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Министерство образования Республики Беларусь

Учреждение образования
«Гомельский государственный университет
имени Франциска Скорины»

Т. В. ПОЧИНОК

**ПРАКТИКА УСТНОЙ И ПИСЬМЕННОЙ
РЕЧИ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА**

ПРАКТИЧЕСКОЕ ПОСОБИЕ

по теме

“Keeping the conversation ball going in America”

для студентов 2-3 курсов

специальности 1 - 02 03 06 01 «Английский язык»

ПРАВЕРАТА

2014

УК 8413

Установа адукацыі
"Гомельскі дзяржаўны ўніверсітэт
імя Францыска Скарыны"

БІБЛІЯТЭКА

Гомель 2007

УДК 811.111(075.8)
ББК 81.432.1-923.5
П 656

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Скорины»

Рекомендовано к изданию научно-методическим
советом учреждения образования «Гомельский
государственный университет имени Франциска Скорины»

Починок, Т. В.

П 656 Практика устной и письменной речи [Текст]: [практическое
пособие по теме “Keeping the conversation ball going in
America” для студентов специальности 1 – 02 03 06 01
«Английский язык»] / Т. В. Починок; М-во образования
РБ, Гомельский государственный университет
им. Ф. Скорины. – Гомель: ГГУ им. Ф. Скорины, 2007. –
124 с.

ISBN 978-985-439-267-7

Целью подготовки к изданию практического пособия
является формирование у студентов социокультурной
компетенции как основы межкультурного общения на
материале преподавания американского варианта английского
языка.

Практическое пособие адресовано студентам
специальности 1 – 02 03 06 01 «Английский язык»

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ББК 81.432.1-923.5

ISBN 978-985-439-267-7

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Contents

Введение	4
Unit 1 Getting started conversations with Americans.	
Small talk	6
Unit 2 Keeping the conversation ball going.....	20
Unit 3 Conversational strategies.....	48
Unit 4 Tough situations and irritating moments.....	73
Unit 5 Sounding clear without words.....	104
Литература.....	124

РЕПОЗИТОРИЙ ГГУ ИМЕНИ Ф. СКОРИНЫ

432.1-923

п 256

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Введение

Современное иноязычное образование ориентировано на овладение иностранным языком в контексте иноязычной культуры, что предполагает формирование у обучаемых иноязычной социокультурной компетенции. Полноценное, адекватное восприятие и использование в процессе межкультурной коммуникации языковых фактов и явлений невозможно без знания социокультурного контекста их употребления, в котором отражаются особенности менталитета, ценностные ориентации носителя изучаемого языка. Целью данного практического пособия является формирование у студентов 2-3 курсов языкового факультета социокультурной компетенции как основы межкультурного общения на материале преподавания американского варианта английского языка.

Практическое пособие состоит из 5 разделов, рассматривающих различные аспекты американского речевого и неречевого поведения, помещённые в «капсулы культуры» ('Culture Capsule') и «ценностные капсулы» ('Value Capsule'), содержащие описание одной или нескольких ключевых американских ценностей и особенностей менталитета, имплицитно отражающихся в социокультурных особенностях американского речевого поведения. Затем следует комплекс социокультурных заданий, направленных на формирование умений моделирования американского речевого поведения в различных ситуациях межкультурного общения.

Социокультурные задания практического пособия подчинены методическому принципу этапности в формировании речевых навыков и умений и обеспечивают постепенный переход от заданий рецептивного типа через задания рецептивно-репродуктивного типа к заданиям продуктивного типа, представленных в виде ролевых игр и дискуссий социокультурной направленности. Данные задания помогают сформулировать собственную точку зрения по проблемам межкультурного общения. В представленный комплекс социокультурных заданий включены и специальные задания по обучению культуре изучаемого языка, а именно культурные ассимиляторы

(‘Cultural assimilators’) на выбор и анализ правильного варианта социокультурного поведения в той или иной ситуации межкультурного общения, а также задания ‘Cultural problem’, ‘Cultural Incident’, ‘Cultural Advisor’, направленные на анализ особенностей американского социокультурного поведения в сравнении с родной культурой.

Практическое пособие “Keeping the conversation ball going in America” поможет студентам овладеть знаниями социокультурных особенностей менталитета и ценностных ориентаций представителей американской лингвокультуры, научиться анализировать и сравнивать ментальное восприятие окружающего мира носителей американской и родной культур, что способствует формированию умений моделировать аутентичное речевое поведение в соответствии с национально-специфическим стилем общения носителей изучаемого языка. Конечным результатом обучения с помощью данного практического пособия является формирование социокультурной компетенции как основы межкультурного общения.

Практическое пособие адресовано студентам специальности 1 - 02 03 06 01 – “Английский язык” и направлено на формирование социокультурной компетенции.

Unit 1 Getting started conversations with Americans. Small talk

“To know another’s language and his culture is a very good way to make a fluent fool of one’s self.” (Winston Brembeck)

1 Study the *Value Capsule* about American’s and Russian’s sociability and notice all the distinguishing peculiarities. Fill in table 1 with the differences and similarities. Comment on your answers and prove it with examples. Discuss how Americans’ and Russians’ sociability differ according to the given parameters. Answer the questions below.

Value Capsule ‘Sociability of Americans and Russians in comparison’

Americans are very sociable; they usually get in contact very easily. Having been just introduced to a person, they would treat him/her very friendly, as if they have known this person for a long time. In general, American communicative behavior may be characterized even by extreme, demonstrative friendliness. An American is always ready to help. Friendliness to customers is a must, the most common question in a shop or an office is “Can I help you?” To be friendly is a positive quality, highly valued in America. But this sociability of American’s is of a formal character – Americans are equally friendly with everybody. Their sociability doesn’t demonstrate their personal respect to the interlocutor and having turned aside, an American would immediately forget about the latter. Foreigners accustomed to more sincere emotional relations in communication are usually very much surprised when the next day after the party their new acquaintances or the hosts meet them without any emotions, as if they have never seen them. The thing is that for Americans yesterday’s emotions are not supposed to be prolonged for the next day.

Americans try not to discuss personal problems, not to interfere with ones privacy. Every person is considered to have the right for personal immunity and the questions which might deprive him/her of such immunity shouldn’t be asked.

Russians are very sociable, communication with other people is

considered in Russia to be one of the main life values. Russians start communication easily, they don't hesitate to start conversation even with a total stranger. There are many excuses to start a conversation in Russia – it might be any kind of question, a request, an advice, an offer to treat oneself, etc. In order to get in contact a Russian may touch another person; take him/her by the elbow or even bar the way.

There is no formal ceremony of making acquaintance in Russian communicative behavior. It is quite possible to introduce oneself without the help of other people – one may come up to a person he/she wants to get acquainted with and say something like “I'd like to get acquainted with you. I am...” Russian people dislike small talk. They consider it to be insincere and try to avoid it if possible. The best kind of communication for Russians is informal as it allows discussing personal issues. Russians are extremely sincere. They usually don't conceal their mood, their faces reflect their real feelings. Lack of emotions in communication is condemned.

Unlike Western countries in Russia practically every phrase may serve as the starting point of the conversation. A Russian may start a conversation with both an acquaintance and a stranger irrespective of the fact whether the person is free or busy, silent or speaking to other people. A Russian may interfere with a talk of the strangers, may tell his/her opinion or suggest something even if he/she is not asked to. It is possible to interrupt a conversation of other people to ask a question. In offices it is quite common when a member of the staff interferes with a talk of another staff member with a client.

Russians are usually very frank in communication and tell many facts about themselves. Foreigners note that very often Russians tell them facts that they don't want to know about. Such behavior is considered to be a manifestation of trust to the interlocutor and desire to become friends.

Table 1 – Sociability of Americans and Russians in comparison

Parameters	Americans	Russians
sociability		
friendliness		
small talk		
sincerity		
frankness		

Questions to consider:

- 1 Do you use small talk? If yes, what for? / if no, why?
- 2 Do you really think that Russians start conversations very easily? Are you able to start a conversation in a bus/train/queue/shop?
- 3 Do you agree that Russians usually don't conceal their mood? Would you explain the reason of this?
- 4 Are you usually sincere while speaking with your friends/colleagues/ teachers/ parents?
- 5 Do you like to discuss your personal matters or the personal matters of your friends?

2 Study the *Culture Capsules* (1, 2) and answer the questions below

Culture Capsule 1. Verbal Communication: The Way People Speak

Cultures influence communication styles. Although this point may seem obvious, cultural styles can and do create misunderstandings in conversations among people from different cultures. For example, consider the following conversation between an Italian and an American. The Italian made a strong political statement with which he knew his American friend would disagree. The Italian wanted to involve the American in a lively discussion. The American, rather than openly disagreeing, said, "Well, everyone is entitled to an opinion. I accept that your opinion is different than mine". The Italian responded, "That's all you have to say about it?" In general, the American did not enjoy verbal conflicts over politics or anything else. The Italian actually became angry when the American refused to get involved in the discussion. He later explained to the American, "A conversation isn't fun unless it becomes heated!"

What does this example say about culture and its influence on communication? Surely, there are many Americans who do get involved in verbal conflicts over politics, just as there are some Italians who would not become involved. However, the above conversation represents types of communication patterns that are related to cultural differences.

Questions to consider:

1 How do you understand the quotation at the beginning of the Unit which says: "To know another's language and his culture is a very good way to make a fluent fool of one's self." (Winston Brembeck)?

2 What is a conversation style in your opinion?

3 Does cultural background influence styles of communication? Do styles of communication vary?

4 What can you say about the case presented to you in the Culture Capsule? Do the American and the Italian have different communication styles?

5 How does culture affect the communication style of a speaker?

6 Is it possible to understand a foreign speaker properly if you don't know much about people speaking this language?

Culture Capsule 2. Small talk

Conversations in America often begin with 'small talk'. Small talk is important because it often helps to maintain conversations (i.e., keep them going), and it can lead to interesting discussions. In an introductory meeting, maintaining a conversation is easier when two people find that they have something in common.

In America the usual topics for small talk are:

a) your visit to America:

Is this your first visit to the U.S., to Chicago?

Is this your first time in America?

Have you ever been in America before?

What brings you to America/to these parts?

How long is your visit?

How long are you planning to be here?

b) your impressions about the country:

What do you think of America?

What do you think of this country?

How do you like America?

Have you been enjoying your stay in America?

How's life in this country treating you?

Is America a lot different from Russia?

How long are you with us?
(friendly)

How's life in America different
from life in Russia?

How long is your stay?

A lot of small talk is "situational". That is, people initiate a conversation about their common situation. This is often a starting point for further conversation.

Appropriate Questions for Initial Small Talk:

- 1 How long have you lived here?
- 2 Have you always lived in (for example) New York?
- 3 What are you studying? (to a student)
- 4 What do you do? or What is your line of work?
- 5 What do you think of the weather we've been having?

Inappropriate Questions for Initial Small Talk:

- 1 Are you married?
- 2 How much money do you earn?
- 3 How much did you pay for your car?
- 4 What is your religion?
- 5 Are you a Republican or a Democrat?

Being introduced to someone, in formal and informal cases the Americans usually say:

- Hi, it's nice to meet you. My name is + name + surname.
- Hi, I don't think we've met. My name is + name + surname.
- The answer can be:
- Hi, it's nice to meet you too. My name is + name + surname.

The Americans don't use such too official phrases as:

- Allow me to introduce myself. My name is ...
- Let me introduce myself. My name is ...
- May I introduce myself? My name is ...
- (My name is) name + surname (sounds impolite).

In official cases they say:

- Mr. Jackson, I'd like to introduce you to Ms. Walsh.
- Mr. Jackson, I'd like you to meet Ms. Walsh.

The answer is:

- Hi, Mr. Jackson. It's really nice to meet you.
- Hi, Mr. Jackson. It's really a pleasure to meet you. (Delighted to meet you, Mr. Jackson).

Giving an answer to Ms. Walsh, Mr. Jackson would say:

- Pleased / Glad to meet you. He may add: Please call me Sydney.

Getting acquainted informally, you may use:

- Maura, this is my friend Ann.
- Ann, this is Maura Kelly, one of our graduate students.

The question "What's your name?" is too rough.

The usual phrases to begin conversations in America are:

- How are you? - How's life treating you?
- How are things? - How are you doing?
- How's life?

In America it's better not to use:

- How are you getting on?
- How are you holding up? (In AE it means, "How are you bearing up?")

- How are tricks?
- How are you keeping? (In AE "to keep" means, "not to spoil, to remain fresh and edible". It's used about tomatoes, but not about people)

It's better to answer with:

- Fine, thank you/thanks. And you?
- Just fine, thank you. And you?
- Can't complain, how are you doing?

To your friends and relatives, you may use more emotional answers:

- Great!/Fantastic!/ Stupendous!/Wonderful!
- So-so./Not too well.
- Awful!/Crummy! Horrible! Lousy! Rotten! Terrible!

Emotional answer needs the speaker's reaction:

- Wonderful!
- Did you finally get the job? Or
- Terrible!
- Oh, no, what's wrong?

In AE the question "What's the news?" (used in BE) means that a person has got a letter or a call. They use the phrase "What's new?"

3 Comprehension test. According to the information in the Culture Capsules complete the statement so that it corresponds

most closely to the text. Explain your choice.

1 Why is 'small talk' important for Americans?

- a) It influences communication styles.
- b) It helps to maintain conversations.
- c) It can lead to interesting discussions.

2 Choose appropriate questions for initial small talk:

- a) What is your line of work?
- b) How much money do you earn?
- c) What is your religion?
- d) What do you think of the weather we've been having?

3 Which questions are inappropriate for small talk?

- a) How old are you?
- b) Where do you live?
- c) What's your profession?
- d) Have you got a well-paid job?

4 When initiating a conversation, Americans may say ...

- a) How are you?
- b) What are you doing?
- c) What's the news?

5 If someone asks you "how do you do?" you can reply ...

- a) Fine thanks, and you?
- b) I have a headache, my husband's/wife's in a bad mood, the kids are sick and the dog bit me (i.e. you should answer honestly).
- c) That's a very personal question!

6 A friend of yours fell down a flight of stairs and broke her leg.

At the hospital you ask her ...

- a) How are you getting on?
- b) How are you holding up?
- c) How are you keeping?

7 What should you do if you don't want to answer the question you are asked?

- a) You should answer even if you don't want to.
- b) You should say directly that you don't want to answer this question.
- c) You should apologize and say that you are not inclined to answer just now, for example.
- d) You should keep silent.

4 Analyze the structure of 'Small talk': the way the speakers start the conversation, the topics to introduce and keep the discussion.

Sue: It's nice to meet you. My friend told me about you. Have you lived in Seattle Long?

Mark: No, only three months. How about you?

Sue: I moved here three years ago from California.

Mark: Oh really! I'm from California too. Where did you live in California?

Sue: In Gilroy, not far from San Jose.

Mark: This is really a coincidence. I'm from Gilroy, too! I like telling people I'm from the garlic capital of the world. Did you usually go to the summer garlic festival?

Sue: I used to go every summer. How about you?

Mark: I went to most of them. I thought the one in 1980 was great. Did you go to that one?

5 Match the following questions and answers according to their style. Note, in a couple instances, more than one answer may be possible.

1

A

How are you?
How are you doing?
How are you holding up?
What's new?
How's life?

B

Same old stuff!
Fantastic! I'm in love.
Fine, thank you and you?
So-so.
Can't complain.

A

Good morning.
Jose, I'd like you to meet Alicia.
How are you?

Abdul, this is Joe. He's from Florida.

B

Yes, I did. Thanks.
Nothing much.

Really? It must seem very cold to you here.
Nice to meet you.

Did you have a nice weekend?	It's nice to meet you, too.
What's up?	Fine, thanks.
It's nice to meet you.	Good morning.

6 In pairs, read each situation (1, 2) and circle the best answer. Explain your choice.

1 It is 9:00 Wednesday morning in your office. You are at your desk. Your boss comes in. You see her every day. Monday through Friday. You have a formal/businesslike relationship with her. What do you say?

- a) Hey, how're you doing?
- b) Good morning, Ms. Schmidt.
- c) Hi, what's up?
- d) Hello. How have you been?
- e) What have you been doing?

2 You are walking down the street and you see your old friend Jack. You have not seen him for about ten years. You were best friends in high school. What do you say?

- a) How have you been?
- b) Good morning. How have you been doing?
- c) It's nice to see you again.
- d) Jack? I can't believe it. It's wonderful to see you again!
- e) What have you been doing!

7 Jumbled text 'Getting acquainted'. Make an order of the phrases below. Comment on your choice.

- a) Oh, it's no bother, you can help me chop onions.
- b) Hi, Mrs. Desoto. It's nice to meet you.
- c) Oh, well, I don't want to be any bother.
- d) Mom, I'd like you to meet Mark. Mark, this is my mom.
- e) It's nice to meet you too... Would you like to stay for dinner?

8 Put the conversation in the correct order by numbering the sentences. Reproduce your versions.

1 – Well, Kim and I went to a great movie last night.

- Hi, Harry. How're you doing?
- Oh, Yeah? What was it?
- Not bad. What's new?
- Nothing much. What's new with you?
- Attack of the Frog Men. It was exciting. You should see it sometime.

2 - Not bad. Hey, I heard that you were going to Mexico.

- Thanks!

- Hi, Lilliana. How have you been?

- Well, have fun!

- Yeah, we're leaving next week.

- Fine, thanks and you?

3 - Mary's going to be in your department working as a computer programmer.

- Fine, Ching. How are you?

- It's nice to meet you, Mary.

- Great! Tomas, I'd like you to meet our newest employee, Mary Bradshaw.

- It's nice to meet you too, Tomas.

- Good morning, Tomas. How are you today?

4 - Pretty good, actually. How are you?

- Hey Miguel, how've you been?

- Nice to meet you, Miguel.

- Almost five years.

- Not bad. Hey, I'd like you to meet my husband, Ralph. Ralph, this is Miguel. He's an old friend from school.

- Nice to meet you too. So, how long have you been married?

9 Use the following questions to initiate "small talk".

1 How long have you lived here?

2 Have you always lived in (for example) New York?

3 Do you like living here?

4 What do you do? (or) What is your line of work?

5 What do you think of the weather we've been having?

10 Try to manage the situation when the speaker asks inappropriate questions to initiate 'small talk'. To start your answer you may use the following tips. Each tip use only once.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Start with fillers or hesitation devices | Oh, er ..., well, you see, as a matter of fact, actually ...; |
| 2 Start with an apology | I'm sorry, but ...; I'm afraid ...; |
| 3 Start by seeming to agree | You're quite right, but ...; I know it would be a good time to do it, but ...; |
| 4 End with an explanation or justification | We've already been invited somewhere else that evening; I promised my mother that I wouldn't do until I am 18 ... |

Example:

- *How old are you?*

- *Well, that's an interesting question. Isn't it strange how people always feel that they need to know the age of a person? I don't really think that age is important at all.*

- | | |
|---|---|
| a) A: Have you got a husband/wife?
B: ... | b) A: You look well. By the way, how old are you?
B: ... |
| c) A: Oh, what a pretty bag! How much does it cost?
B: ... | d) A: Your hairdo is great today! Does it cost you money?
B: ... |
| e) A: What is your religion?
B: ... | f) A: Who is your favorite politician?
B: ... |
| g) A: Are you married?
B: ... | h) A: How much money do you earn?
B: ... |

11 Study the *Culture Capsule* and pay attention to the choice of address in America.

Culture Capsule 'How to address Americans'

1 In a formal introduction, Americans often use titles until they

are told they may use first names.

2 When two people are introduced by a third person, the first and last names are usually given. For example:

A friend: Michael, I'd like you to meet my friend, Diane Rae.

Diane, I'd like you to meet Michael Lipsett.

Note: In less formal introductions, last names may be dropped.

3 In Table 2 is a list of titles used in introductions and conversations. (Except when noted, these titles are followed by a person's last name.)

Table 2 – Titles used in introductions and conversations

Title	Usage
<i>Dr. (Doctor)</i>	Used to address medical doctors (M.D.) and university professors who have earned a doctorate (Ph.D.)
<i>Prof. (Professor)</i>	Used to address a college or university teacher
<i>Teacher</i>	Used by very young children in school (Note: The word "teacher" is not usually followed by a name).
<i>Mrs.</i>	Used to address a married woman (teacher, director, etc.) <i>Mrs.</i> should be used with a surname (<i>Mrs. Johnson</i>)
<i>Miss</i>	Used to address an unmarried woman (teacher, waitress, businesswoman, etc.)
<i>Ms.</i>	Used to address an unmarried or married woman (teacher, housewife, professional, etc.). Used in written English, but not in a conversation
<i>Mr.</i>	Used to address a man (teacher, businessman, etc.). Used with a surname (<i>Mr. Johnson</i>)
<i>Madam</i>	Used to address a middle-aged woman
<i>Sir</i>	Used to address a stranger (a taxi-driver, for example)
<i>Lady</i>	Used emotionally if anyone wants to joke. It also can apply some negative sense (<i>Lady, would you please be quite!</i>)
<i>Ladies and Gentleman</i>	Used to address the audience

4 Don't use *guys, girls, kids, folks and people*. It sounds too rude!

5 The following phrases may be used if a name given in an introduction is not understood or is forgotten:

Informal

- Excuse me, I didn't catch your name.
- I'm sorry, what is your name again?
- Could you spell your first name? That will help me pronounce it better.

