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THE PROBLEM OF MULTICULTURAL COMPONENT OF LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the problem of language education in the multicultural aspect. The urgency of the problem is due to modernization of education with its course on the use of the educational process for harmonization of interethnic relations, on multicultural education. The content of the problem is revealed through consideration of the question of multicultural component of language education. The aim of the article is to reveal the content, functions and structure of the multicultural component. It is revealed that the content of the multicultural component of language education includes a set of interrelated external (regional-cultural, ethnic-cultural, socio-cultural, intercultural) and internal (world-reflective) elements. The main functions of the multicultural component are cognitive, evaluative, personal-oriented, and integrative functions. In accordance with the functions, the structural levels of the multicultural component - enculturation, communicative-linguistic and information - are distinguished.

Keywords: multicultural component; language education; intercultural cooperation

Introduction

Development of intercultural communication, interaction and cooperation contribute to developing attitudes towards the modern educational process from the standpoint of diversity of cultures. In modern conditions of modernization of education, the main direction of its development is the course on the use of the learning process for harmonization interethnic relations, and on multicultural education.

All this also applies to language education. The emphasizing of the multicultural component of language education is due to the need for clear understanding of the multicultural content-structural form of training of students of a language institute. The effectiveness of training a student for positive multicultural interaction on the basis of intercultural cooperation depends on it.

1. The content of the multicultural component

Culture is a super complex system, which combines a lot of subsystems. The term “multicultural” is a systemic concept that leads to understanding

problems of co-evolution, i.e. joint “mutually agreed development of complex structures and ways of their integration into a single whole” (Kuznetsova 2002, 10).

The multicultural component, according to Mukhametzyanova, means the involvement of an individual in the modern world civilization processes and “modern education should be aimed at the formation of a person of culture, capable of working with knowledge, with different types of thinking, with ideas of different cultures” (2002).

According to researchers, such multicultural education opens up great opportunities for students to learn human and national values for meaningful cooperation of various ethnic cultures in a multiethnic environment to ensure a dialogue of cultures (Banks 2013; Jackson 2013; Sleeter & Grant 2009).

The realization of the multicultural component of education is aimed at forming the readiness for positive multicultural interaction. Readiness is considered to be the ability of solving the tasks of mastering the main professionally significant functions that are provided by a combination of external and internal factors. Therefore, the multicultural component of the training of students of a language institute includes a set of interrelated elements of external (regional-cultural, ethnic- cultural, socio-cultural, intercultural) and internal (world-reflective) levels that determine the content of student training on the basis of included educational material, characterized by a multicultural orientation. Let us turn to a more detailed examination of them.

1.1 Regional-cultural element

From the position of culture one can define “region” as the cultural-civilizational integrity of the essential, stable and dynamic signs of the vital activity of people. The phenomenon of the region is revealed in ideological, mental and practical self-identification of a certain territorial community in its self-consciousness as a relatively independent subject. The equivalent of the concept “region” in humanitarian studies may be a concept “historical-cultural zone” as a multicultural space with a high degree of sustainability. “Regional culture is the entire rich world of material and spiritual elements that constitute the life of inhabitants of a given region (its constituent parts are geography, history, political life, art, sport, folklore, household realities)” (Kuznetsova 2002, 20).

Interest in the regional or minority cultures and their protection under globalization which penetrates deeper into the various areas of life activities of the society acts as one of the main directions of the Council of Europe's culture policy.

Development of minority cultures, resistance to majority cultures, preservation of their identities and finding any possible ways that can keep native cultures and languages alive are the actual trend all over the world, and in Europe, in particular (Hornsby 2012; Colluzi 2007; Edwards 2010).

1.2 Ethnic-cultural element

The education system aimed at forming culture of interethnic relations may be a mechanism of their improvement. Now, attention to the problems related

to the interaction of ethnocultural, linguistic and ethnopsychological factors is growing. Formation of the individual must be built in the light of culture, historical epoch, ethnosocium and natural-geographical situation, as Mukhametzyanova (2002) believes.

