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Collaborative Learning in Teaching Culture Studies to Further Training Program Students

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Abstract: Today, educational practices are modified in accordance with the demands of the industrial and economic environment. Further training programs have become an important part of university students learning. This article investigates strategies of collaborative learning and their effectiveness in improving learning outcomes. The authors prove that various forms of co-operative work such as problem-based learning, peer teaching and small group discussions are effective in training university students within further training programs in Special Translation. The study participants were students of the "Special Translation and Editing of Technical, Economic and Media Texts" further training program. The experiment was conducted within the module referred to as "The Translation of Culture Specific Realities". The authors highlight the importance of comprehending cultural issues apart from extensive knowledge of translation techniques for specialists in translation, since intercultural misunderstanding can be a major obstacle in the way of effective communication. The conducted survey also revealed the importance of collaborative learning in increasing the motivation of the students to develop intercultural competencies and master communication strategies. Today, students are much more inquisitive than they were in the past because they are familiar with resources that make the learning process more interesting. Applying strategies of collaborative learning when students are working co-operatively in pairs or groups can significantly improve learning outcomes and boost motivation.

Keywords: collaborative learning; culture studies; further training; learning outcome; motivation

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1. Introduction

The Fourth Industrial Revolution has brought about the automation of modern industries, and innovative technologies are being increasingly introduced into all spheres of life. Educational practices are also being modified in accordance with the demands of the industrial and economic environment. In universities, the emphasis is placed on training specialists in engineering, economics, etc., with lesser coverage of the humanities. In some countries, the humanities are even removed from the university curriculum since they are regarded as an unwanted distraction from studying specialist subjects [1]. However, if students only focus on their core subjects, their training will be incomplete, and they will lack important characteristics that are vital for the specialists of the future. In this regard, intercultural competence is an important constituent of the professional competence of the specialist in many fields, as it facilitates the process of professional communication and helps to avoid possible cultural clashes. By studying translation techniques and intercultural communication strategies as part of their further training course, students majoring in economics and engineering have to step out of their comfort zone and deal with a range of subjects they are not familiar with. This experience develops effective coping mechanisms that enhance the employability of the specialists of the future in the context of the innovation economy.

By studying translation techniques and intercultural communication strategies as part of their further training course, students majoring in economics and engineering have to

step out of their comfort zone and deal with a range of subjects they are not familiar with. This experience develops effective coping mechanisms that enhance the employability of the specialists of the future in the context of the innovation economy.

Apart from conventional tertiary education, students should seek further training at all stages of their professional development, regardless of their age, because skill sets require constant upgrading. Further training can ensure graduates have a competitive edge since it enables them to develop transferrable skills that can be effectively utilized at all stages of the decision-making process. Specialists in translation should be flexible, versatile, and able to adapt to new conditions, so tailoring the learning process to their needs and making it motivating and interesting is of paramount importance. Teaching culture studies to students majoring in translation as part of the curriculum is important to develop their intercultural and professional competencies, which imply a broad outlook, cultural awareness, etc.

However, aspects of intercultural communication and culture studies are not always included in the curriculum of further training translation programs as mandatory academic disciplines [2]. Further training program students whose minor is a translation in the field of professional communication can only enroll in the course of cultural studies as an optional discipline with a limited number of academic hours, hence insufficient attention is paid to intercultural issues throughout their studies. Such educational gaps can cause cultural clashes and misunderstandings in their future professional communication in a foreign language.

Intercultural competence is a prerequisite for successful intercultural communication. Ilie O.-A. describes intercultural competence as a combination of three attributes: knowledge of local customs, people's beliefs, values, and patterns of communication behavior; skills (ability to observe, listen actively, and reflect on the information); and attitudes (respect, openness, and curiosity) [3]. Perry L.B. and Southwell L. also describe intercultural competence as a combination of the above-mentioned three factors (knowledge, skills, and attitude) and define it as being able to communicate effectively in cross-cultural contexts [4]. For students who enroll in the course "Special Translation and Editing of Technical, Economic, and Media Texts", intercultural competence goes well beyond the need to communicate in social situations: translators' goal is not just the word-for-word transfer of the meaning of a statement; it is also bridging the gaps between people with different cultural backgrounds.

