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The Model of Training Students for Intercultural Interaction in Foreign Language Education

Abstract: The aim of the article is to develop an educational model of training students for intercultural interaction. The structure of the presented educational model includes a target, methodological, informative, organizational and technological, productive components. The model aims at integrating the various components of the educational environment of a higher educational institution, developing students' personality characteristics which help to successfully and efficiently realize themselves in different social and professional circumstances in a multicultural society.

Keywords: educational model, intercultural training, intercultural education, intercultural interaction.

Global integration processes in the field of vocational education caused quality modernization of higher school in the language education, "capable of ensuring the productive interaction of specialists in the global space, which includes a conglomerate of cultures" [1]. The success of the modernization of the language education largely depends on: the timely implementation of new approaches and principles in the learning process within the humanistic paradigm of cultural type, cultural capacity increase of language education content and new technologies as a mechanism for training future experts in the sphere of languages.

Nowadays one of the urgent tasks in developing multicultural society is the improvement of students' cumulative integrated personal characteristics of a person. Those characteristics provide the students with the ability to successfully and efficiently realize themselves in different social and professional conditions in a multicultural community, to expand their own horizons and multicultural education in the linguistic field and cultural socialization [2].

The issue of intercultural education has diversely been discussed by many researchers in different countries [3, 4, 5] in the fields of various scientific conferences [6]. It has been noticed that multiple terms, such as 'transcultural', 'multicultural' and intercultural" have interchangeably been applied to both very similar / identical approaches or quite different ones. Despite the fact that there is no sharp distinction of multicultural and intercultural education, all the researchers consider it to be necessary to develop interaction skills, multicultural perspective, tolerance and sensibility to native and foreign culture. All mentioned above give us ground to study and improve students' intercultural competencies in the sphere of foreign language education.

The survey among the 4th year students of Institute of Foreign Languages and Literature at the Udmurt State University (Russia), conducted within the international project "Education Quality" between the University and the Foundation named after Robert Bosch (Germany) in 2007–2011 academic year, showed that the most popular features among graduates are professionalism (excellent command of the language and cultural awareness in the field of native / foreign languages and regional cultures), the most significant personal qualities are communication skills, responsibility, organization, multicultural thinking, the ability to come to mutual understanding and ability to cooperate in different teams with an international context.

In this connection, the problem of social and professional intercultural training of the youth for professional, social and personal interaction with the representatives of various linguocultures and traditions is becoming very urgent. This problem solution implies the development of knowledge-based and practice-oriented education model aimed at creating conditions for developing a competent, creative person, able to quickly adapt to a multicultural environment and to be competitive in the field of regional and global labor markets. Achieving this goal involves studying methodological foundations of this process, constructing its didactic content, as well as searching and implementing integrative technologies of students' intercultural training.

The methodological basis of the study is the cultural-historical concept of human personality development in the process of training and education [7], psycho-pedagogical theses of humane pedagogy [8], the theses of the cultural approach as a

methodological basis for developing the theory and practice of pedagogical, linguistic and philological education [9].

Methodological guidelines of the research are the following: student-centered, activity, system, competence, and integrative approaches. The theoretical basis for the study is philosophical theses of culture [10], the theory of intercultural communication [3, 4, 11], the theses of intercultural didactics [5].

A set of theoretical and empirical research methods have been used to achieve this goal, including: analysis of the scientific and educational literature, a method of modelling the process of forming students' readiness to intercultural interaction, survey methods, the method of expert evaluations, analysis of personal educational activities, pedagogical experiment, pedagogical testing, analysis of the results of students' tests.

The experimental work has been carried out at the Institute of Foreign Languages and Literature, at the Udmurt Philology Faculty, at the Faculty of Professional Foreign Language (Udmurt State University, Russia).

