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FORMATION OF STUDENTS' INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN THE CONDITIONS OF MODERN GLOBAL CHANGES

Abstract. *The article is devoted to the topical problem of formation of intercultural competence of students in higher education institutions in the conditions of modern global changes. The aim of the present study is to analyse the current national and international sources on the problem of formation of person's intercultural competence in the context of global changes; to outline the basic components of cross-cultural competence of personality; to identify the main barriers of the formation of students' intercultural competence in institutions of higher education.*

To achieve the goal and implement the objectives of the study, we used theoretical methods: content-analysis and generalization of scientific research in order to define the main approaches in the formation of students' intercultural competence in institutions of higher education; systematization and comparison of theoretical data in order to identify the main barriers of the formation of students' intercultural competence.

Based on the analysis of scientific sources, the notion of "intercultural competence" is revealed, the structural components of intercultural competence are discovered, the main barriers of intercultural communication are highlighted, the scientific approaches to the formation of students' intercultural competence in institution of higher education are outlined.

The obtained results have shown that students' intercultural competence express through verbal and nonverbal communication, interest in cross-cultural values, tolerant attitudes towards representatives of different cultures, overcoming communication barriers that may arise due to intercultural differences in various activities, using knowledge of national traditions, norms, and values of a different culture. It is found that in order to achieve the goal of the formation of students' intercultural competence, academic curricula of higher education should (in particular, educational programs of foreign language disciplines) should be modernized taking into account current intercultural integration processes and the global changes.

The practical significance of the article is that its materials can be used in the organization of educational work in institutions of higher education, for the development of curricula for learning a foreign language for students, in the system of teacher training.

Future research could continue to explore the issue of the formation of students' intercultural competence that is necessary to develop technology of the formation of students' intercultural competence in the process of blended and distance learning.

Key words: *intercultural competence, barriers of intercultural communication, foreign language teaching, students, institutions of higher education.*

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Introduction. Dynamic transformational processes in political, economic, social and cultural sphere of life all over the world, occurring in recent decades, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic has completely changed person's behaviour, lifestyle, attitudes, values, and communication, which is an essential part of cross-cultural interaction with the representatives of

different cultures. Increasing linguistic and cultural diversity within many societies are called educational system to provide solutions to the global cross-cultural challenges.

It important that modern institutions of higher education continued to promote academic and professional development skills of future professionals, but globalization requires graduates with a well-formed intercultural competence. Therefore, to prepare students for future cross-cultural challenges, the system of higher education in Ukraine should change and revise the goals and content of academic curricula, in particular educational programs of foreign language disciplines, that will positive effects on the formation of the students' intercultural competence.

The normative foundation for solving above-mentioned problem is the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" [8], "White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue" of the Council of Europe [28], the Reports of UNESCO "The socio-cultural impact of COVID-19: exploring the role of intercultural dialogue in emerging responses" [26], "Intercultural Competences: Conceptual and Operational Framework" [20], etc.

Aim and tasks. The aim of the present study is to analyse the current national and international sources on the problem of formation of person's intercultural competence in the context of global changes; to outline the basic components of cross-cultural competence of personality; to identify the main barriers of the formation of students' intercultural competence in institutions of higher education.

Research methods. To achieve the goal and implement the objectives of the study, we used theoretical methods: content-analysis and generalization of scientific research in order to define the main approaches in the formation of students' intercultural competence in institutions of higher education; systematization and comparison of theoretical data in order to identify the main barriers of the formation of students' intercultural competence.

Research results. The foundation of intercultural competence is the principles of linguoculturology (the relationship of language and culture with a focus on the linguistic perception of the world by one ethnic group) and the theory of intercultural communication (interaction of different cultures and ethnic groups in a multicultural world, which is important for learning foreign language).

According to the results of analysis and generalization of international scientific studies of M. Byram [13], D. Deardorff [14; 15], Y. Donders, A. Laaksonen [16], S. Ting-Toomey, W. Gudykunst [17; 18], P. King, M. Baxter-Magolda [24], it was found that scholars have already

conducted some research to determine the basic elements of intercultural competences.

