

**Valentyna Bohatyrets**

PhD in Political Science /Associate Professor

Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, Chernivtsi, Ukraine

ORCID [0000-0002-6291-5180](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6291-5180); [v.bohatyrets@chnu.edu.ua](mailto:v.bohatyrets@chnu.edu.ua)

## **HARNESSING CULTURAL DIPLOMACY THROUGH TEACHING/LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

**Abstract.** *Today's security environment is dramatically different from the one we've been engaged in for the last 30 years and it requires new ways of thinking and new ways of acting. By and large, it concerns a motley tapestry of immensely transformed world politics, economy and environment, communication, employment, psychological and emotional wellbeing, safety and security, societal structures, and social culture and values integrated into the global landscape. Importantly, education has always been a core pillar of strength, since EDUCATION involves every aspect of human life: culture, power, ideology and authorities' impact. Respectively, education and culture are the powerful forces that drive youth as stakeholders in education to reveal their potential and change their future as well as the future of the globe. In this respect, my strong conviction is that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom (EFL) can considerably contribute to a culturally versatile development of global citizenship education. Recently foreign language professors/teachers have become a pull and push factor in the sustainable development of both a global society and its citizens. Delving into the problem of harnessing cultural diplomacy through teaching/learning English as EFL, the study presented an in-depth scientific analysis based on conceptual framework of cultural diplomacy as soft power and synthesis which aimed at actual and multifaceted practices and, accordingly, provided the students with opportunities to consider their own experiences and yield their own fruits of soft skills. The present study was designed to determine the effect of cultural diplomacy as soft power that considerably contributes to effective EFL teaching/learning. One of the most significant findings to emerge from this study is that EFL teachers are to provide learners with a rich socio-cultural awareness and living skills, rather than only linguistic training on the target language.*

**Key words:** *English, EFL teachers/students, cultural diplomacy, soft skills, global citizenship education, cross-cultural communication, socio-cultural awareness*

*Реалії сьогодення кардинально змінили світ і наше мислення, вони вимагають від нас нового мислення на зростання та нових дієвих кроків. Загалом, це стосується строкатого гобелена трансформованої світової політики, економіки та довкілля, психологічного та емоційного здоров'я, безпеки та захисту, комунікації, соціальної культури та цінностей, інтегрованих у глобальний ландшафт. Варто наголосити на тому, що, що освіта і культура завжди була невід'ємним конструктом всіх процесів, оскільки власне ОСВІТА має потужний вплив на кожний аспект людського життя: ідеологію та владні структури, культуру і виховання. Відповідно, освіта та культура є потужною рушійною силою, яка спонукає молодь як стейкхолдерів освітнього процесу розкрити свій потенціал та змінити як своє майбутнє, так і майбутнє світового соціуму. У даному контексті, безумовним є той факт, що викладання англійської мови як іноземної значно сприяє всебічному крос-культурному розвитку глобальної освіти. Відповідно, викладачі іноземних мов (зокрема, англійської) стали агентами змін та менторами сталого розвитку як глобального суспільства, так і його громадян. Висвітлюючи проблему здійснення культурної дипломатії через викладання англійської мови як іноземної, дана розвідка надає поглиблений науковий аналіз, який ґрунтується на концептуальних засадах культурної дипломатії як м'якої сили, і разом з тим висвітлює практичну складову процесу інтеграції культурної дипломатії у викладанні англійської мови як іноземної. Аргументовано, що вивчаючи англійську мову, студенти окрім*

*лінгвосоціокультурних компетенцій, набувають життєві навички та взаємозбагачуючий кроскультурний досвід. Вивчення іноземних мов – це тривалий процес, який дає привід стимулювати українців вивчати іноземні мови, водночас вдосконалюючи рідну, щоб використовувати всі сучасні можливості, впливати на майбутнє світу та забезпечити гідне позиціонування України у ньому.*

**Ключові слова:** *англійська мова, викладачі/студенти, культурна дипломатія, м'які навички, глобальна освіта, міжкультурна комунікація.*

What students love is THE COURSE that advances beyond their mere skills, the course that teaches them life competences, and the course that is reflective, natural and entertaining.  
In my strong opinion, EFL is the one that facilitates students to learn how to nourish life and cultivate their sense of belonging to a broader community and humanity.

