laborative activity organization quality in its quality assessment. Meanwhile, students who do not act as lesson planners using the *case-study* technology do not consider the collaborative activity as a characteristic of modern education quality.

Moreover, the students participating in lesson planning with *case*-study technology select the issues concerning essence, purposes and prospects of their professional area as a discussion subject.

In general, the conducted research allows to state the influence of case-study technology on the quality of learning process participants' collaborative activity and thus mediates the manifestation of their individual differences as well as their learning and educational achievements. Finally, in spite of the fact that case-study technology is still a relatively new technology for ESP teaching but its effective use calls for further positive and empirical studies.

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Actual problems and processes of intercultural communication and intercultural understanding between Russians and Germans
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When you search for results about intercultural communication between Germany and Russia on Google, the first results you find are guidebooks and websites that give explanations about intercultural communication especially for business etiquette used by managers and for business relations between both cultural areas. These Google results demonstrate that there is a great need for improving intercultural communication between Russia and Germany. It is striking that results about intercultural communication between both countries in other areas of life apart from business relations are rare to find. So the focus coming to communication between Russia and Germany seems to be mostly on business relations and not cultural relations. Also, given that the number of such results in

Google is high, it can be concluded that there is a great need for better intercultural communication and intercultural understanding.

When I am writing about ‚Russia/n' and ‚German/y' I do not intend any negative rather positive interpretation. Also I do not insist that the mentioned dimensions of cultures are character trades of every individual of each culture. Using the expressions ‚Russia/n' and ‚German/y' makes sense for general comparison purposes and is meant to be value-free.

Russia and Western Europe and thus Germany are closely linked with each other in a historical and cultural way. However, both went through alternate historical developments. This leads to different developments of mentality and values in each cultural area. Mentality and values influence communication and action strategies, which then again shape the culture. Therefore it is only natural that Russian culture and German culture differ from one another, just as the mentalities of both cultural areas do.

German cultural standards are connected to the history of the formation of the German society. German society always has been a part of the Oxidant and Christian culture. European ideas and conceptions are based on the collapsed Roman Empire and Hellenistic ideas. This was the reason for generate some general values and a general mindset: legal thinking, law and morality (Roman law), objectivity, concept of linear time, esteem of truthfulness, individualism with emphasising the individual human as well as independence. These ideas have been further developed in the periods of Renaissance, Reformation and Enlightenment [7. P. 84].

In Russian history other developments were influential. First of all the territory of the Russian Federation is very large. In several historical periods there have been many Asian influences as well as European ones. Very great impact on the historical development of Russia had Byzantine culture, especially Byzantine religion. Also the domination of Tatars and in the recent history communism and post-communism were influencing the general Russian mind-set and values [6. P. 14].

For a proper communication between both cultural areas knowledge about the other cultural background is needed as well as the understanding of the other culture, so called intercultural communication. The idea of intercultural communication is comparatively new. Edward T. Hall can be seen as one of the founders of ‚Intercultural communication'. After the Second World War he did research about ‚International communication' on behalf of the US-American government. His research was about other cultures, foreign mentalities and behaviours [6. P. 14]. Today intercultural communication and understanding is needed in an increasing number of areas: in economic sectors, for political relations, in daily life, etc. Especially since the beginning of the 1990s after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the opening of the country new international contacts could be made.

Meanwhile, intercultural communication as a field of study has become well-known and the research of it has made a lot of progress. In Europe one could even call the increasing number of study programs of intercultural communication a boom. However further research is needed to improve intercultural relations even more. In a globalized world with growing international networks and international links it is essential to work on all those relationships and to improve them constantly.

So a question is: What leads to problems of translation or misunderstandings? A main reason for the lack of intercultural understanding is the existence of stereotypes and ethnocentrism. ‚Stereotypes' are firm ideas of human character trades. Stereotypes can exist about individuals, social groups etc. Each individual interprets the behaviour of other individuals in reference to his own culture and system of values. An individual might un-

derstand his or her own culture as a superior culture to certain or even all other cultures. This is the so-called 'ethnocentrism'. Such a mind-set towards other, foreign cultures is a result of little knowledge about them.

