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НОВОЕ ПОЛОЖЕНИЕ ИНОСТРАННЫХ ЯЗЫКОВ В СИСТЕМЕ ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ, ОРИЕНТИРОВАННОГО НА ГЛОБАЛЬНУЮ ГРАЖДАНСТВЕННОСТЬ

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В статье представлен обзор основных направлений современных исследований по проблеме корректировки целей языкового образования, ориентированного на подготовку к эффективной межкультурной и поликультурной коммуникации. Цели статьи – проанализировать влияние процесса глобализации на изменение целей обучения иностранным языкам, описать основные положения нового подхода к обучению иностранным языкам, целью которого является формирование нового типа компетенции – поликультурной, а также представить результаты его практического использования. Авторами отмечается, что поликультурная компетенция может рассматриваться как новое направление теории языкового образования, которое основывается на когнитивной лингвистике и фокусирует свое внимание на том, что обучение иностранным языкам не исчерпывается овладением языковым кодом. Овладение концептуальной картиной мира носителей различных культур рассматривается как важный компонент обучения иностранным языкам. В статье выделены два важных аспекта исследования: 1) возрастание роли иностранных языков как образования, способствующего формированию гражданской ответственности; 2) доказательство нового положения иностранных языков как образования, ориентированного на формирование качеств глобальной гражданской ответственности. Важной частью предложенной авторами методологии является междисциплинарный и интегрированный подход, который включает в себя две теоретические дисциплины («Межкультурная и поликультурная коммуникация» и «Культурологические основы перевода») и практическую дисциплину («Английский язык»). Полученные результаты подтверждают гипотезу о том, что развитие поликультурной компетенции обеспечивает формирование таких знаний, умений и навыков, которые помогают студентам стать гражданами глобального общества.

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THE NEW POSITION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AS EDUCATION FOR GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

Abstract

The article presents the observation of modern directions in research devoted to the problem of changes of the goals in language education, oriented on preparation for effective intercultural and multicultural communication. The purpose of this article is to analyze the influence of the process of globalization on the goals of teaching foreign languages, to describe the ideas of a new approach to the system of foreign language teaching aimed at developing a new type of competence – multicultural and to present its practical results. The authors point out that multicultural competence is characterized here as a new perspective in the theory of linguistic education which is based on cognitive linguistics and focused on the fact that teaching foreign languages is not only a language code acquisition. An important component of teaching is a conceptual world picture of native speakers belonging to different cultures. Two aspects are underlined in the article: 1) the growth of the role of foreign language teaching as education for citizenship [4], 2) confirmation of the new position of foreign language teaching as education for global citizenship. The most important part of the authors' methodology is an interdisciplinary and integrating approach which includes the theoretical course "Intercultural and multicultural communication" + the theoretical course "Cultural aspects of interpretation" + the practical course "Foreign language (English)". The results proved the idea that the development of multicultural competence provides the formation of necessary knowledge and skills helping students to become global citizens.

Keywords

Globalization, multicultural competence, intercultural/multicultural communication, interdisciplinary approach, foreign culture, cultural concepts, global citizen, global citizenship.



Among the most important imperatives of the XXI century globalization (as a process of growing worldwide interconnection of structures and cultures) takes one of the first positions. This phenomenon appeared in the XX century and is connected with increasing acceleration in both concrete global interdependence and consciousness of the global whole [12]. It is widely known that various problems and conflicts are associated with globalization (e.g. migration, immigration, employment and education of new arrivals, cultural misunderstanding).

In this situation researchers from different spheres of social sciences (sociology, education, philosophy, psychology) try to find the ways preventing negative influence of this phenomenon on different sides of our life (M. S. Archer, K. A. Grant, A. Portera, J. Stier, etc.).