According to analysis of recent research, it is emphasized that there are many definitions of intercultural competencies, depending on culture and the language. D. Deardorff defines intercultural competence as “communication and behavior that is both effective and appropriate when interacting across difference” [14]. Many of the definitions focus on specific knowledge, skill, and attitude dimensions of competences, and nearly all address differences between people. As Y. Donders and Y. Laaksonen argue, these competences are connected to the human rights principles of equality, interrelatedness, dignity, respect, inclusion, participation, and empowerment are all closely aligned with intercultural competencies [16]. Other definitions are considered as the role of language [13], the role of mindfulness and motivation [18], the developmental stages of intercultural competencies [24], etc.

Additionally, the UNESCO report “Intercultural Competences: Conceptual and Operational Framework” defines the notion “intercultural competence” as person’s adequate relevant knowledge about particular cultures, general knowledge about the sorts of issues arising when members of different cultures interact, receptive attitudes that encourage establishing and maintaining contact with diverse others, the skills required to draw upon both knowledge and attitudes when interacting with others from different cultures [20, p. 16].

In the study “The Manual for Developing Intercultural Competencies”, D. Deardorff summarizes many existing definitions, intercultural competencies in essence are about improving human interactions across difference, whether within a society (differences due to age, gender, religion, socio-economic status, political affiliation, ethnicity, and so on) or across borders. In addition, the scholar proposes a global, accessible methodology to help sensitize diverse audiences to key intercultural competencies, including listening for understanding, respect, cultural curiosity, empathy, and reflexivity [15].

In the latest research M. Byram divided person’s intercultural competences into the following separate skills:

- knowledge of the culture;
- skills of interpreting and relating;
- skills of discovery and interaction;
- attitudes of curiosity and openness;
- critical cultural awareness [13].

We agree with O. Rembach's point of view that foreign language is a key tool of human multicultural development in the process of professional training, because it is an integral means of entering the world of foreign culture, a tool of cognition in dialogue and poly-logy of cultures, a means of human integration into a new society and the new social situation. By learning each new language, people expand the boundaries of their worldview and: any event, as well as any phenomenon of another culture, is evaluated by a person through the prism of accepted cultural norms and values in their own linguistic society. Entering the world of foreign culture involves a change in the value orientations of the individual, the system of attitudes towards socially significant artefacts – education, profession, language, communication, traditions, norms and rules of conduct. Significant factors in learning a foreign language are awareness of the problems that arise during intercultural communication, understanding the values and generally accepted norms of behavior of other cultures [11].

In the context of our study, it is important to highlight that the function of language in the communication process requires a certain type of utterance and selection of words. Therefore, in order to develop students' cross-cultural competence, it is important to set the goals of cultural communication, which involve a wide range of types of statements such as: question, answer, suggestion, message, opinion, critical remark, judgment, advice, compliment, recommendation, conclusion, summary. In this regards, oral communication is manifested in dialogue, which is usually presented as the actual dialogue, dispute, discussion, controversy or symposium. As an alternative, written speech is expressed in the form texts, namely, articles, abstracts, books, receipts, instructions, novels, etc.

Consequently, students' intercultural competence can be expressed through the following structural elements of communication such as both verbal and nonverbal means of communication as well as the context. Verbal means of communication are divided into written and oral speech involved in the production of text and the transmission of information, listening and reading, which are elements of the process of perception information.

Due to the fact that the most important means of transmitting information is language, W. Gudykunst and S. Ting-Toomey [17] highlight the basic functions of language in the process of communication, which are manifested through:

- 1) exchange information;
- 2) formulation of thoughts;

- 3) impact on the addressee;
- 4) emotional reaction to the situation;
- 5) exchange ritual or etiquette formulas;
- 6) interpretation of ongoing processes.