Most of all intercultural misunderstandings are a result of misunderstanding the target culture caused by wrong assessment, because values and common standards of the culture of origin are being used for the assessment of understanding [2. P. 17].

First of all it is important to understand what the term ‚culture‘ stands for. A general definition states that culture is a system of collective acceptance (of terms), values and standards. Members of a social group learn, internalise, and share such a system – whether consciously or unconsciously [2. P. 10]. Culture and language are interconnected highly. Language is not only the medium for outward communication between people. It is also the medium for inward communication, because humans are thinking and representing, organizing and systemizing their surrounding or living environment through language. Without language used as a medium between outward and inward human communication no cultural or individual process could occur. Language gives humans the ability to symbolize, accumulate and share their experiences. Language makes it possible for human groups and societies to pass their accumulated knowledge on to future generations. So the system of language or the system of symbolism of language is the core of human social life as well as cultural and social evolution.

Inward speaking (medium for thinking) and outward speaking (medium for social communication) are interlinked and interact. This leads to the fact that cultural differences do not only influence the use of language as a medium of social communication. Cultural differences also cause differences in the way of thinking [4. P. 10].

Systems of communication are determined by the worldly or the environmental context of the communicating people and their cultural knowledge. Systems of communication norm and regulate the living environment of people [4. P. 8].

There are many different theories about functioning of communication systems. One of them was developed by Edward T. Hall. Halls concept is mainly about dimensions of culture. Dimensions of culture can be used as a general orientation for comparing cultures with each other. Hall emphasised four dimensions of culture: orientation on contexts, orientation on space, orientation on time and speed of information flows. These dimensions are usually related to each other [5. P. 695 – 701].

Although dimensions of culture can represent cultural values it is important to stress that they do not describe individuals. So an individual or individual behaviour can differ from a general cultural standard, even to great extent [7. P. 29-30].

Taking the orientation on contexts as an example it makes clear how difficult intercultural communication can be and how easy it can lead to incomprehension. According to Hall orientation on contexts means that in different cultures different amounts of information are needed to understand a message. Hall differentiates between *high-context-cultures* and *low-context-cultures*. In *high-context-cultures* individuals are usually part of an extremely tight-knit social network. That is why specific messages do not have to be explicit mentioned or explained in detail. Usually individuals in those cultures do not distinguish very precise between areas of life, such as work, family, friends etc. Russian culture can be seen as *high-context-culture*. In *low-context-cultures* individuals do not have extremely tight-knit social networks. Messages contain more direct information. Otherwise the sense of the message cannot be transmitted. So phrases and verbalisation are very direct. German culture can be seen as *low*-context-culture [1. P. 83]. ‚High-context people are apt to become impatient and irritated when low-context people insist in giving them

information they don' need. Conversely, low-context people are at a loss when high-context people do not provide enough information.' [3. P. 9].

Another good example is the understanding of time. It influences communication and behaviour. Hall differentiates between monochron and polychron understanding of time. In cultures with a monochron understanding of time this understanding is mainly linear and tasks are fulfilled one after another. Fulfilling tasks is done in a concentrated and systematic way, meetings and appointments adhered precisely. In the course of industrialization a rather monochron understanding of time became accepted in many countries. The principal reason for this acceptance is that a monochron understanding of time fits best to manufacturing and a working-process based on division of labour. Many countries of the western world are countries with monochron societies, as it is Germany. In polychron cultures the understanding of time is a rather abstract term [2. P. 13].

Tasks are fulfilled parallel to each other rather than one after another. The process of fulfilling tasks is more unsystematic, but planning is even more flexible. Even though more distraction is possible, it is not seen as a disruption of the work process. Russia is a countries with a polychron culture and society [2. P. 14].

For a good working intercultural communication intercultural understanding is needed. Having intercultural communication a person should have linguistic, social and psychic abilities. These abilities can lead to intercultural understanding and to successful communication between members of different cultures. So they can be used for a dynamic intercultural action process, to avoid any misunderstanding or clarify misunderstandings, what usually leads to a greater acceptance [4. P. 10 – 11]. With this in mind prospective enlarged and progressively contact and communication between both cultures would be desirable.

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