Formal

- May I please have your name again?
- Would you please repeat your name?

12 Study the situations and analyze the problems having to do with the choice of address in America. Discuss possible answers to the questions posed in each situation and students' similar personal experience.

Situation 1

A professor, Jane Smith, was lecturing in a University class on psychology. A foreign student from an Asian country started to ask a question to the professor saying, "Mrs. Smith, I have a question..." The professor apparently felt upset and said, "There is no Mrs. Who is teaching in this classroom!" What was the professor telling the student?

Situation 2

Laura is college student currently looking for a summer internship position. She found an interesting position as an assistant at a health science research center. She wrote a letter to the director of the center applying for the position. According to the center's brochure, the name of the director of the research center is M. S. Hess, MD. Laura addressed her letter to Mr. M. S. Hess. A few days later, she received a phone call from someone in M. S. Hess's office notifying her that she didn't get the position. In addition, she was told to be more careful the next time she addresses someone in a letter. What did Laura do wrong?

13 Role-play the situation according to the scheme below.

Situation: You are sitting in a students' café having lunch. You see a girl entering the café. She seems very familiar to you. You think that it must be your former classmate.

You come up to her and ask if you've met before

She's surprised to hear that.
She tries to remember you...

You realize that you've been mistaken... and tries to soften the situation

She says that such things happen and it's not the first time when she's reminds someone else

You introduce yourself and invite her to join you at the table

She replies on your introduction, says her name and accepts your invitation

Unit 2 Keeping the conversation ball going

“Culture hides much more than it reveals, and strangely enough what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own participants. Years of study have convinced me that the real job is not to understand foreign culture but to understand our own.” (Edward T. Hall)

1 Study the *Value Capsule* about the peculiarities of treating the interlocutor among Americans and Russians and generalize the information filling in table 3 below. Discuss the marked peculiarities. Answer the questions below. Give examples from your own experience.

Value Capsule ‘Treating the interlocutor in America and Russia’

Americans control their communication. Americans try to be polite in all situations, especially to strangers, in offices and formal situations. In general, Americans apologize much more than Russians. American communicative reaction is mostly reserved. Both positive and negative reactions can be expressed only for a short period of time.

It is considered totally impolite to interrupt a person talking to somebody else. If the theme of conversation is uninteresting for an American, he/she will nevertheless listen to the interlocutor very patiently.

Americans always pretend to be busy. One may say that practical nature prevails over all the rest human qualities. If an American offers something, you shouldn’t think that it is just a polite gesture; you may feel free to accept what he offers. In general, Americans are non inquisitive. They usually discuss their local idols – great baseball and football players, actors, writers, journalists, film stars. The priority is always given to local news rather than personal matters.

Russians always try to attract the attention of the interlocutors and show themselves as a clever and interesting person. Being in a company Russian people try to impress the audience, they speak

much about themselves, their experience, trips, prestigious friends and acquaintances.

Though being considered impolite and even insulting, interruption of the interlocutor in Russian communicative practice is witnessed very often. In Russia you may interrupt the people who are speaking, may address a question to one or both of them. It is necessary to apologize while interrupting the person, but interruption itself is quite possible.

Russians like long talks with each other. If they have limited time for conversation they usually express regret for it. Russian dialogues as well as monologues in everyday speech are rather long. Russians like to express their opinion, to speak and to be listened to.

Russians have very low tolerance to silence. There is a concept "an inconvenient pause" - a pause which happened in group talk. It is necessary to immediately fill this pause, to keep conversation going.

Table 3 - Treating the interlocutor in America and Russia

Parameters	American	Russian
<i>communicative dominance</i>		
<i>interruption of the interlocutor</i>		
<i>character of communication</i>		
<i>attitude to silence</i>		
<i>inquisitiveness</i>		

Questions to consider:

- 1 Do you often interrupt of your interlocutor with a question or any remark?
- 2 Would you help your American friend to formulate a thought?
- 3 What are the usual topics to discuss for Russians / for Americans? Are the topics different?
- 4 Do you fill in the pauses of silence while speaking with anybody?
- 5 How do Russians and Americans treat a conversation?

2 Solve the quiz 'Are you a good interlocutor?' (table 4). Tick (V) your answers to the questions and then discuss your

results with the rest of the students according to the questions below.

Table 4 – Quiz ‘Are you a good interlocutor?’

Questions	<i>Usually</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Never</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
1	2	3	4	5
1 Do you initiate discussions bringing new ideas and topics, and making suggestions?				
2 Can you easily join a conversation?				
3 Can you be a leader in the talk?				
4 Do you pick up words easily in verbal communication or in most of meanings conveyed through it you depend on non-verbal language?				
5 Do you take into account your interlocutor's status (title, position, age)?				
6 Do you ask people for opinions, information, explanations and clarifications?				
7 Do you offer opinions and information when needed (make contributions to the content)?				
8 Do you try not to lose the thread of the talk which is going on?				
9 Do you repeat ideas for your interlocutors when something has been not understood?				
10 Do you summarize information to make sure that a point has been understood?				
11 Can you generalize your ideas and lead your interlocutors to some sort of conclusion in order to draw their attention to the most important of what has been said?				
12 Do you try to be logical and laconic while talking with other people?				

Table 4, to be continued

1	2	3	4	5
13 Do you try to formulate your thoughts and ideas correctly, so that other people could easily understand you?				
14 Do you encourage people to speak by being co-operative and by accepting different points of view?				
15 Do you show interest to what your interlocutors say?				
16 Do you show respect for your interlocutor's ideas and cultural values?				
17 Do you listen attentively to what your interlocutors say without interrupting them, and always try to remember what they have already said?				
18 Do you try to "teach" your interlocutors, especially if you know that you are more experienced in something?				
19 Can you give arguments to support your thesis in order to sound more persuasive?				
20 Do you use idiomatic expressions and quotations of outstanding people in order to make your speech more eloquent and convincing?				
21 Can you compare your point of view with that of the interlocutor's eliciting the difference?				
22 Can you disprove your opponent's arguments without abusing and offending him/her?				
23 Can you politely correct your opponent and supplement his/her words in case s/he is mistaken?				
24 Can you politely ask your interlocutor to stick to the topic, if s/he "goes off the rails"?				

The end of table 4

1	2	3	4	5
25 Can you convince your opponent of the truth of your words (opinion, attitude)?				
26 Can you elicit the main points of the problem discussed and suggest some possible solutions?				
27 Do you try to take into consideration the foregoing actions of the opponent and foresee the next ones?				
28 Do you try to find out the reasons that caused his/her style of behavior?				
29 Can you switch from one communication strategy to another according to the changes in the talk?				
30 Do you use different formulas of politeness (greeting, complimenting, thanking, smiling and showing friendliness, etc.) while you are talking with other people?				
31 Can you keep down your emotions and voice, even if you are extremely excited or irritated?				
31 Can you keep down your emotions and voice, even if you are extremely excited or irritated?				
33 Do you respect cultural beliefs when you are speaking to people of different nationalities?				

How to calculate your score:

Score: 3 points for each 'Usually'

2 points for each 'Sometimes'

1 point for each 'Never'

0 points for each 'Don't know'

Total score:

Now read the appropriate comments and suggestions that correspond to your scores.

Score: 81-96 points

Congratulations! You are a born orator and a leader!

You really like to talk with people and people like to talk with you. You can easily join any kind of conversation. Moreover you can successfully communicate in various situations (both formal and informal) and use different strategies. You always choose a suitable register according to the situation you are involved in. you can easily initiate a dispute or a debate, choose an interesting topic and suggest new ideas.

You are always polite and friendly with other people. You are very attentive to what your interlocutors say. But this is mostly because of the strong wish to use your opponents' arguments against themselves. You respect other people's ideas and points of view. But sometimes you can't overcome a strong desire to "teach" other people, especially if you are sure that you are more experienced in something.

You might be a born orator! Your speech is so accurate, logical and persuasive that most of the people usually trust you and ask for your opinion on the problem.

You never lose the thread of the talk going on and can politely ask the other interlocutors to stick to the point. You never interrupt people without any strong reason for it.

You can easily communicate with the representatives of different cultures without a risk of being not understood or incorrectly interpreted. Your first rule is to respect other people's cultural and religious beliefs. You always try to "do as the Romans do" in the case of speaking to people of other nationalities.

Suggestions:

- 1 Try to be more self-critical. You are really a good interlocutor. But don't you think that you are so invulnerable?
- 2 Try to "learn" from your interlocutors rather than to "teach" them.
- 3 Try not to show your superiority, even if you are more experienced.

Score: 50-80 points

You are a good interlocutor though there is always much room for improvement!

It's a pleasure to talk with you. You are very sociable. You can speak fluently in most situations (formal or informal). You easily pick up words of the right register. You can easily initiate or join a simple conversation or a formal discussion, bringing new ideas and making suggestions. You are very polite and friendly with other people. You can be a good listener. You always try to observe etiquette norms. You almost never interrupt people without any serious reason for that. You feel relaxed in the company of English-speaking people. But sometimes you are afraid to be misunderstood, because you don't know all the sociocultural differences of English-speaking and Russian-speaking environments. Mean while you always try to respect other people's beliefs.

Score: 32-49 points

Not sure?

You are not very sociable, aren't you? People unwillingly talk with you in most cases. You rarely initiate a conversation or a discussion yourself and always have difficulties when you want to join it because of the lack of ideas and problems with vocabulary. You depend very much on non-verbal language of communication. Sometimes you can hardly define the degree of formality you are supposed to follow. That's why you seem to have serious problems with choosing the right register and words. Sometimes you forget about the norms of etiquette, use the wrong forms of address. You seem to have difficulties with moving from one topic to another, especially in the company of people who you are not familiar with. You forget to take into consideration sociocultural differences. Therefore you are often misinterpreted.

Suggestions:

You should broaden your communication strategies by:

- 1 Learning different strategies that will help you to disprove your opponent's arguments without abusing him/her;
- 2 Learning how to encourage people to speak by being cooperative and by accepting different points of view;
- 3 Learning how to find out the reasons that caused your interlocutor's style of behavior, so that your next actions have more success.

Suggestions:

1 You've got a lot of different ideas why not share them with other people?

2 Try to be a good listener. Don't interrupt your interlocutors – this can be rather offensive. Show your interest to what is being said by your partners.

3 Try to make other people like you and interested in what you are saying. Be polite and friendly to your partners.

4 Study the norms of speech etiquette. Learn how to address people of different ages, titles and positions.

5 Pay special attention to the sociocultural differences of the English and Russian-speaking environments.

Score: 0-31 points**Everything is ahead of you!**

Your score doesn't mean that you are a good interlocutor. Perhaps this is simply the first time you have thought about the way you talk to other people. To realize that is the first step in the way to become a more effective and interesting interlocutor for you.

Suggestions:

Study the sections entitled "Congratulations! You are a born orator and leader" and "You are a good interlocutor though there is always much room for improvement!" They will help you to become more aware of the ways you talk to other people and to decide what communication strategies you should improve in order to become an interesting and effective interlocutor.

Questions to consider:

1 Do you agree with the results of the quiz?

2 What are your strong and weak points?

3 Do you think the quiz may help you to improve your verbal behavior?

4 What other skills, from your point of view, should a good interlocutor have?

5 Why is it so important to become a good interlocutor?

3 Study the *Culture Capsule* about conversational styles and answer the questions below.

Culture Capsule 'The way people converse in America'

Let's look at another example of how people's communication patterns differ: the way people converse. Some foreigners have observed that when Americans hold a conversation, it seems like they are having a *Ping-Pong game*. One person has the ball and then hits it to the other side of the table. The other player hits the ball back and the game continues. If one person doesn't return the ball, then the conversation stops. Each part of the conversation follows this pattern: the greeting and the opening, the discussion of a topic, and the closing and farewell. If either person talks too much, the other may become impatient and feel that the other is monopolizing the conversation. Similarly, if one person doesn't say enough or ask enough questions to keep the conversation moving, the conversation stops. Many North Americans are impatient with culturally different conversation styles simply because the styles are unfamiliar. For example, to many North Americans, it seems that some Latin Americans monopolize conversations, or hold the ball too long. Speaking of her co-workers from several Latin American countries, one North American woman said, "I just can't seem to get a word in edgewise. They seem to take such a long time to express themselves. They give you a lot of unnecessary details." When she talked with them, she became tense, because she found it so hard to participate. Yet she also noticed that when they talked to each other, nobody seemed uncomfortable or left out.

The North American woman didn't know how to interrupt the Latin American conversations because North American ways of listening and breaking in are very different. She had been taught to listen politely until the other person had finished talking. (Once again, there are gender differences; it has been observed that men tend to interrupt women more than women interrupt men.) When the North American woman did what was "natural" or "normal" for her (i.e., listen politely without interrupting), she was not comfortable in the conversation with the Latin Americans. The result was that she became more passive in her conversations with her co-workers. The differences between the unspoken rules of conversation of each cul-

tural group interfered with their on-the-job relationship.

An example of a conversation style that contrasts with the American "Ping-Pong" conversation style is formal conversation among the Japanese, which has been compared to bowling. Each participant in a Japanese conversation waits politely for a turn and knows exactly when the time is right to speak. That is, they know their place in line. One's turn depends on status, age, and the relationship to the other person. When it is time to take a turn, the person bowls carefully. The others watch politely, and do not leave their places in line or take a turn out of order. No one else speaks until the ball has reached the bowling pins. Answers to questions are carefully thought out, rather than blurted out. In Japanese conversation, long silences are tolerated. For Americans, even two or three seconds of silence can become uncomfortable. Americans do not like the feeling of "pulling teeth" in conversations.

The American who is used to the 'Ping-Pong' style of communication is probably going to have some difficulty with someone whose conversational style is like a bowling game. According to some Japanese, Americans ask too many questions and do not give the other person enough time to formulate a careful answer. The American, however, is not doing something "wrong" or insensitive on purpose. The Japanese feels that the American is pushy and over inquisitive because of the difference in cultural conditioning. To the American, the Japanese speaker appears passive and uninterested in the conversation. The Japanese style takes too long for the average American. The Japanese person is not doing anything "wrong" and is not less interested in conversation. Each person has misjudged the other because neither is familiar with their culturally different conversational styles.

Questions to consider:

1 What can you say about the quotation at the beginning of the Unit which says: "Culture hides much more than it reveals, and strangely enough what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own participants. Years of study have convinced me that the real job is not to understand foreign culture but to understand our own". (Edward T. Hall)? What does it mean, in your point of view?

2 What is a 'Ping-Pong conversational style'?

3 Do all Americans have the same conversational style?

4 What is a 'Bowling conversational style'? Is it peculiar to Russians?

5 Why is it so important to know the conversational style of your partner?

6 Did you experience any problems speaking to foreigners because of different communication styles?

4 Read the following quotation by Kenneth Kaye. Do you agree or disagree with the author's point of view? Think what you can add to expand the information from the quotation.

"Language... doesn't exist merely for the sake of naming things. Nor does it exist for the sake of propositions about the world. It consists of interpersonal communication about shared and sharable intentions".

Kenneth Kaye

5 Study the information about silence in *Culture Capsule* and answer the questions below.

Culture Capsule 'Avoiding silence in American conversation'

The greatest part of Americans hates *silence* and considers it to be awkward. In conversation between two American speakers who are not close friends, a silence of longer than about four seconds is not allowed (which means that people become embarrassed if nothing is said after that time – they feel obliged to say something, even if it is only a remark about the weather). They try to fill in every pause in conversation.

The phrases to avoid silence are: *Uh ...; Well ...; Hmmm ...; Let me think ...; That's a difficult question, etc.*

So, silence between interactants is rude or at least embarrassing. Americans expect an immediate response.

The most popular topics of chattering in America are weather, films, books, family and social events. Conversations on these topics can be heard in America everywhere – at a party, on a bus, in the supermarket, at a sport competition.

Americans like to accompany their activity by different sounds –

students would study to the accompaniment of a player, a housewife would fill in the so-called "sound pause" by TV. Almost all Americans turn on the radio when they go to work in their cars. Very many of them listen to the books recorded on the tapes when there are going everywhere. The latter becomes more and more fashionable as you kill two birds with one stone – the tape keeps you awake and you save time for reading the book at home.

Really, the conversation in English is full of reactions because they show that (a) you are listening and interested in what your partner is saying, (b) you would like to encourage them to continue the conversation.

Study the reactions in table 5 and think of the situations in which they can be used. Intonation is important here.

Table 5 – Avoiding silence in American conversation

I'm listening/following	I'm surprised	I sympathize	I'm pleased to hear that	I find it difficult to believe
I see/know; Right/okay/ exactly/sure; Really? Is that right? And so? Uh-huh (neutral)	Really? No!/Never! It can't be! Gosh!/Wow! /Phew!/Oh!? Impossible! What?! Where?! Who?! Can you believe it?!	Oh dear! Oh no! Oh, my God! How/That's unfortunate! You must be very annoy- ed/upset! That's too bad!	Oh good! I'm ever so glad! Well done! Good for you! That is good news! Well, isn't that great/wonder- ful!	Oh, come on! Are you sure? Really? What! It can't be! Surely not! You're kidding/ joking, aren't you? Are you pulling my leg?

Questions to consider:

- 1 What can you do if someone always wants to speak? How can you avoid yourself giving monologues?
- 2 What phrases do we use to break into a conversation?
- 3 What reactions do we use when you want to encourage the

speaker / when the news is surprising or shocking / when you feel sympathy / when something is unbelievable or you are pleased to hear something?

4 What do you do if there is a pause of silence in the conversation?

5 On what occasion is it best or right to keep silent?

6 Situation 'I couldn't get a word in edgeways'. Study the one-sided conversation. In what way does this talk contradict the Ping-Pong conversational style? Turn the dialogue into a correct version.

1 A: Great party, isn't it. I like barbecues, don't you? Yes, I'm sure you do; I mean, who wouldn't enjoy outside on a beautiful summer evening like this, eh?

B: Yes ...

A: Look, I'm going to get another hot dog. I don't suppose you'd like one, though, would you, since you've already had three! It's easy to eat too much at parties like this, isn't it ...

B: ...

2 *One sided telephone conversation:*

A: Did you enjoy the barbecue last night? ... Incredibly warm, wasn't it? I didn't wear mine either. And I ate so much! ... How many hot dogs? Three?! Well, never mind. And the cheesecake was very good; I don't blame you for having second helpings. Besides, you have to enjoy yourself sometimes, don't you?

B: ...

3 *Chris and Kevin are walking home from a pizza parlor:*

Kevin: Well, Chris. How was your pizza?

Chris: Well, it was cold, but I don't mind cold pizza in the summer. I took also pepperoni but they were too greasy and the vegetables weren't fresh.

Kevin: Really?

Chris: Yeah. Besides, they didn't put enough cheese and spices as well. So, next time it's better to order spaghetti. Boys say they are delicious! How about going there tomorrow? After 5 o'clock I will

be free. I like to have a snack outside. By the way, how much tip did you leave?

Kevin: I thought you left the tip!

Chris: Uh-oh. We'd better not go back there again ...

7 In pairs, fill in a listener expressions for each sentence. Then reproduce the conversations to your group mates.

Examples:

1 A: My dog died yesterday.

B: I'm really sorry to hear that.

2 A: I got a raise at work!

B: That's great!

1 A: My wife and I just had a baby!

B: ...

2 A: I have to write an essay for my English class.

B: ...

3 A: My boss gives me too much work!

B: ...

4 A: I went to Greece for two weeks.

B: ...

5 A: I'm going to the movies tonight with my boyfriend.

B: ...

6 A: I lost my job!

B: ...

7 A: I had a great weekend.

B: ...

8 A: I was accepted by Harvard University!

B: ...

8 Put the conversation into the correct order by numbering the sentences. Then reproduce it paying attention to the reactions of the speakers to keep it going and the way the speakers avoid silence. Act it out.

- Hmmm ... well, the pool was small, but it was clean ... and it was only a five minutes walk to the ocean.

- Bye.