**Introduction.** Today's security environment is dramatically different from the one we've been engaged in for the last 30 years and it requires new ways of thinking and new ways of acting. By and large, it concerns a motley tapestry of immensely transformed world politics, economy and environment, communication, employment, psychological and emotional wellbeing, safety and security, societal structures, and social culture and values integrated into the global landscape. Importantly, education has always been a core pillar of strength, since education involves every aspect of human life: culture, power, ideology and authorities' impact. Respectively, education and culture are the powerful forces that drive youth as stakeholders in education to reveal their potential and change their future as well as the future of the globe.

This statement is fully compliant with the founder of critical pedagogy Henry Giroux, who claimed in his seminal interview that,

“Uncertainties can be a time of great anxiety but a time of great possibility. A time to rethink the language of politics, rethink the language of struggle. Power is not always about domination. It's also about resistance. Young people have a lot of power. They can shut societies down. They can block streets, they can engage in direct action, they can educate their parents...

They are a potent political force and I think what they need to do is to recognise themselves as a potent political force and they need to act. Because a discourse of anxiety should give way to a discourse of critique and a discourse of critique should give way to a discourse of possibility. And a discourse of possibility means that you can imagine a future very different from the present” (França, 2019).

In the context of unprovoked Russian-Ukrainian war, when Ukraine is fighting for its Independence and preserving its cultural heritage, Ukrainian HEIs educators and teachers, whilst teaching and educating students have changed their focus on students' emotional resilience, on geopolitical and media literacy, on their capacity to counter deepfakes & disinformation of russia's media outlets. What is more, in November 11, 2022 during the online BERA-UERA webinar “The Voice of Ukrainian Educational Research Association across Borders or is there Educational Solidarity during Russian-Ukrainian War?” (Webinar, 2022), Ukrainian researchers' meaningful messages and powerful voices were cast to tell the truth to the world, disseminate the true information and claim that EDUCATION creates the premises for democracy, defines the society and Ukraine's Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs), as Professor Oksana Zabolotna classified them to be currently 'ruined, displaced or wounded', in their turn, have proved to be a frontline for defending democracy, its moral values and humanism,

cultivating creativity and critical thinking, flexibility, and communication skills. The HEIs of Ukraine have become an effective tool for educating Zoomers-Ukrainians - global citizens to contribute to shaping our future, where social culture and values should be harmoniously blended into the regained democracy of Ukraine – state of Freedom and Independence.

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned, according to President of UERA (Ukrainian Educational Research Association) Professor O.Zabolotna, there is still considerable ambiguity with regard to Education 2030 agenda and the Framework for Action, signed in 2015, and the current reality puts on the table the idea that it's high time to reconsider "indicative strategies which countries may wish to draw upon in developing contextualised plans and strategies, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities" (Education 2030 Framework, 2015).

It should be articulated that global citizenship education has been elaborated as an integral part of UNESCO's agenda to advance sustainable development under the Education 2030 Agenda and Framework for Action. Namely, the United Nations states that global citizenship education "involves students' active participation in projects that address global issues of a social, political, economic, or environmental nature" (para 1). Importantly, both the United Nations and UNESCO's conception of global citizenship enhance the top priority of global citizenship education that seeks "to nurture respect for all, to build a sense of belonging to a common humanity and to help learners become responsible and active global citizens (UNESCO, 2019a, 2019b) (Global Citizenship Education, 2016).

