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EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN TEACHING LITHUANIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN A MULTICULTURAL SETTING

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Abstract

Purpose – The main purpose of this interdisciplinary research is to explore the importance of communication and education guidelines for the lecturer from the standpoint of classical rhetorical techniques and interactive methods applied to the teaching of Lithuanian as a foreign language. The article hypothesises a strong correlation between communicative and educational approaches when teaching the Lithuanian language to a multicultural group of students at Mykolas Romeris University (MRU). Moreover, it highlights the peculiarities of multicultural setting.

Design/methodology/approach – The paper is based on an analysis of the scientific literature related to rhetorical persuasion techniques, innovative language teaching methods and the observation of student progress. The article explores the development of the communication and professional knowledge of the lecturer, focusing on rhetorical persuasion skills and Lithuanian language teaching methods.

Finding – Through the analysis of classical rhetorical techniques, interactive teaching/learning methods and the results of student monitoring, main conclusions emerged: the result of successful Lithuanian language teaching is based not only on education, but also on the communication guidance for lecturers. Moreover, for effective eloquence and communication, classical rhetorical canons as well as innovative, constructive, and interactive language teaching methods must be applied to a multicultural, contemporary group of students capable of developing their communicative and cultural competence inclusively.

Research limitations/implications – The common limitation is that the research did not include a larger and a more diverse number of participants from other multicultural groups. Prolonged and in-depth observation of multicultural groups from other higher education institutions is needed. The fact that this research is characterised by a small number of variables facilitated the analysis of the lecturer's communication skills and the innovative teaching methods used to target a language in one Lithuanian university: MRU. Furthermore, an exploration of core competences and recommendations for lecturer and an analysis of multilingual learning/teaching methods applied to other multicultural groups in international higher institutions could lead to more general and conceptual conclusions.

Practical implications – The findings contribute to the coherence of fundamental sciences, linguistics, rhetoric, pedagogy and communication theory, which play a paramount role in educating future leaders. The links between pedagogy and rhetoric have been known since ancient times. Moreover, enhancing the rhetorical and pedagogical knowledge, based on communication and education guidance with a focus to multicultural background, is useful not only to lecturers, educators and practitioners, but also to everyone who is seeking to be linguistically effective, rhetorically persuasive and professionally competent carrying out activities in a contemporary multicultural society.

Originality/value – Although the scientific literature in this field includes a number of research studies analysing the methodology applied to develop the communicative skills of students, this article explores for the first time the question of the lecturer's communication strategies, including parallels with rhetorical persuasion techniques, methods for teaching Lithuanian as a foreign language and patterns of multicultural environment. The analysis of effective communication phenomenon from the different standpoints of pedagogy, linguistics, ethics and rhetoric makes the research interdisciplinary, authentic, and meaningful to scholars in different areas.

Keywords: effective communication, rhetorical persuasion techniques, innovative Lithuanian language teaching methods, multicultural setting.

Research type: research paper

JEL classification: I29, Y80, Z13.

Introduction

Studies and research of all types on communication concepts have attracted a great deal of attention from communication scholars over the recent decades (Dilbeck & McCroskey, 2009). Communication theory as an extension of rhetoric, a discipline with a long history of more than 2500 years, dates back to ancient times and is based not only on Socratic teaching, Plato's Dialectic, and Aristotle's Rhetoric, but also on the works of Cicero and Quintilian. However, in Antiquity, public speeches were limited to one-way communication with the intention of convincing the interlocutor, whereas modern public discourse includes two-way communication and interaction aimed at mutual persuasion (Baršauskienė & Janulevičiūtė-Ivaškevičienė, 2005). As Dilbeck and McCroskey state, earlier scholars were not in a position to measure related concepts accurately, thus, just in the twentieth century more accurate concepts and measures were developed to explore various dimensions of communication with a focus on interpersonal interaction (Dilbeck & McCroskey, 2009). Moreover, other principles of related group, mass, organizational and intercultural communication are explored in detail by a great number of modern researchers (Kurylo, 2013; Griffin, 2012; Beebe et al, 2007).