Motivation for learning intercultural aspects is also a serious issue that should be addressed as students majoring in Economics and Engineering with a minor in Translation highlight the importance of learning professional terminology, often neglecting the need to develop skills in intercultural communication. Therefore, a variety of teaching methods and learning techniques should be used to encourage students to master intercultural skills and make the learning process more engaging for them. Today, students are much more exacting and discerning than they were in the past because they are familiar with resources that make the learning process more interesting. Educationalists recommend applying visualization and interaction techniques (animation, games, simulation, and other elements) since the concepts that students need to grasp are introduced in a less abstract and theoretical form [5]. When such techniques are applied, it is essential for teachers to switch between different classroom activities to sustain students' interest and make the process of cognition less monotonous and repetitive.

It should be noted that one of the most effective tools to motivate students and add more variety to classroom activities is collaborative learning [6]. E. F. Barkley and others examine ways to create productive learning environments through collaborative learning groups. The researchers stress that "embarking upon collaborative learning should be a reasonable adventure—stimulating, challenging, and requiring thoughtful advanced planning" [7] (p. 27).

Collaborative learning encompasses activities ranging from classroom discussions to problem-solving in groups to working in teams, including experiential, problem-centered,

and student-centered instruction. It is based on the premise that teachers need to "create a context where learners can discover on their own and successfully reconstruct their understanding of the world around them" [8] (p. 21). Learning in this environment can motivate and engage students, leading to better course outcomes. In his doctoral studies, "Mass collaboration and learning: structure and methods", M. Zamiri offered direction and support for the creation, operation, and implementation of collaborative learning initiatives [9]. The researcher gives a comprehensive overview of methods and mechanisms in collaborative learning and identifies the most promising techniques for the purpose of learning in mass collaboration. The researcher highlights five categories of general learning activities that can be used for different purposes (discussion, reciprocal teaching, problem-solving, graphical information organization, and collaborative writing), each including a set of techniques. Each technique is defined for a specific group size, period, and amount of time to be devoted to the task [9] (p. 26). Collaborative learning methods are based on a variety of techniques, including the jigsaw activity, peer teaching, case-based culture studies, and others. In this study, an attempt was made to integrate some of these techniques into the process of teaching culture studies to further training program students. The jigsaw activity; peer teaching; case-based culture studies; small-group discussions; concept mapping, Socratic seminars on a given topic, and mock conferences were chosen for this purpose because the authors deemed it relevant to use these strategies in teaching the subject of culture studies, which is associated with communicative skills. Collaborative learning also proved to generate cognitive interest in learning. It encourages students to study the material more thoughtfully and systematically, helps them memorize it better, and prevents them from losing enthusiasm [10].

Some researchers employ such strategies for increasing students' intrinsic motivation as creating an "autonomy-supportive teaching and learning environment" [11]. When a course of further training is short and not all classrooms are properly equipped, it is impossible to deploy many multimedia materials in class, so they should be used as part of the independent assignments. However, just providing students with multimedia resources will not enable the teacher to produce the desired effect; using them without setting a goal for the learners to achieve is meaningless and will not increase the students' motivation. The researcher in the field of culture studies S.-F. Tseng believes that students should be provided with the following information about the country where the target language is spoken: people's lifestyle, values, attitudes, beliefs, etiquette, norms of behavior, and connotations. The endgame goal is to teach learners to be able to act in the same way as the representatives of the target culture [12]. These intercultural skills will broaden the learners' horizons, help them understand how problems are tackled in different cultures, and allow them to see the world from a different perspective.