The developed educational model of preparing students for intercultural interaction includes the following components: target component (goals, objectives, aimed at creating competencies presented in competence model of modern specialist who is able to interact with different cultures in various professional and social situations); methodological component (approaches, principles); informative component (interdisciplinary integration of cultural, linguistic and basic professional training units); organizational and technological component (integrative technology, pedagogical conditions, scientific and methodological support), and effective component (criteria and indicators of competence development level of students being ready for the implementation of cross-cultural interaction: cognitive, personal, social and professional). This model is aimed at integrating the various components of the educational environment of a higher educational institution. Under such conditions students can develop integrated personality characteristics which help to successfully and efficiently realize themselves in different social and professional circumstances in a multicultural society. Let us consider this model at length.

The goal of the model – developing students' cognitive, personal, social and professional competencies:

- cognitive level is based on the developed individual intellectual and thinking operations such as analysis, comparison, systematization, generalization of information about cultural studies and etc.;

- personal level is composed of personal features necessary for the student's professional activity implementation: responsibility (awareness of one's actions), self-organization, purposefulness, tolerant outlook, willingness to help and etc.;

- social level implies the willingness to carry out cross-cultural interaction on the basis of initiative and activity in the field of intercultural communication; the ability to avoid and solve problems of "intercultural failure"; the ability to control one's behavior during the inter-cultural cooperation on the basis of introspection and self-analysis;

- professional level includes scientific, educational, methodological competences as well as the competence of cultural studies orientation in a multinational environment: cultural studies awareness, the ability to determine the cultural similarities and differences, the ability to allocate values and cultural landmarks of the interacting cultures.

The implementation of the educational model was carried out among the students, specialized in "Foreign Philology" and "Linguistics", teachers and future employers, within several stages of the experiment:

- identification of the region's needs in the desired component composition of the specialist competence model; determination of competencies and diagnosis of the students;

- development and implementation of scientific and methodological support; the development of appropriate teaching materials; formulation of the criteria of aptitude for intercultural interaction in the "microenvironment";

- experimental work, checking the level of formed competence, analysis of the achieved results.

The basis for the content of this model is the gradual organization of training courses, which is realized in three modules: propaedeutic, theoretical and professionally-orienting. The purpose of the first module was the formation of basic culture-relevant targets in the field of cultural studies, necessary for comprehending multicultural environment (academic subjects: "Philosophy", "Cultural Studies", "Introduction to Linguistics" and others). The aim of the second module – forming the integrative basis for learning intercultural and multilingual environment, broadening

students' knowledge of intercultural interaction process ("Psychology", "Psychology", "History of a foreign language", "Lexicology of a foreign language" etc.). The goal of the third module – students' acquisition of the basics of pedagogical interaction in a multicultural educational situation ("The Foreign Language", "The National language", "The Russian language", "Special Courses', pedagogical practice).

The selection and organization of educational material was carried out according to: cultural and professional significance of the materials (culture-oriented texts); implementing interdisciplinary concepts: "cultural heritage", "cultural diversity", "culture of Peace", "cultural and ethnic self-determination", "world view", "dialogue of cultures", "cultural discrimination", "cultural aggression"; expedient use of culture-oriented content according to students' national and intellectual needs.

The integrative principle is aimed at the students' perception of culture-oriented content on the basis of interdisciplinary connections and dependencies. The dialogue of cultures principle implies: contrastive-comparative set of actions for a co-study of national / regional and foreign-language cultures while working on culture-oriented texts.

The principle of culture-oriented problematic tasks' domination is implemented while reading and analyzing special texts. Students acquire core competences: skills and strategies to collect, analyze, organize, synthesize and interpret culture-oriented information, to carry out a search, apply various methods of interpretation of culture manifestations; social competences: the ability to pattern one's behavior in the sphere of culture interaction, which implies the ability to adapt to the process of cross-cultural interaction, that is, to choose culturally appropriate forms of interaction with other cultures; professional competences: adequate language skills for intercultural communication, the development of creative approach while solving professional problems of cultural, communicative and educational nature; ability to continue further self-education in the field of culture-oriented knowledge.

The methods of corporate, interactive and culture-dialogue technologies are correlating vectors of technology's structure. *The first group of methods:* methods of corporate training, case method, intercultural coaching, counseling, interview, and analytical work with information database on various intercultural topics.