Scholars agree that the process of communication in daily educational, social, political, or entrepreneurship activities is considered to be continuous. Furthermore, the sense of unity that emerges during the process of communication encourages cross-cultural dissemination, cooperation, and more efficient solutions to the global challenges faced by contemporary societies. Therefore, effective and appropriate communication, defined as a value, is important to authorities in different areas – teachers, educators, communicators, scholars and contemporary society leaders (Valienė & Čiužauskaitė, 2019).

Extensive research and scientific literature on the development of communication in education and other sciences from the perspective of the acquisition of communication competence and its sub-competences for developing students' language skills can be found. However, not enough research has been conducted with a view to exploring the communication strategies of lecturers (Petkutė, 2010). Therefore, it is crucial not only to determine efficient, innovative methods for teaching Lithuanian as a foreign language, but also to explore the importance of lecturers' communication techniques, as well as to highlight the multicultural knowledge.

Moreover, scholars in related fields focus on objects associated exclusively with their own particular field: Lithuanian language studies (Buivydienė & Žukienė, 2006, 2007; Pribušauskaitė et al, 2009; Ramonienė, 1994, 2004, 2006, 2010; Pukevičiūtė, 2008; Žukienė, 2011; Vilkienė, 2007, 2009). Correlation with other fields of science, particularly, rhetoric, communication theory and linguistics, is therefore in demand for interdisciplinary research. Additionally, scholars (Edwards

et al, 2004; Sharma & Barret, 2007; Dilbeck & McCroskey, 2009) have carried out valuable research analysing distinct subareas of communication. Thus, a lack of research on instructional communication, teacher-students interaction in a combination and dependency with other subareas of intercultural, language and public communication is observed.

The aim of this paper is therefore to explore the communication skills for the lecturer from the perspective of the classical rhetorical techniques underlying the interactive Lithuanian language teaching/learning methods suitable for a multicultural group of students. In addition, the article highlights a review of modern concepts for the exploration of communication strategies and methods as well as insights into multicultural setting. In conclusion, by developing correlations among these constructs, the article lays the foundation for more conceptual future research and more accurate determination of educational and rhetorical approaches in teaching Lithuanian as a foreign language.

1. Theoretical Background

Language is the most effective communication tool for representing culture (Pukevičiūtė, 2008). The extinction of a language may well entail the loss of the entire culture, including the language itself, the worldview, the cultural identity and everything that is related to its communication (Lebaron & Pillay, 2006). As scholars Shuang et al. (2011) assume, the extinction of a language can follow from internal or external causes closely related to the lack or decrease of communication in a certain language. Moreover, scholars consider that the most common reasons for the extinction of a language are emigration, marriages with members of other cultures, a change of religion, a military coup, and the negative influence of media or inner transformations of the language resulting in its extinction (Shuang et al, 2011). The case of spoken Latin, *Latina Vulgaris,* or the case of Hebrew is relevant here. Although the Hebrew language was considered dead, it has now been revived and is used as the second official language of Israel. Latin has been transformed over time and grown into the group of modern Romance languages (Highet, 2015) spoken by a significant proportion of the European Union population.