The scholar O. Rezunova [10] pays special attention in her work on the components of intercultural competence of the modern students, which include knowledge (foreign partner language, country culture, possible barriers to intercultural interaction, ways to prevent and overcome them); skills (to build their own behavior in accordance with the norms of another culture in situations of intercultural communication); personal willingness and desire interact with representatives of the world; personal qualities (tolerance, empathy, sociability, tolerance).

A model of students' intercultural competence, which consists of three main components (motivational factors, factors of knowledge and factors of skills has been proposed by O. Gorchakova [3].

1) *the motivational factors* include the participants' needs in communicative interactions, social connections, self-perception and openness to percept new information.

2) *the factors of knowledge* are expressed through person's expectations, common information network, ideas about different views, knowledge of alternative integrations, knowledge of similar and different in culture.

3) *the factors of skills* contain the ability to show empathy, to be tolerant towards other people, to adapt communication in a positive way, to change behaviour in the process of communication taking into account other people's cultural peculiarities/

The research of I. Ptitsyna [2] has confirmed that each of these functions is different for different cultures, that is why the problems of adequate translation caused so often arise different levels of language competence between native and foreign languages. Expression of thoughts in the native language implies highly specification both verbal and nonverbal contexts, while communication in a foreign language is usually poorer than in the native language in both contexts.

It should be noted that cultural differences in the ways of verbal communication is becoming more and more common barrier of intercultural communication, which are especially important to identify and overcome in the process of communication.

In the context of the research the formation of students' intercultural competence, the most significant languages barriers, as M. Krylova notes [7, p. 32], related to the conflict between the

linguistic content and the formal characteristics of the messages between interacting parties of are the following:

- the linguistic barrier is associated with poor knowledge, both one's own and foreign language;
- the phonetic barrier in the communicative process usually arises in connections with differences in pronunciation in different languages and dialects, great part of the phonetic barriers may be due to speech and diction defects, parasitic sounds, too fast speech, very loud or very quiet voice;
- the semantic barrier arises when the word and meaning are not connected, that is, communication partners with the same symbols, signs, and hence words denote completely different things and phenomena;
- the stylistic barrier arises at a series of discrepancies, among them are the discrepancies between speech style and situation, speech style and psychological state, speech style and profession, and of course speech style and national culture, however, groups of inconsistencies may be continued as appropriate.

To overcome the language barriers, it must be discovered, to realize, study and bring into the space of discussion with a partner on communication or, having studied it independently, to begin to speak in semantic partner field.

For our research we use the findings of H. Diduk-Stupiak [5] about the technology of different types of approaches for the effective formation of students' intercultural competence:

a) *person-oriented approach* based on interactive methods, game forms of educational interaction with the inherent freedom of play, competition, which allows students to realize their potential creating their own world, a special space, losing in it their own and others' models of reality; through modelling a real life communication for testing their behaviour and attitudes towards other people in practice.

b) *communicative approach* based on creating an artificial language environment, which encourage students to communicate and express their own stories, facts and fantasies that do not have an unambiguous interpretation; critical reflection, which allows students to understand the meaning of the phenomenon of some foreign culture, instead of mechanical memorization;

c) *discourse approach*, which helps students to master grammatical categories, phenomena directly in coherent texts of different types and styles under different circumstances of speech

(discourses); in the process of working with authentic texts are formed students' linguistic, communicative and intercultural competence, as well as sensory-emotional sphere;

d) *competence approach*, which include the students' ability to accumulate, to apply adequately the acquired knowledge in practice depending on educational and life needs; it is a metaphorical using of educational material as a mechanism of activation of emotional understanding of communicative in relation with associative, cognitive, logical connections to actualize students' mental and speech capabilities;

e) *socio-cultural approach*, which fundamental features are students' interaction with the world of culture, in which there is a comprehension, revision of the values, search of ways of self-development, self-improvement, self-education.

f) *axiological approach* promote teacher to expand the communicative range of students at the expense of interaction with representatives of other cultures; to stimulate interest in the study of cultural and mental differences of native speakers; to focus students' attention on those areas of life that are as different as possible from similar ones in the native culture and university research notes, they want to create misunderstandings when communicating with native speakers of foreign culture; to learn to compare cultural differences, refusing to make hasty assessments and judgments, to give an objective assessment of the cultural phenomena of another people; to cultivate a tolerant attitude to religion, value system of representatives of other cultures; to develop a willingness to adopt a new way of thinking; to promote the development of axiological attitudes of the individual, enriching them with universal and national-specific values own and other cultures.

