

## STUDENT MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION WHILE MASTERING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

*In our article we attempt to reveal the potential of a foreign language as an academic subject in the realization of student multicultural education in higher pedagogical educational establishments. There was used a complex of general sciences methods according to the aim of the article: analysis (historiographical, comparative, retrospective), synthesis, abstraction, generalization, analogy for consideration of the development history of formation and theoretical issues of language education and practice of teaching foreign languages.*

*Multicultural education is seen as a complex, multidisciplinary concept that combines a variety of approaches to addressing the cultural heterogeneity of society and is an integral part of general education in most countries of the world. It is revealed that foreign language is an important means of multicultural education of student youth, formation of a culture of inter-ethnic relations of students in the conditions of state orientation on establishment of all-round contacts with peace-loving countries of the world. The effectiveness of multicultural education while teaching foreign languages in higher education institutions is ensured under the following conditions: involving students in learning and communication activities aimed at supporting the implementation of standard microfunctions (establishing social relationships, motivations, expressing attitudes, assisting in communication, etc.) and macrofunctions (description, narration, commentary, beliefs, etc.) in popular fields for young people which are primarily public (social-domestic, sociocultural, public and political), educational and personal; problem-thematic orientation of the subject-based communication content; using interactive methods in student learning and communication activities; special selection of linguistic and speech material based on regional studies to be included in the education process.*

*Further researches of the problem will consist in determining the content, technologies of student multicultural education while mastering a foreign language, the study of foreign experience in promoting multicultural education among the youth in higher education institutions.*

*Key words: multicultural education, foreign language, student, higher educational establishments, culture of interethnic relations.*

**Introduction.** An important condition for the preservation of democracy, civil

peace, national and international well-being is an awareness of the value of one's own and other nations' culture. Multicultural education being rather influenced by national culture may significantly contribute to understanding a cultural diversity of the world, preserving and strengthening cultural values, norms, patterns of behaviour and forms of activity.

As a result of democratic transformations in Ukraine, one can observe two prevailing trends, namely, on the one hand – the revival of national consciousness, Ukrainian culture and language, and on the other hand – the striving for integration in the global and European community, which provides certain orientation toward multicultural education.

Thus, the globalization of society, an individual's readiness for rapid adaptation to multicultural world that is always changing, increases interest in foreign language education as an important tool of human life in a multicultural community of people.

Multicultural education is a relatively new branch of scientific pedagogical knowledge and educational practice, however, it provokes a significant interest in sociopolitical leaders and scholars. This is, primarily, due to acute conflicts that occur between nations, ethnic, religious and other communities at both country and global levels.

Culture and language constantly interact to create a phenomenon of a unique unity. The main way of communication between people is verbal communication. Language has a wide arsenal of tools to express national-specific information, which is why it may be used as a source of comprehending unique cultures of different peoples. A foreign language as an academic discipline is extremely important while preparing students for a multicultural and multilingual world.

**Analysis of relevant research.** In modern philosophical, pedagogical and political literature along with the term «multicultural education» there can be found the term «polycultural education», «intercultural education», «transcultural education», and they have been borrowed by the national pedagogy from the West, where since the 1970s they became the subject of controversions and bases for certain political decisions.

In many works of native and Russian scholars more focus is placed on the characteristics of philosophical and ideological foundations of modern education reforms in developed countries, the peculiarities of development and implementation of national and multicultural education policy (N. Abashkina, V. Andrushchenko, T. Koshmanova, M. Krasovitsky, M. Kultaieva, N. Lavrychenko, M. Leshchenko, A. Liferov, V. Lutai, Z. Malkova, V. Mitina, L. Pukhovska, A. Radionova, A. Romanovskyi, I. Rusnak, K. Salimova, O. Sukhomlynska, A. Valytska, V. Zhukovskyi, I. Ziaziun).

There are many famous foreign researches that have an analysis of general approaches to multicultural education and foreign languages learning reformation (S. Banks, S. Beukelman, S. Chaffee, S. Davis, S. Friedman, R. Garcia, X. Gruber, A. Maslow, A. Milsom, S. Moon, E. Polloway, A. Samuel).