One of the subjects on the curriculum of the further training course "Special Translation and Editing of Technical, Economic, and Media Texts" is referred to as "Culture Studies" (module of The Translation of Culture Specific Vocabulary). In these classes, students whose major is engineering or economics acquire intercultural skills by gaining insights into the history and culture of English-speaking countries. These skills can be applied by them in their future careers in various cross-cultural contexts. Some English culturally marked words cannot be translated correctly without knowledge of country-specific issues because they have "different cultural connotations" [13]. Even though students may have mastered translation techniques, they will not be able to translate accurately enough without being familiar with the culture of the country where the target language is spoken. Since a complete understanding of the overall context is the key to accurate translation, the intercultural skills of the students who enroll in the course should be redefined.

As can be seen from the research under review, culture studies is an essential component of the further training program for students whose minor is in the field of translation and intercultural communication; however, insufficient attention is paid to cultural aspects in the curriculum, and students tend to show a low level of motivation for the discipline. Consequently, the research questions of the paper include several issues:

RQ1: To what extent can the customization of the course "Culture Studies" increase the motivation of students majoring in engineering and economics with a minor in translation to learn the intercultural aspects of communication?

RQ2: To what extent can the introduction of collaborative learning techniques into the syllabus of the course "Culture Studies" improve students' learning outcomes?

RQ3: How can the customization of the course "Culture Studies" contribute to students' satisfaction with learning?

Therefore, the research hypothesis is that the introduction of collaborative learning techniques into the course "Culture Studies" on the curriculum of the further training program "Special Translation and Editing of Technical, Economic, and Media Texts" for Engineering and Economics students getting their minor degree in Translation will improve learning outcomes, increase students' motivation for cultural studies, and improve students' satisfaction with learning. Following the research questions and the hypothesis, the authors set the following objectives:

1. To customize the discipline"Culture Studies: The Translation of Culture Specific Vocabulary" by the introducing collaborative learning techniques into the syllabus;
2. To organize the survey to determine the level of students' motivation for learning the cultural aspects of translation;
3. To conduct a pedagogical experiment, critically analyze its results using statistical research methods and check the effectiveness of customization proposed by the authors.

2. Materials and Methods

The study was conducted at the polytechnic university in the 2021–2022 academic year, within the "Special Translation and Editing of Technical, Economic, and Media Texts" further training program. The participants were 193 students aged between 19 and 31, whose major is in the field of engineering and economics and whose minor is translation. Students are enrolled in the further training program on the basis of the entry test measuring their level of English; B2-C1 is required for taking the course. Among the students, there were 92 (47.7%) males and 101 (52.3%) females; 81 (41.9%) were second-year students, 105 (54.4%) were third-year students, 5 (2.6%) graduates with a bachelor's degree in engineering, and 2 (1.0%) graduates with a master' s degree in economics. The sample of students differed in terms of their previous culture studies experience: about half of the respondents (52.4%) had studied culture studies as part of the English language course only in the system of formal education—at school and university—while 92 students (47.6%) had supplemented formal education courses with options of informal education (language courses in language centers, language summer schools, or private individual training). All the respondents studied in non-linguistic (engineering and economics) degree programs.

The learning context was a "Special Translation and Editing of Technical, Economic, and Media Texts" further training program (minor degree; 1420 academic hours), designed to develop the fundamental professional competencies necessary for the work of a translator and editor of technical, economic, and media texts. After completing the program, students are entitled to carry out professional activities in the field of technical translation and work in the translation departments of large organizations, translation agencies, and as freelance translators. The study and the pedagogical experiment were conducted within a two-semester-long course "Culture Studies" (module of The Translation of Culture-Specific Vocabulary), which ran for 30 weeks. The course not only aimed to develop students' in-depth understanding of culture-specific vocabulary but also to equip them with a repertoire of communication strategies and translation techniques. The course was designed as a blended course, which systematically combines technologically mediated interactions between students, teachers, and resources in learning and requires students to learn across in-class and online contexts in the pursuit of learning outcomes. The face-to-face part of the course consisted of two academic hours of classes covering the key concepts per week. The online learning component was a self-paced independent study hosted in a proprietary

learning management system (LMS), which held compulsory and supplementary reading, interactive learning activities, and assessment tasks.