Teaching the diversity of cultures and peoples within the framework of linguistic disciplines creates the possibility of enriching the individual in the process of studying ethnolinguistics, ethnodidactics, etc. Socio-historical features of people's vital activity, values, psychological characteristics, and traditions constitute the ethnonational system of linguistic thinking. Mutual enrichment of cultures and mutual understanding of people imply the study of the culture of the everyday life of the ethnos, its language, its general culture, and its national characteristics of behavior, conditioned by religious-cultural affiliation.

Preserving the cultural heritage, increasing the degree of its influence on the formation of the cultural foundation of modernity is the most important problem of modernity. In particular, the works of researchers are devoted to this problem and to the study of the features of ethnic cultures and their interaction (Kane & Jacobs 2015; Phinney & Ong 2007).

1.3 Socio-cultural element

The impact of society on the individual can be considered as a factor affecting formation of culture.

Socio-historical processes define cultural values and cultural diversity. A concrete social system, a commonality, an epoch and a modern model of education, creating a world-reflecting culture of generations, condition the socio-cultural element.

Hofstede (2010) these elements compares to “software mind”. The sources of one’s mental program lie within the social environment in which one grows up and collects one’s life experience. The programming starts within the family, it continues within the neighborhood, at school in youth groups, at the workplace and in the living community.

1.4 Intercultural element

This element refers to intercultural interaction and includes educational and communicative components. In terms of education, intercultural interaction is a combination of intercultural learning and upbringing. Intercultural education presupposes a peaceful settlement of issues related to the interethnic conflicts, as well as cooperation and interaction based on the adoption of key values of cultures, upbringing of tolerant attitude to cultural differences. In the opinion of Sadokhin, intercultural communication ‘is not limited to knowledge of foreign languages, but also requires knowledge of material and spiritual culture of other people, their religion, values, moral attitudes, world outlook’ (2005). The origins of productive intercultural communication, as Persikova (2002) says, are in the purposeful study of culture, and in the analysis of cultural values.

The intercultural element of the multicultural component of language education implies cultural self-determination of a person and study of cultural values by him/her on the basis of communicative interaction.

Intercultural level depends on two basic axes: interculturality and intercultural training (Leiva 2010). These aspects positively influence achieving respect and tolerance in the society we live in.

1.5 World-reflective element

A world-reflective element, the necessity and uniqueness of which is determined by its role of the ideological synthesizer, groups the views of the individual on nature and on the importance of the whole field of culture. It is the key to self-determination in cultural diversity and is the basis of the mentality of a person and his/her behavior.

“Mentalities are a set of beliefs and representations that determine the behavior and attitudes of individuals to a given situation, a solidified system of reactions and responses to experience” (Fulga 2000, 201). “As generating or structural structures, mentalities are diffuse cultural dispositions, supported by socialization and institutionalization” (Sandu 2006, 21).

Values, that are the basis for the formation of the worldview, we refer to this element. In addition, a person is a self-worth because the person at the same time acts as a model of an alloy of different cultures: national, professional, gender, family, social, class. In the opinion of Alishev (2002), a person commits his/her actions according to fundamental value priorities and ideas about the essence of each value. Hence, it follows that the world-reflective element is especially important. Besides, necessity for consideration of such concepts as tolerance, intercultural communication, culture, mutual understanding, agreement, values, cooperation, etc. is embedded in the concept of multicultural education (Shannon-Baker 2018; Smith 2014).

2. Functions of the multicultural component

In the course of the study, the main functions of a multicultural component of the training of students of a language institute are defined. The cognitive function is aimed at developing students' scientific knowledge about problems caused by global processes, about globalization, national-ethnic and territorial differentiation of the peoples of the world, about culture, and cultural diversity of the world.

The evaluative function is to focus on the totality of cultural values, on the knowledge of values that are significant for society. This course on the world of moral, spiritual, cultural and other values in the modern multicultural space should be paramount, as well as the affirmation of the value of the human life, education, activities, and communication in a multicultural society.