- So how was the weather?
- I'll do that. See you later.
- Not bad. How're you doing?
- Uh-huh, it was really cheap.
- It sounds great.
- Hey, I've got to get to class. Why don't you give me a call the next time you go?
 - Well, it was clear, really hot, and humid, but the water was nice and cold, and the surf was incredible!
 - I'm doing great. I just got back from the beach.
 - That's good. I hate it when the water is too warm. How long were you there?
 - Hey, John. How're you doing today?
 - We stayed for three days, two nights.
 - A cheap one, huh? What was it like?
 - The beach? Did you stay in a hotel?

9 To keep the conversation going you should ask questions to encourage your partner and to show that you are interested in the subject of the talk. Open questions can help you to do it. Open questions can be opinion and description questions. Study table 6.

Table 6 – Opinion and description questions

Opinion questions	Possible Answers
How was your summer?	It was busy / great / terrible / etc.
How was that?	It was nice / pretty / good / etc.
So, how was Switzerland?	It was fantastic / beautiful / etc.
How did you like Italy?	The food was incredible. / The people were very friendly.
Description Questions	Possible Answers
What was your summer like?	I worked down at the mill. / I spent two weeks in Europe.
What was it like?	It was fantastic. / I loved the architecture of the cities. ...
What's Miller Lake like nowadays?	It's really deep and has an island in the middle of it.

10 In pairs read the following situations. Write one opinion and one description question for each. Then write a possible answer for each question. Reproduce your versions.

Examples:

Situation: You meet a friend who has just returned from New York.

A: How did you like New York? (*opinion*)

B: I really liked it!

A: What was New York like? (*description*)

B: It was really big and crowded.

1 Your brother went to a concert last night.

A: ...

B: ...

A: ...

B: ...

2 You meet a friend who has returned from India.

A: ...

B: ...

A: ...

B: ...

3 Your mother and father went to a new restaurant last night.

A: ...

B: ...

A: ...

B: ...

11 In pairs take turns asking and answering the questions. When answering, use the expressions to avoid silence (table 4).

Example:

A: How did you like the movie?

B: Hmmm ... well ..., it was violent.

1 A: What was the beach like?

B:

2 A: How did you like Thailand?

B:

3 A: What did you like best in Egypt?

B:

4 A: What was Mexico like?

B:

12 When responding to questions, give a complete answer. Follow the example and note Student B's three different answers.

Example:

Poor answer	Better answer	Best answer
A: What was Japan like? B: Great!	A: What was Japan like? B: It was great. The people were very friendly.	A: What was Japan like? B: It was great! The people were very friendly. The temples and shrines in Kyoto are really beautiful.
A: Uh-huh.	A: So, it sounds like you had a good time.	A: (many possible responses)

1 A: How was your vacation?

B:

B:

B:

2 A: How do you like your classes?

B:

B:

B:

3 A: What do you think of pop music?

B:

B:

B:

4 A: Could you tell me about your country?

B:

B:

B:

13 Work in pairs. React emotionally to the remarks of your partner and ask an open question to get some details.

1 A: I'm so upset. I must be in New York this Friday, but the flight has just been canceled.

B:

2 A: I won a thousand dollars in the lottery.

B:

3 A: Just imagine. Yesterday I and my husband were returning home after a movie and suddenly we discovered that neither of us had the house key.

B:

4 A: Today I was strolling downtown and suddenly I met an old friend of mine whom I have not seen since I was in elementary school. Now he is a millionaire!

B:

5 A: It's terrible even to recall but today I lost my child at the supermarket. I rushed to the man in charge and asked him to help me to find my baby ...

B:

6 A: It's unbelievable, but yesterday I was walking home at midnight and suddenly I saw a shadow in front of me. I heard a voice telling me to stop ...

B:

14 Task 'Wrong reactions'. In pairs, react emotionally to the remark of your partner. Keep in mind that your reaction is to be opposite to the necessary one. Go on talking till someone produces something as:

Example:

- What do you mean?! It's really awful. He has no clothes and his keys are in his suitcase.

Example:

- And just imagine that he lost his luggage at the airport!
- That's great! I'm ever so glad!

15 Study the information in the *Culture Capsule* about bringing a conversation to a close and answer the questions below.

Culture Capsule 'Let's not chat'

Sometimes when you are absolutely not in the mood to have a chat you find yourself with someone who is very eager to share their views on anything with you. What can you do? In such situations people typically try to be as short and unresponsive as possible without being offensive.

To bring conversation to a close politely you can use some of these phrases:

- *Well, I suppose ... / Well, anyway ...*
- *I hope you don't mind, but ...*
- *Would you excuse me, please ...*
- *I've got to go now / I've got to be going now.*
- *I'd better be going/moving/getting on my way.*
- *I guess I ought to get back.*
- *I'm sorry, but I'm meeting someone in five minutes / I've got to make a phone call.*
- *I'd better let you go.*
- *I'd better not take up any more of your time.*
- *It's been very nice talking to you.*
- *I hope everything goes well.*

There is one more way to bring a conversation to a close as to conclude it with a proverb or a platitude.

Proverbs and platitudes, which can be used to conclude a conversation:

- 1 That's life / just the way it goes / the way of the world.
- 2 Things always work out for the best.
- 3 It'll all turn out for the best.
- 4 Makes you think, doesn't it?
- 5 You never can tell.

6 Doesn't time fly?

7 You've got to take the rough with the smooth.

8 Every cloud has the silver lining.

Questions to consider:

1 What do you do if you are not in the mood to speak to anyone?

2 How do you show that you would like to bring the conversation to a close?

3 What do you do if your partner doesn't understand your hints?

4 What is the polite way to finish the conversation?

5 Why can we use the proverbs above as the way to finish the conversation? What is their common sense?

16 Task 'Let's not chat'. In pairs, act out a situation in which the 'intruder' cannot and will not be put off by the lack of reactions or the odd blunt response, and so the dialogue becomes a series of conversation starters and short but polite refusals. Consult the cultural note.

Cultural note: The intruder can use some typical conversation starters for the given situations:

1 a) Excuse me, but is anyone sitting here?

b) Forgive me for asking, but aren't you Marjorie Pickering's son?

c) I'm sorry to trouble you, but have we met somewhere before?

2 Other questions: Have you got the time, please? / How old is the little dog? / Not many people today, are there? / Do you come here often? / Have you heard about?

3 Weather: At last some nice weather ... / Lovely day, isn't it? / etc.

4 Making a comment on something present: Those are lovely apples ... / etc.

5 Opening a complaint: The traffic in this city is simply incredible ... / The service here is getting worse and worse ... / etc.

6 Asking for a small favor: Could you please watch my suitcase for a moment?

7 Party lines: Great party, isn't it? / Hello! Are you a friend of David's? / etc.

Situations:

1 You are sitting in the cinema waiting for the movie to start. A very talkative man takes a seat close to you. He is eager to chat but you are not in the mood and want just to relax ... *Try to ignore the conversation politely.*

2 It is a Christmas Eve and you are standing in a line to pay for the presents you have just bought. You are thinking over the details of your new project. Suddenly you've got a brainwave. You try to concentrate to remember it, but the woman standing after you keeps talking with you. *Try to bring the conversation to a close politely.*

3 At the bus station someone comes to you to have a chat to kill the time. *Use answers and polite remarks that you are not interested in the subject.*

4 You are choosing fruit in the shop and an old lady annoys you with asking your opinion about fruit she should buy. *What polite way to finish the conversation would you use?*

5 You are going by bus reading a newspaper about some breaking event. A man sitting close to you keeps on grumbling and complaining about this or that. *Try to bring the conversation to a close.*

6 In twenty minutes your train leaves. A girl asks you to keep an eye on her luggage for five minutes or so. You are extremely short of time. *Express your polite refusal.*

7 At the party some annoying young man is trying to make friends with you asking some foolish questions. He irritates you but you know that he is an old acquaintance of your uncle's. *Use answers and polite remarks that you are not interested in the subject.*

17 Task 'Say good-bye!' Close the following conversations using the techniques of bringing a conversation to a close from the Culture Capsule above.

Situations:

1 You are talking to your friend, "just shooting the breeze", when you realize that you have an appointment in five minutes.

2 You are a professor and you have been talking with a student about his last test grade, which was very low. You're getting tired of talking to him and you have lots of work to do.

3 You are talking to your mother on the phone and you smell something burning on the stove.

4 You are discussing politics with a friend of your father's. You would like to talk with him further but you have to catch a bus.

5 You are talking with a very nice classmate whom you don't know very well. You find it very difficult to follow what he is saying. You don't want to hurt his feelings, but you don't want to talk any longer.

6 You are waiting for a bus at the bus station. A stranger strikes up a conversation with you. After a few minutes you don't want to talk to her any more.

7 You are a bank employee. You have just explained checking accounts to a new customer.

8 Your best friend calls. You have visitors, so you can't talk very long.

18 Task 'Can't say good-bye!' Make up a dialogue between two speakers. The one uses different proverbs and platitudes to conclude the conversation. He is short of time but he doesn't want to seem careless towards his friend's problems. The other doesn't understand the intentions of the first and keeps speaking on the problems he worries about.

19 Study the information in the *Culture Capsule* about the ways to change the subject of the conversation and use it in the exercise below.

Culture Capsule 'By the way that reminds me'

Sometimes if you want to stop a talkative neighbor or just change a subject of the talk, the following phrases will help you to do it politely:

- *Actually* (is used to correct what someone has said).
- *By the way* (is used to introduce a new topic).

- *But* (can be used to show disagreement).
- *Besides* (is used to add a reason to an argument)
- *So what?* (can mean, “Why is this important?” or “Why are you telling me this?”)
- *Anyway* (is used to end a main point or to return to a main point already discussed. It is not used to return to a new point).
- *Never mind* (is used to end a topic you don’t want to talk about anymore).
- *Forget it.* (the same sense)
- *Before I forget .../Oh, I nearly forgot! ...*
- *I just thought of something ...*
- *Oh, there is something else I wanted/meant to say .../ ask you ...*
- *This has nothing to do with what we are talking about, but*
- *I know this is changing the subject but ...*
- *That’s funny because something similar ...*

20 Situation ‘By the way, that reminds me’. In the conversation, circle the correct expression in parenthesis. Then read the conversation in pairs paying attention to the phrases to change the subject.

Ted: Hey Joan!

Joan: What’s up?

Ted: Well, there’s a big dance tonight at the Disco Palace!

John: Really? Who’s playing?

Ted: The Sparkles.

Joan: I really like that place and I love the Sparkles!

Ted: Yeah, me too. (Anyway / By the way), I was wondering if you’d like to go with me tonight.

Ted: Around 8:00.

Joan: That sounds great! (Anyway / By the way), I saw your brother Tom last night.

Joan: You don’t really like him, do you?

Ted: I don’t know. I’d like him better if he’d get a job.

Joan: (Never mind /Actually), he’s had several jobs in the last year.

Ted: Yeah, (besides / but) he always loses them.

Joan: You should try to be more understanding.

Ted: I've tried now for over 15 years.

Joan: (Never mind / Actually), we'll just get in an argument.

Ted: (Anyway / That reminds me), I'll come by about eight.

Joan: That sounds great.

Ted: Bye!

21 Put the conversation in the correct order by numbering the sentences. Read your variant. Mind the way the speakers change the subject.

Situation: Two friends meet in a convenience store:

- Oh, that reminds me, she said she wanted to visit you soon. Should I call her and give her a message from you?
- She's doing better thanks. The operation was successful.
- Fine Mona. How've you been?
- Not on me, but I'll call when I get home. (pause) Anyway, I'll be sure to give her yours.
- Not bad. Hey, how's your mother?
- Yeah, I'd better get home. It was nice seeing you.
- That would be great. (pause) Oh, never mind, I'll call her tomorrow myself. Do you have her number?
- Bye.
- Hey Luis. How're you doing?
- Actually, I saw her yesterday. She's doing very well up in Seattle.
- I'd appreciate it. (pause) Well, it's getting late.
- I'm certainly glad to hear it. (pause) Oh, by the way, are you going to see Kathy next month?
- She is? I've been meaning to write to her.

22 Task "Catch the initiative in the talk". Two students take the center of the circle. One of them starts the talk with any remark on any topic he likes. His partner is to encourage the conversation and switch him to a new topic. Consult the cultural note.

Cultural note: To change the subject in the conversation you may use:

- (Oh) by the way ...;

- That reminds me (of) ...;
- Speaking about/of ... / Talking of ...;
- Before I forget ... / Oh, I nearly forgot!
- Oh, while I remember ...;
- I just thought of something ...;
- That's funny, because something similar

23 Task 'keep the conversation ball going'. Take the cards with the topic of your talk. Your task is to maintain the conversation by interrupting the conversation politely, changing the topic, according to your card and adding some information. Use the following phrases:

1 I'm sorry to interrupt ...; Sorry to break in, but ...; If I may interrupt for a second; Can I just say/add that ...; But surely ...; If I can just make a point here.

2 Oh, by the way ...; That's reminds me (off) ...; I just thought of something ...; This has got nothing to do with what we are talking about, but ...; Incidentally, ...;

3 I see/know; Quite (so); Exactly, sure; Really? And so? Me too. ...

Topics for the cards:

Card 1 – 'New teacher of English';

Card 2 – 'Breaking news about Sew';

Card 3 – 'A real bargain at the nearest supermarket';

Card 4 – 'Yesterday talk-show on TV';

Card 5 – 'Tom and Mary have made friends';

Card 6 – 'Plans for the coming week-end'.

24 Role-play the situation 'Meeting in the street'. Use the techniques to keep the conversation ball going. Follow the instructions.

Student A: *Your name is Ted Spenser. You are from Texas. You are on a short visit to Minsk and are going to stay here only one day. You want to see as many places of interest as possible.*

1 Stop a stranger and ask him/her if he/she speaks English.

2 Explain your situation and ask him/her for advice where to go and what to see. Ask what you should start the sightseeing with.

3 Accept his/her offer to show you around the city. Thank him

and introduce yourself to your future guide.

4 Decline his/her invitation to go to the circus in the evening. You don't like circus. Suggest seeing a ballet in the Ballet and Opera theatre. It has always been your dream to visit this theatre.

5 Make a request that you drop in a book shop on your way. You'd like to buy some books about the history of Minsk.

6 Accept your companion's suggestion to start the excursion.

Student B: *You are a Minskovite. A foreign visitor needs your advice. You can speak English.*

1 When asked, advise the foreign guest what places of interest he/she should see in Minsk and what he/she should start sightseeing with. You have a sudden idea: offer to show him/her about Minsk. It's your day off and you have no plans.

2 Introduce yourself to your companion.

3 Invite him/her to go to the circus in the evening when you are through with the sightseeing.

4 Accept his/her suggestion to see a ballet in the Ballet and Opera theatre. Approve of his/her choice.

5 Accept your companion's request to call at a bookshop. Recommend some famous bookshop and suggest to start the excursion.

25 Role-play different situations in which the following people start and keep a conversation with a stranger. Don't forget to use different forms of addressing people in America.

1 You are waiting outside an interview room to be interviewed for a summer job in the USA. You are keen to make a good impression. A young lady comes along the corridor. You'd like to ask if she is Mr. Mason's secretary and make sure you're in time and will be interviewed soon.

2 You're in a dentist's waiting room. The only other patient is a little girl/boy who looks very miserable. You know the dentist is a good one and start a conversation in order to calm her/him down.

3 At your friend, Jane's birthday party you see someone you'd like to meet. Everybody is dancing, chatting and having fun.

4 In a first-class compartment in a train you think you recognize a well-know person.

26 Study the situation and make up a dialogue between a student who wishes to get an "incomplete" and a teacher. Use the words and phrases given below:

Excuse me, Can I talk to you, What can I do for you, Would it be possible, to get an incomplete, I'm sorry, I can't because ..., Yes, I can ..., However, I suggest...

Situation:

At many American Universities students who are unable to finish all of their coursework by the end of the semester will ask for an "incomplete" (abbr. "I") grade to be entered in their transcript (что-то вроде страницы из зачётки). The student must still take the final exam on time but has to a year to finish the coursework upon which the appropriate grade of "F" (fail) being entered in the transcript). The professor or instructor can refuse to give an incomplete.

27 Two students get the role-cards on the situation and problem cards according to the same situation. They are to role-play the given scenario. The rest of the group should find a sociocultural error in their dialogue and discuss the role-play afterwards.

Role-cards:

Person A: You have just moved to America for a study trip. You don't know too much about the town, public transport, health facilities, etc. You meet the neighbor in front of your house. Ask him or her questions to find out where you can find the post office, how you can buy tickets for public transport, and what kind of entertainment facilities there are in town.

Person B: You have lived in the same town for 10 years. You have found out that a foreign university student has just moved in next to you. You meet him or her in the street. Give information

about public transport, entertainment facilities, etc.

Problem cards:

Person A: Be very direct in your questions. When asking for information, avoid questions forms such as 'Could you please tell me...?' Instead use more direct ways to ask for information, such as 'Please tell me where...' You don't know 'how are you?' is a greeting. When your partner asks you this question, give a detailed account of how you really are.

Person B: You live alone, have a lot of spare time, and love speaking to people. Try to maintain the conversation as long as you can; ignore your partner's intention to leave.

РЕПОЗИТОРИЙ ГГУ ИМЕНИ Ф. СКОРИНЫ

Unit 3 Conversational strategies

1 Study the *Value Capsule* about individual freedom and self-reliance of Americans and discuss the questions below.

Value Capsule 'Individual Freedom and self-reliance of Americans'

The United States came to be associated with the concept of *individual freedom*. This is probably the most basic of all the American values. Scholars and outside observers often call this value "individualism", but many Americans use the word "freedom". Perhaps the word "freedom" is one of the most respected popular words in the United States today.

By "freedom", Americans mean the desire and the ability of all individuals to control their own destiny without outside interference from the government, a ruling noble class, the church, or any other organized authority.

There is, however, a price to be paid for this individual freedom: *self-reliance*. Americans believe that individuals must learn to rely on themselves or risk losing freedom. This means achieving both financial and emotional independence from their parents as early as possible, usually by age 18 or 21. It means that Americans believe they should take care of themselves, solve their problems, and "stand on their own two feet." Tocqueville observed the Americans' belief in self-reliance 150 years ago in the 1830s: 'They owe nothing to any man, they expect nothing from any man; they acquire the habit of always considering themselves as standing alone, and they are apt to imagine that their destiny is in their own hands.'

This strong belief in self-reliance continues today as a basic American value. In order to be in the mainstream of American life – to have power and /or respect – individuals must be seen as self-reliant to keep their freedom.

Questions to consider:

- 1 What's your attitude to such fundamental American values as *individual freedom* and *self-reliance*?
- 2 Do Russians tend to be individually-free and self-reliant? Why?

3 What are the positive and negative sides of these values?

4 The Americans' principles of life is 'Honesty is the best policy', 'Do your work yourself', 'Think for yourself'. Would an American help his group mate at the exam, for example? Would a Russian student help his group mate? Why?

5 Is it considered honest for American students to copy from their group mate's exam paper? Is it the same for Russian students? Why?

6 Do you write crib sheets for exams?

2 Analyze the cultural assimilator 'Birthday party'. Study the situation, choose the proper variant and comment on your choice. Share your views on the questions below.

Olga is a third-year student of the economics faculty. She's come to the Los-Angeles University, USA, to get the probation. She's settled at the University hostel with four American students. All of five girls lived friendly together. In three months, Olga decided to celebrate her birthday party. To buy food for the party, she had to get to the nearest supermarket by car. When she explained the reason of her trip and asked her girlfriends about the shortest way, they were very surprised that she wanted to trouble herself to make a birthday party. Olga was bewildered. She was in two minds what to do next.

What's the reason of such a reaction of her American friends? What would you advice to Olga in this case?

a) American girls treated Olga badly, as it seemed to her. They wanted to show their attitude to her by such a reaction.

b) Olga's friends had planed another party and they were going to suggest going with them instead of making her own party.

c) American friends thought that in Russia birthday parties are usually ignored. That's why they were surprised to get the invitation.

d) Her friends knew beforehand that Olga had a birthday, so they wanted to make a birthday party for her as a present. They were about to free her from worries.

Questions to consider:

1 What is the reason of misunderstanding between Olga and her American friends?

2 Is it a problem of different cultural perceptions between Russians and Americans?

3 How do the Americans treat their birthdays? Does it differ from the Russians' way of celebrating birthdays?

4 How does the case above reveal the Americans' / the Russians' mentality?

5 How would you like to celebrate your next birthday?

3 Study the *Value Capsule* about the differences in the perception of time between Russians and Americans (table 7) and answer the questions below.