The role of education and educators may be of great significance here. The importance of education is recognized as a global call to the preparation of students to face challenges of migration, mobility, social inequality and etc. In this way it is well known that any education has ideological implementation and foreign language teaching first of all plays a “political role” [6]. This role is defined as developing an ability to critically evaluate practices and products in one’s own and other countries and cultures [5] and to construct a new peaceful world under the laws of global citizenship.

The role of foreign language teaching integrated with multicultural communication is under our investigation. The globally developing world is becoming multicultural. Consequently, it is not enough to teach students to understand only one contacting culture as in the theory of intercultural communication, which is included in contemporary educational standards. In order to prepare future specialists to communicate and cooperate with different people of the world it is necessary to create a new approach.

Our experiment was to answer the following questions: 1) How has the role of intercultural communication and intercultural competence for participants of the international interactions in the situation of globalization been changed? 2) What characteristic features should be included into the structure of multicultural competence helping a person to become a global citizen? 3) What new methodological ideas can be used for developing characteristic features of global citizenship?

Within the current situation of globally developing world we agree with the opinion of those scientists who try to prove the idea that special competencies should be developed for a global world and that the role of intercultural education is assumed to match demands of the global and multicultural world [16].

Intercultural education is described as the organization of the educational process which is based on the interaction of subjects, representatives of various cultures mediated by language. This activity is directed to “accumulation of knowledge about culture of the country of the learned language and elaboration of strategy of actions which promotes understanding of own and foreign culture on the basis of their comparison” [14]. In present day situation, intercultural education is determined as a response to the new context of globalization and the increasing convergence of different languages, religions, cultural behaviour and ways of thinking [15].

Within the situation of intercultural education during the last decade a lot was investigated in the sphere of intercultural communication and intercultural competence and their role in preventing social and cultural conflicts. We absolutely agree with the conclusion that intercultural competence can facilitate intercultural communication by enabling individuals to act as mediators during



conflicts between those from distinct cultures [13].

The research in the sphere of intercultural communication including the works of such well-known specialists as M. J. Bennett [4], M. Byram [6], J. Stier [17] and many others helped us to come up to the idea that interdisciplinary investigation should be fulfilled for the purpose of developing a model for multicultural competence. Thus, intercultural communication is usually defined as “ability to communicate and interact across cultural boundaries” [7]. As for the meaning of intercultural competence, in the majority of cases it is described as the ability to interact effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations; it is supported by specific attitudes and effective features, (inter)cultural knowledge, skills and reflection [18]. In general, interaction between two contacting cultures is meant. But in the global society the process of intercultural communication assuming only dialogue of cultures isn't sufficient.

Later on the term “intercultural communicative competence” has appeared. It was analyzed and investigated by M. Aguilar [1]. She tried to explain the appearance of this very important connection between the process of foreign languages learning and teaching with culture and attitude. According to her survey, after years of concentrating attention only on communicative competence, researchers came to understanding the importance of including culture, cultural content in traditional language acquisition. This author even suggests a new term “intercultural teacher” describing his role in helping students to see the connections between their own and other cultures, “awaken their curiosity about difference and otherness” [1, pp. 92–93]. This idea is very important for the development of the theory of intercultural communicative competence.

An interesting research proving new ideas of the role of intercultural competence development in foreign language learning and teaching was done in 2011 by M. Georgiou [9]. This author as the previous one came to an important conclusion that the role of the teacher in the process of building intercultural competence changes from language development to promoting humanistic values such as respect of diversity, tolerance, and understanding amongst cultural groups. In other words, this role is called a “moral enterprise”. This conclusion is very close to those, which we are going to prove in our research.

Inside the theory of intercultural communicative competence some scientists started to speak about enhancing the role of cultural critical awareness – CCA – while teaching foreign languages (M. Byrom [7, 8], K. Nugent and T. Catalano [11] and others). The results of their research showed that the social and psychological dimensions of CCA guide teachers in addressing how the social context of language and culture affect interactions with representatives from different cultures. According to K. Nugent and T. Catalano, critical cultural awareness should be treated as an expansion of intercultural communicative competence and must become an important part of the foreign language classroom [11]. This attitude helps students to deeper penetrate into the problem of understanding differences and common features of different cultures thus solving effectively the problem of connecting classrooms to real situations of global community.

