students. It provides them with legal assistance and other kind of support, reveals their creative potential.

The International Friendship Club aims at developing and maintaining a sense of tolerance among students, increasing their interest in intercultural and international dialogue, and creating favorable conditions for the adaptation of foreign students of Elabuga Institute of KFU. The club hosts various master classes, discussions, round tables, brain-rings, projects, such as: #followme (when club guests "travel" to different countries), #madeinChina (events aimed at studying the Chinese language and culture, etc.). Thus, in February 2019, the head of the Elabuga branch of the Youth Assembly of the Peoples of Tatarstan was invited to a regular meeting of the club. Together with the new members of the club, they held a training on team building, during which the students not only got to know each other, but also became much closer and more united. After a little warm-up, the members of the club discussed the club's development plan. It is also worth noting that members the International Friendship Club of Elabuga Institute of KFU are always pleased to see new faces and guests.

The thematic film club "Films from the treasury of Soviet cinema" aims at watching and analyzing different Uzbek, Turkmen, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Tajik, Azerbaijani, Ukrainian films in Russian. The film club of Elabuga Institute of KFU began its work in September 2013. This is a special cultural space. The main idea of the club is to watch and discuss the film, which got the maximum votes from its members. Voting takes place in the group "Cinema Club of Elabuga Institute of KFU" in the social network "Vkontakte". The list of films submitted for voting is formed by the administration of the group. The cinema club is held once a month in the institute.

Comprehension and assimilation of a culture unknown to foreign students doesn't only expand their outlook and cultural horizons, but also makes them look at their native culture from the outside and draw parallels, compare, find the general and the specific things.

The results of our study show (and students mentioned it in personal conversations) that extracurricular activities of an entertaining character also contribute to the integration formation: they are the Freshmen viewing contest, the Festival of friendship, the Imperial Ball, "Student Spring Talent Show". The annual Festival of friendship of nations is aimed at familiarizing students with the history, folklore, peculiarities of life of peoples of different nationalities, raising a tolerant attitude towards representatives of different nationalities, and forming a national identity in the framework of civil-patriotic education. The beautiful tradition - the Imperial Ball on Commencement days of the Elabuga Institute, is held to draw attention to the traditions, morality and spirituality of the Russians, to foster the young people's patriotic spirit and pride in their country.

Foreign students attend sports clubs and take part in various competitions in national sports, which also creates favorable conditions for increasing interethnic communication standards. As part of celebrating the Day of National Unity, an International Futsal Tournament is organized, where students of different nationalities join the same team. Foreign students participate in the ancient Tajik national wrestling "Gushtingiri", the Turkmen national wrestling Goresh; representatives of other nationalities attend these competitions with pleasure. It should be stressed that many of the foreign students win prizes not only in the tournaments of the institute, the city, but also of the republican level. Some students are engaged in the international theater-studio "Friendship of Nations".

Thus, the culture of interethnic communication, formed through integration, is considered by us, teachers of Elabuga Institute of KFU, training future teachers, as the leading personal and professional characteristics of the student today, and of the teacher in future. Pedagogical activity is a way of "adapting" by students the system of values of their native culture and other people's culture, the possibility of "introducing" them into the world of global culture.

The research work revealed the desire of foreign students-future teachers not only to adapt to the new socio-cultural environment, but also to maintain their own cultural identity, as well as the tendencies, that have arisen during the acculturation processes, which require correcting.

### **Conclusion**

The results of the study indicate an increase in the indices of the level of interethnic communication standards between second-year students and first-year students. In the process of studying at the university, within a year, foreign students demonstrate a positive dynamics of acculturation processes. One of the key factors in the dynamics of acculturation processes in the university educational environment is the duration of foreign students' training. At the same time, in the second and subsequent years of being in another culture, in another country, indicators of both acculturation and their positive, tolerant attitude towards representatives of another nationality and culture increase.

Elements of different cultures are gradually transformed and reflected in the educational environment of the university. While studying at a university, young people interact with people from different cultures. This interaction requires certain attitude of each individual to this fact, developing their acculturation strategy, certain forms of adaptation to the conditions of living in a new multicultural environment, which can result in a change in the individual's identity, value orientations, role-playing behavior.

In the process of training in a multicultural environment of a modern university, students mostly use the acculturation integration strategy, the essence of which is identification with their culture and cultural values and norms of a new socio-cultural space, which should be involved into. All the forms of educational and extracurricular activities carried out in Elabuga Institute of KFU follow this aim.

The results of the study suggest that the process of acculturation of foreign students at the University is more successful and faster in the implementation of the program of pedagogical support of adaptation. This is also indicated by the active involvement of foreign students in interaction with Russian students and teachers, their participation in extracurricular life of the University. But the problem requires further research to achieve the best results of the acculturation process of foreign students at the University and the expansion of educational boundaries between the countries.

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