Table 7 – Value Capsule 'Misunderstandings emerging from the differences in the perception of time'

American	Russian
1 Americans like to do one thing at a time.	1 Russians very often do many things at a time simultaneously.
2 One- on- one conversation. It is rude to interrupt conversing people. If somebody is speaking over the telephone and there is a signal that someone else is calling, it is rude to switch the call. Attention is exclusive, undivided.	2 Multiple conversations. You may be speaking with somebody, but other people can interfere with quite a different problem, you have to switch from one person to another. Though generally it is impolite but it happens all the time. Attention is split.
3 Americans concentrate on the job. They hate being interrupted.	3 Highly distractible. Russians also concentrate on the job, but they can be easily interrupted. Even your boss can give you a task different from the previous one knowing that you are not finished with the last one.
4 Americans take time commitments seriously. When the deadlines are fixed they should be observed. There are almost no exceptions. Everybody tries to meet the deadline.	4 Russians have deadlines, but they are very often an approximation, flexible.

The end of table 7

American	Russian
5 Time and tide wait for no man. This proverb shows the importance of time in American culture. The focus is on time.	5 'Seven people do not wait for one' is a corresponding Russian proverb where focus is on people and not on time.
6 Americans religiously adhere to plans; they always try not to change anything in their plans. Things are planned well in advance, changes are made but preferably the earlier the better (though the last minute changes do occur too)	6 Plans are more flexible. There is more spontaneity, changes occur too often.
7 Americans seldom borrow or lend money from each other.	7 Russians borrow and lend money from each other often and easily. Most of the time the money is lent without any interest. It is better to lose money than a friend.
8 Americans are accustomed to short-term relationships.	8 Russians are accustomed to long-term relationships.
9 'First come first served' basis works in different settings. Cutting in a line is very rude.	9 Cutting in a line is rude but happens very often. A person can cut a line thinking that it will take him or her less time to buy the things he or she wants.
10 Americans are punctual. Being late is rude. Having to wait is an insult, sometimes used deliberately.	10 Being late is not a great 'sin', it is forgivable. Having to wait is so natural that a person should be prepared to take, say, a book to read while waiting. In passing, Russians hate to wait, but accept it as an insurmountable evil.

Questions to consider:

- 1 What's the key difference in the perception of time between Americans and Russians?
- 2 What does it mean 'one-on-one conversation'? How does this

communicative peculiarity characterize Americans' mentality?

3 How does it characterize Americans that they seldom borrow or lend money?

4 How do you understand that Russians are accustomed to long-term relationships? Give examples.

5 How do Americans react if a person is late?

4 Work in small groups. Consider each of the following social situations. For each situation answer the questions: Do you think that behavior is appropriate/polite in the U.S.? If certain behavior seems inappropriate/impolite, what social rule has been broken? Is the behavior appropriate/polite in your culture? If it seems inappropriate/impolite, what social rule has been broken?

Situation 1. Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence, an American couple, have invited several international students to their home for dinner. When the students accept the invitation, Mrs. Lawrence tells them to come around 6:00. The students arrive at 7:30.

Discussion. What do you think about the students' behavior?

Situation 2. Maria's colleague at work has invited several people from the office to lunch at her home on Saturday afternoon. Ten minutes before it's time for Maria to leave, two of her good friends drop by house unexpectedly. Maria has not seen them in some time, so they spend twenty minutes talking. Maria then says, "Why don't you come with me to lunch?" Her friends accept and go with Maria to her colleague's home for lunch.

Discuss: What do you think about Maria's behavior and the behavior of her friends?

Situation 3. Ms. Flynn, a university professor, has invited her students to her house to celebrate the end of the semester. She arranges to have the dinner on a night when everyone is free. Ms. Flynn is very pleased that all eighteen students say that they will be able to come. Five students, however, do not show up for the dinner. The next day in class, they say they couldn't come because they were busy.

Discuss: What do you think about the students' behavior?

Situation 4. On Monday, Mike Barfor invited several colleagues to his house for dinner on Saturday night. At the time he invited everyone, one colleague, Ed Galloway, said he wasn't sure whether he could come. On Thursday Mike talks to Ed again. Ed says he still isn't to sure, but that he will try to come dinner on Saturday.

Discuss: What do you think about Ed's behavior?

Situation 5. Sami has planed to meet a classmate in front of the library at 2:00. On the way to the library, however, Sami runs into some friends. He hasn't seen them for several weeks, so they have a lot of news to discuss. Sami arrives at the library at 2:30.

Discuss: What do you think about Sami's behavior?

5 Study the situation 'Always late!' and discuss it. The first group of students stands for the position 'Everyone is different', while the second group is for 'People who are late are rude and lazy'. In the end of the discussion the groups should give advice to Duksoo and prove it with their arguments.

Situation 'Always late': Duksoo is a Korean American. He's talking with his father about his fiancée. But his father thinks there is a problem. What is the problem?

Father: We've been waiting almost half an hour now. Where's Jinhee?

Duksoo: I don't know. I guess she's late again.

Father: You mean this has happened before?

Duksoo: Yeah. All the time.

Father: Really? And this is the woman you're engaged to, and planning to marry?

Duksoo: Yes, of course! She's beautiful, she's kind, she's really a wonderful person, Dad. And I know she'll be a great mother. So what if she runs late sometimes? It's really not that big a deal.

Father: Okay, but being late is a sign of disrespect. It shows a lack of respect for other people, for commitments. It's a sign of a bigger problem.

Duksoo: No, it's nothing like that. Belive me. She's not disrespectful, she's just, Father: Disorganized? Well, let me make

sure I understand. She's really this late all the time?

Duksoo: Yes. To tell the truth, sometimes it's even worse. Like yesterday, we had an appointment at 5 o'clock to talk with the manager of the Prince Hotel.

Father: Where the wedding is going to be? That's a very important meeting.

Duksoo: I know. So I arrived on time, at 5. But Jinhee didn't come until almost 6. Actually, it was really embarrassing. But, Dad, she didn't mean it. She said that...

Father: An hour late. I had no idea it was that bad. That is rude. That's very selfish. Very disrespectful. Have you talked to her about it?

Duksoo: Of course I have. Over and over. But if I bring it up too often she gets angry, and tells me to relax.

Father: You're trying to help her with her problem, and she gets angry at you. That's even more disrespectful. It's obvious that the problem is deeper than just being late. If you marry her, you're going to have a lot of trouble.

Duksoo: Ahh... .

6 Answer the following questions to stimulate cross-cultural discussion. First, give an answer that describes a likely response in your country. On the multiple-choice questions, try to guess what an American would do. Try to compare Russian and American behavior in the given situations concerning their mentality. More than one answer may be correct.

1 If you were invited to another family's house for dinner, how much later than the scheduled time would you arrive?

In your country:

In the United States:

- a) Fifteen minutes later;
- b) Thirty minutes later;
- c) One hour later;
- d) Two or more hours later.

2 How long does a party at which dinner is served usually last?

In your country:

In the United States:

- a) One or two hours;
- b) Three to two hours;

- c) Three to four hours;
- d) Five to six hours;
- e) Seven to eight hours.

3 If you were having a party for the students in your class, how many days in advance would you invite them?

In your country:

In the United States:

- a) The day of the party;
- b) One day in advance;
- c) Several days in advance;
- d) 3 or 4 weeks in advance.

4 How would a host indicate to a guest that it was time to leave?

In your country:

In the United States:

- a) The host would start yawning;
- b) The host would announce, "It's time to leave.";
- c) The host would start cleaning up;
- d) The host wouldn't say anything, so I would leave at a time I thought was reasonable.

5 At a party or other social occasion, how would you indicate that it was time for you to leave someone's home?

In your country:

In the United States:

- a) I would wait until the host said something;
- b) I would say, "I'm sorry, I have to leave now";
- c) I would say, "It's getting late, and I'd better be going";
- d) I would say, I would make up an excuse (e.g., I have to get up early tomorrow) and thank the host.

7 Study the information in the *Culture Capsule* about the use of formal and informal styles in American English. Answer the questions below.

Culture Capsule 'To be formal or informal?'

Americans are very democratic in communication. Douglas Stevenson in his book "American life and Institutions" explains American informality in communication as a consequence of the historical evolution of the country: "Thrown together in a new world,

most immigrants watched the familiar societal distinctions of the old world become blurred. The Revolution had abolished titles of nobility, and state laws did away with the traditional passing on of wealth and land from father to eldest son. As a result, there was never a hereditary aristocracy in the U.S. ... Immigration, the traditional class barriers which elsewhere remained socially effective much longer. As a result, Americans have always felt less constrained and more informal in their social and professional lives". (Stevenson D.K. American Life and Institutions. Washington, D.C., 1987)

The habit of informality, the ease with which Americans speak to people they've casually met, as well as the habit of Americans of roughly the same age group and social status to use first names in communication surprises foreigners a lot. But it should be noted that the latter doesn't symbolize the same degree of intimacy in communication as using the first names and pronouns of the second person singular in Russian.

In English, as in other languages, the types of vocabulary, structure, and tone used in conversation vary with the situation. In each of the following examples, you may compare the ways that a request may be made, and look at the vocabulary used and the length of the sentences:

- I'm sorry to trouble you, but could you please tell me where the library is? (formal)
- Would you be so kind as to tell me where the library is? (formal)
- Where is the library, please? (semiformal)
- Where's the library? (informal)

Typical differences of formal speech (FS) and informal speech (IFS):

1 IFS contains a more limited and basic vocabulary than FS; extensive use in IFS of phrasal verbs, which are often substituted in FS by less common verbs, e.g., *put off*–*postpone*, *do up*–*redecorate*; tendency in FS to use more Latin and Greek-based words and not their more common counterparts, e.g., *educate*–*teach*, *comprehend*–*understand*.

2 General tendency in IFS to be imprecise and use less specific

vocabulary; more frequent use of 'all-purpose words', e.g., *thing, place, guy, do, be, have, fine, bad, good*; frequent use of words like *whatsisname, what-do-you-call-it, you-know-what-I-mean, doo-da*; frequent use of 'fillers' and 'hesitation devices', e.g., *well, you know*, etc.

3 Tendency in IFS to exaggerate and use adjectives like *fantastic, great, super, smashing, terrible, awful, horrible*, etc.

4 Use of slang, swear words and colloquial expressions in IFS; fewer words and topics are taboo in IFS than in FS.

5 Most language functions have different set formulae in IFS and FS, e.g., IFS: *'Can you open the window, please?'* FS: *'Would you be so kind as to open the window, please?'*

6 Politeness formulae are less emphasized and shorter in IFS than in FS, e.g., *'Thanks'* instead of *'Thank you very much'*; FS in general tends to be more polite than IFS.

7 In IFS people are typically addressed by their first names or nicknames, in FS by their surname preceded by some title, e.g., *Professor, Dr, President, Mrs*, etc.

8 IFS contains simpler grammar than FS: complicated grammatical structures and long, complex sentences are avoided.

9 IFS contains many ungrammatical forms, which are often the result of reducing sentences, e.g., by omitting the subject, *'Must be off'*, *'Sounds great'*, the auxiliary verb, *'Seen Joe?', 'You know what?'* or the verb 'to be', *'Lovely day', 'Good idea'*.

10 IFS is generally shorter, more concise and direct than FS.

11 IFS typically contains more personal information than FS, e.g., IFS: *'I'm going to the doctor's about my ear problem'*, FS: *'I have a doctor's appointment'*.

Questions to consider:

- 1 Do Americans tend to be formal or informal? Why?
- 2 What does American informality mean?
- 3 Do Russians tend to be formal or informal? Why? Give examples.
- 4 Comment on the typical differences of the formal and informal style.

8 Task 'Formal or informal'. According to the information in the Culture Capsule above, react properly to the following situations. Then analyze your reactions and answer the questions: How would you respond in your native language? How formal and informal would you be? How direct or indirect would you be? What words indicate formality and informality in your language?

1 You need some money and are considering asking either some relatives or a friend for a loan.

- How would you ask your relatives?
-
- How would you ask your friend?
-

2 You have just read an excellent article written by a student you know and a professor whom you don't know very well. You would like to compliment both of them.

- What would you say to the student?
-
- What would you say to the professor?
-

3 There are discipline problems in one of your classes. Students are talking all the time, and can't hear the teacher to concentrate on the subject. You feel you must say something about the situation to your teacher. You also want to speak to the talkative students.

- What would you say after class to your teacher?
- ...
- What would you say to the other students?

9 Use the scheme of the dialogue and reproduce it in two

styles – (highly) informal, formal. Follow the example.

Highly informal

Paul: Hi, Vic! Coming down the pub?

Victor: Thanks, sounds great, but friends are coming round for dinner tonight.

Very formal

Paul: Good evening, Mr. Roe. Would you care to join us for a drink at the 'Red Lion'?

Victor: Thank you, that's most kind of you, but my wife and I are expecting dinner guests shortly.

Paul: Hello ... drink ... come ...?

Victor: ... love ... but ... dinner

10 Study the information in the *Culture Capsule* about American politeness strategies and answer the questions below.

Culture Capsule 'Politeness/impoliteness'

Americans are traditionally very polite to strangers. They are usually ready to answer questions addressed to them and offer strangers their help. At the same time it is not usual to do something for the stranger if not being asked for. Americans smile is an obligatory component of politeness to strangers in every situation.

Americans listen attentively. It is customary to smile when listening to your interlocutor – it is considered to be a signal of politeness.

American politeness excludes many topics of communication, which might cause conflict or disagreement. It is polite not to ask many questions. Nevertheless it is not considered impolite to ask one-word questions of the type: "What?"; "Who?"

It is polite to react verbally to what is said by the partner – absence of verbal reaction is considered as a sign of embarrassment or hostility.

An important sign of politeness on the part of a guest is to send a "bread and butter" letter to the host after the visit.

It may be said that Russian politeness is more formal and is based mainly on polite words, which should be said in proper

situations. American politeness is rather informal and allows on many occasions a democratic way of speech and conduct. Being polite for Americans is first of all being friendly to the communicative partner.

American politeness is also based on privacy: being polite means not only being friendly but also presupposes noninterference with others person's business.

American politeness strategies with examples:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 If you impose, i.e., bother the hearer or invade his/her privacy | <i>I'm terribly sorry to disturb you at a time like this, but ...</i> |
| apologise | |
| indicate reluctance | <i>I hate to bother you, but ...</i> |
| give a very strong reason | <i>There's simply no-one else I could ask ...</i> |
| make the imposition seem less than it is | <i>Could t make a very quick phone call please? I won't be a second.</i> |
| 2 If you make requests, give options for the other person to refuse without sounding rude | <i>It would be really nice if you could, but don't worry if you don't have time ...</i> |
| 3 Ask for something in an unhopeful way so that refusal simply confirms your pessimism | <i>I don't suppose you 'd have time to check these over ... ?</i> |
| 4 Be indirect, especially when giving negative responses | <i>Well you're right in a way, but it's not quite as simple as that.</i> |
| 5 In negative answers emphasize any positive element you can find | <i>Well, you've got the general idea, and this bit is really good, but I'm afraid ...</i> |

- 6 Notice and attend to the hearer's interests, wants and needs *Thanks for bringing that for me. By the way, is that a new dress?*
- 7 Exaggerate interest, approval or sympathy with the hearer *Oh no! It must have been awful! Poor you standing there ...*
- 8 Make the hearer feel good by saying what he/she would like to hear (even if you don't agree) *Jeanie! I can't believe it! You haven't changed at all in the last thirty years!*
- giving compliments and praise *The reason I asked you is because you're so good at organizing things ...*
- 9 And finally, smile and nod as much as you reasonably can!

Questions to consider:

- 1 One proverb says: 'Politeness costs little, but yields much.' Do you agree with it? Try to prove your point of view giving your own examples.
- 2 Do you think politeness has got a nationality? What is it if so?
- 3 Is there any general code for polite behavior? What is it?
- 4 Can we regard seven Bible's commandments as a kind of "Code of Politeness"?
- 5 What is the peculiar thing of the Americans' politeness?
- 6 Are Russians and Americans polite in the same way?
- 7 What does it mean 'to be polite' in America?
- 8 Give some useful politeness strategies with examples. Which of them do you use?

11 Change the dialogue to very polite. Emphasize respect to your American partner.

Example:

– Could I make a call? into – Could I make a very quick phone call please? I won't be a second.

1 – Would you check this over? into ...;

2 – Julie, could I borrow your tape recorder, please? into ...;

4 – Mark, help me with the computer, please. into ...;

5 – Professor Smith, may I show you my article? into ...

12 Change the dialogue to the less polite and more direct.

A. I'm sorry to bother you, Frank, but do you think you could find time to type this for me please? I'd be very grateful.

B: Of course, David. No problem at all.

13 Task 'You can't say that!' Change the following impolite and stylistically incorrect phrases to polite ones.

Shop assistant: What do you want?

Newspaper headline: These two people have won about 10,000\$ on the football pools.

Employee to boss: You don't understand anything and you're totally wrong.

Notice in hotel: In the unlikely event of a fire breaking out, it's a good idea to close the window and then see if you can find the fire exit.

Drowning man: Excuse me, sorry to trouble you, but do you think you could throw me one of those rather pretty lifebelts which are just behind you?

Interviewer to candidate: OK, that's all. See you later. Be good!

One friend to another: Er ...I hope you don't mind me saying this, but I've been admiring your new Jumper. Would you mind telling me where you purchased it?

14 React politely to the following situations.

1 You don't hear someone's name when you are introduced to him or her.

2 You have to refuse an invitation to dinner with an acquaintance.

- 3 You are offered food, which you hate.
- 4 You want to end a conversation in a diplomatic way.
- 5 You have to greet a visitor.
- 6 You have to introduce two people to each other at work.
- 7 You have to introduce two people to each other at a party.
- 8 You have to propose a toast.
- 9 Your colleague's been made redundant.
- 10 You arrive half an hour late

15 Study the *Culture Capsule* about excuses and apologies in American English and answer the questions below.

Culture Capsule 'Excuses and apologies'

1 If you are late for the class, take your seat quietly without saying anything. In the U.S., it is rude to interrupt the class to apologize when you first enter. Wait until after the class to speak to the instructor.

2 Apologies are most often accompanied by an explanation of how the situation happened.

3 Even if it is not your fault (somebody dropped your umbrella), it is better to apologize.

4 To apologize in America you may use:

- a) I'm sorry; I really didn't mean to hurt you;
- b) It's my fault; How stupid of me!
- c) I'll will pay for it; Let me buy you a drink;
- d) It won't happen again;
- e) There was a traffic jam; My watch had stopped; I was suddenly called to a meeting.

Questions to consider:

1 Do you think Americans apologize too much? How does it characterize Americans' mentality?

2 Do you feel that Americans are sincere when they make (and accept) apologies?

3 In Belarus/Russia, do you apologize much? Are your apologies short or long? Are apologies ever not accepted? If so, under what circumstances?

16 Fill in the table 8 with different forms of excuses and apologies in the following situations.

Table 8 – Excuses and apologies

Situation	Your reaction
1 If you didn't hear properly the name of your partner	
2 If you want to interrupt your partner	
3 If somebody dropped something passing it to you	
4 If you stepped somebody's feet	
5 If you are late because you were too busy with something urgent	
6 If you are waiting for the guests, but your best dish was spoiled	
7 On more serious occasions	

17 Apologize in the following situations.

- 1 You are in class, and suddenly you don't feel well.
- 2 Apologize to your brother for yelling at him because he lost several of your tapes.
- 3 You are at a friend's house for dinner. You have to leave early to study for a test the next day.
- 4 You had an appointment with your advisor, Professor Johnson, at 10:30. You didn't get there until 10:50.
- 5 Your neighbor asks you to help him move a couch. You have to say no because you have a bad back. Apologize and explain.
- 6 You told Fred you would come over to study with him last night and you forgot. He sees you and asks why you didn't come.
- 7 You borrowed an expensive pen from a classmate and then lost it.

18 Make up dialogues for the following situations and act them out.

1 Mindy and Nancy made plans to meet at a party last night, but Mindy forgot to call Nancy to tell her where it was. She apologizes the next day.

2 Randy asks Dr. Lewis, his chemistry professor, if he can turn in his lab report late. He apologizes for the inconvenience to Dr.

Lewis.

3 Toshi and Sam meet in the hall of their apartment after summer vacation. They are both graduate students in the computer science department, and they know each other fairly well. Sam sent Toshi several postcards but didn't receive any in return. Toshi apologizes for this.

19 Study the information in the *Culture Capsule* about Americans' straightforwardness in communication and answer the questions below.