Sociology studies of globalization as social theory and global culture (M. Archer [3], A. Giddens [10], etc.) and of multiculturalism as its result have also proved the idea of the importance of developing a new type of competence in the new generation of foreign language specialists. They should know how to



build bridges with the representatives of various countries and cultures, but not only with the only foreign country the language of which they learn.

An important fact for us is that many employers stress and value the need of diverse cultural codes for professionals with competencies in several languages and knowledge [16]. In this concern, we would like to express our full agreement with the idea of M. Byram that it's high time to pass from foreign language teaching to educating intercultural citizens [5]. In a 'globalised' and 'internationalised' world, the importance of identification with people beyond the national borders is crucial. In the investigations of this scientist, it was proved that "combined with education for citizenship, foreign language education can offer an education for 'intercultural citizenship'".

Later on a new term "global citizenship" appeared. Thus, some authors propose the idea of using a foreign language in order to promote global, cosmopolitan or intercultural citizenship [7]. We are sure that this is quite a new role of foreign language teaching and it fully reflects the demands of globally developing world and can offer new ideas and ways of preventing cultural conflicts and misunderstandings.

The role of a global citizen in the situation of intercultural conflicts is important for us. The scientists have proved the idea that intercultural competent individuals have the capacity to act as mediators in the situations of conflict between members of distinct cultural communities [2].

UNESCO has developed the idea of Global Citizenship Education (GCED) which aims to empower learners to assume active roles to face and resolve global challenges and to become proactive contributors to a more peaceful,

tolerant, inclusive and secure world¹. Nurturing respect for all, building a sense of belonging to a common humanity and helping learners become responsible and active global citizens – these are the common ideas of this type of education.

All these background materials helped us to consider that it is necessary to talk about multicultural competence, which is becoming more important in globally developing world where many countries and cultures interact. We consider multicultural competence as the ability for active positive interaction with representatives of multicultural world. It is defined as the ability to effectively carry out multicultural interaction, taking a position of a mediator between representatives of native and other cultures, realizing oneself as the representative of a certain ethnic community, the nation, and perceiving a situation of polylogue of cultures as an indispensable condition of self-realization and mutual enrichment of representatives of these cultures.

We have created the structure of multicultural competence consisting of three components: foreign language, sociocultural and personal. The foreign language component reflects the level of communicative competence in a foreign language.

The sociocultural component is defined as the knowledge of cultural features (based on cultural concepts, national mentality) of native speakers from different countries and ability to use them in the process of interaction.

The personal component is a position of a mediator (or a global citizen) between the native and other cultures, helping to analyze information from two, three or more points of view and to use a situation of multicultural communication not only for effective communication, but also for preventing cultural conflicts. The structure of the

¹ UNESCO. *Global Citizenship Education*. Available at: <http://en.unesco.org/gced> (accessed 30.05.2016).



construct of a mediator consists of such elements as tolerance, positive ethnic identity, close social distance, harmonious affiliation. From our point of view, these characteristic features of a personality are important parts of multicultural competence.

At the next level of the experiment, we worked out a special interdisciplinary technology for developing multicultural competence among the students of Saint-Petersburg Polytechnic University, studying at the department of the Humanities.

In order this technology to be successful we suggested a didactically organized integration of different subjects (theoretical and practical) and real communication with representatives of different cultures studying together in one and the same group due to the programs of students mobility. In other words, the principle of integrated training, which allows uniting diversified disciplines for complex formation of multicultural competence, is declared by us as the basic. For practical realization of this principle and check of a hypothesis that within the integrated training process the development of multicultural competence of students is carried out successfully, experimental training was organized.