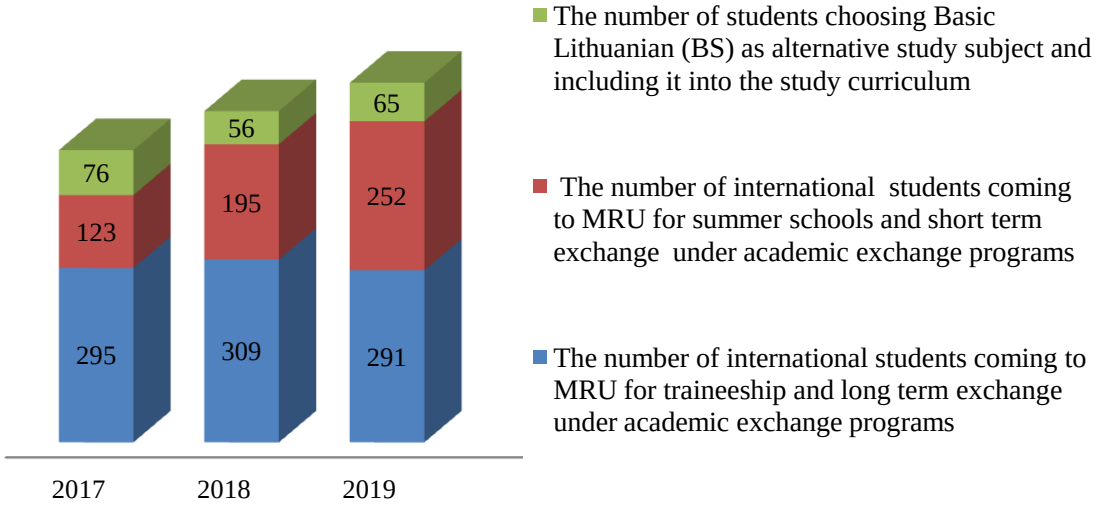
The Lithuanian language is considered to be the most archaic among the living Indo-European languages (Poliakovas, 2008), unique and small, but rich in dialects and sub-dialects compared with modern English and German languages with a great number of speakers. Lithuanian has preserved the largest number of the phonetic and morphological features of the Proto-Indo-European family of languages, and is similar to Sanskrit, ancient Greek and Latin languages, on the basis of which the present-day European languages were formed (Zinkevičius, 1996; Kaplan & Baldauf, 2008). Lithuanian itself plays a paramount role in studies of the Indo-European language family exploring

the origin, development and modifications of Indo-European languages. It has also survived extremely difficult periods in its history, years of language bans and the destruction of different regimes, and has been preserved only by the efforts of Lithuanian ancestors who fought for it tirelessly over the centuries. Unfortunately, factors such as increasing emigration and the falling birth-rate, the influence of English and lack of interest in correct usage on the part of Lithuanian citizens have created unfavourable conditions not only for the dissemination of Lithuanian, but also for the survival of Lithuanian culture (Murdock, 1993). Therefore, the importance of nurturing the mother-tongue language by refusing incorrectness, jargon, barbarisms and other irregular and abusive lexical elements in public speaking is crucial for the survival of the language and its transfer to future generations. Teaching Lithuanian as a foreign language and increasing its usage in academic and multicultural environment is clearly one of the solutions for preserving the language from extinction.

Over decades of its history, Lithuanian has always been taught as a mother-tongue language, and the term 'Lithuanian as a foreign language' was formed only after the country's declaration of Independence (Buivydienė & Mačianskienė, 2007). After the country's accession to the European Union on May 1, 2004, the Lithuanian language gained the opportunity to become an object of research, development and dissemination of ideas (Žukienė, 2011). Moreover, strategies for teaching/learning Lithuanian and other foreign languages in the European Union have been established by regulation in various legal acts and documents, namely the European Commission Life Learning Memoranda 2000, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment 2001, and the Description of the Language Teaching Policy 2004, etc. (Buivydienė & Mačianskienė, 2007). Although the enrichment of Lithuanian language education is the goal of a multilingual and multicultural society, the dissemination of the language should first of all occur in its country of origin.

Newly emerging needs for teaching Lithuanian as a foreign language at a basic level of study have encouraged rethinking, re-evaluating and adapting subject study programmes, language teaching/learning methods and communication guidance for lecturers. Lithuanian language studies being quite complex, with a smaller variety of tools and methods by comparison with classical languages (English, German, Russian and French) and challenging grammar issues (phonetics, vocabulary, syntax), requires hard work and dedication. However, many students who come to study under exchange programmes choose to study Lithuanian in order to communicate in the everyday environment. According to statistical data compiled at MRU from 2017 to 2019 (Figure 1), it can be concluded that the number of incoming students alternatively choosing Lithuanian language studies is proportionately increasing. Similarly, the number of participants in mobility

programmes of other higher education institutions is also expanding. In these circumstances, there is an obligation to improve the teaching/learning process by organising productive Lithuanian language studies.