Students majoring in engineering and economics who enrolled in the minor program "Special Translation and Editing of Technical, Economic, and Media Texts" (Group A—experimental group; Group B—control group) participated in the study. Students in Group A took the experimental course "Culture Studies" (module of The Translation of Culture Specific Vocabulary), customized with the introduction of collaborative learning strategies and interactive teaching methods; students in Group B were given a traditional course with basic materials. The topics on the syllabus were the same for both groups.

The motivation levels of students toward learning were measured before and after the pedagogical experiment. The questionnaire "Methodology for Studying the Motivation for Learning at the University," designed by T.I. Iliyna, was used [14]. The questionnaire consisted of 50 statements for students to mark their agreement with a "+" sign or their disagreement with a "" sign for each of the statements. When creating this technique, the author used a number of other well-known techniques. It has three scales: "acquisition of knowledge", "development of professional competencies", and "getting a certificate or diploma". The maximum score for the first scale is 12.6, the maximum score for the second scale is 10, and the maximum score for the third scale is 10. The predominance of motives on the first two scales indicates an adequate choice of a profession by a student and satisfaction with it. The study questionnaires, along with informed written consent forms, were distributed to the students. The purpose of the study was clearly explained, and adequate time was given to each respondent to complete the questionnaire at the beginning and at the end of the experiment. The questionnaire was designed in English in electronic form. The students completed the questionnaire in class before and after the pedagogical experiment.

Students were also surveyed to determine their level of satisfaction with learning and elicit their opinions about collaborative learning strategies and techniques aimed at stimulating their interest. The survey was conducted on an anonymous basis. The students of both groups (99 and 94 people, respectively) were asked to assess the degree of their satisfaction with learning by a number of criteria, which included the level of teaching, level of technical facilities in the classrooms, the use of active teaching methods in the educational process, the relevance of teaching aids, the relevance of the thematic areas studied, correlation of the content of training with practical activities, and satisfaction with the learning content in general. The questionnaire was designed by the authors using relevant sources in the field of student learning satisfaction [15–17]. The criteria were assessed using three-point scales ranging from 1 to 3: 1—low, 2—medium, and 3—high. For further processing of the results of the survey, the total number of answers in each group was taken as 100%, and the number of answers for each question was calculated as a percentage for each of the groups. The questionnaire consisted of several scales: level of teaching, level of technical facilities in the classrooms, use of active teaching methods, use of collaborative learning strategies, the relevance of teaching aids, the relevance of the thematic areas studied, correlation of the content of training with practical activities, and satisfaction with the learning content in general. Internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire were measured by means of Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The results of Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis are the following: the "Use of collaborative learning strategies" scale obtained an alpha coefficient of 0.667; the "Relevance of the thematic areas studied" scale obtained an alpha coefficient of 0.624; the "Level of teaching" scale obtained the alpha coefficient of 0.611; the "Level of technical facilities in the classrooms" scale obtained the alpha coefficient of 0.621; the "Use of active teaching methods" scale obtained the alpha coefficient of 0.609; the "Relevance of teaching aids" scale obtained the alpha coefficient of 0.689; the "Correlation of the content of training with practical activities" scale obtained the alpha coefficient of 0.701; the "Satisfaction with the learning content in general" scale obtained the alpha coefficient of 0.699. The results for all scales are above 0.60 and can be considered satisfactory.

To measure students' learning outcomes, the entry course test and the end-of-course test of the same format, both containing multiple-choice questions, were used. They revealed what students had learned at the end of the course. The tests were designed by the authors using the materials and teaching aids included in the syllabus of the course [18–20]. The tests comprised 50 questions, with a maximum score of 50 (100%). The questions on cultural studies covered two thematic areas: "History and Culture of the United Kingdom" and "History and Culture of the United States of America", with 25 questions for each area. The tests comprised 50 questions, with a maximum score of 50 (100%). A score higher than 60% was accepted as a "pass", and those who scored less than 60% failed the test. Students who scored 90–100% got "A (excellent)"; 70–80% got "B (good)"; 60–70% got "C (satisfactory)". For further processing of the results of the test, the number of students in each group was taken as 100%, and the number of "passes" was calculated as a percentage for each of the groups. Within the course, students' current performance was assessed using the system for calculating individual student grades.