Undoubtedly, they form a profound theoretical basis for the researches on the problem of multicultural education, which is particularly relevant within pedagogical thought at the present stage of our country's development.

**Aim of the Study.** In our article we attempt to reveal the potential of a foreign language as an academic subject in the realization of student multicultural education in higher pedagogical education institutions.

**Research Methods.** There was used a complex of general sciences methods according to the aim of the article: analysis (historiographical, comparative, retrospective), synthesis, abstraction, generalization, analogy for consideration of the development history of formation and theoretical issues of language education and practice of teaching foreign languages.

**Results.** The conducted analysis of scientific sources confirms the existence of various definitions of the term «multicultural education» offered by a wide range of scholars, namely, from educators to lawyers. So it is natural that they all have different views when discussing an ethnic diversity and cultural pluralism. Some of them are based on cultural characteristics of various groups, while others emphasize social problems (in particular, related to harassment, political power and redistribution of economic resources). Some researchers single out only human skin colours, and others include all the major groups.

There are those definitions that limit multicultural education with the characteristics of local schools, however, others provide the directions of the school reform in all the fields, regardless of their peculiarities. These types of multicultural education set different goals: beginning from filling textbooks with more information about the various groups to struggling with racism, complete reconstructing the school system and reforming society to make schools more culturally balanced.

Much attention has been paid to the problem of multiculturalism by Ukrainian and Russian scholars. In the broadest sense, under multiculturalism or cultural pluralism our researchers understand «the principles of coexistence of ethnic and cultural communities based on the foundations of democracy, namely, the coexistence within a country of many cultures, provided that none of them are dominant». The realization of those problems associated with the forming of cultural pluralism, actualizes the forming of cross-cultural consciousness that is «a holistic sustainable sociopsychological entity which includes tolerance, respect for others' views, cultures, religions, the ability to communicate and adapt in a multicultural environment» [3].

V. Bolharina and I. Loshchenova interpret the concept of multiculturalism «as an element of general culture, the core of which includes knowledge of the cultures' peculiarities all over the world, the ability to take the best in them and thus enrich their own culture» [Дмитриев]. Without denying the expediency of this approach, V. Boichenko draws attention to its certain limited nature, that is reduced to pure knowledge of cultural heritage in the narrow sense [1].

Analyzing the most common concept of multiculturalism today, I. Loshchenova indicates that their main task is the development of cognitive and non-verbal skills that allow to contact with other cultures and their carriers. The scholar views multicultural education as a mechanism needed to enhance a level of erudition and success achievement in a multicultural environment and singles out four functions:

- 1) forming students' views on the diversity of cultures and their interconnection;
- 2) comprehending the importance of cultural diversity for personal self-realization;
- 3) forming a positive attitude towards cultural differences;
- 4) developing interaction skills between carriers of different cultures based on

tolerance and mutual understanding [4].

The participants of the conference on «Multicultural Education in Ukraine», held in 1999, note that multiculturalism is «a principle of functioning and coexistence of different ethnic and cultural communities within a certain society that are aware of their own identity that ensures their equal rights, tolerance and naturalness of the connection with a wider cross-cultural community, mutual enrichment of cultures as well as presence and recognition of a common national system of norms and values that form the basis for civic consciousness of every member of society» [5].

According to O. Hahanova, a modern definition of the term «multicultural education» seems to be not so felicitous as it is limited to national, racial and ethnic culture and is viewed through the prism of a tolerant attitude towards other cultures, forming knowledge of differences and similarities between them. At the same time, a social group, a dialect speaking group, sexual minorities are seen as normal variations within a single culture and are not related to multicultural education [2].

In the context of the problem raised, it is necessary to apply to the experience of American scholars who have accumulated powerful achievements in multicultural education. Thus, they proposed such an interpretation of the term «multicultural education»: it is a humanistic concept based on the promotion of cultural diversity, human rights, social justice and alternative lifestyle choice for all the people [7].