Note: including data on those coming for summer schools and short-term exchange, for traineeship and long-term exchange and choosing Basic Lithuanian as an alternative subject of studies.

Source: created by author.

Figure1. Statistics on incoming students to MRU under academic exchange programmes, 2017 - 2019

Figure 1 represents data collected from the 2020 annual report of the Rector of MRU, including statistical data from 2017 to 2019, autumn and spring semesters. Moreover, it contains information about the attendance and frequency of students coming to study at MRU under exchange programmes. The data collected over several years' show that the number of students coming to MRU satisfactorily increases, especially in the section for summer schools and short-term exchange.

Since there is a statistically significant increase in the opportunity to acquire a language used by only 4.1 million people worldwide, which features old and complex language skills, with the aim to communicate effectively in an everyday environment, this paper employs a perceptual theory of effective communication strategies and techniques that lecturers need to be familiar with. Moreover, a strong correlation is maintained between lecturers' communication skills, language teaching methods and multicultural knowledge.

2. Exploring the concept and characteristics of communication

After getting acquainted with the development of Lithuanian language, its history and the assumptions of teaching it in line with innovative methods and techniques, it is important to define

the communication phenomenon relevant for developing lecturers' professional competences and students' skills. Since the communication theory is based on the rhetoric conventions and influence on other fields of science, namely, linguistics, ethics and pedagogy, studies and research questions related to it are broad and interdisciplinary (Rubbin et al, 2010). Therefore, it is important to note that with a vast variety of literature on communication, countless definitions are found on the concept of it. Despite a variety of definitions submitted by the majority of modern researchers, obvious commonalities can be found of the term. Scholars Baršauskienė and Janulevičiūtė-Ivaškevičienė provide a variety of definitions of communication considering it as a dynamic process in which people exchange thoughts, views and attitudes (2005). Meanwhile, professor Griffin offers a conceptual description of the term, according to which communication is comprehended as the relational process of creating and interpreting messages that elicit a response (2012).

Although five decades ago a catalogue of over 120 definitions of communication was made, it is difficult to clarify the current overall number of definitions or identify the prevailing one (Griffin, 2012). Many scholars distinguish similar features of communication, emphasizing the power of dynamism, symbolism, contextuality, self-reflectiveness, learnability and consequence, (Lustig & Koester, 2013; Samovar et al, 2006). Naturally, the classified areas of communication have got common features, the same or combined intentions and goals; therefore, they can be explored from different standpoints. Additionally, lecturers are not only engaged in giving their knowledge to learners through description, explanation and persuasion (Rubbin et al, 2010), they also encourage students being engaged in this process of learning through the defence of their own believes, presentation of their attitudes or viewpoints; therefore, instructional, public and multicultural subareas of communication have got interdisciplinary approach. According Rubbin and other scholars, communication can be divided into subareas related with technology, group interaction, health issues, instructional background, intercultural and international settings, interpersonal activities, usage of language and symbolic codes, mass reports, organizational procedures and public appeals. Since categorized subareas are interdisciplinary and connected with each other, equivalent methods, rules and rhetorical persuasion strategies can be applied to all of them. Consequently, this study is focused on subareas of (i) instructional communication, including communication education, developmental communication and lecturer-student interactions, (ii) multicultural communication, and (iii) public communication, focusing on rhetorical appeals of persuasion.