3. Results and Discussion

Students in Group A (the experimental group) and Group B (the control group) were surveyed to determine the level of their motivation, measure their learning outcomes, and assess their level of learning satisfaction. At the beginning of the course, students in both groups reported that they had an incentive to get further foreign-language training. The majority of students in both groups were just interested in getting a certificate at the end of the course in order to enhance their employability. In this research, we focused on the respondents, who cited a lack of motivation, because we hoped that the findings of this study would enable us to suggest some measures that could be taken to retain the students and lower the dropout rates.

3.1. Measuring Motivation Levels of Students TowardLearning

To measure the motivation levels of students toward learning, the questionnaire "Methodology for Studying the Motivation for Learning at the University", designed by T.I. Iliynawas, was used. It has three scales: "acquisition of knowledge", "development of professional competencies", and "getting a certificate or diploma". The predominance of motives on the first two scales indicates an adequate choice of a profession by a student and satisfaction with it. The motivation for the acquisition of knowledge and development of professional competencies in both groups was relatively high before the pedagogical experiment: 8.6% and 8.7% in groups A and B, respectively (first scale); 9.8% and 9.1% in groups A and B, respectively (second scale). However, we expected to obtain a much higher level of motivation before the pedagogical experiment since the experiment involved further training courses oriented toward acquiring additional knowledge and skills. The motivation for getting a certificate or diploma was predictably high in both groups, given the fact that a degree in translation substantially increases the chances of finding a good job. The results of the questionnaire are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Motivation factors for learning.

	Group A	Group A	Group B	Group B
	Before the Pedagogical Experiment	**at the End of Pedagogical Experiment**	**Before the Pedagogical Experiment**	**at the End of Pedagogical Experiment**
'Acquisition of knowledge', points (max 12.6)	8.6	12.6	8.7	7.8
'Development of professional competencies', points (max 10)	9.1	10	9.1	9.1
'Getting a certificate/diploma', points (max 10)	10	10	10	10

The score for the first scale, "Acquisition of Knowledge", in Group A increased by 4 points after the pedagogical experiment, while it dropped in Group B, which may result from the lack of enthusiasm typical for part-time students who need to be encouraged for studies after full-time educational activities in their major. Interactive teaching methods and collaborative learning strategies can revive students' interest and motivation for learning, which is confirmed by the results of this survey. The score for the second scale, "Development of professional competencies", rose by 0.6 points in Group A, while it remained the same in Group B, which, again, can be explained by the lack of collaborative learning strategies and interactive teaching techniques in the classroom. Thus, the results of the questionnaire obtained at the end of the pedagogical experiment reveal a substantial growth in the motivation level toward learning (31.7%: acquisition of knowledge; 9%: development of professional competencies) in Group A, while Group B demonstrated much lower results.

3.2. Conducting a Pedagogical Experiment

Several decades of empirical research have demonstrated the positive relationship between collaborative learning and student achievement, effort, persistence, and motivation [21–23]. We conducted a pedagogical experiment in which the syllabus of the course "Culture Studies" (module of Translation of Culture Specific Vocabulary) was customized with the introduction of collaborative learning strategies and interactive teaching methods. The customization was implemented in the following collaborative activities: the jigsaw activity—a collaborative technique where one student or group of students researches a certain topic and then teaches this topic to other students, which promotes research, problem solving, communication, and cooperation skills; peer teaching—a method of teaching where a student instructs another student, wherein the former will be an expert and the latter a novice; case-based culture studies; small-group discussions—a student-centered methodology that allows students to be actively involved partners in the teaching-learning process; concept mapping—a collaborative learning technique that grants students working in groups a way of illustrating the connections that exist between terms or concepts covered in course material—as well as Socratic seminars on a given topic, i.e., a discussion organized by students, video-based discussions (for example, a discussion on the topic: "GPT Chat for the translator and teacher: a friend or a foe?"), and mock conferences. The collaborative activity of Socratic seminars dates back to the Greek philosopher Socrates. Socrates believed that exploration prompts more reflection and leads to more substantial learning than just lectures; the use of Socrates' seminars promotes the development of critical thinking, genuine interaction, and cooperation.