***Culture Capsule* 'Directness/Indirectness'**

Cultural beliefs differ as to whether directness or indirectness is considered positive. In the mainstream American culture, the ideal form of communication includes being direct rather than indirect. ("Ideal" here means that the culture values this style, although not everyone speaks directly.) There are several expressions in English that emphasize the importance of being direct: "Get to the point! Don't beat around the bush! Let's get down to business!" These sayings all indicate the importance of dealing directly with issues rather than avoiding them. One way to determine whether a culture favors a direct or indirect style in communication is to find out how the people in that culture express disagreement or how they say, "No". In Japan, there are at least fifteen ways of saying, "No", without actually saying the word. Similarly, in Japan, it would be considered rude to say directly, "I disagree with you", or "You're wrong".

Many Americans believe that "honesty is the best policy", and their communication style reflects this. Honesty and directness in communication are strongly related. It is not a surprise, then, to find out that cultural groups misjudge each other based on different beliefs about directness and honesty in communication. It should be noticed that giving negative responses Americans prefer to do it politely and tactfully.

To say 'No' Americans use the following tips:

- 1 Be indirect, especially when giving negative responses;
- 2 Make your excuses as tactful and truthful as possible:

Untactful: 'The manager asked me to come in to talk about my

project on Wednesday, and I completely forgot we've decided on a lunch meeting that day.'

Tactful: 'Jim, the company set up a project meeting on Wednesday, and that's the day we were going to meet for lunch.'

3 Acknowledge inconvenience briefly. Suggest alternatives swiftly.

To fill up time for thinking your answer over, you may:

a) Start with fillers or hesitation devices – 'Oh, er ..., well, you see, as a matter of fact, actually ...'

b) Start with an apology – 'I'm sorry but ..., I'm afraid I can't ...'

c) Start by seeming to agree – 'I know it would be a good time to do it, but...'

d) End with an explanation or justification – 'We've already been invited somewhere else that evening; I promised my mother that I wouldn't do that until I am 18 ...'

4 To say 'No' Americans use:

Mind/view-phrases To my mind; in my opinion/view; from my point of view etc.

As-phrases As far as I know; as far as I concerned; as I see it; as for me etc.

If-phrases Forgive me if I wrong; if I'm not mistaken; if you ask me etc.

Questions to consider:

1 What does the Americans' directness mean?

2 Are Russians direct in their conversational style?

3 How would you say 'No' being in America?

4 Are Russians direct or indirect in saying 'No'?

5 Do you often say 'No' to your parents, group mates, colleagues, friends?

20 Quiz 'How honest are you?' This provocative quiz may provide some surprises. Answer each question candidly as possible. (Assume in every case that you would be caught in any wrongdoings; being honest for fear of retribution doesn't count.) Following the test are instructions for scoring. Discuss the results.

1 You find a wallet containing nearly \$1,000, plus indification. Do you keep the cash?

No (); Maybe (); Yes ()

2 You want to add to your house, but a building inspector says the structure will violate a zoning ordinance. He later hints, however, that for \$100 he will okay the construction anyway. Do you give him the money?

No (); Maybe (); Yes ()

3 You sell your house to a woman who, for reasons of her own, pays you in cash. By reporting only part of this payment to the IRS, and putting the rest in a bank vault, you can save thousands. Do you?

No (); Maybe (); Yes ()

4 A catalog store ships you a \$500 television, but bills you only for a \$25 TV-table. Do you quietly send a check for a smaller sum?

No (); Maybe (); Yes ()

5 Checking in at a fine hotel, you find a thick, new bathmat in exactly the color you need. Before you leave, you could hide it in your suitcase. Do you?

No (); Maybe (); Yes ()

6 You have dinner with a colleague in an expensive restaurant. Paying the bill, she hands you the receipt and says, "Tell your company you took me to dinner – make yourself fifty bucks". Do you?

No (); Maybe (); Yes ()

7 In the ladies' room of a hotel's restaurant, you take off your wedding band, and then forget to put it back on. By the time you return to the ladies' room for a ring, it's gone. Your insurance doesn't cover this kind of loss, but if you claim the ring was stolen from your hotel room, you could be reimbursed. Do you lie to your insurance company?

No (); Maybe (); Yes ()

8 Late for an evening engagement, you speed through a stop sign and dent an outcoming car. This accident could cost you your license, so to make the judge more lenient, you propose to tell him that, though you were driving carefully, you were blinded by the other vehicle's oncoming lights. Do you tell this story to the judge, and lie under oath?

No (); Maybe (); Yes ()

9 Your car is for sale, and someone agrees to pay the price you name – he gives you a deposit and the two of you shake hands. Later on, another customer offers you \$200 more. She urges you to tell the first customer you've changed your mind and send him back his deposit. Do you?

No (); Maybe (); Yes ()

Scoring: Give yourself two points for each No, one point for each May be and no points for each Yes. Then add up and see how your honesty rates:

18: You've a straight arrow, perfect. 12-17: Your honesty is laudable. 7-11: Your honesty is rather selective, or – depending on how you look at it – shaky. 1 to 6: You're a self – seeker with a few leftover qualms. 0: You look out only for Number One; you're a cheat.

21 Group work 'How to be honest?' You live in an imaginary society where at the end of the year a special board evaluates people's honesty. The members of the group are Americans and Russians who are to evaluate the following people on a 1-10 scale, 1 point being given to a perfectly honest people, 10 to somebody who has committed a very serious offence. Unfortunately, no additional information is available. Russians and Americans are to comment their choice according to their national perceptions. Work in groups of 4-5. The results arrived at by the various groups should be compared and followed by a general discussion on the topic "Does Russian and American honesty differ?"

For the 'Russian' group:

1 A student studying for a very important examination tears out a few pages from a library book. He needs them badly and the book is rarely used by others.

2 Another student studying for a very important examination marks pages of a library book with a pen.

3 A journalist needs a specialized atlas for his work. Such atlases are not available in shops, so he borrows one from a library, says he has lost it and pays for it.

4 A young woman avoids paying her bus fare. She thinks the bus service is bad.

5 A young man buys a cheap ticket to the cinema and sits in a more expensive seat, since one is available.

6 A research worker wants to get a scholarship to France. All the candidates must take an examination in French. He is afraid he will not pass it, so a friend who speaks very good French takes the examination for him.

7 A worker at a shampoo factory regularly smuggles out shampoo for himself and his family.

8 New lamps have been brought for a hotel. A man who works in the hotel changes his own old lamp for a new one which he takes home.

9 An unknown artist imitates the style of a famous painter and in this way sells his pictures to private collectors.

10 An academic publishes falsified results of an experiment.

For the 'American' group:

1 A well-educated engineer works as an unskilled laborer. (he earns more money this way).

2 A shop assistant needs money desperately. He takes it from the shop and, unnoticed, returns it next day.

3 A man wants time off work to redecorate his flat, so he goes to a doctor and asks for a sickness certificate saying he is ill. He is given one.

4 An academic asks a colleague to read his manuscript. He is then killed in a car crash. The colleague publishes the manuscript as his own.

5 Two academics work on a manuscript. Then one of them is killed in a car crash. The other publishes the manuscript as his own.

6 A coach driver on a long-distance coach is paid a fare by a passenger who does not insist on getting a ticket. The driver puts the money in his pocket.

7 A man sends a unjustified anonymous letter, as a result of which a good specialist loses his job.

8 A nurse takes a packet of cotton-wool from the hospital where she works.

9 A nurse takes a packet of cotton-wool from a self-service shop.

10 A well-off family decides to send their eighty-year-old grandmother to an old people's home.

22 How would you say 'No' in the following situations? Make up short dialogues.

- Your neighbor asks you to fix something in his bathroom, but you are really short of time. You would say...;

- Your friend asks you to help him to move out, but you've got a splitting headache;

- Your friend asks you to let him live with you for some time, but your parents are against. You would say...;

- You're waiting for your fiancé under a heavy rain. A young boy is also waiting for somebody and asks you to share your umbrella with him. But your fiancé is very jealous. You would say...

23 Task 'How to say 'no'. Study the Brad's problem. Discuss it. What's the reason of his problem? Is it good for a person if he can't say 'No'? What advice would you give to him? Role-play the situation in which Brad can say "No" tactfully. Mind the tips to say 'No' in the Culture Capsule.

Situation 'Brad's problem':

'I have a problem. Actually, I'm not sure what my problem is. But whatever it is, I need help. It seems like I'm always doing favors for people, and I never have time for myself. I mean, I like people, and I want them to like me, but it's getting to be too much. You see, like this week, I'm taking care of Rex. It's a dog that belongs to a woman in my office. How did I end up taking care of this dog? I don't even like dogs. Sheila asked me to help with her dog and I said: 'Oh, no problem'. Why did I say that? I just couldn't say 'no'. I always seem to get into this kind of situation. Tell me, please, how to say 'no'?

24 Role-play 'The truth is hard to tell'. Sometimes the truth is difficult to tell and sounds better if embellished. Pick one of the following situations and build up a short scene, trying to make the truth sound less unpleasant than it is. You will need a few minutes to decide on your strategy: hedging, rapidly changing

the subject, presenting other advantages, making promises and so on. The person on the receiving end will also need to decide on his or her attitude. The useful language below will help you to do it successfully:

Apologizing, hedging:

Look at the language used in this one-sided telephone conversation.

- Hello, Mary, this is Dick. Look, you know that weekend we planned in Venice? Well, um, you see, it's like this, I'm afraid I can't make it.

- ...

- No, really, I'm terribly sorry but I can't come after all.

- ...

- I'm frightfully sorry, honestly, but something has come up at work and the boss is putting the pressure on

- ...

- Anyway, we weren't absolutely set on going this weekend, were we? And in any case I'm a bit broke at the moment. Besides, it will be so much warmer if we go in the spring.

- ...

- And by the way, the boss is promising a rise in salary, a kind of promotion or something, if I get a few new contracts.

- ...

- I promise I'll make it up to you, I really will.

Situations:

1 A student announces his or her failure of exams for the second time running to a not-so-understanding parent.

2 A husband or wife returns home late from work for the third time in a week to be greeted by a suspicious spouse.

3 You had agreed to go on holiday with a friend. At the last minute you decide not to go. You break the news to your friend, knowing that you have probably ruined his or her holiday.

4 You have promised to pay back some money you borrowed

from a friend by a certain date. You know he or she needs the money but you cannot honor your promise.

25 Role-play the situation “The truth is hard to tell”. Use useful language from the task above.

Situation “The truth is hard to tell”:

Imagine that you are very friendly with your neighbors, where the father in the family is a colleague of yours at work. They regularly invite you to meals, and you spend a lot of time at their house. Now, a most delicate problem has arisen at work. You have discovered, in your position as an accountant, that the father from next door has stolen money from the organization. You confronted him with your evidence, and he broke down and wept. He said he needed the money for an operation his youngest daughter just underwent and that he planned to put it all back over the next few months. He begs you to give him a chance and not tell anyone what you have discovered. He reminds you of all he and his family have done for you and asks for your trust. “Friends have to help each other in situation like this”, he says. For your part, you know that if an audit is ever done of the organization books, the missing funds will be discovered, and your own competence and credibility may be questioned.

Unit 4 Tough situations and irritating moments

1 Study the *Value Capsule* (table 9) about the misunderstandings emerging from the differences in the key American and Russian values and answer the questions below.

Table 9 – Value Capsule ‘Misunderstandings emerging from the differences in values’

American Values	Russian Values
<p>1 Personal control over the environment: Americans believe that an individual can control nature, their own future. If, for example something is out of order Americans will report and are greatly surprised why the Russians let it go as it is.</p>	<p>1 Most individuals are pessimistic about their personal control of the environment and future. But the reason is not only fatalism of the Russian character but also the way the state system works. At least you will have to waste so much time and effort that it is better to surrender; to be patient, things will be fixed up somehow. Though every Russian feels inconvenienced and will complain to his or her friends.</p>
<p>2 Achievement is a must in American society. Achievement and success are measured; if you have accomplished something in your life you have to have material wealth. The success ethic presupposes hard work. Losers and old-aged are less respected. Winners are admired.</p>	<p>2 Though achievement is indeed very important, connections and other factors are often taken into consideration when a person is promoted. “The success ethic [in the American sense]... is alien to Russians who believe that it may be morally wrong to get ahead, particularly at the expense of others”. Achievement is measured morally. Russians usually sympathize with losers, homeless. Old-aged are more respected than in the US.</p>
<p>3 Materialism as a value is connected with achievement. Material wealth is important and is seen by Americans not only as an evidence of their ability. Often Americans buy things “to keep up with the Joneses”.</p>	<p>3 Materialism has negative connotations and until recently materialism was not respected. Rich soul was opposed to material wealth.</p>

Table 9, to be continued

American Values	Russian Values
<p>4 Practicality as a value is embodied in realistic approach concerning his or her future. For example at decision making less emphasis is laid on emotional things. Practical considerations are usually most important.</p>	<p>4 Practicality has negative connotations for many Russians. More emphasis is laid on subjective, emotional side. Idealistic goals can be pursued regardless of their feasibility.</p>
<p>5 Thriftiness is a value. Americans economize on everything, including time. The proverbs "A penny saved is a penny earned" and "Waste not; want not" embody thriftiness and frugality.</p>	<p>5 Russian people do not value thriftiness. Moreover it is usually regarded as greed.</p>
<p>6 Activity is a great value. "Indeed, we are hyperactive; to the degree that one sociologist has described the American as an "Electric Englishman". Americans are doers.</p>	<p>6 Russians are sooner dreamers than doers. A person may dream a lot but does nothing to put his dream into practice.</p>
<p>7 Happiness is a great value. It is necessary to be happy, it is a must in the U.S. If you don't show that you are happy you will hear, "Are you O.K.?"</p>	<p>7 Happiness is just one of the feelings or states a person can experience. Though each individual wants to be happy you must feel that you are really happy. Moreover, some people are happy but they are afraid to mark it. (according to a superstition)</p>
<p>8 Competitiveness. Americans value competitiveness and believe that competition brings out the best in people. It helps to establish success. Of course, Americans do not exclude cooperation.</p>	<p>8 Cooperation is more important than competition. Though, in general, there is competition, competitive people are respected, but one is supposed to help even during a contest.</p>
<p>9 Privacy means 1. The state of being private; retirement or seclusion. 2. Secrecy. As a value it is sacred for most Americans. They need time to be alone and nobody can disturb you if you are in a thoughtful mood.</p>	<p>9 Russians do value privacy, but lack of space limits their wishes and needs. So, Russians adjust and bear the lack of privacy.</p>

The end of Table 9

American Values	Russian Values
<p>10 Directness: truth is preferable, no matter how bitter it may be. A deadly ill person prefers to know the truth, and his relatives would prefer an open way of discussing his illness. If a person hesitates to give a direct answer, his/her behavior may be interpreted negatively (the person is not honest, avoid saying the truth).</p>	<p>10 Generally Russians are rather direct. Direct ways are better, but there are limits (illness is never discussed openly, except with a doctor or a friend). There are also “white lies”. There are ways to say “no” in an indirect way. If a person hesitates to answer it means he/she is saying “no”, does not agree with you.</p>
<p>11 Hospitality is understood as giving the guest the opportunity to enjoy their stay, by offering food, drinks and different activities. The guest feels free to help himself/herself at table, open the refrigerator, etc.</p>	<p>11 Hospitality of Russians is proverbial. The main focus is on eating. Lavish table is not indicative of the host’s wealth. He/she can spend the last money (or borrow from somebody) to make a lavish table.</p>
<p>12 Cleanliness is valued; hygiene is almost an obsession. The proverb “Cleanliness is next to godliness” aptly reflects the value. A person whose lawn is not mowed or the house is not clean is not respected.</p>	<p>12 Cleanliness is a thing well respected but standards are different. It can be dirty in public bathrooms, in the hospitals. Due to finances many people cannot renovate their apartments, etc. A person’s apartment may be spick and span but outside the building it may be dirty.</p>
<p>13 Concern for physical appearance is a value. The proverb “Clothes make the man” speaks for itself.</p>	<p>13 Russians are less concerned about physical looks but they like to dress up and generously use make up. Russians stand for the priority of intellect over looks.</p>

Questions to consider:

- 1 Do you agree with the contents of the table?
- 2 What are the values that Americans and Russians have in common?

3 Choose two or three differences and prove it with examples.

2 Task 'American and Russian values'. Divide into two groups and range Russian and American values from more to less important (table 10). Prove your choice using the information in the *Value Capsule* above. Consider the questions below.

Table 10 – American and Russian values

American values	Russian values
Freedom	Hospitality
Honesty	Patriotism
Smiles	Harmony in soul
Felling wanted and respected	Loyalty in friendship
Fulfillment	Understanding
Health	Sincerity
Material wealth	Making career
Objectives and the will to achieve them	Interfering people

Questions to consider:

- 1 What is a value?
- 2 Why does every culture have its own set of values?
- 3 What are the basic American values?
- 4 What are the basic Russian values?
- 5 What values are close and absolutely different in both cultures?
- 6 How do the values direct your everyday life?

3 Task 'Happiness cake'. Imagine that you are going to bake a happiness cake. Think about the ingredients and spices for your happiness. Work alone and then discuss your ingredients with your partners.

4 Task 'True confessions of a Russian living in America'. Read the article "True confessions of a Russian living in America" by Robert Bridge from Moscow News. Find all the differences of mentality, perceptions and traditions between Russians and Americans. Explain and discuss them concerning the Americans' and Russians' set of values.

Text: True confessions of a Russian living in America

I recently enjoyed a conversation with a young woman, Lena, who has been living in the United States for seven years. The discussion opened in the usual, predictable way, where she asks: "Robert, why are you living in Russia?" Whereas I respond, rather defensively: "Why are you living in America?" These discussions have a way of felling like a session on the psychiatrist's couch – not terribly comfortable, but occasionally necessary.

After some obligatory rhetoric about baseball, hot dogs, apple pie and Chevrolet, we got down to the nuts and bolts. Relaxing with an imported American beer, Lena begins to discuss her likes and dislikes about life in America. First, she spoke with great pride about her fenced-in yard in Minneapolis, which she described as a nice piece of property with plenty of space for the kids to run. "I have become like everybody else on my street," she says, with only a hint of Russian accent. "I am just concerned about what happens in my own backyard." She added that it is nice to be able to open the backdoor and let her kids play alone. "In Russia," she said, "if your child wants go out and play, you must go outside with them." As a father, I immediately understood this glaring disadvantage of apartment living.

I asked if her American friends inquire about life in Russia. Surprisingly, she said that they almost never do. "Maybe because they don't want to seem prying." She said. Then she confesses to felling that many Americans never really hear what she is saying ("What was that?" I say), "They ask me how I am doing, and I take this an invitation to pour out my soul, like I would in Russia," she said. "But I soon realized that when an American asks how you are doing, it is just an expression. They don't really care."

I discovered this American character trait only after moving to Russia. In the U.S., you sometimes get the feeling that you are fitted with a European 220-volt plug, while all of the outlets only handle 110-volt. There's connection. The Russian people seem to nurture much stronger relationships, which is immediately apparent to first-timers here. I can't tell you how many times a westerner has asked me: "Why are those two women holding hands – in public!?"

Somehow, we started to talk about American parties (the non-political sort), and the subject turned to food. Lena said that she was

greatly amused with the American tradition of having the guests contribute dishes to the dinner. I had totally forgotten about this little social quirk, where guests parade into your home carrying huge tubs of baked beans, potato salad and cole slaw. Our laughter was quickly silenced once our attention turned to Irena, our dear host, who was presently slaving over a hot stove. "Maybe there is some sense to that American tradition," Lena mused.

But it seems that Lena is still attached to many Russian traditions, such as home cooking, which is quickly becoming a lost art in the U.S. She told me, with great emotion, that she couldn't understand why Americans don't start cooking until their guests start arriving. "Whenever I have guests, I am cooking and preparing food all day," Lena says with a sigh.

But such discussions, I've learned, are loaded with generalizations. There are just as many American women (and men) who cook all day for guests, for example, as there are Russian women who couldn't correctly identify a frying pan. But somewhere in the middle lies the truth.

(By Robert Bridge, MN)

5 Quiz 'Which do you value more'. Answer the following questions individually and then exchange your opinions. Try to make your own hierarchy of values. What is it? Which do you value more?

Questions:

- 1 Your sense of taste (smell)?
- 2 Your mind or your body?
- 3 Your arms or your legs?
- 4 Your own happiness or your (future) child's happiness?
- 5 Your friends or your family?
- 6 Your job or your dreams?
- 7 What you've received or what you've given?
- 8 Your money or your spirit?
- 9 Your religion or your citizenship?
- 10 This life or the next?

6 Study the *Value Capsule* about the concepts of friendliness and friendship in America and discuss the questions below.