Noticeably, multicultural education is sometimes perceived as identical to intercultural education; however, the goals of each can slightly differ. The first one is focused on the multicultural group with the aim of maintaining a dialogue, unity and cooperation among group

members. Thus, the focus is concentrated on efficient ways of teaching in order to help students to achieve the best results and promote intergroup harmony by a variety of instructional strategies used for influencing multicultural awareness and strengthening common values, such as respect, tolerance, appreciation and acceptance among diverse ethnic, racial, cultural and ability groups (Harriet & Holm, 2009). Moreover, a multicultural worldview is usually characteristic to a person who is open-minded and open to other cultures (Kurylo, 2013). Unlike multicultural education, intercultural education addresses social justice issues, such as injustices as racism and xenophobia; it stands out as a conflict prevention device. Additionally, the lecturers' as the facilitator's role is important in delivering strategies designed for bridge-building activities of culturally diverse participants (Hogan, 2007). However, in order to emphasize commonality, unity and achievement of common goals, the correlations between multicultural education as well as instructional and public communication traits are emphasized in the research. Thus, the article is based on the analysis of the lecturer-students communication strategies and methods applied in teaching Lithuanian as a foreign language.

2.1. Guidelines on effective communication techniques for lecturers

The teaching/learning methods applied to the instruction of Lithuanian as a foreign language have been the subject of many insights and there has been little discussion on the guidance for the lecturer. Although some researchers do not attribute communication skills as an integrated part of professional competence of lecturer, Dragana Bjekić in her research on teachers' communicative competence claims that professional competence of teacher is consisted of three domains: educational competence; programme (syllabus, content) and communication competence (Petkutė, 2010). As Petkutė states the focus is usually concentrated to foreign language study programmes and methodology, whereas the communication requirements for the lecturer are left aside. Naturally, in order to apply the communicative model to students seeking to act in the everyday environment, the lecturer must first of all possess communication skills oneself. Studies should therefore be carried out to explore the fundamental guidelines for the lecturer including not only his educational knowledge, but also communication skills.

Consequently, to be successful in Lithuanian language education, the lecturer should acquire, or at least be acquainted with classical rhetorical rules, namely the categories of persuasion. Their application makes the study process more constructive and efficient. According to the conceptual insights of Regina Koženiauskiene, a well-known Lithuanian researcher of classical rhetoric, intentions of teaching, informing, educating, presenting, clarifying, revealing, and explaining are common to all public informative speeches: lessons, lectures, seminars, workshops, presentations,

reports, instructions and reportages (1999). Although teachers as well as speakers may have several intentions behind their speech, the desire to motivate and inspire multicultural groups plays a paramount role. Therefore, an educator who is a competent communicator chooses a rhetorical strategy that does not evoke any stress or fear but rather encourages and inspires the student (Petkutė, 2010). The lecturer's willingness to inspire may in addition promote the student's understanding and pursuit of better results. Moreover, the positive impact of rhetoric and communication can consciously develop a positive atmosphere, which is extremely important for newcomers unfamiliar with the country, culture and academic environment.

As Beebe claims, persuasion is considered to be a process of attempting to change or reinforce attitudes, believes, values or behaviour of others by ethical means of communication, an obligation to be honest and forthright in crafting messages (2007). Persuasion is sought in the context of teaching (Rubbin et al, 2010) and is considered to be the most efficient strategy leading to success (Valienė & Čiužauskaitė, 2019). Furthermore, a threefold combination of rhetorical appeals is provided in order to bring success in eloquence and communication of teaching/learning process. The lecturer's impact on the audience is therefore based on artistic proofs, categories of persuasion: *logos*, *ethos* and *pathos*, which lecturer creates, and inartistic ones, particularly, letters, documents or testimonies of witnesses, which does not depend on the speaker's will (Griffin, 2012). It should be noted that *logos*, the first category of persuasion, is revealed though the intellectual state of the speaker, his professional competences, critical thinking, logical reasoning and ability to choose relevant arguments and rational ways of proof (Koženiauskienė, 2005). Meanwhile *ethos*, according to scholars, is defined as the most convincing category due to the moral authority of the communicator (Koženiauskienė, 1999). Thus, the inner values and virtues of the educator, namely ethics, etiquette, aesthetics, energy, emotions, eloquence and emotions (Koženiauskienė, 2005) play a key role in the communication process with learners. Additional components of *ethos* are constituted by an appropriate level of vocabulary and a relevant theme, the external and internal features of the lecturer such as dress code, self-possession, self-confidence and solid preparation, as well as by understanding and presenting of the teaching material (Valienė & Čiužauskaitė, 2019). Moreover, public rhetoric if practiced ethically is useful to society (Beebe et al, 2012). The category of *pathos,* for its part, is perceived as the capacity to awaken the emotions of the audience and the ability to acquire empathy and sincerity (Samovar et al, 2006). To summarise, the lecturer's success depends not only on his professional knowledge, general erudition, personality and leadership, but also on the ability to apply rhetorical rules and language sources (Koženiauskienė, 1999). Finally, the unity of Aristotle's categories of persuasion determines the success of eloquence and the