Symbolically, according to online language tool Babbel (Statistics & Data), in 2022, amongst 7,151 living languages, English (sometimes it is called Globish) ranks top of 10 most spoken languages globally and is mainly used for international communication as one of the results of globalisation processes (Kaufman, 2022).

In this respect, my strong conviction is that English as a Foreign Language classroom (EFL) can considerably contribute to a culturally versatile development of global citizenship education. Recently foreign language professors/teachers have become a pull and push factor in the sustainable development of both a global society and its citizens. Since, English is mainly used for international communication as one of the results of globalisation processes, users of English are supposed to be aware of how to deal and communicate with different cultures. This is especially important for students because the trend towards an increased international work environment will influence their later careers. Furthermore, gaining a shared legacy of facing challenges in adapting to a new environment as a refugee/migrant is a common phenomenon in today's globalised world, respectively, EFL teachers are supposed to learn by themselves and develop students' pragmatic competence to deal with diverse cultural backgrounds.

At present, in an increasingly multi-territorialized and interdependent world, people are getting more in touch with each other than ever before through many

mass media services (Moutinho et al, 2015). This provides people the possibility to overcome geographical borders in order to develop their capacity to build new relationships that foster mutual interests in economical and socio-cultural aspects from different countries.

Consequently, not only official diplomats are in charge of this exchange, quoting the British cultural diplomacy expert Melissa Nisbet, “in the age of globalisation, it would seem, that anything and everything could be labelled and understood as cultural diplomacy, and anyone and everyone is responsible for it” (Nisbett, 2016:2).

As EFL teachers we can all be considered cultural diplomats who perform interaction between cultures through teaching English as a foreign language and being Ukrainians. In this vein, we provide the students with information about socio-cultural aspects, rather than only linguistic ones.

The objective of the research is to focus on *Cultural Diplomacy* through foreign language teaching/learning, illustrating real life situations experienced by both students and professors/teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), who act as cultural diplomats in both a domestic and an international setting.

**METHODS.** Delving into the problem of harnessing cultural diplomacy through teaching/learning English as EFL, the study presented an in-depth scientific analysis based on conceptual framework of cultural diplomacy as soft power and synthesis which aimed at actual and multifaceted practices and, accordingly, provided the students with opportunities to consider their own experiences and yield their own fruits of soft skills. Generalisation of theoretical and research data were primarily used to relate to the problem of embracing EFL teaching methodology and general understanding of cross-cultural communication as a core concept of the study. To establish whether a theoretical perspective of the research concords with a pragmatic one, case study method was incorporated in the communicative approach study. 80 participants – 1-5-year students of the Faculty of History, Political Sciences and International Studies were facilitated to use English as an effective tool of communication and voicing their ideas instead of mere practising of vocabulary and grammar points. The rise and the rise of IT and students’ tech-savviness, an arts-based, collaborative and innovative method of Digital storytelling enabled to evaluate the students’ teamwork and evaluative method to assess students’ translation quality assessment.

**RESULTS & DISCUSSION.** It should be articulated that applied linguistics is a growing and vibrant discipline in universities nationally and internationally. It is an interdisciplinary field of research and instruction that provides theoretical and descriptive foundations for the empirical investigation and solution of language-related issues, especially those of language education (first-language, second-language, foreign-language and heritage-language teaching and learning), but also issues of bilingualism and biliteracy, language policy, language assessment, lexicography, rhetoric and composition, and translation and interpretation.

Students who demonstrate competence in these areas increase their opportunities for employment, as many job descriptions indicate a preference for candidates with an emphasis in applied linguistics or foreign language acquisition. Also, with the ever-increasing number of foreign/second language learners, it is essential for all teachers and educational researchers to have a fundamental understanding of language learning and teaching theories and practices.

What is more, applied linguists working in the fields of workplace communication, intercultural communication, and cross-cultural pragmatics have made an important contribution to cross-cultural understanding. For instance, by helping uncover the linguistic source of misunderstandings, including in problem-solving in conflict situations.

