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**ТІЛ ЖӘНЕ ШЫНДЫҚ: 10-11 СЫНЫПТАРДА КОММУНИКАТИВТІК
ДАҒДЫЛАРДЫ АРТТЫРУҒА АРНАЛҒАН «ҰЛЫБРИТАНИЯ МЕН АМЕРИКА
ҚҰРАМА ШТАТТАРЫНЫҢ ЕЛТАНУ» КУРСЫНЫҢ ПРАКТИКАЛЫҚ БАҒЫТЫ.**

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**«ЯЗЫК И РЕАЛЬНОСТЬ: ПРАКТИЧЕСКАЯ НАПРАВЛЕННОСТЬ КУРСА
«СТРАНОВЕДЕНИЕ ВЕЛИКОБРИТАНИИ И СОЕДИНЕННЫХ ШТАТОВ
АМЕРИКИ» ДЛЯ ПОВЫШЕНИЯ КОММУНИКАТИВНЫХ УМЕНИЙ В 10-11
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**LANGUAGE AND REALITY: PRACTICAL FOCUS OF “THE UK AND USA
COUNTRY STUDY COURSE” FOR ENHANCING COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN
GRADES 10-11**

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Аңдатпа

Мақалада жоғары сыныптардағы мемлекеттану курсының қалайша тілді теориядан нақты өмірде қолдануға көшіретіні талданады. Культуралық және тарихи контексті интеграциялау адекватты тілдік қатынас үшін маңызды екені көрсетіледі. Курс дебаттар мен аутентикалық жобалар арқылы оқушылардың әлеуметтік-лингвистикалық сауаттылығын дамытады. Елтану нақты коммуникативтік құзыреттілікті қалыптастыратын негізгі фактор екені дәлелденеді.

Аннотация

В статье анализируется, как курс страноведения в старших классах помогает перейти от теоретического изучения языка к его практическому использованию в реальной жизни. Показано, что интеграция культурного и исторического контекста является важным условием адекватной языковой коммуникации. Курс развивает социолингвистическую грамотность учащихся через дебаты и аутентичные проекты. Доказывается, что

страноведение является ключевым фактором формирования реальной коммуникативной компетенции.

Annotation

This article analyzes how “The UK and USA Country Study” Course transforms theoretical English knowledge into practical communication competence. It demonstrates that integrating authentic cultural and historical context is crucial for adequate linguistic output. The course successfully develops socio-linguistic awareness, contextual vocabulary, and critical thinking through debates and authentic media projects. It confirms that Country study course is the key to producing globally competent graduates ready for real-world interaction.

Түйінді сөздер: елтану, коммуникативтік құзыреттілік, социолингвистикалық сауаттылық, мәдени контекст, тарихи контекст, шетел тілін оқыту, дебаттар, аутентикалық жобалар.

Ключевые слова: страноведение, коммуникативная компетенция, социолингвистическая грамотность, культурный контекст, исторический контекст, изучение иностранного языка, дебаты, аутентичные проекты.

Keywords: country studies, communicative competence, sociolinguistic literacy, cultural context, historical context, foreign language learning, debates, authentic projects.

Introduction

The study of a foreign language in the senior grades of a gymnasium often encounters a gap between theoretical knowledge (grammar, vocabulary) and the ability to apply it in real-life situations. Students in the 10th and 11th grades, possessing high intellectual potential, are ready to transition from learning a language to using the language as a tool for interacting with the world. Maslova V. A., in her work *Lingvokulturologiya* [Linguoculturology], notes: “Language is most closely connected with culture: it grows into it, develops within it, and expresses it” [1, p. 9]. According to Shchukin A. N., cultural studies information “ensures not only cognitive but also communicative needs of students, contributing to the formation of communicative and sociocultural competence” [2, p. 32]. In this context, Country Studies—a discipline that examines the culture, history, and society of English-speaking countries (focusing here on the USA and Great Britain)—is an effective tool that allows acquired knowledge to be put into practice, connecting language and reality. “The UK and USA Country Study” Course has been running at Gymnasium No. 38 named after Lev Gumilev in Ust-Kamenogorsk for over 10 years and has proven its effectiveness. This course integrates knowledge about Great Britain and the USA into a unified framework, facilitating the assimilation of knowledge regarding geography, major historical events, national psychology, social realities, and the country’s culture. Furthermore, it fosters the cultural and linguistic-cultural competence necessary for adequate command of English, both as a means of communication and for professional training. Thus, communicative skills of the students are formed within the course based on linguistic-cultural and Country studies knowledge.

The goal of this article is to analyze the mechanisms through which “The UK and USA Country Study” Course enhances the practical applicability of the language and to demonstrate specific forms of this practical implementation.

Country Studies as a Foundation for Communicative Competence

Communicative competence is not just the ability to form grammatically correct sentences, but also the skill to choose adequate linguistic means depending on the situation, and the cultural background. Without cultural knowledge, this choice often proves incorrect, leading to communication breakdowns or misunderstandings.

“The UK and USA Country Study Course” addresses the following tasks:

1. **Vocabulary Enrichment through Context:** Instead of isolated memorization of words, students master vocabulary closely linked to realia (e.g., healthcare system, prime minister, royal family). This vocabulary is immediately activated in discussions, cementing it in their active lexicon.
2. **Development of Sociolinguistic Awareness:** The course introduces language variation (British vs. American English, formal vs. informal style), which directly influences the ability to adapt speech.
3. **Mastery of Cultural Codes:** Understanding that the reality of communication is determined

not only by words but also by unspoken rules (etiquette, humor) is crucial for senior students preparing for international contacts.