Institutions of higher education play a vital role for the integration of international students in the lives and cultures of our institutions and their mutual relationships with domestic students due to the fact that intercultural communication skills are needed by both domestic and international students to bridge the cultural gaps. Moreover, institutions of higher education help their students develop the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes, while focusing on the effects of short-term cross-cultural experiences on the development of intercultural competence among university students [24].

Therefore, the formation of students' intercultural competence in institutions of higher education will be effective in teaching foreign language based on the complex of abovementioned approaches implemented in curriculum in foreign language teaching institutions of higher education,

The main principle of the formation of students' intercultural competence should be the principle of mutual enrichment of the strengths of foreign cultures with the preservation of their own identity and integrity.

Discussion. Among the scholars there has been much discussion in the discourse regarding the formation of students' intercultural competence. International organization recognize the importance of enhancing the skills, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals for reaching the ambitions of the decade and providing a comprehensive overview of the importance of developing the capacities to manage growing cultural diversity and clarifying key related concepts and their operational interlinkages.

As a result, it can be noted that there are different approaches to define the notion of "intercultural competence" and its main structural components. The most studies interpret intercultural competence as an integrative personal and professional quality, the ability to recognize, respect and use effectively differences in perception, thinking and behaviour of their own and others' culture intercultural contacts, which allows personality to achieve success in solving problems of communication with representatives of foreign cultures, which include different types of ethnic identity, value sphere, verbal and nonverbal communication, customs and traditions, etc.

The studies of I. Bakhov [1], O. Honcharova, A. Maslova [2], N. Samoilenko [12], D. Demchenko [4], A. Kozak [6] determine pedagogical conditions for the formation of students' intercultural competence in institution of higher education such as: development of the need and readiness to pursue a foreign language professional communication with representatives of other cultures; the focus of the educational process on the education of multicultural worldview, which involves the development of national and international identity; holistic development of skills and abilities to carry out professionally significant intercultural verbal and nonverbal communication with the help of correctly chosen communicative strategies and tactics of foreign language communication; use of the potential of professional subjects for the formation of elements of intercultural competence, taking into account the specifics of future professional activities of university graduates; use of educational and methodical materials (authentic texts professional nature, exercises, tasks, audiovisual material), which would acquaint students with the norms, rules and styles of intercultural communication, with the national customs and values of different cultures, non-verbal national-specific means of communication in professional contexts; use of such teaching methods as analysis of professional incidents, solving professionally significant problem

situations – cases, analysis of situations of professional sensitivity, contextual observation, etc.; introduction of reflexivity and emotional-speech sensitivity trainings into the educational process for the development of affective and motivational and value components of intercultural competence of the future specialist.

As M. Hall, K. Ainsworth, S. Telling note, it is important to view the acquisition of intercultural competencies as a learner-centered process, meaning that to develop intercultural competencies in educational institution. The main approach to develop intercultural competencies is formal and non-formal learning. The process of learning aimed at developing intercultural competencies may occur through educational curriculum at all levels of education through specific content focused on particular elements of intercultural competence [19, p. 8].

At the same time, it is evident that higher education faced a series of unanticipated challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Accordingly, a global pandemic has greatly influenced the process of teaching and learning in institutions of higher education. Much has been heard in the scientific discussions occurring in studies of M. Kefalaki, M. Nevradakis, Q. Li [23], as well as Y. Liu, T. Shirley [25] regarding the necessity to revise curricula in order to develop students' intercultural competence effective communication in future.

