

**The formation of
intercultural competence
among the students in the
process teaching English**

THE FORMATION OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AMONG THE STUDENTS IN THE PROCESS TEACHING ENGLISH

LA FORMACIÓN DE LA COMPETENCIA INTERCULTURAL ENTRE LOS ESTUDIANTES EN EL PROCESO DE ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS

ABSTRACT

In the international level for modern journalist a linguistic and a cultural component have become increasingly important. In addition to knowledge in the professional field, future teacher needs to possess cultural, sociocultural knowledge and skills of intercultural communication. Nowadays this problem is widely discussed due to the active growth of theoretical and practical interest in issues of intercultural communication. The introduction of a two-level education system (bachelor's and master's degrees) in Russia entails a considerable number of changes, including creating courses of a foreign language. These programs must be compiled in accordance with the new federal state standards the main demand of which is to increase the level of intercultural competence of students in the process of teaching a foreign language at a university.

This article touches upon an experiment on the formation of intercultural competence of students. The different technologies as: projects, discussions, brainstorming, and roles games were used for the formation of the intercultural competence. The results of the experiment proved the effectiveness of competence-based approach in the formation of intercultural competence of future journalist.

KEYWORDS: competence, intercultural competence, future Journalist, intercultural communication, foreign language, university, English language teaching.

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RESUMEN

En el nivel internacional para el periodista moderno, un componente lingüístico y cultural se ha vuelto cada vez más importante. Además del conocimiento en el campo profesional, el futuro maestro debe poseer conocimientos culturales, socioculturales y habilidades de comunicación intercultural. Hoy en día, este problema se debate ampliamente debido al crecimiento activo del interés teórico y práctico en cuestiones de comunicación intercultural. La introducción de un sistema educativo de dos niveles (licenciaturas y másters) en Rusia implica un número considerable de cambios, incluida la creación de cursos de un idioma extranjero. Estos programas deben compilarse de acuerdo con los nuevos estándares estatales federales cuya principal demanda es aumentar el nivel de competencia intercultural de los estudiantes en el proceso de enseñanza de un idioma extranjero en una universidad.

Este artículo toca un experimento sobre la formación de la competencia intercultural de los estudiantes. Las diferentes tecnologías como: proyectos, discusiones, lluvia de ideas y juegos de roles se utilizaron para la formación de la competencia intercultural. Los resultados del experimento demostraron la efectividad del enfoque basado en competencias en la formación de la competencia intercultural del futuro periodista.

PALABRAS CLAVE: competencia, competencia intercultural, futuro periodista, comunicación intercultural, lengua extranjera, universidad, enseñanza de la lengua inglesa.

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INTRODUCTION

The great interest to the problem of formation the intercultural communication in the modern world is obvious. It is connected with the processes of global integration, the expansion of the information space and enriching personal contacts. Russia enters the world community and this necessitates new approaches in teaching foreign language to students of the university. The problem of formation of intercultural competence of future Journalist is connected with the real process of intercultural communication and requires not only a high level of professional and communicative competence, but also the ability for independent reflexive mastering of their own norms of behavior for intercultural communication.

FORMATION OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE OF FUTURE JOURNALIST

The analysis of the existing university practice in the field of professionally directed teaching of foreign languages shows that in the process of intercultural communication even those specialists who are fluent in a foreign language are still experiencing great difficulties in understanding the meaning of foreign professional communication. This happens due to ignorance of the norms and cultural values of another country, the lack of personal behavioral qualities necessary for effective communication in an intercultural environment. Therefore, the search for ways to organize the formation of intercultural professional competence is one of the topical areas of pedagogical research aimed at optimizing higher education. There is a real need to determine appropriate conditions for the formation of intercultural competence among students of universities in accordance with the requirements of the Federal State Educational Standards of Higher Professional Education [1].