Value Capsule 'Friendliness versus Friendship'

What do Americans mean when they use the word "friend"? The dictionary defines it as: "one attached to another by affection or esteem". Americans, however, use the word more freely than the dictionary definition. A friend might be an acquaintance or an intimate companion that one has known since childhood. It is difficult to define this word precisely as it is used in American English, because it covers many different relationships. "My friend and I took our kids to the park yesterday". "My friend told me about a wonderful restaurant". "My friend listened to my problems for two hours yesterday". We hear such daily uses of the word "friend" without knowing the quality of the friendship mentioned.

In general, Americans have casual, friendly relationships with many people, but deeper, closer friendships with only few. True friendships require time and commitment, which many Americans lack. Therefore, they often find it convenient to have friendly but less committed relationships, rather than many deep, close friendships. Unlike the stereotype, Americans do indeed have close friends, but in addition they have friendships that can be characterized as superficial. Their shortage of time and their numerous commitments to family, work, and even volunteer projects mean Americans have less time to pursue many close friends.

Many people around the world characterize Americans as friendly. Americans, especially in comparison to certain other cultural groups, tend to smile and talk easily with others even if they are strangers. That's why foreigners misinterpret American friendliness as an offer of friendship. Naturally, a foreigner who thinks that an American is extending friendship would have expectations for the friendship. When the American is unaware of these expectations or is unwilling to be true friend, the foreigner or newcomer in the U.S. can become disappointed.

On the surface, when Americans are being friendly, it may seem that they are initiating a friendship. It is useful for foreign students, visitors, and immigrants to know that Americans can actually be shy in interactions with foreigners. In general, it is advisable to approach Americans first to initiate friendship. One foreign student, having lived in the U.S. for several years, said that the most important advice he could give to newcomers would be: "Don't be passive

when it comes to making friends with Americans. Begin conversations, extend invitations, and make the first move”.

Questions to discuss:

- 1 What does American friendliness mean?
- 2 Why is it difficult for people from different cultures to understand why some American friendships are temporary?
- 3 It is said in the article that in order to make an American friend, a foreigner should approach the American first. What specific advice would you give people from your country who wanted to make friends from your culture?
- 4 In your country, if someone is friendly, does that mean the person wants to become your friend? Is it acceptable or usual to be friendly to strangers? Explain.
- 5 What does a word ‘friend’ mean in Belarus/Russia?
- 6 When you make friends, are they your friends “for life”?
- 7 What do you expect of a close friend? What do you expect of a casual friend?
- 8 What a friend are you?

7 Analyze the ‘Cultural problem’ – “Russian-American friendship”. Discuss the questions below.

The person from Russia asked the American to co-sign a loan; in other words, the American’s signature would indicate a willingness to pay back a loan to a bank if the Russian immigrant was not able to do so. The American, with his sense of financial responsibility to his family, felt that the favor asked was excessive, even though he was almost sure that his Russian friend would be able to repay the loan. The Russian, who felt very close to the American, didn’t see this as an unreasonable request. The American ended up telling the Russian that, although he would very much like to help him, he would not co-sign the loan. After that, the Russian never called him, and when the American called him, the wife said, “He’s busy now.” Neither person did anything internationally to end friendship; in fact, both felt bad about what had happened.

Questions to consider:

- 1 Why did the friendship of these two men break up?

2 Have you ever had to adjust your expectations of a cross-cultural friendship in order to save it?

3 Would have you reacted the same as the Russian immigrant in the story?

4 It is important to realize that if an American behaves differently from what you expect in a personal relationship, don't assume that the friendship is over or that the person is not a true friend. Do you agree?

8 Analyze and discuss the 'Cultural problem' – "At an American Party". Answer the questions below.

Situation: At an American Party

Malita and Palil: A newly arrived immigrant couple in the United States

Jan: Malita and Palil's sponsor in the United States

Malita and Palil, newly arrived immigrants in the United States, are eager to make friends. Jan, their sponsor, has promised them that she will have a party and invite several of her friends so that they can meet people. When she does have the party, a number of people talk to Malita and Palil, and show an interest in them and their culture. At the end of the party, many people say, "It was nice meeting you; I hope to see you again". This made the new couple feel very good. There were even three people who asked them for their phone number. Malita and Palil felt that it would be very easy to make friends in the United States.

Several weeks passed after the party, but nobody had called them except Jan. They wanted to ask their friend why the other Americans were so friendly but didn't call. However, the new couple felt too hurt and had too much pride to ask.

Questions to consider:

1 Why did the American's behavior give the couple the feeling that it would be easy to make friends in the United States? (Recall the concepts of friendliness and friendship from the reading.)

2 How can you explain the fact that the Americans didn't call the couple after the party?

3 Is there anything that Malita or Palil could have done to show that they were interested in having further contact with the people they met at the party? In other words, how could they have made the first move or taken the initiative?

9 Study the information in the *Culture Capsule* about irritating moments that can be in Russian-American conversations (table 11). Answer the questions below.

Table 11 – Culture Capsule ‘Irritating moments in Russian-American communication’

What can irritate Russians communicating with Americans	What can irritate Americans communicating with Russians
1 Lack of geographical knowledge. Very often Americans place other people's countries on the wrong point of the globe. Sometimes Americans have a wrong idea what other countries look like.	1 Russians ask stupid questions like “Would you like to eat?” “What would you like to do?”
2 Superficially polite, try to listen to you without deep interest.	2 Imposing way of offering something several times (Americans are very irritated, especially when Russians insist on having alcoholic beverages).
3 Americans are often unceremonious (walk around the flat, open the fridge, sit with their feet on the sofa).	3 Russians ask personal questions, (“How much do you earn?” “How much does it cost?” etc.
4 Self-satisfaction (they are sure that they live in the best country, they are the best, they know how to do things in the best possible way, etc.)	4 Gloomy faces (“When I'm walking on the street, the other people will not return my smile”).
5 Americans think that Russians drink too much.	5 Lack of quick response in business (and personal) correspondence.
	6 Russians often are not polite to other people (bang the door into the face, do not say “excuse me” to an unknown person)

The end of Table 11

What can irritate Russians communicating with Americans	What can irritate Americans communicating with Russians
	7 Russians like to complain about their difficult life. Americans in this case often ask, "What can we do?" "How can we help?" but are surprised to hear that Russians would like to hear sympathy.

Questions to consider:

1 Why do these points about Russians irritate Americans? Is the problem in the difference of mentality? Explain the difference of perceptions.

2 What can irritate Americans in Russians? Explain the difference of perceptions.

3 What is a proper and culturally-competent way to react if something irritates you in your foreign partner? What should you understand in this case?

10 Task 'Annoying topics in America'. Study the annoying topics in America. Share your ideas on what kind of things annoy them when they're talking to someone. Write the items on the board. Note the very low annoyance level of items 8 and 10, and the relatively high positions of 3 and 5 which are common problems with non-native language speakers. Add any points from the list below that have not been mentioned. Work out your own annoyance classification.

The annoying topics are:

- 1 Interrupting while others are talking;
- 2 Swearing';
- 3 Mumbling or talking too softly;
- 4 Talking too loudly';
- 5 Monotonous, boring voice;
- 6 Using filler words ('you know', 'like');
- 7 Talking too fast;
- 8 Poor grammar, mispronunciation;

- 9 A high-pitched voice;
10 A foreign or regional accent.

11 Task “Cross cultural echo”. Work in small groups so that there is one group member for each role in the dialogue plus one more student to be the echo. Turn one character in the dialogue into a foreigner (ex. Rosa) who has a dual personality; Rosa 1 can speak English but inappropriately from the cultural point of view, Rosa 2 is always correct. Every sentence Rosa says should be said by her culturally inappropriate self first, then by her perfect self.

Sample dialogue:

William: Would you like a cup of tea or coffee ...

Rosa 1: (interrupting) ... yes, some coffee and cake, please.

Rosa 2: Oh, yes please. I'd love a cup of coffee.

William: I'll bring some cake too. Or would you prefer custard tart?

Rosa 1: Oh, er ... I don't know. It doesn't matter.

Rosa 2: No, Thank you. The cake sounds lovely, thanks.

William: OK. I'll be right back.

Rosa 1: Oh, William! Where's the toilet?

Rosa 2: Oh, sorry, but could I wash my hands first?

William: Sure, the bathroom's the first on the right.

12 Task ‘A polite communicator’. Make up a situation between a Russian and an American when one of them asks an irritating question or takes an irritating topic, but the other partner should understand that these topics can be used as a sign of sociability just to initiate a conversation, for example. That's why he should react in a calm way showing respect to his partner.

13 Study the *Culture Capsule* about the complimenting behavior in American English and answer the questions below.

Culture Capsule ‘How to compliment in American English’

Americans positively react to praise and compliments. In American English, compliments occur in a very wide variety of

situations. They are quite frequent and they serve to produce or reinforce a feeling of solidarity between speakers. Compliments may also serve as greetings, thanking, and apologizing, or even as substitutes to them. They may serve as a way of opening a conversation. Foreigners often remark upon the frequency of compliments in American English. Comments are often heard from non-native speakers that Americans do an excessive amount of complimenting. People from cultures, which are less open in expressing of approval, are often extremely embarrassed by this.

Americans may give compliments in situations where the compliment would be totally inappropriate in other cultures. A particularly interesting example of this came about recently when an American politician visiting France happened to compliment one of the members of the French government on the job he was doing. The French were very annoyed and articles appeared in the French press attributing all sorts of hidden implications to the act and condemning it as interference in French internal affairs. In reality, the visiting American politician had done no more than the typical American would do when trying to be friendly to a stranger: give a compliment.

The usual American compliments are about a nice apartment and good food. It is not considered complimentary for Americans to suggest that another's attractiveness depends on having money. For example:

S: Your earrings are pure gold, aren't they?

A: Yes, they are. They must be pure gold when you put them on.

S: Money is a necessary condition to become attractive, indeed.

A: I think so too.

This variant of complimenting is rule breaking.

It is very insulting for the Americans if a speaker who compliments unwillingly underlines that the addressee looks unusually well. They may understand that the reverse is usually the case. Thus, two men meet at an elevator and one says to the other:

S: Hey, what's the occasion? You look really nice today.

Or two friends meet and one greets the other by exclaiming:

S: Wow! Linda! What did you do to your hair? I almost didn't recognize you. It looks great.

As a rule, Americans don't use proverbs and set phrases in

giving compliments. The most frequent verbs in the American compliments are *like* and *love*, and as for adjectives they are *nice*, *good*, *beautiful*, *pretty* and *great*. For example:

- I really like your bookcase.
- I love your outfit.
- Your apartment's nice!
- You sound good on tape!
- You did a beautiful job of explaining that.
- Your hair looks great that way.
- Are those new glasses? They're pretty.

There are some other variants of the American way of complimenting:

'Good for you!'

'(Th)ataboy/(Th)attagirl!' (to kids with love)

'Bingo/Bull's Eye!' (with approve to a pupil who answered the question correctly)

In America if you are complimented you should thank for it, otherwise your partner may think that you doubt his sincere praise. In comparison, Russian speakers tend to underline their modesty and because of it they may doubt the compliment. Complimenting in America, it is better not to use:

'You flatter me/us.' (it underlines insincerity of a person who gives a compliment)

'If only it were not a compliment.' (it pays mistrust to a person)

'It's just a compliment.' (implication to a false compliment)

'Oh, come on!' (it may show even disappointment about the insincerity of a speaker)

So the best reaction to a compliment is to agree and thank. But if you would like to treat it funny you may say the following:

'Will/Would you put that in writing?'

'Will/Would/Can/Could you say that in front of some witnesses?'

'Oh, say that to me one more time, I love hearing it!'

Questions to consider:

- 1 Are compliments frequent in American English?
- 2 What are the functions of the compliments in America?
- 3 How does this tendency to give compliments characterize American mentality?

- 4 What are the main topics of the compliments?
- 5 What should one avoid complimenting anybody?
- 6 What is a proper reaction for a compliment in American English?

7 Are Belarusians/Russians open in expressing of approval?
What are the possible reactions to compliments in Belarus/Russia?

8 Do you compliment your friends, colleagues, parents? What do you want to show by this?

9 Can you pinpoint any differences in complimenting behavior in Belarus/Russia and America?

14 Compliment or congratulate on the following happy events. React emotionally to the compliments and congratulations.

1 Compliment your classmate on his new suit.
2 You meet one of your former teachers at a local ice cream store. She tells you that she is going to have a baby.

3 Your roommate, Sandra, is all dressed up for a very important job interview. Compliment her on her appearance.

4 You are invited out to see the new house of a good friend. You think it is beautiful.

5 You are finishing dinner at MRS. Evan's house. She serves a chocolate cake that is wonderful.

6 You are leaving a potluck dinner (a dinner where everyone brings a dish to share). Compliment the host and hostess.

7 Your brother calls you with the good news that he has a new job.

8 You are leaving a reception for a new faculty member in your department. The food was delicious. Compliment Ms. Thompson, the secretary who organized everything.

15 Make up short dialogues on complimenting behavior according to the situations below. Use the necessary phrases from the *Culture Capsule*.

- 1 A friend is showing his new computer to you;
- 2 Mary has his hair done in the most fashionable way;
- 3 Mr. Smith bought a new leather bag to match his suit;
- 4 Sara is in love and looks happy;
- 5 My mother always thinks positively.

6 You run into Chuck, a friend from management school. You are both looking for summer jobs in business, to get experience for your degree. When ask him if he has found a job, he answers yes.

7 You meet a former classmate at a big department store at the mall. She tells you that she is going to be married next month. Congratulate her.

8 Dr. Walters, a distinguished anthropology professor, has just given a very interesting lecture in a department seminar. His topic is one that you would like to do your thesis on. Compliment him on his lecture and express your interest in the topic.

9 Your neighbor, Kim Smith, has just bought a new sports car. Compliment her on it.

16 Study the *Culture Capsule* about the ways of encouraging and giving emotional support in America and answer the questions below.

***Culture Capsule* 'The ways of encouraging and giving emotional support in America'**

Americans are considered to be optimists about their own personal success and about the future. They seem to be sure of themselves and of their future success. They aren't afraid to make long-term plans. They don't believe in superstitions, on the contrary Russians are very superstitious. It can be proven by an extract from the letter of an American friend to his Russian acquaintance:

An American: Congratulations on your imminent car purchase!

A Russian: I think by now, after having known us so long, you are expected to know how superstitious we, Russians, are. Never, never congratulate us in advance. So please, take your congratulations back!

An American: I take my congratulations back, but this superstition is another thing I cannot understand about you. For an expecting mother, understandable. But for car?

So, this example is very vivid and informative. It shows that Russians are eager to avoid uncertainty in life.

To encourage and support a person Americans use the following phrases:

'Go on, you can do it! Just one more. Just a little harder. Stick

with it. Stay at it. Go for it. Give it your best shot. Give it your best. Keep your nose to the grind stone. (idiomatic) Hang in there. (informal) Hang tough. (slang) Stick it out. (informal)'

Encouraging someone to try something:

'Have a go at it. It won't hurt you to try it. Try your luck. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. No pain, no gain.

Asking why someone looks so unhappy:

Something got you down?

Why are you so blue?

Why is your face so long?

Who rained on your parade? (idiomatic) = Who ruined your plans?

Who burst your bubble? (idiomatic) = Who burst your good outlook on life?

When you are depressed:

I'm feeling low. I'm feeling blue. I'm out of sorts. I'm in the doldrums. I'm a little down in the mouth. I'm down in the dumps. I can't put my finger on what's wrong. My heart is heavy. I'm downhearted.

When someone looks very happy:

You look like you just won the jackpot. You look like you died and went to heaven. You're looking on top of the world. What're you smiling about?

When someone is very happy – idioms:

I'm on Cloud Nine. I'm in seventh heaven. I'm walking on air. I'm high on life. I'm as happy as a clam. I'm as pleased as punch. I'm beside myself with joy.

Expressing enthusiasm for life:

Things couldn't be better. I don't have a care in the world. Everything's coming up roses. What a great day! It's great to be alive. Life's been good to me.

Encouraging someone who is unhappy:

Cheer up! Things are never as bad as they seem. Don't let it get you down.

Chin up.

Tomorrow is another day.

It's always darkest before the dawn. Stop caring the weight of the world on your shoulders.

the initials of Obadiah Kelly, a mythical railroad clerk who put his initials on all the packages he accepted as shipment.

Whatever its origin, the use of *O.K.* as an informal expression for something good persisted and spread, first in the United States and then abroad. This rapid spread may be at least partly attributable to the invention of the telegraph in 1844 and the comparative ease of tapping out the Morse Code equivalent of *O.K.* in place of the considerably longer *all right*.

The most usual spelling is the one we have used above: *O.K.* other spellings are *OX* and *okay* (earlier *okeh* was also sometimes used). When employed as a borrowed term in other languages it is often spelled in one of the above ways; however, it is also sometimes incorporated into the spelling or writing systems of the foreign language. Thus we find, among many others, *oke* in Dutch and Indonesian.

O'Ken in Russian, and in Chinese and Japanese, respectively, *O* and *K*. Like many other English words, *O.K.* can be used as various parts of speech without change of *form*, always with the meaning of approval or endorsement, or that something is satisfactory, acceptable, or correct. It is used most often as an interjection: *A. You'll do this now, wont you? B. O.K.* As an adjective: *He was hurt pretty badly when he fell but he's O.K. now* or *that's an O.K. idea; let's do it.* As a noun: *We / have to get the boss's O.K. on this.* As a verb: *I'll O.K. your proposal if you make the changes I suggested.* As an adverb: *The radio is working O.K. now.*

Questions to consider:

- 1 What are the theories on the origins of 'OK'?
- 2 Which one does it seem the most truthful to you?
- 3 Why do you think 'OK' is so frequently-used in American English? What mental characteristic does this word reveal?
- 4 Do you often use 'OK' speaking English?

18 Study the *Culture Capsule* how to use OK in a proper way in American English.

Culture Capsule 'Tips on the proper use of OK in American English'

1 OK is used when the speaker asks a question or makes a request for something expecting that the answer will be positive: *'Is it OK with you if Helen joins us? – Of course that's OK'*.

2 OK can be used in the meaning “нормално”, “ничего”, but not in the meaning “прекрасно”: *'How are you today? – Well, I'm OK, but lately I've been terribly busy and I'm a bit tired. How was the film? – It was OK but I really wouldn't recommend it'*.

3 The use of OK can mean that you agree with something but one of the speakers should consider some obstacles or factors: *'I've got to go out now – I'll be back in half an hour. – OK, but be sure you're back by 3:30 – otherwise we could miss the train'*.

4 If the speaker repeats OK several times, it means that he is annoyed and irritated by something: *'Will you be sure to pick up the laundry on your way home? – OK, OK, I already told you I'd do that'*.

5 Don't use OK in some formal situation: *'Could you please have this memorandum ready by 2:00 this afternoon? – Yes, of course/Certainly/Will do. (but not 'OK, sure')'*.

6 OK means 'Did you understand me?'

7 OK is used in the sense “Вам помочь”? – *'Are you OK?'*

19 Work in pairs. Make up short dialogues with OK in different situations.

20 Study the Culture Capsule about the ways of giving advice in America and answer the questions below.

Culture Capsule 'The American way of advising'

One of the guiding principles in American society is the value of individualism, which has a long political and historical basis. This value affects many aspects of typically “American” behavior and attitudes, including the American “brand” of privacy. They want and value privacy especially at times when some one from another culture might not feel the need. That's why Americans don't like to give and to be given advice. If someone from another culture is having a serious problem, Americans may say, “Let me know if there is anything I can do for you”. If the Americans do not receive a

specific request, they may feel that there's nothing they can do. In this case, they may call every now and then to stay in touch. The friend from another culture may be expecting "sympathy calls" or frequent visits, and may not hesitate to demonstrate a dependence on a friend. An American may feel that a friend needs privacy to "work out" a problem alone.

Americans believe that individuals must learn to rely on themselves or risk losing freedom. It means that Americans believe they should take care of themselves, solve their own problems, and "stand on their own two feet". Tocqueville observed the Americans' belief in self-reliance 150 years ago in the 1830s: "They own nothing to any man, they expect nothing from any man; they acquire the habit of always considering themselves as standing alone, and they are apt to imagine that their whole destiny is in their own hands".

So, it's very risky to advise in America. But if you decide to do it, try not to use such phrases as:

'- Let me give you some advice';

'- Let me give you a word/piece of advice.' (depending on the intonation it may sound bothering);

'- You should ...' (it sounds instructive);

'- Listen up!' (speaking to a child).

The phrases below may be used only when speaking to relatives or friends:

'- If I were you I would ...';

'- I think you should ...';

'- Why don't you ... I advise you to ...';

'- I suggest that you should ...';

'- May be you should ...';

'- It wouldn't kill you to ...' (it implies some disappointment in a person who is given advice).