In the classroom, students acquire knowledge of the cultural specifics of the English-speaking world. The classes take place once a week in the autumn and spring semesters. The purpose of the course is to provide the students with substantial insights into the lifestyle issues in these countries. They learn to translate texts that contain culture-specific vocabulary, taking the historical, cultural, economic, and political context into consideration. At the end of the course, the students take a test, on the basis of which they receive credit for the course. To constantly monitor students' progress in terms of intercultural competence, students were required to fulfill various tasks in the context of collaborative learning that were taken into account in their final assessment. At the beginning of the pedagogical experiment, the students in both groups took the entry multiple-choice test aimed at measuring their knowledge of culture-specific vocabulary and structures. The maximum score was 50 (100%). The average score was about the same in both groups (in Group A it was 65% and in Group B it was slightly higher at 67%), which clearly indicated that the students had a satisfactory overall grasp of English-speaking cultures before the beginning of the experiment. In the course of the experiment, Group A and Group B had to do the same amount of work, both online and in class, and they covered the same topics, but the presentation of the information and teaching methods were different. Group B worked with the traditional materials of the syllabus, while Group A worked with the

materials developed by the teacher with the use of the collaborative learning strategies mentioned above. These included the jigsaw activity, peer teaching, case-based culture studies, small-group discussions, concept mapping, as well as Socratic seminars on a given topic, i.e., a discussion organized by students, video-based discussions (for example, a discussion on the topic "GPT Chat for the translator and teacher: a friend or a foe?"), and mock conferences.

At the end of the experiment, the students in both groups took the end-of-course multiple-choice test, similar in format to the entry test. Its purpose was to evaluate their learning outcomes at the end of the course. The maximum score was 50 (100%). Unlike the average score in the entry test, which was about the same in both groups, the results of the end-of-course test were markedly different in Groups A and B. In Group A, it was 97%, which was quite an impressive result given the extraordinary complexity of the test. In Group B, the average score was much lower (76%), which clearly indicated that by the end of the experiment, the students had made considerably less progress than the students in Group A. Table 2 shows the average score of the entry and end-of-course tests.

Table 2. The average score of the entry and end-of-course test.

	Group A	Group B
The average score of the entry test (%)	65	67
The average score of the end-of-course test (%)	97	76

Table 3 shows the results of the entry and end-of-course test for each group.

Table 3. Results of the entry and end-of-course test.

		Group A		Group B	
		The Results of the Entry Test (%)	The Results of the End-of-Course Test (%)	The Results of the Entry Test (%)	The Results of the End-of-Course Test (%)
pass		61	99	65	71
pass	"A"	6	89	15	5
	"B"	17	6	21	13
	"C"	38	4	29	53
fail		39	1	35	29

Such a significant discrepancy between the results in the two groups can be explained by the higher level of motivation and learning satisfaction in Group A, which can be summarized as the observation of a few crucial points. It is essential that teachers use a variety of teaching aids to make the learning process more interesting and engaging for students, which is especially important for those getting part-time education. In Group B, the course books in paper format were the only resource the teacher used as a teaching aid, whereas in Group A, the home assignments, online activities, and classroom activities were all supported with collaborative learning techniques and various teaching aids. Collaborative learning techniques contributed to better results in Group A. The students in Group A participated in a number of collaborative learning activities, whereas in Group B the students just worked in turns answering the teacher's questions; therefore, the former had more time to discuss the topic, while the latter wasted time waiting for their turn to speak. Besides, in Group B, students did not get as much practice in their listening skills by participating in the question-and-answer session as students in Group A in the course of collaborative discussion, since students in Group B did not always pay attention to someone else answering questions from the teacher. On top of that, working in pairs and small groups together with other collaborative learning techniques added more variety as well as entertainment value to the classroom activities.