The structure of *the second group of methods* includes methods of interactive technologies, providing activity-oriented learning, the interpretation of behavior peculiarities of native / non-native and foreign-language cultures.

The third group of methods, used in culture-oriented learning, are methods of culture-dialogue technologies, namely: collective culture-oriented projects and discussions, culture-oriented meetings, culture-oriented simulations.

To determine the effectiveness of the proposed content of training and methodological support, the students (Finno-Ugrians who speak Russian as a second language and learn German (240 students) were diagnosed before and after the experimental teaching. This procedure enabled us to define the students' cognitive, personal, social and professional competences, their formation levels. The formed competences help students to effectively communicate with other cultures (German, Slavic and Finno-Ugric).

The study used the following methods for diagnosing the level of formation of the testing qualities: modified psychological and pedagogical questionnaires diagnosis: interest and desire to explore the linguistic and cultural systems [12], tolerant attitude towards foreign language culture, emotional openness in the process of intercultural communication, the ability to correlate one's own point of view with the system manifestations of foreign language culture. The testing has determined students' sensitivity to cultural studies, meaningful sense, the knowledge of the conceptual categories of culture, knowledge of thesaurus of culture landmarks. The interview has revealed the students' knowledge of rules and formulas of speech etiquette, developed by the society, the ability to expand, differentiate and enhance knowledge of the native / non-native foreign language and culture. The conducted monitoring of students interaction (Udmurt / Russian and German cultures) has detected students' activity in the process of cross-cultural interaction, their ability to adequately communicate in cross-cultural interaction, their ability to act as a mediator between cultures.

The level analysis of indicators of students' readiness for intercultural interaction has shown that in the experimental groups all the indicators of generated quality have significantly been changed: the number of students, showing high interest and desire to study culture, increased from 19.2% (46 people) to 64.2% (154 pers.). The indicators of ability to determine the universal and specific in the language and culture at the high level increased from 18.3% (44 people) to 68.3% (164 pers.). The indicators of tolerance at the high level increased from 20.8% (50 pers.) to 74.6% (179 pers.). The indicators of students' skills to interact according to

the cultural context at the high level increased from 18.3% (44 pers.) to 67.5% (162 pers.).

The following works confirm the educationalists' interest in the studies of multicultural education and intercultural education of the youth: theses devoted to the ways of cultivating culture of inter-ethnic interaction [13], multicultural education [14].The specificity of national education in a multicultural context is studied in the works of N. Krylova [15]; the development of theoretical bases for multicultural education is being conducted by V. Makaeva, L. Suprunova [16]. The study of the problems of the individual's intercultural education as a condition of his successful interaction and cooperation with the multicultural environment of the world are presented in the foreign scientists' works: Byram, Bennett and others [3,4]. In order to solve this problem of students' training for intercultural interaction it is necessary to develop conceptual and diagnostic apparatus, didactic tools and pedagogical conditions for their implementation. In present conditions there is a contradiction between: the awareness of the need to form the younger generation's readiness for intercultural interaction, on the one hand, and insufficient development of the science-based foundations of the theory, on the other hand, which would implement programs of intercultural education and training. Besides, there is students' necessity to acquire skills of intercultural communication, and at the same time, the technologies devoted to this issue have not been developed yet.

As a result of scientific and experimental work, it has been proved that the developed educational training model for intercultural interaction in higher education provides students with necessary cognitive, personal, social and professional competencies. These competencies would enable students to acquire the system of philological and linguistic knowledge, to independently and creatively solve professional tasks in a multicultural community, to be aware of the personal and social significance of language and cross-cultural training for the future generation and to take responsibility for these results. The obtained results could be useful in practical terms for bachelors, undergraduates specialized on "Foreign philology", "Linguistics", for specialists, headmasters, managers whose institutions realize multicultural context of educational activities, for the centers of advanced training and retraining teachers, for methodological departments at national-cultural centers.

In perspective we are going to develop, test and implement technologies of training students for intercultural interaction in the system of continuous education

(kindergarten – school – higher school – adult education) and to elaborate cross-cultural education programs for specific regions; to develop scientific methods for distance learning courses aimed at the individual's training for intercultural interaction.

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