Giving advice to an American it is better to use the following variants:

- *'Could I make a suggestion?'*;

- *'Would you like me to show you how to ...?'*;

- *'Would you like me to give you a few pointers how to ...?'*;

- *'Would you like to know what I do in such a situation?'*;

- *'My personal recommendation is that you...'*;

- *'I have an idea if you'd like to hear it'*;

- 'Would you like to talk about it?';
- 'Need some one to talk to?';
- 'If you need someone to talk to, I'm always available. I'm here if you want to talk about it'.

Questions to consider:

- 1 Why do Americans try to ignore advice?
- 2 How do Russians treat advice given to them?
- 3 Are the Americans' and Russians' perceptions of advice different? Why?
- 4 Do you often give and take advice?

21 According to the information in the Culture Capsule, give advice in the following situations.

- a) to a student with poor grades in English how to improve his/her language skills;
- b) to a tourist who is visiting Washington D.C. for the first time on what sites to visit;
- c) to someone who's always suffering from colds on how to avoid them.

22 Try to improve the following suggestions turning them into polite advice and respond to them. Work in pairs.

- a) Don't wear jeans to the office. The Boss hates it;
- b) It wouldn't kill you to give up smoking, Mr. Tate. If you ask me, I think you had better stick to your diet;
- c) Don't use so much salt. It's bad for your heart. That's not the way to cut onion. Watch how I do it.

23 Study the situation "A Mother's worry". Role-play it in pairs using the E-A-R technique (Empathize, Attend, Respond). Sympathize, encourage, support your friend and give advice. Mind cultural notes. Work in three groups to discuss the problem. The first group should support the argument – 'Margarita should work part-time.' The second group – 'She should keep working full-time and try to get support from her husband.' The third group – 'Margarita shouldn't work. She needs to be a full-time mother'.

Cultural notes:

1 To empathize you may use the phrases: *'That's sounds exciting, challenging, disappointing ...; I know what you mean about ...; Let me see if I understood every thing ...'*;

2 To attend you should:

- a) focus your eyes on his/her face;
- b) when he pauses, encourage him to go on;
- c) show a slight forward in;
- d) try not to fidget, glance away, or adjust your posture.

3 Respond with: *'Oh, dear! How/That's unfortunate! That's too bad! I know exactly how you feel! Oh, I'm sorry to hear that! I do sympathize! You poor thing! Poor you!'*

4 Encourage with: *'Go on; you can do it! Keep your nose to the grindstone. No pain, no gain! Nothing ventured, nothing gained! Try your luck! Patience is a virtue! In the long run, everything will be OK!'*

5 Support with: *'I'm with you! I'm on your side! You've got my support! You can count on me. You can trust me. You can put your faith in me. I have faith in you.'*

6 Give advice with: *'You're trying to do too much. You're overdoing it. You're carrying the world on your shoulders. You need to set your priorities. Try your luck. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. Get moving.'*

Situation 'A Mother's worry':

'Hi, Rosa,

Sorry it's been so long since I emailed you. I've been very busy since I returned to work. Do you remember that two month ago I decided that Marcos was old enough to be independent? I think I emailed you that I put him in a child-care center and went back to my old job at the advertising agency.

Now I need to ask your opinion about something. You know that three years ago when Marcos was born I quit my job. At the time I thought it was best. But you know me. I love my job.

Do you remember how difficult it was for me to convince my husband? Raul is so traditional. He worries about Marcos. Raul works a lot and can't help me too much. He tries to help, but he can't cook and he hates housework. Marcos gets sick sometimes at the child-care center. So I have to leave work early to take him to the

doctor or home. To tell the truth, I'm really stressed. When I finally get home after work, I'm exhausted.

Even though it's been harder than I expected, my job is very important to me. I know that I can't be only a mother and a housewife. What do you think? I can always depend on you for good advice. I hope everything is fine with you.

Take care, Margarita'

24 Task 'I'd advise...' Work in pairs. Each pair of the students is to discuss the letters of the people who have some problems. Try to understand their problems and give them some advice. Then share your pieces of advice and discuss them.

1 A few years ago I had my hand read by a gypsy. She told me a lot of very detailed things, all of which were strikingly true. Then she asked me for a lot of money, about \$10 I think, and although I had the money with me I refused to give it to her, telling her that I thought it was too much. She went on and on at me and in the end I gave her &1, at which point she made a very elaborate curse and ever since my life has been a total disaster. A month later my husband had a fatal car accident, then I lost my job and now I've lost my hearing in one ear. I'm desperate.

2 I am 50, have recently remarried, and am madly in love with my new husband. It's his first marriage and my 30-year-old daughter from my first marriage says I'd be out of mind. What do you think?

3 I come from Newcastle and my accent is really getting me down, as my voice makes me feel inferior. The problem is that I married into a rather posh family, and I end up not talking at all so as not to get embarrassed. This of course gives an even worse impression so I feel even more depressed. Would elocution lessons help?

4 I'm unhappy. I'm only 68 but I'm stuck in this old people's home where most people are 10.20 even 30 years older than me. I suffer from rheumatoid arthritis, yet with my drugs I can move around quite well. My brain is very alert and I feel like I'm in some dreadful prison. My only son lives in Australia. What can I do?

5 Please, don't think I'm vain but I do know that I'm extremely attractive and have a very good figure. The problem is people like to be seen with me, but they're not interested in getting to know me. I'm 23 and I've tried various ways of making myself look less attractive-wearing scruffy clothes, cutting my hair short – but none of them work. Should I have some cosmetic surgery done? I really need to be taken seriously by someone.

25 Study the *Culture Capsule* about the criticizing behavior in America and answer the questions below.

Culture Capsule 'I'm right and you're not'

Americans are not aggressive in everyday life. They always try to find a *compromise* – in communication, in interpersonal relations, in business; they would rather say not 'my enemy', but 'the person who doesn't like me'.

Americans would openly discuss their problems and disagreements, but would not try not to demonstrate any kind of confrontation and would try to find the decision, which would satisfy everybody.

Americans are very tolerant. The opinions of the interlocutors or the presenter and the audience may differ greatly, but everybody will be calm and will listen to all points of view very attentively. Public speeches and political meetings in the U.S. are usually very peaceful and well-organized. Americans are very outspoken in expressing their opinion, but Russians are open and sincere in expressing emotions.

Stating disagreement or refusal in America:

Polite ways of disagreeing:

I agree with you, but ... / Agreed/Granted, but ...

I couldn't agree more, but ...

Yes/Yeah/Sure, but (on the other hand) ...:

You're right, but ...

That's a good idea, but / Yes, that's quite true, but ...

I see what you mean, but ... / I see/take your point, but ...

Well, you have a point there, but ...

I can see why you think/say that, but ...

That's one way of looking at it, but ...

There's a lot of truth in what you say, but/still/however ...
Yes, maybe/perhaps/possibly, but ... / That may be so, but ...
I would agree, only/but ... / I agree in principle, but ...
Perhaps/Yes, but don't you think ... ?
In most cases you would be right, but ...
To a certain extent yes, but ... / Yes, up to a point, but ...
That would be great, except ...
(Yes, but) I think it's not so much (a case of) ...
I think perhaps it's more a case of ...
But isn't it more a matter/question of ... ? / more to do with ... ?
Yes, but don't forget ... / but we shouldn't forget ... Perhaps not quite as bad/good/difficult as that ...
But surely ...
Er ... I don't know ..

Forgive me if I'm wrong, but ...
Sorry, I don't quite see it the same way ...

I'm not sure (I quite agree with that part about) ... I don't think it's quite that simple; you see ... Actually/In fact, I think ... (followed by a different opinion)

Personally, I'm more inclined to agree with ... (someone else)
Personally, I wouldn't go so far as (to say) that ...

Impolite ways of disagreement or refusal:

No(pe); No way; not a chance; You've got that wrong; You are wrong; You missed the boat; Wrong on both counts. You're dead wrong. You're off. You're way off base. Nothing doing. You're out of luck. In a pig's eye. Only in your dreams. You're barking up the wrong tree. Forget it. Not for a million dollars.

Questions to consider:

1 How to understand that Americans are very direct in expressing their opinion but at the same time they are very tolerant to another opinion?

2 Why is it considered very rude for an American if his

opponent says that his American partner is wrong?

3 What do Americans say when they disagree with someone's point of view? Give three possible ways of politely saying in English "Вы не правы".

4 What principle do Americans follow in the discussion?

5 How does this characterize Americans' mentality?

6 Are Russians tolerant discussing something? Do they try to find compromise in the discussion?

7 How does this characterize the Russians' mentality?

8 What is a major difference between Russian and American ways of discussing issues and their conversational styles?

9 Do you like to argue? Do you always persist in your opinion?

26 Share your views doing the test. Explain your choice.

1 Who has the most influence on your opinion?

- a) friends;
- b) family;
- c) school teacher;
- d) religious teacher;
- e) mass media.

2 At what age is it easiest to influence or change someone's opinion?

- a) 5-13;
- b) 13-18;
- c) 18-25;
- d) 25-40;
- e) 40+.

3 Whose opinion would you never question?

- a) parents;
- b) school teacher;
- c) religious teacher;
- d) government.

4 In a friendship, is it important to have...?

- a) pretty much the same opinions about politics;
- b) the same fundamental religious beliefs;
- c) the same interests;

5 In a love relationship, should you have ...?

- a) pretty much the same opinions about politics;

- b) the same fundamental religious beliefs;
- c) the same interests;
- 6 In life in general, is it better...?
 - a) to have the same opinions as the majority;
 - b) not to force other people to have the same opinion as you;
 - c) not to use power and fame to influence others;
 - d) to invent an opinion rather than not have one at all.

27 Look through disagreement phrases in the *Culture Capsule*.

Vote on (a) which ones they personally like most, and (b) which they think would be most useful when trying to convince a police officer or traffic warden not to fine them. Everybody has three votes for both categories. The votes are added up on the blackboard, with the students dictating them one after the other and a 'secretary' putting tally marks in front of the expressions voted for. This way, without realizing it, you should go through the whole list several times.

28 Task 'Russian or American?' Read the following passage about two people involved in a conversation. Try to guess which words belong to the Russian and which of them belong to the American, and fill in the gaps with the appropriate nationality. Could you explain what made you think so?

The Russian made a strong political statement with which he knew his American friend would disagree. The Russian wanted to involve the American in a lively discussion. The, rather than openly disagreeing, said, "Well, everyone is entitled to an opinion. I accept that your opinion is different than mine." The Responded, "That's all you have to say about it?" In general, the didn't enjoy verbal conflicts over politics or anything else. The actually became angry when the refused to get involved in the discussion. He later explained to the, "A conversation isn't fun unless it becomes heated!"

29 Task 'Do you disagree?' There are five people's opinions in answer to the question: 'In a relationship is it OK for you to have different opinions and beliefs from the other person?' Find

the statements you would like to express your disagreement. Don't forget about the tips from the *Culture Capsule* above. Share your ideas on the question afterwards: Do you think there can be an element of conflict in the relationship? Make some conclusion to the problem.

1 I mean it really depends on how far expect the relationship to go on for. If it's not going to be anything permanent then I don't see that it matters, in actual fact it's probably far more stimulating that way.

2 OK for friends, but I think in a love relationship there need to be some fundamental things you need to agree on. I could never go out with someone who had a different political outlook for example or who had different musical tastes for that matter.

3 Yeah, why not? I see a relationship, any kind of relationship whether it is with friends or in a stable love relationship, as being a constant learning process. And this process requires some kind of conflict.

4 Not a good idea. Relationships only work where you know where you stand in some basic situations. I could never go out with anybody who didn't have a fundamental respect for family values. That's not to say that you can't have different interests, you may like football, I might hate it, that doesn't matter, in fact it would be really boring if we both always did the same things and thoughts the same things. But you do need to share some basic values.

5 I've got friends whose opinions I share and friends whose opinions I quite frankly detest. I've had love relations with girls who shared my fundamental beliefs, and with girls who were on a totally different wave length. And they all ended in tears. Conclusion? I'm not made for relationships. No, seriously, I certainly don't think it matters with friends, and with lovers; I just think there has to be something magical, something inexplicable and something almost spiritual but physical too, that has to click. And I'm still waiting.

30 Task 'Cultural advisor'. Work in pairs to solve the problem presented in the letters to the Cultural Advisor. Give your variant of the solution for the Cultural Advisor to choose the best one. The Cultural Advisor should agree or disagree with

your solution and make the final decision. To give a solution the Cultural Advisor should mind the peculiarities of the Americans' mentality and prove his choice.

Letters to the Cultural Advisor:

1 'Dear *Cultural Advisor*, I would like to invite my good friend T home with me for spring break, but I'm not sure how my family and T will get along. The problem is that T is very formal with adults – he always uses their last names. My family may think that T is unfriendly if he is so formal with them. I worry that both T and my family will feel uncomfortable together. What should I do?

2 'Dear *Cultural Advisor*, I went shopping yesterday and was trying on watches. Suddenly I looked at the clock and saw that I had only a few minutes left to catch the last number 31 bus of the day (the only bus that goes near my house). I ran out of the store to catch the bus. When I got home, I realized that I still had on one of the watches I had been trying on. I had forgotten to give it back to the clerk. The clerk was busy with another customer and didn't notice that I left with the watch. What should I do?

3 'Dear *Cultural Advisor*', I have been working very hard on a ten-page paper for my psychology course. This paper will count for 40 percent of my final grade. Yesterday, very late the night before it was due, I lost the entire paper because of the computer error. The instructor for this course has stressed several times that the paper must be on time. I have only one day! What should I do?

4 'Dear *Cultural Advisor*', my friend Mario borrowed \$25.00 from you two months ago. He promised to pay me right away. He still hasn't paid me back and I need the money desperately now. He saw me yesterday and said me to loan him \$15.00 more. I didn't say anything about the \$25.00 he already owed me. What should I do?

5 'Dear *Cultural Advisor*', I got the results back for a midterm exam in a chemistry class. After the class, several of the students were bragging about how they cheated. Their extremely high grades

made everyone else's grade much lower than it might have been otherwise. I studied hard for this test and only got a C+. What should I do?

31 Cross-cultural discussion “Speech etiquette in Russia and America”. Before the discussion answer the following questions:

1 What do you know about the rules of the so-called “speech etiquette”?

2 What do you usually take into consideration while speaking with a foreigner? Why?

3 Do you try to learn more about his/her attitudes to the problems discussed his /her cultural beliefs and values?

Discussion:

1 When do you use first names in introductions? When do you use first and middle names (patronymics) in introductions?

2 When do you use titles (e.g., Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms) in introductions?

3 What do you think a Russian person should know about introductions in English?

4 What should you inform a foreigner about how to introduce people in Russia?

5 How do people accept and refuse invitations in your country? Do you usually prove your oral invitation by sending a written invitation card? How do Americans do?

6 When people extend invitations, do they prefer to know the response?

7 What does silence indicate in conversation? What does it depend on? What do you associate silence with (e.g., approval or disapproval, agreement or disagreement, irritation and unwillingness to continue the conversation or your interlocutor's desire to give you more time to speak)?

8 In what situation is it acceptable to interrupt others?

9 Who can criticize whom in the USA? In what manner do people make criticisms in Russia?

Unit 5 Sounding clear without words

"He didn't look at me once. I know he's guilty. Never trust a person who doesn't look you in the eye".

American Police Officer

"Americans smile at strangers. I don't know what to think of that"

Russian Engineer

"Americans seem cold. They seem to get upset when you stand close to them".

Jordanian Teacher

1 Read the quotations above and say which three key characteristics of American nonverbal behavior they express. What do you know about them?

2 Study the Culture Capsule (table 12, 13) about American-Russian nonverbal behavior and answer the questions below.

Table 12 – Culture Capsule 'Misunderstandings emerging from the differences of nonverbal behavior'

American nonverbal behavior	Russian nonverbal behavior
<p>Perception of space: Americans feel more comfortable when the space is 0.5 meters (bigger than in Russian culture). See the exact figures in the discussion of time perception. American line resembles a dotted line (with some space between people; lines in front of ATMs have bigger spaces than usual).</p>	<p>The space between interactants is smaller in Russian culture than in American. In a line people stand very close to each other.</p>
<p>Americans touch people less than Russians.</p>	<p>Russians touch people more to set a contact. Teacher at school or universities may touch a student's arm to attract his or her attention. Interlocutors also touch each other more.</p>

The end of table 12

American nonverbal behavior	Russian nonverbal behavior
<p>A smile is an expression of friendliness: the American smile became proverbial. A smile is a requirement for employees working with customers. It is included into job descriptions of waiters, salespersons, etc.</p>	<p>“Smiling Americans may look naive and even suspicious to Russians”, Yale Richmond wrote in 1992. But I must add that Russians will, on seeing a Russian person smiling, ask something like this: “What are you smiling (laughing) at?” Moreover, there is a belief that to laugh or smile one should have some ground, which can be illustrated by a proverb that can be translated approximately as “Laughter without a reason is a sign of a fool”.</p>
<p>Silence between interactants is rude or at least embarrassing. Americans expect an immediate response.</p>	<p>Silence is O.K., especially at table. There used to be a custom keeping silence at table (an old Russian proverb: I am deaf and dumb while I am eating). It may take a person some time to think over an answer to the question. So, it is O.K. to be silent for a moment.</p>
<p>Loud talk at table or in any other setting (including loud greetings): is O.K. Hall interprets it as a reaction to a larger space perception.</p>	<p>It is impolite.</p>
<p>Whistle at the concert means approval.</p>	<p>Whistle at the concert means disapproval.</p>
<p>Stamping one's feet at the concert means approval.</p>	<p>Stamping one's feet at the concert means disapproval</p>
<p>Hissing means disapproval.</p>	<p>Hissing means the request to be quiet.</p>

Table 13 – Misunderstandings emerging from the differences in gestures

American gestures	Russian gestures
<p>Beckoning by wiggling the index finger is usually a parental gesture that means: "Come here. I want you here, now!" It is accompanied with the words: "Come here". "Come on". Note that a person beckoned is of inferior status.</p>	<p>Has approximately the same meaning.</p>
<p>Counting gesture looks different. Americans open the fingers from the fist.</p>	<p>Russians count closing the fingers into a fist.</p>
<p>Slap on a shoulder expresses friendliness.</p>	<p>Slap on a shoulder is not usually used; there is rather a pat on the shoulder to attract somebody's attention.</p>
<p>Patting a kid on the head is positive in the U.S. you express appreciation of the kid, his performance, etc.</p>	<p>People (usually relatives) very often softly "slap" a kid on the buttocks expressing their appreciation of a kid. But it can be done up to a certain age: not later than 3-4 years old.</p>
<p>Americans do not know the fig in the Russian meaning though it is used in the U.S. in several meanings: 1) (is rather widely used) when playing with children Americans pretend to take the kid's nose and tease him or her with the words, "I've got your nose"; 2) when going under the ladder some superstitious people use it as a counter charm (incidentally, others cross fingers for this purpose); 3) in Texas it is rude, has some sexual meaning.</p>	<p>The fig is widely spread and well known by Russians as an offensive and vulgar gesture meaning that you are not going to receive what you have aspired.</p>
<p>Scraping your index fingers together - This is usually a parental gesture, though it may also be used to express your dissatisfaction with an inferior person's behavior. The accompanying words are: "Naughty, Naughty!" "Bad girl! (or boy)" "Tsk, tsk!"</p>	<p>Does not exist in Russian culture</p>

Table 13, to be continued

American gestures	Russian gestures
<p>Shaking your finger at someone This is a gesture expressing a reprimand or scolding, often casing. The index finger is pointed at a child or n inferior person. As a rule it is accompanied with the words: “Naughty, Naughty!” “Bad girl! or boy)” “Tsk, tsk!”</p>	<p>Shaking your finger at someone has the same meaning in Russian.</p>
<p>To shake the fist means you are mad.</p>	<p>To shake the fist means a threat.</p>
<p>Putting the index finger across the lips shushing someone. This is a signal to be quiet, sometimes is not accompanied with words or sound, but sometimes a person whispers: “Shh”, “Be quiet!”</p>	<p>Has absolutely the same meaning.</p>
<p>Holding your hand over your heart is a societal gesture (a civilian style salute) used when giving a pledge of allegiance to the national flag or singing the national anthem.</p>	<p>A palm put at the temple at an angle is more often used as a military salute.</p>
<p>Putting your hand on the Bible This is a societal gesture, the formal stance assumed while taking in oath. If a person rejects the Bible, he or she can put a hand over his or her heart. The accompanying words are: “I swear (on the bible/on my honor) that I will...”</p>	<p>The gesture is not used in Russia maybe because of the fact that the Soviet power denounced religion as the opiate for the masses for 70 years.</p>
<p>Peace sign (a V sign with the palm forward) 1. This is a societal gesture, especially popular during the 1960s, the period of civil rights movement. It expresses peace. Accompanying words are: “Peace!” 2. A ‘V’ stands for “victory”, either military or political, and nothing is usually said.</p>	<p>Peace sign is also used, I think, it was borrowed.</p>