To achieve effective intercultural communication, student must have not only knowledge and skills, but also be able to combine them with openness, flexibility of own thinking, as well as have motivated desire to carry out effective intercultural communication. Furthermore, the formation of students' intercultural competence implies the person's readiness to interact with other cultural systems based on respect for other cultural values.

Conclusion. The main conclusion that can be drawn is that there is an urgent need to help students of institutions of higher education to adapt their behaviour and attitudes towards cultural differences in a modern diverse environment and to prepare them for challenges caused by cultural, personal, and professional factors as well as the global pandemic changes.

Based on analysis of different socio-cultural and psycho-linguistic scientific sources as well as international documents on understanding the essence of the notion of “intercultural competence”, we concluded that students' intercultural competence is a system of knowledge of the culture, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, attitudes of curiosity and openness, critical cultural awareness. Students' intercultural competence express through verbal and nonverbal communication, interest in cross-cultural values, tolerant attitudes towards

representatives of different cultures, overcoming communication barriers that may arise due to intercultural differences in various activities, using knowledge of national traditions, norms, and values of a different culture. To achieve the goal of the formation of students' intercultural competence, academic curricula of higher education should (in particular, educational programs of foreign language disciplines) should be modernized taking into account current intercultural integration processes and the global changes.

Regardless, future research could continue to explore the issue of the formation of students' intercultural competence that is necessary to develop technology of the formation of students' intercultural competence in the process of blended and distance learning.

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ФОРМУВАННЯ МІЖКУЛЬТУРНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ СТУДЕНТІВ В УМОВАХ СУЧАСНИХ ГЛОБАЛЬНИХ ЗМІН

Анотація. *Стаття присвячена актуальній проблемі формування міжкультурної компетентності студентів в закладах вищої освіти в умовах сучасних глобальних змін. Метою статті є аналіз сучасних вітчизняних та зарубіжних джерел з проблеми формування міжкультурної компетентності особистості у контексті змін, зумовлених пандемією; окреслення структурних компонентів міжкультурної компетентності особистості; визначення основних бар'єри у формування міжкультурної компетентності студентів у вищих навчальних закладах.*

Для реалізації мети та завдань дослідження були використані такі методи: теоретичні – контент-аналіз та узагальнення сучасних наукових досліджень з метою визначення основних підходів до формування міжкультурної компетентності студентів у закладах вищої освіти; систематизація та зіставлення теоретичних даних з метою виявлення основних бар'єрів у міжкультурній комунікації студентів.

На основі аналізу наукових джерел розкрито поняття «міжкультурної компетентності», виявлено структурні компоненти міжкультурної компетентності, висвітлено основних бар'єри міжкультурної комунікації, окреслено наукові підходи до формування міжкультурної компетентності студентів у закладах вищої освіти.

У результаті дослідження встановлено, що міжкультурна компетентність студентів виражається через вербальне та невербальне спілкування, інтерес до міжкультурних цінностей, толерантне ставлення до представників різних культур, подолання комунікаційних бар'єрів, які можуть виникнути через міжкультурні відмінності в різних видах діяльності, використання знань про національні традиції, норми та цінності іншої культури. З'ясовано, що для досягнення мети формування міжкультурної компетентності студентів необхідно модернізувати навчальні програми закладів вищої освіти (зокрема, програми з іноземних дисциплін) з урахуванням сучасних міжкультурних інтеграційних процесів та глобальних змін.

Практичне значення статті полягає у тому, що її матеріали можуть використовуватися в організації виховної роботи в закладах вищої освіти, для розроблення навчальних програм з вивчення іноземної мови для студентів, у системі підвищення кваліфікації викладачів.

Перспективи подальших досліджень дослідження вбачаються у розробленні технології формування міжкультурної компетентності студентів у процесі змішаного та дистанційного навчання.

Ключові слова: *міжкультурна компетентність, бар'єри міжкультурної комунікації, викладання іноземної мови, студенти, заклади вищої освіти.*

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