The role of culture in a field as vast as applied linguistics is so pronounced and vital that even a highly selective overview might not be sufficient to be comprehensive. The enigmatic point which even makes the vast field of applied linguistics goes to unbeaten tracks is the similar nature of culture, since culture and language are intrinsically intertwined, it's decided to have a more cultural stance rather than a linguistic one.

According to Humaroih (2022, 69), for many years, intercultural communicative competence (ICC) has been discussed to elucidate the development of students' awareness, skill, and experience in regard to intercultural communication. Yet, practically, suggestions for enhancing teachers' or educators' practice in intercultural communication classrooms are of vital value, the use of culture-based digital storytelling (DST) tasks “ to promote intercultural awareness and identity in multicultural classroom settings. 1) express their cultural identities from their point of view verbally and visually; (2) maximise their multimodal literacy and design creatively; (3) activate their background experiences to illustrate their intersecting cultural ideas critically; (4) further enhance their critical thinking and cultural awareness; (5) reflect their cultural identities in enhancing their intercultural competence; and (6) apply cultural identity theory to demonstrate and analyse their cultural ideas”.

As language Professors of our DEPT are to teach students majoring in IS and TS, both students and EFL teachers can be considered independent, public or cultural diplomats who mediate the interaction between cultures (and countries) through the teaching, doing research, translating of the corresponding languages.

Therefore, EFL teachers are to provide learners with a rich socio-cultural awareness and living skills, rather than only linguistic training on the target language. This means that the instructor's task is no longer just teaching the language system itself, but teaching beyond language, incorporating the capacity to use the target language through topics related to the students' interests and needs. As it is largely presupposed in Foreign Language Acquisition theory, a foreign language teacher is not only an important external factor but also a key agent to help achieve learners' success through many kinds of contributions. Besides the more traditional role of a competent speaker who can provide the learners relevant comprehensible input so that they can reach an acceptable level of proficiency, the

language instructor can also provide motivation, elucidation and explanation on the evolutionary processes of the culture, history and economy of a country (or countries), making the students to act in the new space called foreign language and participating in their own process of learning. This students' involvement can lead to an eventual integration in or, at least, an understanding of the target language culture. This understanding can, in turn, become solid full-fledged attitudes in the future, facilitating the process of foreign language acquisition.

To recapitulate a theoretical framework, I can state the status of applied linguistics as discipline is questioned and problems of establishing it – and other newly formed scientific enterprises like cultural science – as disciplines have become the focal point of EFL researches. From a pragmatic perspective, this problem under study has been contextualised using my own experience as an applied linguist working at the Department of Modern Foreign Languages & Translation Studies (DMFL&TS).

The establishment of the DMFL&TS was a pilot project, since the academic staff of the Department was supposed to teach foreign languages and TS to students who were majoring in International Relations, Regional Studies and Public Communications. In the end, the daring venture turned into a deep-rooted and developed institution with its own traditional methods of teaching, adapting to the modern challenges of the Knowledge Society. It is worth mentioning that the Department made a breakthrough in teaching both IS and a foreign language – *'using language to learn, learning to use language'*. The Department professors/teachers started up a new educational approach Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), providing exposure to the language without requiring extra time in the curriculum, which is of particular interest in their future expertise. Primarily, the attention has been drawn to linguistics as well as terminology and translation studies – building blocks of the educational process associated with learning foreign languages. The Department of Modern Languages and Translation Studies trains a professional translator as a mediator of cross-cultural communication to survive and succeed under the conditions of a rapid globalisation. The process of EFL teaching significantly contributes to students' gaining key competencies of the 21st century, namely: civic literacy; global awareness and cross-cultural skills; critical and inventive thinking; communication, collaboration and information skills. It is worth mentioning that after completing their Master's Degree, graduates are conferred the diplomas of Experts in International Studies and Experts in Translation. If to monitor our multifaceted graduates' success, they have become cultural diplomats at different levels - scholars, civil servants, entrepreneurs, social media marketing managers, politicians, media experts, PR managers, interpreters and visionaries to meet the diverse challenges of a globalised world (Bohatyrets, 2021:229).