Practical Focus: From Knowledge to Application

The practical value of Country Studies manifests when theoretical material is immediately transformed into active tasks. This allows students not just to know about presidential elections or analyze the education systems in the USA, the UK, and Kazakhstan, but also to discuss the elections implications, compare educational systems, and identify commonalities in English, utilizing appropriate terminology and style.

Below are examples of how the course's practical focus is demonstrated in preparing 10th and 11th graders:

1. Analysis and Debates Based on Authentic Sources (Critical Thinking and Communication)

Practical orientation is realized through working with real media products.

- **Debates on Social Issues:** Organizing debates on urgent topics (e.g., “Free education: myth or reality?” or “The Monarchy’s Role Today”). Successful participation requires mastery not only of the language but also of the historical and political context, which makes the discussion deep and realistic.

2. Project and Research Activities (Creativity and Cooperation)

Creation of the Information Center: The English Information Digest “BEES: BEST ENERGETIC ENGLISH SPEAKERS” project exists and operates in the gymnasium, where senior students create weekly issues on various topics interesting to them and the teenage audience, publishing them on the project’s Instagram page. A significant portion of the topics is cultural studies-oriented, aimed at deepening knowledge about the culture and traditions of the USA and Great Britain. For example, the “Britain Inside” issue introduces the most interesting, often little-known but entertaining, facts. The students find, process, analyze information, and present it in a vivid, lively, and engaging format. There are videos dedicated to holidays celebrated not only in English-speaking countries but also in Kazakhstan, helping to bring the peoples of our countries closer. Thinking about entering university, the “BEES” participants concluded the necessity of presenting for students the format of the international language exam IELTS. In their issues, they provide practical advice on preparation and successful exam taking. All issues of the “BEES” Digest are prepared by my students in English, which allows them to apply linguistic-cultural knowledge in various practical situations. Working within this project demands cooperation and a creative approach to producing an information-rich product.

Participation in Student Conferences: As topics for research projects presented annually at the gymnasium’s scientific practical conference, students willingly choose topics related to the culture and history of the UK and the USA: “Mysteries of the Tower,” “A Guide to London: A, B, C of London,” “History of the Royal Family,” “Who is Sherlock Holmes?,” “The Difference Between American and British English,” “Shakespeare’s vocabulary heritage”.

Monitoring of gymnasium students’ participation in research activities in English (Followed by a table showing participation rates over academic years, demonstrating growth).

Academic year	SPC «Eureka» (9-11 grades)		SPC «Bastau» (5-8 grades)		SPC «Tick Tock» (1-4 grades)	
	Number of projects	Number of Country Studies projects	Number of projects	Number of Country Studies projects	Number of projects	Number of Country Studies projects
2020-2021 (online)	6	3	5	2	-	-

2021-2022	11	7	13	4	-	-
2022-2023	12	8	14	5	-	-
2023-2024	11	7	12	6	2	1
2024-2025	10	5	12	5	2	1
2025-2026	8	5	7	4	-	-

“Virtual Companion”: Modeling conversations with foreign interlocutors on various topics: admission to foreign universities, preparation for a tourist trip, conversational taboos with foreigners, favorite food recipes.

3. Modeling Cultural Scenarios (Sociocultural Adaptation)

This is direct training in “how to behave” in real situations where a mistake could lead to awkwardness.

- **Etiquette and Business Correspondence:** Analyzing examples of correct business writing (considering the British tendency towards politeness and American directness). Role-plays simulating attendance at a formal Afternoon Tea or participation in a business lunch.

- **“Cultural Survival Guides” (Trip around the UK):** Students, working in groups, develop short interactive guides for their peers traveling to London or New York for the first time. The guide includes not only useful information (transport, food) but also a “Don’ts” section—a list of actions that might be perceived negatively (e.g., regarding tips, punctuality, or directness in requests). The presentation of these guides is conducted in a talk show format.

Orientation towards the Future

The practical focus of the course is also closely linked to career guidance. Senior students planning further studies or a career abroad need confidence that their language skills meet real-world requirements. Knowing how the higher education system works in the USA or how a job interview proceeds in a British company allows them to practically prepare for these steps, using English as a reliable tool to achieve their goals.

Conclusion

“The UK and USA Country Study” Course in the 10th and 11th grades of the gymnasium is a necessary supplement to the core curriculum. It shifts the study of English from an academic plane to one of vital necessity and practical application.

Based on observation and questionnaires:

90% of students find this course interesting;

85% state that they learn many new facts about the life, culture, and history of the UK and USA residents previously unknown to them;

80% feel confident as speakers when delivering presentations for mini-projects in English during Country Studies classes;

70% started reading the works of British and American writers after learning facts about the writers;

60% are motivated to participate in English research activities.

By providing rich, authentic material, the course enables students not just to command the language but to communicate consciously, confidently, and adequately in the complex, multifaceted

English-speaking reality. Thus, “The UK and USA Country Study” Course” becomes a key factor in forming a truly competent graduate, ready for global interaction.

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