In 1972, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) through its newly established Commission on Multicultural Education adopted the formulation of multicultural education, which became the basis of teacher education. It was as follows, «multicultural education is a type of education, based on the pluralism of cultures. It orients schools toward cultural enrichment of all the children and adolescents, development of such programs that may be used for the preservation and enhancement of cultural pluralism; recognizes the differences in culture as a fact of life in American society, affirming that cultural diversity is a valuable resource that should be preserved and strengthened; is based on knowledge and understanding of differences in culture. The most important is the recognition of differences in culture of different people, and the effective educational program makes the equality of cultures real» [6].

It is obvious that this concept encompasses all the children and is addressed to both cultural differences and ethnic content. As it is further noted in the formulation, it includes the promotion of multiculturalism, multilingualism and multidialectism. In such a way bilingualism is supported.

In our study, we adhere to the interpretation of multicultural education as a process of deliberate and systematic forming and development of ideology, beliefs and feelings of an individual, that is based on the recognition of cultural diversity and enriches their feelings, forms a special attitude towards the surrounding world and people in it and is accompanied by perception and understanding of vital paradigms of reality, transformation of external cultural senses in the internal moral and ethical world.

The construction of the content of multicultural education is based on the general-didactic theory of the three-component composition of general education. Proceeding from this theory, the four-component structure of the content of multicultural education is built-up: the student's orientation towards cultural self-determination as a condition for understanding and entering into the multicultural environment; enriching the individual concept of the individual with the basic concepts that determine the diversity of the world; education of emotionally positive attitude to the cultures diversity; formation of intercultural communication skills.

When selecting the content of multicultural education, it is necessary to take into account:

- socio-cultural environment of students;
- individual interests of students concerning questions of the multicultural society as a whole or separate socio-cultural groups;
- changing socio-cultural situation in the region (processes of convergence of countries, ethnic and confessional groups);
- ethnic and socio-economic features of a particular region.

Proceeding from the objectives of multicultural education, all the variety of methods used can be divided into four groups: methods of actualization of cultural self-determination and goal-setting of students; methods of obtaining new knowledge, practical skills and skills of interaction with subjects of the multicultural society; reflexive methods; methods of

modeling and designing in the field of culture.

Technologies of multicultural education provide for the attitude to education as a cultural process, the driving forces of which is the dialogue and cooperation of its participants, the attitude to the educational institution as a holistic multicultural space, where cultural prototypes of the multicultural society are reproduced. The main task of updating cultural self-determination can be achieved as a result of the use of conversations, discussions, the formation of dialogue methods of communication, based on respect for various cultures and traditions of different people, people through languages and cultures, denial of negative stereotypes in relation to any culture, teaching students to critical thinking.

When selecting forms of educational activity, one should rely on feedback from students, which can be organized through dialog forms of work – seminars, conferences, colloquia, etc. One of the main requirements in this case is the creation of comfortable conditions that exclude distrust and emotional and moral stress, as well as the use of opportunities cultural and educational environment.

The effectiveness of multicultural education is achieved if:

- 1) the concept of multicultural education was developed;
- 2) the defined content of multicultural education, based on the principles of scientific, humanization, interdisciplinarity, nature and culture of compliance;
- 3) the model is proposed and the scientific and methodological support of multicultural education in educational institutions of different type is developed;
- 4) developed methods and pedagogical technologies of multicultural education, which take into account the need to orient students to understand and perceive the manifestations of carriers of another culture;
- 5) developed criteria and levels of readiness for effective intercultural interaction in the conditions of the modern multicultural world.

So, multicultural education is a complex, multidimensional concept that combines a variety of approaches to solving the problems associated with cultural heterogeneity of society and is an integral part of general education in most countries in the world.

Undoubtedly, the basis of the formation of a multicultural personality is multilingualism, which is considered by us as an effective tool for the training of the

younger generation in a context of interconnected world. In this regard, understanding the role of languages in the modern world poses the question of raising the level of language training.

A foreign language is an important means of student multicultural education, forming a culture of international relations between students under the conditions of the state orientation toward establishing extensive contacts with peaceful countries. In fact, the need for communication and cooperation between different countries and peoples is significantly increasing. Therefore, communicative competences of individuals became an unalterable means of international communication at the beginning of the 21st century. The time had come when Ukrainian society felt the urgent need for specialists in various fields who would have a command of at least one of the most common languages in the world, effectively use it to exchange information, establish professional contacts, reach an agreement in the dialogue of cultures.

