

# Pedagogical conditions for the formation and development of intercultural competences in university students

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**Abstract.** The society of the twenty-first century, due to its polyethnicity, multilingualism, and multiculturalism, poses a whole pool of theoretical and practical dilemmas related to solving problems of peaceful coexistence, communication, mutual respect, and enrichment of representatives of different cultures to pedagogical science. Purposeful intercultural education of the student youth contributes to the formation and development of critical understanding of their own culture and traditions, as well as the culture of an ethno-partner, overcoming ethnocentrism, developing tolerance, empathy in the students, fostering conscious, socially responsible, non-conflict behavior. In pedagogy, a strong conviction has developed that the formation and development of intercultural competence is carried out mainly in the study of foreign languages. The article defines the structure of intercultural competence, presents the factors of intercultural competence identified on the basis of factor analysis, describes the pedagogical conditions for the formation and development of intercultural competence of university students.

**Keywords:** intercultural competence, pedagogical conditions, communication, foreign language, university, student

## 1. Introduction

Strategies of the State National Policy of the Russian Federation for the Period up to 2025, and the State Cultural Policy for the Period up to 2030, and the Federal Target Program “Strengthening the Unity of the Russian Nation and the Ethnocultural Development of the Peoples of Russia for 2014-2020” formulated the ideas of preserving and strengthening the national unity of Russia, the spiritual and moral recovery of the Russian society. They actualize the issues of positive intercultural communication between the representatives of different cultures, fix the thesis about the need to educate a person with a culture of international communication, capable of adequate perception, understanding and recognition of the cultural characteristics and values of their people and ethnic groups-partners, with whom the process of communication is carried out, ready to overcome hetero- and autostereotypes, to build a constructive dialogue with people of other cultures, using verbal and non-verbal means, reflexing on the communication results.

The Altai region is a multinational region numbering more than 100 nationalities practicing about 20 religious traditions. Thousands of students from various regions of the Russian Federation and foreign countries study, undergo internships, successfully implement academic mobility programs annually in universities of the region. In this regard, in the education system, the task of nurturing intercultural competence (IC) in the student environment is actualized.

Analysis of the methodological development of the problem field of the formation and development of the IC of students of the university allows to highlight a number of contradictions:

- The contradiction between the social order for the formation and development of IC among university students in order to strengthen the national identity and spiritual community of the peoples of Russia and the insufficient development of pedagogical strategies and techniques aimed at solving this problem taking into account the ethnoregional variation of multicultural actors of Russian society;
- The contradiction between the need for the formation and development of IC in the system of higher and secondary vocational education and the insufficient development of the pedagogical conditions of its formation, taking into account the ethnocultural traditions of a multicultural region.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

To determine the structure of the MC, we applied a factor analysis using the methods of principal components, the Varimax rotation, with the Kaiser normalization. The factor analysis excluded the Bogardus social distance scale, which expresses a subjective attitude to specific nationalities.

## **3. Results**

Factor analysis revealed the following 8 factors IC. Factor 1: Intercultural tolerance. In the structure of the IC for students of the Altai universities, a significant factor is intercultural, inter-ethnic, interfaith tolerance towards representatives of other ethnic groups, cultures, and other religions. The same factor includes affective component (emotions, feelings caused by ethnic differences), a cognitive component (understanding and interest in a different opinion), and a conative component (willingness to interact).

Factor 2: Total tolerance. The students who took part in the study associated this factor with elementary tolerance, independent of national characteristics and the nature of any interaction with people of other ethnic groups: social tolerance and tolerance as a personality trait.

Factor 3: Ethnic self-consciousness. The third factor confirms the influence of attitudes towards one's own nationality on the success of interaction with representatives of other ethnic groups. This factor is represented by the following indicators: ethno-egoism, ethno-isolationism, ethnofanatism, ethnonigilism, ethnic indifference.

Factor 4: Cultural and value orientations. This factor is represented by traditional and contemporary cultures and allows one to determine the orientation of a person to the past with a commitment to tradition, custom, religion, etc., or to contemporary trends in the development of society.

Factor 5: Non-verbal competence in communication. The fifth factor emphasizes the importance of the non-verbal aspect in intercultural interaction and is represented by perceptual-non-verbal competence and knowledge of the following norms of communication adopted in various countries: relation to time, boundaries of personal space, sensory perceptions, etc.

Factor 6: Cultural competence. This factor includes interest in other countries, knowledge of foreign culture, which helps to ensure the effectiveness of intercultural interaction.

Factor 7: Linguistic competence. This factor included the scale "Knowledge of a foreign language and language of international communication." It is interesting that in our study the following question: "In your opinion, what qualities and skills related to intercultural competence will you need for a successful professional activity?" This shows how students with low tolerance often relied on knowledge of the language, while students with high tolerance spoke primarily about respect for the individual tolerance for opposing views and opinions, etc. Thus, the former laid the basis for the IC more formal criteria, while the latter preferred informal ones.

Factor 8: Positive ethnic identity. This factor synthesizes the combination of a positive attitude towards one's own people and a positive attitude towards people of other cultures.