Case studies based on watching videos and doing the assignments attached to them also proved to be conducive to better results in Group A. Videos provide authentic audiovisual input from native speakers, and the target language is used in a natural context [24]. Moreover, watching authentic videos calls for greater engagement than reading a text, requiring students to watch videos a few times to fully understand the essence and memorize new information.

Apart from multiple revisions of the topic, the learning outcomes of the students involved in collaborative learning activities were much better than those of the students who participated in traditional learning activities based on the course book. In Group A, the students received additional input via multiple collaborative techniques, which was conducive to retaining the material. They also had little difficulty retrieving the relevant information from their memory while taking the end-of-course test because they could associate information with video images and interactive strategies.

3.3. Assessing the Level of Learning Satisfaction

Students were also surveyed at the end of the experimental teaching to determine their level of satisfaction with learning and elicit their opinions about collaborative learning strategies and techniques aimed at stimulating their interest. The results of the survey are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Levels of students' satisfaction withlearning.

	Group 1		**Group B**	
	High	**Low**	**High**	**Low**
The level of teaching (%)	95	2	68	28
The level of technical facilities in the classrooms (%)	91	7	89	10
The use of active teaching methods (%)	100	0	35	61
The use of collaborative learning strategies (%)	100	1	0	0
Relevance of teaching aids (%)	97	1	41	28
Relevance of the thematic areas studied (%)	95	1	87	8
Correlation of the content of training with practical activities (%)	97	2	51	28
Satisfaction with the learning content in general (%)	100	0	55	27

As can be seen from the table, the respondents from Group A showed a high degree of satisfaction with learning in most indicators. Survey participants in Group A unanimously highly appreciated the relevance of the thematic areas studied and the level of professional training of teachers. The respondents were also asked to give their opinion about the strategies that were used to generate their interest and increase their motivation. The teacher's fundamental task as seen by the students is to set goals, plan and structure the tasks, and assign students into group roles to work together toward a common end, which confirms the idea that the teacher should act as a facilitator monitoring the learning process and providing students with ongoing feedback and assessment of group progress [25,26]. The following initiatives were highly appreciated by the students: adding more variety to the classroom activities; increasing the number of practical assignments similar to those they will have to do in their professional career; adding creative assignments that stimulate critical thinking; using educational technologies in class; providing additional materials that could be studied as part of homework; providing more interaction with the teacher and between the students; introducing collaborative learning strategies in the course of Culture Studies.

4. Conclusions

The results of the experiment clearly illustrate the benefits of applying collaborative learning techniques for improving students' learning outcomes and boosting their motivation to develop intercultural competencies in addition to acquiring translation skills within

the "Special Translation and Editing of Technical, Economic, and Media Texts" further training program. Thus, the research objectives and hypotheses of the study are fulfilled.

The survey conducted revealed the importance of collaborative learning in increasing the motivation of students to develop intercultural competencies. Applying strategies of collaborative learning when students are working cooperatively in pairs or groups can significantly improve learning outcomes and boost motivation. Eliciting the students' opinions about the best ways of organizing classroom activities and the educational process in general can be an effective tool in syllabus design. Since the students are the main stakeholders when it comes to making decisions about what to learn and in what ways the information should be made available, taking their opinions into consideration is vitally important.

Students nowadays expect to get classroom instruction in various forms since technology enables teachers to present information in an engaging way. It is especially critical for teachers who run further training courses because the students who enroll in them usually work, study, and have a lot of commitments during the daytime. They will have a better incentive to pursue further education if the teachers do their best to develop instruction aids, create a stimulating and favorable learning environment, and adjust the classroom activities to their needs.

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