If to speak about a couple of cases that could exemplify the principle from information to participation, following the chronology, I would mention that the first valuable contribution of the students, Associate and Assistant Professors in English of our Department was the translation of a package of documents of the

nomination dossier on the inclusion of the Residence of Metropolitan Bukovina and Dalmatia (now Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University) in the UNESCO World Heritage, being adopted by the 35th session of UNESCO on June 28, 2011 (The Residence of Bukovyna and Dalmatia Metropolitans in Chernivtsi, 2008).

Applying multiple skill- and knowledge-based assessments, we could evaluate students' learning targets and their achievements, in particular, their performance in class as well as conferences and their qualified translations on different University and NGO's levels. Our students' participation in international summer schools and international conferences both as contributors and translators has become an amazing experience of their pragmatic competence both as translators and cultural diplomats on their interpersonal and international level.

I can't but mention a very crucial moment in the course of the history of Ukraine. To be more precise, our EFL professors/teachers and students' joint efforts as well as students' powerful linguistic and tech-savvy competencies facilitated powerful Euromaidan (The Revolution of Dignity) outreach. In this respect, I cannot but mention, the-then students of the Faculty of History, Political Science and International Studies with the assistance and support of the Department of International Relations and the Department of Modern Foreign Languages and Translation Studies, shot a multilingual video "An Address to the Students of Europe" (in 6 languages) and created a post on YouTube, and, consequently, the world began to react and respond ("Ukrainian students' address to students from Europe!", 2014).

Of particular interest is the fact that teaching EFL does not necessarily focus on syntactic accuracy or competency in grammar usage. Instead, giving opportunities to students to use as much English as they can in real life contexts should be critically considered, especially for the students who have limited chances not only to be exposed to native English speakers, but also the opportunity to use English in their real-life milieu. Respectively, our going to London David Game College (Kensington Academy of English) has become another act of cultural diplomacy and a vital event in the life of both professors/teachers and students. We had a great opportunity to improve our lingual and socio-cultural skills, got acquainted with both the English language teaching system in British educational institutions and cultural heritage (architectural monuments, museums of London and Cambridge) and communicate with native speakers, breaking stereotypes about the climate of the Foggy Albion, arrogance and superiority of the British and gaining more confidence in terms of our own competences in the language environment. It was an unforgettable, extremely insightful and informative trip that allowed us to enrich our experience and acquire new knowledge, expand our worldview and become real cultural diplomats of Ukraine, promoting a positive image of Ukraine and its citizens amongst the learners from different countries. We were extremely proud of our 1-5-year students (including the students from the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Law Faculty), who aired their profound knowledge in both English and culture (60% of our students were

given C1 proficiency level certificates). I will never forget the moment the British professors/teachers were highly appraising our students' achievements and mentioning them to stand out among Brazilians, Russians, Italians, Polish, Chinese, Indians, and Greeks etc.

Noteworthy, what made our students – high-achievers, was grounded by their culture and values, and the idiosyncratic experiences of their upbringing and EFL learning style. During our EFL classroom we usually start with presenting the news (BBC one-minute English as a paradigm). The students are free to highlight the news about politics, culture, technologies and advancements, sharing with their fellow-students the relevant glossary (importantly, new entry should be defined in English and given synonyms), every winter and summer holidays students are enjoying their extensive reading (their own choice) – 50 pages of the authentic text; 50 collocations and phrases or chunks to be committed to the memory; and 5 their most-favoured collocations to share with their students during their presentations. Furthermore, every Unit of our course book “Bridge to Success: English for International Studies Students”, comprises the texts and tests about culture, lifestyle, geography and wildlife, famous people, science and technologies, art, history, sports, healthcare, society, environmental issues, public speaking and education, including English learning. In this perspective, while completing every unit, we put the cherry on the top by singing the songs or watching a movie on a relevant topic (students do love this activity and eagerly present their grammatically-correct and logically structured reviews, involving the new-learnt vocabulary).