According to this document language and verbal knowledge of a journalist are the following: the students must observe certain speech etiquette for expressing various communicative intentions. The latter may include greeting or farewell, acquaintance, self-presentation, establishing contact, asking questions, searching for necessary information, expressing a request, indicating, completing a conversation. The logical and compositional skills in solving problems of foreign language communication of the journalist include the ability of structuring the sentences correctly, taking into account relationships and sequence patterns, also style and the register of professional communication. It is worthwhile to highlight the ability to compose a professionally significant message or statement, in particular a report on the company's work, the situation of the meeting at the airport / railway station, the presentation of the product, the advertisement of the vacancy, the interview. The student should be able to produce typical samples of professional communication, adequately transmit models of speech behavior and ways of communicating in the professional field. It is also necessary to have intercultural awareness and ideas about the ways to reflect values of the future profession. The student, who is mastering how social factors and relations between business partners influence the choice of language units, can increase the success of professional and business communication in general. [2] Foreign language communicative competence of the student performs as a general, elusive in learning short time aim. It implies such language proficiency that approaches to the language of native speakers by its linguistic parameters; therefore, oral and written forms of training should differ in correctness, disengagement, stylistic adequacy, accordance to the situation of communication. [3]

RESEARCH METHODS

In order to achieve the goal set in the following methods were used: to study and analyze domestic and foreign literature on the research problem; monographic method solid research experience in foreign language teaching students in higher school; observation, conversation method; study products of the educational activities of students, teaching experiment (diagnostic, formative, stages of a control).

In this research were used different methods that can qualify as productive educational activities for students. They were directed to the chose the ones that allow successfully forming the intercultural competence of students in the process of teaching a professionally oriented foreign language course.

Roles games provides conditions for the integrated application of existing knowledge, improving the foreign language skills of students. [4].

Project method is based on recreating a social interaction in a small group during the educational process. It creates conditions that contribute not only to increasing the amount of knowledge of foreign language among students in training, but also has an impact on their mobility, creativity, autonomy. [5] As a student solves creative tasks for the implementation of the project he also acquires knowledge. With the activities done on the way to perform a successful project presentation, students use a variety of forms and methods of work, which indicates the flexibility of thinking, the development of creativity, independence, and intellectual activity in future profession. In a professionally oriented foreign language course, this technology can be effectively used at all stages of training, but its role at the stage of mastering the language in the field of a particular specialty is quite significant. [6]. A complicated ethnic composition of Russia's population and its multi-confessional nature cause the educational system to fulfill the following functions: educational providing the universal education to the country's population regardless of ethnic origin and religion; ethno-cultural function: disseminating and developing ethnic cultures and languages; consolidating function: integrating the ethnically heterogeneous society into a united supranational community – a political nation – with a common system of values.

Case-study is a method of active learning of life situations, based on the organization of discussions on the specific issues. Trainees are encouraged to understand the situations of professional activities, which need the solution of a problem. [7,8] The case method is particularly successfully used only in combination with other methods of teaching foreign languages (modeling, system analysis, mental experiment, problem method, classi-

fication method, game methods, «brainstorming» and discussion). [9]

The method of «brainstorming» encourages intellectual-creative and cognitive abilities of students. [10] Its purpose is to organize collective cognitive activity of students in order to find the greatest number of non-traditional ways of solving the problems by releasing the participants from the inertia of thinking and stereotypes; to stimulate creative activity; to demonstrate the benefits of the collective search of complex problems' solutions and etc.

These methods give students the opportunity to:

1. Directly participate in team work because the methods under discussion involve a high number of students in the learning process. It is practically impossible to find a student who does not take an active participation in the work.
2. Develop social and personal skills, learn to make decisions together and respect different points of view, thereby revealing leadership qualities. In addition, it also touches upon developing critical thinking and creativity.
3. To learn how to organize their speeches, formulate the main points with illustrative examples in a graphic or collisional form. They start prioritizing, highlighting the main ideas from the less relevant parts. Students also practice creating logical chains and attracting the attention of the audience, which contributes to the development of oratory skills and the ability to represent their own opinions and creative ideas.