In our perspective, it is advisable to design the educational environment conducive to the education of IC in accordance with the basic principles of multiculturalism. Analysis of psychological and

pedagogical works allowed to isolate the most significant and effective educational strategies and technologies, the use of which will ensure the effectiveness of the formation and development of MC in the student environment, taking into account the cultural and national characteristics of the region. These may include the following:

- Learning strategies based on experience are focused on the concentration of the organization of learning based on the personal experience of students (discussions, problem-based learning, methods of researching a particular case, etc.);
- Critical learning strategies contribute to the formation and development of their own opinions during the search for the necessary informational training materials, meaningful and objective assessment of their quality;
- Integral learning strategies are implemented through a series of training intensives, specialized master classes;
- Assertive behavior learning strategies implies effective communication in which the assertive behavior model is formed. It includes confidence, tolerance, positive attitudes. This model is implemented through training forms, consultations using the methods of analysis of real or “chair” cases, discussion methods of training, role-playing games;
- Action-oriented learning strategies that involve the independent acquisition of knowledge in the process of solving a professional, life, study situation with the obligatory passage of all phases of a full working action: informing, planning, decision-making, implementation, monitoring, evaluation;
- Strategies for collaborative learning, based on the concept of knowledge management in the process of communication and joint activities of participants in educational relations, in the process of solving an educational problem, etc.

#### **4. Discussion**

In this study, we analyzed models related to the content and structure of the IC. They include the following:

- *Structural models*: relationships, values, knowledge, skills, desired external and internal results;
- *Adaptation models*: levels of analysis (individual, episodic, level of relationships), skills of managing communication processes, the quality of a participant of intercultural interaction (friendly, trustworthy, and persistent);
- In addition to many of the parameters mentioned, *spectral models*, also include cultural distance, adequacy (compliance with certain standards, context), intercultural proximity.

Appeal to foreign and domestic models of the IC showed us that they most often deal with the following phenomena:

- Personality parameters include the following: ideological attitudes, motivational sphere, knowledge, skills in the field of communication, ability to adapt, perception of cultural distance, self-consciousness and ethnic identity;
- Phenomena of interethnic interaction include the following: tolerance, lack of xenophobia, heterostereotypes, level of relationships, self-presentation, communicative effectiveness, style and strategies of interaction;
- Linguistic features of IC include the following: phonological, syntactic and semantic components, knowledge of the norms of the language and its stylistic features;
- Contextual parameters include the following: patterns and interactions, supporting factors, intercultural concepts, etc.

Most of the concepts under consideration are original and independent, and, within their specific goals, workable for solving tasks. But often, for certain parameters of personal and, especially, linguistic characteristics of IC, their “derivative” of the characteristics of the ethnic group, the connection with these features is not visible. In our opinion, a concept is needed in which, on the one

hand, a person is shown in integration unity with an ethnic group through specific “interpenetrating” characteristics. On the other hand, these same characteristics are significant for interethnic interaction (and therefore for IC).

In our study, we rely on the model of personal and ethno-psychological resources of IC, which can be used as sources, means and ways to improve the efficiency of IC processes. We understand resources as properties, states, characteristics, features, etc. individuals and groups when they perform their function, namely, ensuring the effectiveness of activities, communication, management.

The model of IC support resources related to the structure of personality includes the following:

- Psychophysiological properties include: extraversion, emotional synchronicity, empathy;
- Positive motivation of interethnic interaction or lack of negative ethnocentrism and racial prejudice can serve as an orientation;
- Self-esteem can demonstrate a high level of national dignity and attention to it from others, effective feedback and reflection;
- Ability to understand foreign language vocabulary, skills and cooperation skills, tolerance;
- Communicative potentials includes knowledge of the ethics of interethnic interaction, an adequate interaction style, a tactful communication, communication resources.

## 5. Conclusion

Analysis of the content of the terms “competence”, “intercultural competence”, “sociocultural competence”, “ethnocultural competence” in the theoretical works of contemporary researchers allowed to isolate the essential characteristics of IC. It is of a over professional and non-professional nature, represents the integrative quality of the individual and presupposes the existence of a set of special knowledge of the norms, rules, beliefs and skills governing the nature of interpersonal relations between representatives of various ethnic communities (both on verbal and non-verbal levels). In turn, they ensure a positive attitude towards the language and culture of ethnopartners, compliance with the established traditional forms of interethnic communication. Another important feature is the desire to establish in practice mutually agreed principles of mutual understanding and cooperation in the course of interethnic relations; the ability to resist national limitation and isolation, national bias and hostility, national egoism and ethnocentrism [1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6].

When designing the pedagogical conditions and content that ensure the formation and development of IC for university students in the Altai Region, we need to take into account the fact that some students, depending on their national identity, professional interests, existing experience of international communication, have a personal orientation to specific spheres of life.

The results obtained allow to design an educational program for the formation and development of intercultural competence for university students, to detail it taking into account regional and national peculiarities of students. In addition, the study allows to develop recommendations for teachers to optimize the processes of teaching and education in high schools. But these measures need a more thorough analysis, which is planned by us in the next study.

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