possession of effective communication skills, which play a paramount role in education of a multilingual and multicultural society.

2.2. Education and syllabus oriented approaches fostering students' communication skills

Although the possession of effective communication strategies for lecturers plays a paramount role, a selection of interactive teaching tools and techniques is also important. A variety of learning/teaching methods have been applied to Lithuanian as a foreign language from the twentieth century, particularly, *speaking comprehension*, *linguistic analysis*, *direct reading* and *grammar-translation* methods, finally *structural*, with emergence to *audio linguistic* and *situational* directions and *communicative* methods (Buivydienė & Žukienė, 2007). Scholars maintain the idea that priority should be given to language perception and acquisition applying a communicative approach rather than to the deliberate repetition of grammatical constructions applying a structural method (Buivydienė & Žukienė, 2006; 2007). Consequently, sub-competences of the communicative method, namely, *linguistic*, *sociolinguistic*, *discursive*, *strategic*, *socio-cultural* and *social*, have been adapted to Lithuanian from the eighties and nineties (Buivydienė & Mačanskienė, 2007).

A combination of several methodologies is generally applied in language education. Some methods are conventionally designed for a mono-cultural environment while others are more suitable for the mixed programmes of multicultural groups. Hence, as Petty points out, it is important not to be satisfied with a general interest, but to apply effective methods by working not harder, but smarter, focusing only on those factors that determine the results (Petty, 2008). Furthermore, the re-evaluation of the interactive methods used to teach classical and modern languages - English, German, French (Buivydienė & Žukienė, 2006) and their adaptation to the study of smaller languages, focusing on the multicultural environment and the requirements for effective communication must take into consideration. Some lecturers argue that chalk, blackboard, and insightful, competent, experiential thinking are sufficient for foreign language education. Others, however, working with the modern, information-based Z-generation whose daily life is formed by information technologies, support the idea that traditional teaching/learning methods are not sufficient. Innovative language teaching methods must be alternatively adopted (Jeriomina et al, 2012).

The monitoring research carried out provided insights and correlations as regards interactive Lithuanian teaching methods for the development of a communicative model. After monitoring the progress from 2016 to 2018 of 132 exchange students in the Basic Lithuanian course with a similar age, education background and learning experience, an analysis was completed of the participants' interactions, their level of motivation and their mid-term and final evaluations. As a result a list of

efficient teaching methods for exploring correlations with sub-competences, fostering a communicative model was identified (see Table 1).

Table 1. Methods applied to teaching Lithuanian for developing communicative competence