The use of interactive methods of teaching include the following components of professionally-communicative orientation:

- Substantial (special vocabulary, texts (including audio and videotext) associated with the profession);
- And procedural (games, situations, discussions, which close to the realistic action and reality, associated with future teachers' revealing their professional communicative competence).

Thus, we can identify the several advantages of the interactive methods of teaching of English language:

1) Interactive methods of teaching can easily be integrated with the content of education into the educational process and they help to achieve the educational goals in language more effectively than while using only traditional teaching methods;

2) Interactive methods of teaching are humanistic in nature, because they provide not only a successful learning, but also the intellectual, creative development, as well as the activity and independence;

3) Interactive methods of teaching promote the realization of communicative function in the process of learning English.

To sum up, these methods of teaching have great pedagogical potential, which is aimed at forming intercultural competence of future journalists in the process of learning English.

RESULTS

The scientific novelty and theoretical significance of the research are:

- The specification of the term “intercultural competence” as an integrated systematized phenomenon of a humanistic worldview, including a high culture of interpersonal communication and a generally developed cultural level.

- Defining content of the main educational programs of the “Foreign Language” discipline and stating their place in the formation of the intercultural competence of students - future journalists in the educational space of the university;

- Creating the model of formation of intercultural competence of the undergraduate student in the process of teaching a foreign language is developed;

- Identifying methodical means (content, forms, methods, conditions) for ensuring the process of forming the intercultural competence of undergraduate students in accordance with the requirements of new educational standards have been determined and their effectiveness has been experimentally proven.

- Research materials can be used by university teachers and methodologists in the system of advanced training and retraining of educators to improve the educational process of teaching a foreign language, in general, and the formation of intercultural competence, in particular.

DISCUSSION

The research was aimed at measuring the awareness of intercultural competence at the beginning of the English language course and at the end after performing certain research tasks. Experimental work on the formation of intercultural competence of students by means of English language teaching has been carried out on the basis of Kazan Federal University. The group of future journalists was exposed to English language classes with the use of different methods such as case-study, project method, and “brainstorming”. These methods helped students to enrich their vocabulary, to correct grammar in speech, to work on problem-solving and teamwork as well as to train in presenting themselves and defending their points of view.

The experiment has revealed that more than a half of the students in the target groups are aware of intercultural competence phenomenon. They came across it, know the field it's used in. However they experience difficulties in giving the proper definition to the term “intercultural competence”. Mostly they confuse it with linguistic competence. By the end of the experiment we increased the number of students who are able to define the term from 31% to 65%.


Due to this fact it was quite unexpected that at the beginning of the experiment more than 64% stated the importance of intercultural competence in the process of learning English and becoming successful journalists. They see necessity in its further formation and think that it's a key issue in developing professional connections. The results of this question were high at both beginning and the end of the research. As we questioned the weakest parts in the process of intercultural communication that students can mention we found out that: 33% cannot carry a successful oral conversation with native speakers, 17% said that they have difficulties in using idioms and special vocabulary that is common in everyday speech, movies and in interviews they watched online. 9% of the students

who have taken the survey confessed that they are unfamiliar with the values and proper ways of behaving during different speech situations. They were not sure of the proper greetings or how to behave during the job interview in a multinational company. By using role-plays and other simulation activities we had the number of unconfident in the process of communication students decreased from 33% to 19%. The awareness of core values in the countries of target language rose which led to decrease from 9% of unsure students to 1%.

CONCLUSION

During our study we came to the conclusion that students in the focus group are aware of intercultural competence and recognize its importance for international communication. Nevertheless, there is also a misunderstanding in the proper definition of the term and necessity of working with students' awareness in this field. The results we obtained after conducting the survey and analysing its results could be used for the enhancing English language curriculum in the universities. With the use of information gathered we were able to create an effective set of exercises which helps to work on the points that were proven to be weaknesses of the future journalists.

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