Table 13, to be continued

American gestures	Russian gestures
<p>Shaking hands is a gesture of greeting, particularly between friends. The accompanying words are: "Hi". "Hi there". "Good to see you". It is also used during introductions with accompanying words: "Hello". "How do you do". "It's nice to meet you". "It's a pleasure to meet you", etc. It is polite to give a firm handshake ("two and a half hand shake"), a weak hand shake is called "cold fish" and is not appreciated. Shaking hands with both hands suggests warm feelings. It is also used when parting or after having completed an agreement. Handshakes are more common between men, than between women or between men and women, than between adults and children of all ages.</p>	<p>Males often use shaking hands. On being introduced, females are the first to give the hand. After introduction women almost never shake hands.</p>
<p>Wave of the hand is (1) a greeting gesture (the hand is with extended fingers), usually accompanied with the words "Hi". "Hello". (2) It is also used to say goodbye from a distance saying "Bye", etc (3) It is also used as a sign of getting someone's attention, with the words: "Yoo hoo". "Here I am".</p>	<p>Wave of the hand is the gesture of saying goodbye. In this case the direction of the motion is different: the hand goes from backward to forward, with the fingers together. In the first and the third meanings Russian wave of the hand coincide with American.</p>
<p>Winking is a friendly facial gesture. Nothing is usually said because it means that you take somebody into confidence, as if you agree with him or her. The exact meaning depend on the context: one may wink in agreement or in encouragement, or congratulating some body, or inviting somebody to come up to get acquainted (in the last case it may be insulting).</p>	<p>Winking in Russian coincide in all the meanings and connotations.</p>

Table 13, to be continued

American gestures	Russian gestures
Does not exist in American culture.	To “beat” one’s ears (to take an ear into your hand and shake) is a punishment. Nowadays it is mostly said as a threat.
Poking someone in the ribs is a gesture meaning that you understand that your interlocutor is kidding you, saying something funny. It may be noted in passing that the expression “He’s ribbing you” means that a person is teasing you, making fun of something. Accompanying words may be the following: “Aw, come on”. “You are ribbing me”. “Ha! You can’t fool me!” or “He’s kidding!” “Don’t believe a word of it!”.	Does not exist in Russian culture.
Tapping your temple with your forefinger (also making circular motion around your ear) means that you think a person is crazy to do or say things like he did. There is an accompanying gesture: rolling your eyes towards that person or (and) pointing at him/her. The words are the following: “He’s crazy”, “Nuts”, “Got a screw loose”, “Batty”, “Loco”, “Out of his mind”, etc.	The gesture is a little bit different. You put your finger on the temple and then turn it several times from one side to the other. It communicates the same idea: you think that a person is crazy.
Thumbing your nose at someone This is an insulting gesture (touching your nose with your thumb while wiggling your outstretched fingers) meaning mockery. It is often done silently or may be accompanied with sounds like “Yaaa!”	This is a teasing gesture.
Flicking the side or bottom of your nose with the index finger means a vulgar insult. Accompanying sounds are “Psss!”, “Ppppff” and any other insulting interjections.	Does not exist in Russian culture.

Table 13, to be continued

American gestures	Russian gestures
<p>Putting feet on a table or a couch is quite a common practice. By the way it does not exist in black culture. (Note that superior can do it in the presence of inferior but not vice versa.</p>	<p>It is regarded as very rude</p>
<p>The finger (or the third finger) is the ultimate vulgar gesture expressing anger and aggressiveness, accompanied with hisses, grunts, or with such vulgar expressions as "Fuck you!". To make the gesture less vulgar, some persons show three fingers and say, "Read between the lines".</p>	<p>Unfortunately, the gesture is borrowed into Russian culture through films. It has the same meaning.</p>
<p>Crossed fingers (index and middle) is believed to resist bad luck. If you do not want to mark your luck you just "keep your fingers crossed". Children sometimes cross their arms over the chest. Widely used words are: "Let's keep our fingers crossed". "Oh, I hope so!" "I hope, I hope, I hope!" It also has one more meaning: when a person is lying he or she can cross the fingers to be forgiven for the lie (is limited in usage).</p>	<p>Does not exist in the first meaning, but not to mark any event or good luck Russians spit (rather imitate spitting) three times over the left shoulder. Exists in the second meaning (is also limited in usage)</p>
<p>Thumbs up is a gesture of approval, it is done with both thumbs. The accompanying words are: "Thumbs up". "O.K." "Good work!"</p>	<p>Thumb up (only one thumb) has the same meaning: "Good, great".</p>
<p>Thumbs down is a gesture of disapproval, usually done with both thumbs. The accompanying words are: "Thumbs down". "That's awful!"</p>	<p>Does not exist in Russian culture.</p>

Table 13, to be continued

American gestures	Russian gestures
<p>Shaking your clasped hands above your head is a gesture of enthusiastic approval, victory. Accompanying words are: "You won!", "You are wonderful!", "Congratulations!", "Yea! We did it!"</p>	<p>Shaking your clasped hands above the head means "friendship". There was a misunderstanding when Nikita Khrushchev (1894-1971), premier of the U.S.S.R. (1958-64), visited the U.S.A. with a state visit and expressed his feelings in a Russian way: with the clasped hands over his head. The gesture was interpreted as the victory over Americans (!).</p>
<p>A pat on the back expresses friendliness. It is so widely used that there is an expression "back-slapping American". As it is known class and status are to be emphasized.</p>	<p>A hand put on the arm expresses concern.</p>
<p>Chalking one up is a gesture of congratulation meaning that you or someone else has scored a point in a game. It may also be used figuratively to show that someone "scored" in a discussion, or argument, or some other competitive situation. You put your index finger on your tongue and then point with it to the person who, you think, has scored. Accompanying words may be: "Oh, that's one for me (you, him, her, etc)".</p>	<p>Does not exist in Russian culture.</p>
<p>Rubbing your nails on your chest This is a comic gesture of self-congratulation that may be interpreted as polishing a prize, a medal, etc. First you huff on your nails ("for better results") and then rub them on the chest.</p>	<p>Does not exist in Russian culture.</p>

Table 13, to be continued

American gestures	Russian gestures
<p>Twiddling your thumbs (usually putting your hands on your stomach). This gesture expresses impatience, boredom, annoyance, though it may also be comic or mocking. When it is done openly while someone is talking, it is rude. It is often done covertly to tell someone else that you are bored with what someone is saying or with the situation you are in. Accompanying expressions may be: "Ho hum!", "Really!", "I'm just bored to death!"</p>	<p>Twiddling the thumbs is often performed, but it is not so negative. One is mildly bored or just does not have much to do.</p>
<p>Shrugging your shoulders This is a gesture of resignation or non-violent meaning: "So, what can I do?". "It's not my problem". "I don't know what to do". "I don't know anything about it". "Don't ask me". Thus, accompanying words may be like these: "Don't ask!", "Damned if I know!", "I haven't any idea!"</p>	<p>Has the same meaning in Russian culture.</p>
<p>Snapping your fingers has several meanings. 1) If the gesture is made with an expression of delight and surprise it means that you have just thought of or remembered something you have been trying to think of. It is accompanied with the words: "I've got it!" "That's it!" "Ah, ha" "Eureka!" 2) If it is made with a stern, impatient, or angry expression, it generally means that you want someone to do something immediately. 3) It may also mean getting someone's attention (for example, of a waiter in a crowded restaurant). In this case it is offensive.</p>	<p>Snapping the fingers is used in the first and the third meanings.</p>

Table 13, to be continued

American gestures	Russian gestures
<p>Rubbing your hands (in glee) is a comic gesture meaning that you have a good and clever idea for some action. It is sometimes done to simply to show anticipation, but when it is exaggerated, it suggests that you are being crafty. The accompanying expressions are: "Oh, boy!", "Hee, hee, bee!", "Oh, just wait till I..."</p>	<p>The gesture has the same meaning.</p>
<p>Slitting your throat is a comic gesture meaning: stop doing that, end it, or I disapprove! Accompanying words and sounds are: "That's it!", "Kill it!", "Wrap it up!", "Cut!" "QuekkkkK!"</p>	<p>Slitting your throat means "I am fed up!"</p>
<p>Thumbing a ride (hitching a ride) holding your hand out to the side with palm forward, fingers closed in, and thumb extended up means that you want to be picked up by a passing driver and given a ride. If you are hitchhiking try to attract more attention of the driver by raising your hands slightly or moving them backward and forward, smiling and looking hopefully at each car. To avoid sexual harassment women prefer to hitchhike accompanied by women or men. In some states it is against the law to hitchhike.</p>	<p>Hitching a ride in Russia you must hold your hand out and wait looking at drivers.</p>
<p>Quotation marks This is a literary gesture to illustrate the quotation. When it is done at a conference or in any other official situation, accompanying words are "Quote" at the beginning of a citation and "Unquote" at the end. It may also be done in humor. In this case the accompanying interjections may be "Qurk, qurk".</p>	<p>Does not exist in Russian culture.</p>

The end of table 13









American gestures	Russian gestures
<p>Lifting the index finger is the sign to attract attention of a teacher at school or university. It is a polite gesture to attract the attention of a waiter, which may be accompanied by the phrase "Excuse me, please". To get the waiter's attention you may discreetly wave your hand. Other gestures (snapping fingers, clapping hands, whistling are rude).</p>	<p>Lifting the hand with the elbow on the table is a polite way to attract attention of a teacher. Some high school students are so impatient to answer that they raise the hand without keeping the elbow on the table. The teacher usually regards this as impolite.</p>
<p>Raised index finger means the first, the best. One can see this sign in ads; it is very popular with the fans at sports events. Fans wear big plastic gloves with the raised index finger meaning that they hope their favorite team is the best and they want their team to win.</p>	<p>Does not exist in Russian culture.</p>

Questions to consider:

- 1 What is the function of nonverbal behavior in verbal communication? Is it different from culture to culture?
- 2 What can you say about eye-contact, smile and personal space in Russia? Does this nonverbal language have the same meaning?
- 3 What gestures of American nonverbal behavior have the same meaning in Belarus/Russia?
- 4 What gestures of American nonverbal behavior don't exist in the Russian language or vice versa?
- 5 What American gestures surprised you a lot?

3 Try to show to your partner some American gestures from the table above and he should guess their meaning consulting the table.

4 Study the following gestures often used in the U.S. Discuss the questions below.

	O.K.		Cut; that's enough. Stop, or it's all over for me.
	Good luck. I hope it works out.		Oh, I forgot! Don't tell me [surprised]!
	Don't ask me; I don't know.		Wait a second. Slow down. Relax.
	I didn't hear you. I can't hear you.		Come here.

Questions to consider:

- 1 In your country, what does a smile mean? When is it used? When is it never used?
- 2 Do you think that in your country gestures are used more often than in the U.S., less often, or about as often?
- 3 In your country, do people use their hands while speaking more often than Americans do?
- 4 Are some gestures the same in your country and the U.S.? Which ones? Do some gestures look the same but have different meaning?
- 5 Are there some gestures from your country that you still find yourself using in the U.S.? Which ones?
- 6 Are there any American gestures that you originally had trouble understanding? Which ones?

5 Fill in the chart (table 14) with Russian and American gestures. What gestures are different? What gestures are alike?

Table 14 – Russian-American gestures in comparison

What gestures do people make for...	Your country	United States
Crazy?		
Be quiet?		
Goodbye?		
Go away?		
Come here?		
Yes?		
No?		
Stop?		
Wishing for luck?		
Delicious (food)?		
Everything is fine?		
I don't know?		

6 Work in a small group. Each person should choose several of the following messages. Take turns sending these messages nonverbally, while the other group members guess what you mean. Within your group, discuss how many different ways can you find to communicate each message? Does everyone

understand each way?

- 1 Hello (to someone across the room).
- 2 Good-bye.
- 3 Come here.
- 4 Yes. / I agree.
- 5 No. / I disagree.
- 6 I don't know. I have no idea.
- 7 Wait a second. I'm trying to think.
- 8 Good luck.
- 9 It's okay.
- 10 That's very expensive.
- 11 I can't hear you.
- 12 Shhhh. Be quiet.
- 13 It's time to leave.
- 14 Stop! Don't come closer.
- 15 Yu did a great job! It was a success.
- 16 Calm down! Don't be upset.
- 17 What do you think?

7 These signs mean the following concepts: America, disagree, doubt, dream, must, silly. Try to match the words with the signs.

4 Sign language



8 Act out the following situations, practicing the gestures listed in the Culture Capsules.

- 1 You can't hear your friend's voice.
- 2 You want a child to come to your side.
- 3 Your friend has just walked into the class to take an important examination. Wish him or her good luck.
- 4 Somebody has asked you a question, and you don't know the answer.
- 5 You want to tell your friend that the lecture is boring.
- 6 You signal to your friend that the person on the phone is talking too much.
- 7 You are ready to enter the restaurant when you notice that a simple dinner costs almost \$25.
- 8 You want to show your disapproval that the work isn't done on time.
- 9 You want to congratulate your friend on the victory in the contest.
- 10 You hope that your favorite team is the best and you want it to win.

9 Pantomime ideas and emotions to the rest of the class. Think of sentences or phrases to illustrate them nonverbally.

- 1 I'm mad!
- 2 This is delicious!
- 3 Your baby is beautiful!
- 4 Please leave.
- 5 You are my friend!
- 6 You are kidding me!
- 7 Good luck!
- 8 Good work! etc.

10 Work in pairs. Imagine that you are to say your partner something urgent and important but a glass wall separates you and you don't hear anything. Try to use different American gestures to explain your message to the partner. Then he is to say if he understood you correctly.

11 Study the Cultural note on the eye contact. In pairs carry on short conversations using different types of eye contact: a) minimal eye contact; b) gazing; c) your natural style of eye contact. Discuss your feelings and impressions. When did you understand your partner better? Why?

Cultural note:

Americans follow the principle – “Never trust a person who doesn’t look you in the eyes”. Eye contact is a sign of respect to your communicator. They may feel uncomfortable with the “gaze” which is too intense for them. Too little eye contact may be viewed negatively, because it may convey a lack of interest, inattention, or even mistrust.

12 Task on the eye-contact. Work in pairs. a) Sit back to back to your partner and begin discussing something important to you. b) Sit down and initiate the same dialogue while your partner is standing near you. Then change your postures and go on speaking. c) Then make an eye-contact to each other and socialize for 2-3 minutes without any words.

Share your impressions with the rest of the group according to the questions below:

1 What do you feel when you didn’t see the face of your partner while speaking to him about your problem? Did you feel that you were in contact with your partner?

2 What do you feel when your partner was standing close to you while discussing the problems? Are you satisfied with such a talk?

3 What do you feel when you saw your partner in the eye? Did you feel contact with him in this case?

4 Make your own conclusion about the importance of eye-contact in the conversation.

13 Role-Play. Working in pairs, make up a dialogue in your own language and then in English using the following situation. First perform the dialogue in front of the class in your own language. Then perform the same situation in English. The class members will comment on the nonverbal behavior they observe in both scenes. Discuss the questions below.

Situation:

A student is entering a professor's office to discuss a problem. After a short conversation, the student leaves the office. Demonstrate how the student enters the office, greets the professor, discusses the problem, and leaves.

Questions to consider:

- 1 Did you feel or observe any differences when you switched languages?
- 2 Were you more comfortable in one language than in another?
- 3 Do your body movements change when you are speaking a foreign language? If so, how?

14 Study the Cultural note on the perception of space by Americans. Role-play the situation.

Cultural note:

You know that Americans hate space invaders. The standard American comfort space zones are:

- Comfortable formal distance: Three to six feet apart;
- Comfortable acquaintance distance: two to three feet apart;
- Average close friend distance: 1 1/3 feet apart;
- Still closer friend distance: eight to twelve inches apart;
- Intimate friend or lover distance: six inches or less apart.

The helpful hints to stop the 'Space Invader' in his tricks:

- 1 Situate yourself so that a piece of furniture or an object is always between you.
- 2 Change your spatial relationship to suit you, not the invader.
- 3 If efforts to create more distance don't work, it may be time for a more direct presentation of your concern. Say what you need in order to be comfortable. Make a positive statement first if you're concerned about injuring the invader's feelings: "Jerry, our morning reviews are helpful. You have a way of literally coming too close for comfort, though. I'd feel much better with a few more inches between us. Thanks".

Situation:

'Jan's boss liked to stand behind her with his hand on her chair whenever he went over the day's schedule. She felt that it made her

skin crawl. She had to put up with it. This morning he did the same, but her reaction was quite different and helpful. How did she manage to change the situation?'

15 Test yourself answering the following questionnaire on the American non-verbal behavior (more than one answer may be correct). Stimulate the cross-cultural discussion on the differences and similarities of American-Russian non-verbal gestures.

1 Signaling a waiter is done by:

In your country:

In the United States:

- a) snapping the fingers;
- b) whistling;
- c) raising one hand briefly;
- d) saying, "Waiter".

2 How do people end conversations nonverbally?

In your country:

In the United States:

- a) They look at their watches.
- b) They look away from the speaker.
- c) They back up slowly.
- d) They stop talking abruptly.

3 The best way to get a teacher's attention is to:

In your country:

In the United States:

- a) snap your fingers;
- b) raise your hand until the teacher calls on you;
- c) raise your hand and lower it when the teacher noticed that you have a question;
- d) call out the teacher's name.

4 When you are being introduced, what do you do in addition to speaking (e.g., what do you do with your hands)?

In your country:

In the United States:

- a) shake hands slightly;
- b) shake hands firmly for a few seconds;

- c) shake hands until the introduction is completely finished;
- d) shake hands and then bow.

5 When you are being introduced, what kind of eye contact do you use?

In your country:

In the United States:

- a) Make direct eye contact.
- b) Avoid eye contact.
- c) Make eye contact and then quickly look away.
- d) Make eye contact and then look at the floor.

6 Nonverbally, how would you get the attention of a busy secretary in an office?

In your country:

In the United States:

- a) stand by the door and wait until the secretary looks at you;
- b) stand close to the secretary until you are noticed;
- c) sit down near the secretary and remain silent until you are noticed;
- d) tap the secretary on the shoulder.

7 If a student doesn't understand a point that a teacher makes in class, it is best to:

In your country:

In the United States:

- a) raise a hand and ask for clarification;
- b) look confused;
- c) remain silent and ask the teacher after the class;
- d) leave the class.

8 How do you motion to a person to come to you?

In your country:

In the United States:

- a) extend both arms in front of you and, with your palms up, wave to the person to come;
- b) roll your eyes in the direction and want the person to come;
- c) extend one arm in front of you and, with your palm up, wave to the person to come;
- d) extend one arm in front of you and, with your palm down, wave to the person to come.

16 Final discussion 'Let's share our impressions'. Share your impressions and thoughts on the course you've just studied according to the questions below:

Questions to consider:

1 Did you get much use studying the course of American verbal behavior?

2 What did you know about American verbal culture?

3 Can you understand now what set of American values and mental perceptions stand behind the communicative behavior?

4 Can you compare now Belarusian/Russian way of thinking, cultural norms, conversational style to American patterns?

5 What did you like most/less in the course?

6 Would you feel surer speaking to Americans now?

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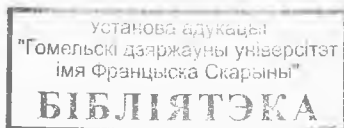
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Учебное издание

Починок Татьяна Викторовна

ПРАКТИКА УСТНОЙ И ПИСЬМЕННОЙ РЕЧИ

ПРАКТИЧЕСКОЕ ПОСОБИЕ

по теме **“Keeping the conversation ball going in America”**
для студентов 2-3 курсов специальности 1 - 02 03 06 01
«Английский язык»

В авторской редакции

Лицензия № 02330/0133208 от 30.04.04.

Подписано в печать 12.10.07. Формат 60x84 1/16.

Бумага писчая №1. Гарнитура «Таймс». Усл. печ. л. 7,23 .

Уч.-изд. л. 7,9. Тираж 100 экз. Заказ № **58**

2032-00

Отпечатано с оригинала-макета на ризографе
учреждения образования
«Гомельский государственный университет
имени Франциска Скорины»

Лицензия № 02330/0056611 от 16.02.04.
246019, г. Гомель, ул. Советская, 104