Experimental training included the training of students within the integrated course "Introduction to Multicultural Communication + Cultural Aspects of Interpretation + Foreign Language". At the first stage lectures and practical course "Introduction to multicultural communication" with elements of intercultural and multicultural training, fixing of material in foreign language classes and communication with representatives of other cultures studying together were used. While organizing an integrated training it was important to consider correlation of materials and themes, which were included into the content of various disciplines. For our

research, horizontal communication of perspective and successive character between the three disciplines "Introduction to multicultural communication", "Cultural aspects of interpretation" and "Foreign language" were important. The purposes of this integration were: to increase the level of communicative competence of students in foreign languages, to reduce social distance of students with representatives of different nationalities, to harmonize ethnic affiliation and to move the students from an ethno-centrist position to the position of a global citizen.

Integrated training is the conventional resource of improvement of quality of education promoting the general rationalization of educational process in the limits of a curriculum. We explain the effectiveness of the idea of interdisciplinary synthesis in the following way: the process of studying basic courses is enriched with substantial elements of related subjects as the integrated training. In our case, the subject "Foreign language" takes into account the content of the theoretical course "Introduction to multicultural communication" setting scope of intercultural communication in a foreign language. In this type of interdisciplinary technology, the skills connected with the use of the subject content of the theoretical discipline are formed and improved with the help of a practical discipline.

As for the discipline "Cultural aspects of interpretation", it worked on the development of knowledge and skills in understanding the theory and practice of evaluating cultural concepts of universal and ethnical levels. The necessary knowledge and skills are connected with conceptual analysis technique at the three levels of investigation: word etymology, dictionary analysis (nuclear components), context analysis (interpretation components). One of the main goals here was to teach the students to understand



that universal concepts only partially have common features in different cultures, in many aspects their interpretation in different cultures is different. For developing all those components in the model of multicultural competence we have designed a special implementation system, which included such elements as principles, language material, topics, technology.

It is important to mention that the topics were formulated by the students according to their own interests, only after that the concept for investigation was chosen. For example, in the topic “Changing attitude to bad habits” the concept “bad habits” was analyzed in different cultures; in the topic “The role of money in our life” the concept “money”; in the topic “Surrogacy: is it the way out?” the concepts “maternity” and “marriage” were investigated.

Significant components, necessary for training, included the following range of knowledge and skills:

- 1) foreign language skills necessary for communication and interaction;
- 2) rules of real communication with other cultures for preventing conflicts;
- 3) knowledge of features of communicative behavior of foreign-language partners (for preventing conflicts);
- 4) knowledge of culturological specifics of partners in communication (cultural concepts of universal and ethno-cultural types);
- 5) attitude and characteristic features: tolerance, close social distance, inquisitiveness and interest in other cultures, etc.

The results of the experimental work were evaluated in the end. The diagnostic tools included the following complex: a) specially prepared language tests, compositions and reports in English; b) express questionnaire “Tolerance index”; c) questionnaire “Types of ethnic identity”; d) “scale of a social distance”; e) “questionnaire of an ethnic affiliation”; f) content

analysis of students’ compositions (experience of communication with foreign respondents); g) analysis of the final projects-presentations, prepared by the students.

The complex of the diagnostic procedures confirmed the increase of the level of formation of multicultural competence of students. In particular, the following set of the attitudes (later explained as important characteristic features of a mediator), necessary for the position of a mediator between one’s own and other cultures, in decreasing order of quantity of tallies (tab. 1) was analyzed.

Realization of the experimental training caused six positive shifts checked up by the technique “A scale of social distance”. Reduction of social distance and increase of positive feelings of students towards representatives of other nationalities was confirmed by the results of the content analysis: inquisitiveness and interest in other cultures – 41, positive attitude towards representatives of other nationalities in the course of multicultural interaction – 37, general openness to multicultural training and communication with representatives of other cultures – 16.