Another stage in developing students' pragmatic competences has become Corona- or HyFlex learning that stirred another idea for spreading our positive vibes in the cultural front via FB and Instagram. Noteworthy, after Covid-19 the world and education has changed dramatically; with the distinctive rise of e-learning, whereby teaching is undertaken remotely and on digital platforms. The students were given a chance to lead and make their sole and team projects related to the topics we covered during the semester and it proved to be one of the best ways to reinforce learning through teaching. The students were given the opportunity to make their presentations or lead classes segments on particular topics (presenting news, topic-related idioms and slang; forums on DOEU project) a kind of Pedagogy of Partnership. To the point, we used to allow student-led teaching to take place both in the classroom and virtually. Their final projects that were to share their experience gained in Corona Learning yielded great fruits and outperformed our expectations. Being tech-savvy, the 1–2-year-students made Digital storytelling (shot their 3-minute studvines) rich in learnt vocabulary and grammar presentation, filled with bright emotions and sweet memories. The 3-year students shot the video ‘What is my vision of EU’ and even recorded the song “Shallow” and the 4-year students published their third issue of the magazine giving life hacks on how to survive the Corona and never stop advancing and mastering English. That was a real blast in re-conceptualization of the teaching/learning. It should be articulated, that corona reality has significantly

addressed the need for linguistic knowledge and intercultural competence in a global business environment, a requirement and necessity that has become more apparent to many international businesses and organisations, and students were supposed to customise their knowledge in business interactions, public discourse, media discourse, as well as the discourse of consumption and globalisation (#STAYSAFE #STAYHOME, 2020; Learning Can Be Entertaining,2020; Department of Modern Foreign Languages & TS, 2020).

Together these results provide important insights into another identity aspect for our students' socio-lingual and translation and interpreting skills has become a two-year truly bountiful cooperation with the EU-funded Jean Monnet Open Online Course of European Integration (EUROSCI) and prompted us to infer that EU-Ukraine cultural cooperation as a powerful toolkit of enhancing opportunity and value of interstate relations prove to strengthen its regulatory environment, moreover, to remove barriers of existing borders, based on cultural similarities and on economic and social differences. Apropos, each course at our Faculty of History, Political Science and International Relations, in particular at the Department of International Studies (International Relations, Regional Studies & Public Communications) is delivered with reference to the knowledge acquired through globalisation of education. This refers to the history, culture and different educational methodologies received from the EU and alike. Consequently, it sounds quite logical that our faculty wants to deepen the accumulated knowledge in order to prepare experts in International and Translation Studies, diplomats, political scientists, think-tank analysts and interpreters to be able to accept and adapt to changes in the cutting-edge traditional channels of communication. The EUROSCI network included the courses "EU Economic Development"; and after their being agile and proactive in doing the course and airing their knowledge of 3 languages (English, Spanish and Romanian), what is more, shooting the video 'What the EU means for us', another JM course "Strategic Communication" was deliberately elaborated and tailed for the students of our Faculty (What the EU means for us', 2018).

To finalise, it has been an honour and a real pleasure to introduce the students of Ukraine to the world of EU academia and studentship within the framework of the project "Doing Europe: Cohesion and Integration in the European Union" (611388-EPP-1-2019-1-DE-EPPJMO-MODULE). During 3 different modules (2020-2022) our students – cultural diplomats acquired their practical academic competencies and skills within a virtual JM DOEU course. I am confident that our inter-university international, multilingual and multi-faceted videoconferences have become another opportunity for us to bolster our gained ample knowledge and mutually enriching cross-cultural experience. Eventually, this virtual course has definitely benefited our institutions as well as promoted our personal growth and generated new ideas. I would like to wrap up some insights of our zoom-journey of Joint Jean-Monnet-Course 'European Integration: Conflicts, Institutions, Policies, and Cohesion'.