The analysis of pedagogical literature and normative documents proves that at the beginning of the 21st century they are reconsidering the goals of foreign language teaching, and one of the main goals is to form a sociocultural competence of young generations.

The goal of multicultural education when teaching a foreign language is to develop cross-cultural literacy, interest and respect for foreign language culture, so that students may be open to other cultures, develop the ability to conduct «a dialogue of cultures» as well as their national identity. This goal involves the implementation of specific objectives, namely:

- 1) comprehensive mastering one's own culture, which is an essential condition for integration in other culture;
- 2) forming a positive attitude towards cultural diversity of other peoples;
- 3) providing conditions for students' integration in a foreign language culture;
- 4) forming a feeling of respect for the unique culture of other people, tolerance to unusual behaviour, flexibility in alternative decision-making and lack of high expectations from communicating with representatives of other cultures;
- 5) educating young generations through the prism of humane international

communication.

Thus, the concept of «teaching language» in modern higher education is being gradually developed into the concept of «teaching language and culture» under the influence of numerous linguistic and sociocultural factors.

The development of an ability to communicate at the intercultural level should be facilitated due planning each class as potential, interesting and informative. It has to immitate the communication of students with speakers of a certain language, first of all, with foreign peers, so that young people may better imagine practical and life prospects of mastering a new language. This will significantly increase their speech intention. Therefore, as noted by modern psychologists and educators, a special role in the process of teaching a foreign language to students plays motivation, which varies in different periods of life. In the course of personality development, certain transformation takes place. Based on some motives, other ones are formed, there appear contradictions between them, the ratio of prevailing motives is changed.

We would like to characterize the subject-based potential of a foreign language as for student multicultural education, grounded on the forming of their multicultural competence. It must be noted that recently there has been increasing attention of scholars to the phenomenon of multicultural and sociocultural competence as one of the indicators of personality readiness for intercultural communication. Quite widely discussed is the problem of their forming while teaching foreign languages (N. Hez, O. Kolominova, Z. Kornaieva, T. Opanasenko, O. Pervak, V. Redko, N. Salanovych, V. Skalkin, V. Topalov).

Considering the multicultural component in the broad sense, we can state that it includes regional and linguoregional knowledge. Regional knowledge includes encyclopedic and background knowledge as well as the realities of those countries, whose language is being studied. Linguoregional knowledge requires the knowledge of vocabulary that is typical for the cultural sphere of this country and presents it with the help of language units semantics.

In Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University teachers of the Foreign Languages Department provide multilevel learning to foreign languages, aimed at

mastering intercultural communication among students and the ability to relate language resources to specific spheres, situations, conditions and communication tasks. Together with the practical purpose learning communication, language education implies the implementation of educational goals. The implementation of the educational potential of foreign language learning is manifested in the readiness of students as future specialists to facilitate the establishment of intercultural and scientific relations, to represent their educational institution, the country at international conferences, and respect the spiritual values of other countries and peoples.

The following modern technologies are used in the foreign language classes for effective and efficient multicultural education:

- developmental learning;
- problem training;
- multilevel training;
- collective learning system;
- project teaching method;
- information and communication technologies;
- health saving technologies.

Currently, the introduction of a personal computer, multimedia technology and the global Internet network affects the education system, causing significant changes in the content and methods of teaching foreign languages.

A modern teacher is faced with the problem of finding a new pedagogical tool. In modern conditions, taking into account the great interest of students in information technologies, the use of computers contributes to the development of motivation and increasing cognitive interest in learning a foreign language.

The main purpose of using modern pedagogical technologies in foreign language teaching is to move from subject-oriented learning, aimed at transferring the content of this subject area, to learning aimed at developing the student, to form his motivational sphere, an independent style of thinking, independence, to stimulate his cognitive activity and improving the quality of knowledge.

Any pedagogical technology, correctly used, allows to shorten the path to

multicultural education, save time and effort, to conduct a lesson more efficiently and interestingly.