No	Methods applied to teaching Lithuanian as a foreign language	Sub-competences of communicative approach					
		Linguistic	Sociolinguistic	Discursive	Strategic	Sociocultural	Social
1	*Suggestopedia method*, developed by the Bulgarian psychotherapist Georgi Lozanov, employs various techniques for auditory interactions, including art and music (Buivydienė, 2006). The *staging of certain situations* and *game-based* methods using various additional tools and instruments such as a ball are applied for animating the audience. These light-hearted methods encourage critical thinking and the memorisation of new expressions.	+	+			+	+
2	*The employment* of a *virtual Lithuanian language learning platform*, which is considered to be a flexible alternative among traditional language teaching methods. The Vilnius University platform could be provided as an example: http://www.oneness.vu.lt (Žukienė, 2011; Baltakojytė & Žiūraitė, 2016).	+	+	+	+	+	
3	*Analogy* – a method transferred from rhetoric theory and practice, applied to the analysis of the etymology of Lithuanian lexical elements based on their equivalents in other fluent foreign-language multicultural groups. The method has demonstrated positive impact on grammar tasks and fast memorisation of vocabulary.	+	+	+	+		+
4	*Group method*, employed between different levels of participants: teacher – student; teacher - student group; student A - student B; student - student group; student group A - student group B (Adomaitienė et al, 2012). The method is useful for developing the public-speaking skills of learners, promoting the cognitive process, and exchanging opinions or improving communication skills.	+	+	+	+	+	+
5	*Active questioning* is based on well-argued answers to open-ended questions. Each response is supplemented, adjusted, and evaluated. This method is also effective when questions are answered individually, voluntarily, or when the answer is formulated for a pair of students.	+	+	+		+	
6	*Dialogue delivery* method, suitable for any group of learners. Positive impact on developing creativity and communication competence.	+	+	+	+	+	+
7	Presentations on given topics using *computer mediated interaction* (Hall, 2011), borrowed from English language education, are effective for developing the ability to present informative speeches and public announcements in Lithuanian. The method is useful for the development of language and cultural competencies.	+	+	+	+	+	+
8	*Brainstorming* has had positive effects in handling tasks related with different topics, encouraging competition, positive participation, critical thinking, leadership and creativity.	+	+		+		
9	*Informal education activities*, particularly reviewing films, and performances of cultural events outside the auditorium, has clearly had a positive impact on students. The core principle is the exclusive opportunity to learn the language through deeper acquaintance, connection with culture (Baravykaitė, 2007).	+			+	+	+

Source: created by author.

According to the progress monitoring results, *dialogue* delivery, *group* method and *presentation* on given topics using *computer mediated interaction* are considered to be the most efficient methods when applied to teaching Lithuanian. In addition, the ability to communicate in Lithuanian is strengthened by fostering linguistic, sociolinguistic, discursive, strategic, sociocultural and social competences. Although the study of Lithuanian as a foreign language is based not on the rules of grammar and spelling, but on the process of learning, cognition and daily communication, linguistic (9) and sociolinguistic (8) competences have mostly been developed according to the results of student progress monitoring.

2.3. Multicultural communication traits applied to teaching Lithuanian

The context of multiculturalism is also considered as one of the most important aspects in the process of teaching the Lithuanian. As Fernback claims (2015), communication is a part of a system of cultural practices that create, maintain and transmute society. It can therefore be assumed that the ability to communicate in Lithuanian and other foreign languages is not only relevant to students enrolled in exchange programmes but is also important for society as a whole. An individual unable to communicate in a foreign language may not be capable of engaging in general social and professional activities. In addition, foreign language studies are valuable for the development of communication and cultural competences as well as for engagement in social and entrepreneurship activities.

The concept of multiculturalism (lat. *multae cultūrae*) has often been interpreted differently depending on the individual point of view. It is defined as the interaction of different cultures, and its emergence is related to education enabling people of different nationalities, traditions and customs be engaged in the pursuit of mutual knowledge and common goals (Lebaron & Pillay, 2006). In general, representatives of a culture share similar attitudes, worldviews, values and perceptions, and the culture is generally perceived as the synthesis of the values, beliefs and assumptions that affect thoughts, perceptions, behaviours, and customs. Many human beings are thus considered to be similar with other culture members who engage in study, work or travel activities. Accordingly, every group possesses a culture, and there is no group without any culture at all.

Scholars consider that language is one of the most important features uniting cultures (Samovar et al, 2010). In the contemporary society of information technologies, perfect conditions have been created for becoming acquainted with other cultures through language. Language studies involve students being equally engaged in the learning/teaching process and provide opportunities not only to communicate intensively with each other, but also to adopt good practices and share

values. Most scholars assume that feedback received from other participants in the communication process is a condition for effective communication (Baršauskienė & Janulevičiūtė-Ivaškevičienė, 2005). Therefore, the sense of community that emerges during the teaching/learning process promotes the dissemination of a wide range of cultural elements and builds a multicultural society. Moreover, in the language teaching process of a multicultural group, the guidelines for the lecturer are quite demanding, and the format of the workshop also has great importance. Thus, the following stages of the teaching activities need to be attentively planned in advance (Samovar, 2010): (i) structure of the seminar; (ii) content of the workshop; (iii) teaching/learning process and methods applied; (iv) self-assessment and evaluation of students.