From *the perspective of Ukraine*, a less visible but vitally important dimension of political change in Ukraine concerns the strengthening of grassroots civil society. Consequently, the DoEU model is perceptive to emulate since after Euromaidan a diversity of grassroots initiatives (economic, social, environmental, and political-institutional) turned up to suggest an efficient toolkit for building a sustainable institutional transformation as well as robust civil society in Ukraine.

The students' skills were shown in the process of completing their final projects. During the course, they have applied empirical methods of observation and comparison, to build soft skills and competencies, communication and interpersonal skills, critical thinking, civic engagement; linguistic and intercultural competencies.

Amongst all the acquired skills I would single out Linguistic Competence is an indispensable part of students' communicative competence. Their declarative and procedural knowledge in EU policies has enabled them to tackle the multifarious fields of the discourse and having specific content-based knowledge they undertook the problem-predicting and problem-solving processes. Thus, they became intermediaries between different language systems as well as intercultural mediators – owing to the DOEU course; they have become both 'bilingual and bicultural'. Thus, our course crucially enhanced their understanding of the cultural 'other'.

Therefore, completing the course they have become in the picture of the EU and **what** it does for Ukraine, respectively, they turned their theoretical and empirical knowledge into practical proficiency in terms of acting, doing resilient, powerful EUROPE for citizens.

In our vein, immediately before the onset of the Russo-Ukrainian War we raised awareness of Siegen University students regarding the benefits of European integration and to demonstrate European values through the examples of Ukrainian students' activities and their involvement in all walks of life.

There is growing awareness that languages play a vital role in development, in ensuring cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue and strengthening cooperation. There was a significant positive correlation between students who learn English as EFL and serve as volunteers, translators and cultural diplomats, when sharing their translations in widely spread social networks and media outlets, disseminating the truth about the war in Ukraine. There was rather a remarkable outcome when 1-year students were suggested translating the post from FB. As EFL learners they've brushed up the vocabulary (Family & Relationship, Home & House) and as translators they accomplished the mission of cultural diplomats (Всім привіт. Я будинок, 2022).

Undergraduates were suggested to do translation for NGO Institute of Democracy and Development, highlighting the true facts about violence in Mariupol and Bucha, Genocide. Mariupol (2022) Bucha (2022) Genocide (2022).

One of the more significant findings to emerge from this study is that the students – logophiles and future interpreters/ translators embrace the importance of developing their translation skill - the ability to decode cultures and bridge worlds

– one of the most highly demanded skills today, especially at the times when Ukraine is at war – bridge hearts and souls.

**CONCLUSION.** The present study was designed to determine the effect of cultural diplomacy as soft power that considerably contributes to effective EFL teaching/learning. The findings in this study reveal that through language we practise our culture and identity. The concluding proof of the research has established a theoretical and practical framework which demonstrates that various disciplines highlight the need for interdisciplinarity of teaching EFL.

Drawing on the theoretical underpinnings of CD (cultural diplomacy) as inextricable part of EFL, both students and EFL teachers can be considered independent, public or cultural diplomats who mediate the interaction between cultures (and countries) through the teaching, doing research, and translating of the corresponding languages.

Students, furnished with cross-cultural pragmatic competence in the classroom and provided with classroom tasks, can develop their capacity to express and implicit their communicative competence for a sustainable English learning environment. One of the most significant findings to emerge from this study is that EFL teachers are to provide learners with a rich socio-cultural awareness and living skills, rather than only linguistic training on the target language.

It is predicted that, with globalisation and advances in technology, peer-to-peer cultural interaction will continue to grow. In the future, countries will increasingly rely on their individual citizens to shape a positive image of their nation abroad, instead of leaving this role to traditional state-to-state diplomacy.

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