The general level of tolerance revealed with the express questionnaire “A tolerance index” remained average but it became closer to high. As a result, it corresponded to the following relations of students: adaptability to new cultural environment and desire to find positive results – 34, tolerant attitude, respect and mutual understanding – 11, acceptance of value of cultural diversity and refusal of stereotypes – 6, politeness – 3. The indicator “norm” in the questionnaire “Types of ethnic identity” remained at the high level that points at positive ethnic identity that is confirmed by the following results of the content analysis: patriotic attitude to the country – 19, the attitude towards oneself as to the representative of a certain ethnic culture (cultural self-determination) – 10.



Table 1

Ranging of categories of the content analysis

Ranks	Qualitative units of the content analysis (attitude)	Quantity of tallies
1	inquisitiveness and interest in other cultures	41
2	positive attitude towards representatives of other nationalities in the course of cross-cultural interaction	37
3	adaptability to new cultural environment and aspiration to find a positive result	34
4	patriotic relation to the native country	19
5	general openness to cross-cultural training and communication with representatives of other cultures	16
6	tolerant relation, respect and mutual understanding	11
7	attitude towards oneself as the representative of a certain ethnic culture	10
8	responsibility	7
9	acceptances of value of cultural diversity and refusal of stereotypes	6
10	attitude to training through interaction	3
10	care	3
10	politeness	3
10	flexibility (attempt to understand another outlook)	3

The results of the research showed effectiveness of the offered approach to the training directed to the development of multicultural competence of future specialists in the sphere of Linguistics (Foreign language and Intercultural communication) which in the situation of globalizing world takes the increasing popularity as a means of predicting and preventing social and cultural conflicts, creating a new peaceful and friendly world.

Conclusion

Our results have proved the fact that foreign language teaching integrated with the theoretical courses “Multicultural communication” and “Cultural aspects of interpretation” can be of big value in the process of realization of the new role of education – education of promoting global

citizenship: existing in peace, mutual respect and understanding.

Those students who participated in this research appreciated the importance of being prepared for the situation of multicultural communication. Everybody came to the conclusion that participation in this type of studying can give students opportunity to experience the multisided nature of cultural diversity of present-day world in which they have to find the ways of positive interactions with representatives of different cultures. In the post-experimental questionnaire the students underlined the idea of importance to learn more about different cultures, their mentality, their beliefs, conceptual cultural codes, etc. during their university studying process. While they shared a positive attitude to understanding that they have much in common (worrying about



cultural heritage saving in their countries, trying to find the ways out to save the heritage, not to destroy it in our controversial world), they expressed the thought about their differences in readiness to accept cultural diversity and not to refuse stereotypes. Some students believed that working side by side with foreigners over a real project helped them to develop tolerant relations with representatives of various countries while others opened for themselves their patriotic attitude to their own culture.

On the other side, these findings suggest that development of multicultural competence may be effective not only on the territory of a foreign country. We believe this study has important implications for us in understanding that it is necessary to use more actively the situation of multicultural groups which we have nowadays at our universities thanks to the programs of academic mobility. The matter is that very often we forget about this real cultural diversity and we organize our teaching process uniculturally, trying to speak about a virtual diversity existing somewhere far away.

The integration of interdisciplinary approach and multicultural diversity of every academic group positively influences the process of preparing young people to the situation of multicultural interaction.

Potential implementation of the results of our study can be used in any educational institution, preparing students for the situation of multicultural communication in the globally developing world. Paraphrasing M. Byram and G. Alred [1] it is possible to say that multiculturally competent learners possess an ability and skills to become global citizens in the situation of social and cultural interaction with representatives of different cultures; a successfully developed level of multicultural competence will help them to evaluate a situation and prevent possible misunderstanding and conflicts.

Prospects of further development of the problem, in particular, of searching new techniques of diagnostics of forming multicultural competence, of the new technologies allowing using the potential of multicultural educational space to form a global citizen under modern conditions are obvious.

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