Taking into account the requirements of multicultural group education, it can be concluded that recommendations for effective communication applied to teaching Lithuanian should be kept in mind. Consequently, a collaborative rather than an autocratic model of communication is preferred, persuasive rhetorical techniques and modern teaching/learning methods applied. Having in mind not significantly expressed differences within a multicultural group, multiculturalism should not be manifested as a result of certain differences, but as a result of similarities among the cultures involved. From a list of cultural differences explored by researchers the only difference observed in a multicultural group studying Lithuanian as a foreign language is the unequal speed of learning the language and a different treatment of time and distance (Lebaron & Pillay, 2006). Despite multicultural differences, effective communication strategies and interactive teaching/learning methods are applied to bring positive tendencies towards students' linguistic, communicative, educative and multicultural experiences. Moreover, Lithuanian language studies are designed to foster values to promote learners' native language and culture and contribute to the growth of leadership and the development of multicultural environment. Finally, the acknowledgement of cultural differences is intended to turn the differences into strengths and provide cognitive joy and inspiration, help or assistance if needed.

3. Conclusions

When exploring the phenomenon of effective communication in a multicultural setting, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The results of successful Lithuanian language teaching/learning are based not only on educational, but also on the communication guidelines for the lecturer. Hence, effective communication skills, multicultural knowledge and innovative language teaching instruments are all equally important in teaching the Lithuanian language.

Additionally, whereas Lithuanian is considered to be the most archaic among the living Indo-European languages, preserving the greatest number of phonetic and morphological features of the Proto-Indo-European family, the usage of Lithuanian language in academic, multicultural environment is very important. The emergence of a need for teaching Lithuanian as a foreign language at a basic level encourages the revision of study programmes, the adoption of innovative language teaching methods and the development of communication skills.

Furthermore, effectiveness in communication is possible through the application of classical rhetorical canons and innovative, constructive, interactive language teaching methods inclusively developing the communicative and cultural competences of a multicultural group. According to the theory of Aristotle, persuasion is the most efficient strategy bringing success in eloquence and communication. Therefore, the lecturer's manner of teaching should be positive, inspiring and based on the rhetorical appeals of persuasion - *logos*, *ethos* and *pathos*. Additional guidance for the lecturer include the appropriate level of vocabulary, a relevant theme, and the educator's external and internal features, such as dress code, self-possession and self-confidence, solid preparation, and efficient presentation of the teaching material.

When analysing Lithuanian language teaching, perception and acquisition methods, the communicative approach is prioritised above others. The strategy recommended is to work not harder, but smarter, focusing only on those factors that determine the results, including alternative, interactive language teaching methods. Additionally, a collaborative rather than an autocratic model of communication recommended to be adopted for the teaching of Lithuanian.

According to the results of progress monitoring, the most interactive teaching methods are considered to be *dialogue* delivery, *group* method and *presentation* on given topics using *computer mediated interaction*. Additionally, linguistic (9) and sociolinguistic (8) sub competences, were mostly developed according to the results of student progress monitoring.

Finally, the findings contribute to the coherence of the fundamental sciences of linguistics, rhetoric, pedagogy and communication theory, which play a paramount role in the education of future leaders. Furthermore, presented insights are useful not only to the lecturers, educators, researchers and leaders of modern society, but also to everyone seeking to be culturally effective, rhetorically persuasive and professionally competent in individual areas of everyday activities. In addition, the development of correlations among the constructs presented lays the foundation for more conceptual research and more accurate determination of educational and rhetorical approaches in the context of Lithuanian as a foreign language studies.

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