The personal-oriented function, derived from the concept of personal-oriented education, is focused on the student's personality, its development, interests, as

well as on the moral and life self-determination in the context of cultural self-determination, personal growth and self-development in a multicultural society. For example, Zimnyaya (2010) believes that the purpose of education is to create conditions for the development of a harmonious, morally perfect, professionally competent and self-developing personality. Relying on the concept of personally oriented education, we believe, that realization of multicultural component of training of students of language institute is aimed at the orientation of the student's personality in a multicultural society.

The integrative function is designed to ensure the coordination and synthesis of all disciplines. It is caused by a certain state of culture, education, science, health and other branches of a specific region and includes the accounting of the specifics of national-cultural traditions, the possibility of realizing the internal potential of the educational institution, the integration of students into the multicultural educational space of Russia and the world as a whole.

3. Structure of the multicultural component

The structure of multicultural component we consider on the basis of a general understanding of the structure of the object of research, in accordance with the functions, highlighting its levels.

The first level is the level of enculturation, reflecting the mastery of the culture of a student's own ethnos. In cultural studies, by enculturation is understood the study of human norms of behavior and traditions of a particular culture. Consequently, the application of the values of ethnoculture, ethnopsychology and ethnopedagogy introduces a person to the roots of the national culture, and their merging helps to identify factors that determine the national mentality and serve as a national-psychological determinant, as well as to understand the causes of ethno-conflicts in the modern world. Appeal to the spiritual, religious, ethnic values of the people makes it possible to evaluate the features of popular pedagogy, its spiritual sources. Consequently, in the process of learning the specificity of the national culture and acquaintance with the national traditions of various ethnic groups, processes of personal development and spiritual development based on the use of potential cultural values intensify. Ethnic knowledge, in particular ethnocultural, helps development of interethnic tolerance.

The second level is the communicative-linguistic level, characterizing the specifics of the language activity as a means of exchanging cultural values transmitted by the language. Communicativeness covers all levels of personality's entry into culture. This level provides interrelation of intercultural communication and linguoculturology through cultural realities, reflected in the language of the people.

Language disciplines (foreign, Russian, and Yakut languages) allow a student to learn spiritual and social-moral values and at the same time act as their translators.

Language is not only a means of expressing thought and communication, but also an accumulator of cultural knowledge. Therefore, one of the main conditions for the implementation of multicultural component is the co-study of languages and cultures. The main role is assigned to the language as a means of transferring cultural national-specific features of the studied language country and means of communication. Inclusion in the content of language disciplines elements acquainting students with customs, rituals, everyday culture, traditions, everyday behavior, national features of thinking, and artistic culture, according to Ter-Minasova (2000), contributes to the intercultural communication. This contributes to the creation of favorable conditions for realization of the dialogue of cultures on the basis of other cultural ideas, a different understanding of socio-cultural values, and different stereotype of thinking.

The third is the information level that ensures the entry of a person into the surrounding information space in which occurs the transmission to subsequent generations of information about different forms of linguistic activity, about the diversity of ethno-cultures, about processes of intercultural interaction and cultural values. It unites scientific ideas of the typology of cultures, the philosophy of culture, and the sociology of culture. During the process of learning cultural values of the past and present, students get an opportunity to understand diversity and interaction of cultures, as well as to choose of the vector of cultural self-determination in the modern multicultural world. This helps them to regard every culture as part of a set of cultures aimed at resolving life human problems.

This level assumes the inclusion of the individual in education as a well-organized and specially organized process of information interaction, influencing the processes of self-education and self-education. It is at this level where a process of differentiation and analysis of the received information about culture takes place.

All of the above levels are interrelated and aimed at gaining knowledge, contributing to the development of tolerance and guiding the productive intercultural cooperation in the multicultural world.

Conclusion

Proceeding from the above, we come to the conclusion that the multicultural component of language education includes a set of interrelated elements of external (regional-cultural, ethnic-cultural, socio-cultural, intercultural) and internal (world-reflective) levels that determine the content of the training of students.

The main functions of the multicultural component of student's training in language institute are cognitive, evaluative, personal-oriented, and integrative functions. According to the functions, its levels are distinguished: enculturation, communicative-linguistic and information levels.

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