Multicultural education, that is provided during all the years of mastering foreign languages, is oriented toward training students for intercultural communication, their understanding the specifics of the national picture of the world. Foreign languages programmes traditionally cover the knowledge of culture, history, geography, way of life and political system of the country whose language is being studied, namely, all the aspects of social and cultural peculiarities.

Based on the current processes taking place in education, the multicultural component of foreign languages teaching should ensure:

1) mastering the means of oral and written transmission of information by the representatives of culture or subculture;

2) forming skills of verbal and non-verbal behaviour;

3) studying the national culture (science and art, history and traditions, as well as national parks, historic reserves, etc.) of the country whose language is being studied.

As a result of studying a foreign language, students are to obtain such multicultural qualities as tolerance to representatives of other cultures; informational impartiality; ideological neutrality; life orientation and practical direction; empathy and perception of what belongs to others; the ability to compare cultural phenomena inherent in the people whose language is being studied and their own people.

According to the foreign language programs offered by higher pedagogical educational establishments, multicultural education should be based on mastering the knowledge of society and culture of a community or communities of the country, whose language is being studied within topics of situational communication related to the following aspects:

- daily life;
- living conditions;
- interpersonal relationships;
- values, ideals, behavioural norms;
- social rules of conduct;

- ritual behaviour;
- the ability to combine both national and foreign cultures within the content of the programme;
- the ability to define and use different strategies for interaction with representatives of other cultures;
- rules on starting a conversation;
- courtesy rules;
- expressions of folk wisdom.

**Conclusions.** Thus, the effectiveness of multicultural education while teaching foreign languages in higher education institutions is ensured under the following conditions:

- 1) involving students in learning and communication activities aimed at supporting the implementation of standard microfunctions (establishing social relationships, motivations, expressing attitudes, assisting in communication, etc.) and macrofunctions (description, narration, commentary, beliefs, etc.) in popular fields for young people which are primarily public (social-domestic, sociocultural, public and political), educational and personal;
- 2) problem-thematic orientation of the subject-based communication content;
- 3) using interactive methods in student learning and communication activities;
- 4) special selection of linguistic and speech material based on regional studies to be included in the education process.

**Further researches** of the problem will consist in determining the content, technologies of student multicultural education while mastering a foreign language, the study of foreign experience in promoting multicultural education among the youth in higher education institutions.

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### РЕЗЮМЕ

**Ірина Білецька.** Полікультурна освіта студентів у процесі вивчення іноземної мови.

У статті поставлено за мету розкрити потенціал іноземної мови як навчальної дисципліни у здійсненні полікультурної освіти студентів вищих закладів педагогічної освіти. Полікультурна освіта розглядається як складне, багатоаспектне поняття, яке поєднує різноманітні підходи до вирішення проблем, пов'язаних з культурною неоднорідністю суспільства, і є невід'ємною складовою загальної освіти у більшості країн світу. З'ясовано, що іноземна мова є важливим засобом полікультурної освіти студентської молоді, формування культури міжнаціональних взаємовідносин студентів в умовах державної орієнтації на встановлення всебічних контактів із миролюбними країнами світу.

*Ключові слова:* полікультурна освіта, іноземна мова, студент, вищий навчальний заклад, культура міжнаціональних відносин.

### РЕЗЮМЕ

**Ирина Билецкая.** Поликультурное образование студентов в процессе изучения иностранного языка.

В статье поставлено за цель раскрыть потенциал иностранного языка как учебной дисциплины в реализации поликультурного образования студентов высших учебных заведений педагогического профиля. Поликультурное образование рассматривается как сложное, многоаспектное понятие, которое объединяет различные подходы к решению проблем, связанных с культурной неоднородностью общества, и является неотъемлемой частью общего образования множества стран мира. Выясняется, что иностранный язык является важным средством поликультурного образования студенческой молодежи, формирования культуры межнациональных взаимоотношений студентов в условиях государственной ориентации на установление всесторонних контактов с миролюбивыми странами мира.

*Ключевые слова:* поликультурное образование, иностранный язык, студент, высшее учебное заведение, культура межнациональных отношений.