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TEACHING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN THE PROCESS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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ОБУЧЕНИЕ МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОММУНИКАЦИИ В КОНТЕКСТЕ ИНОЯЗЫЧНОГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ

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Abstract. The article is devoted to teaching language students intercultural communication in the context of a foreign language acquisition. The author substantiates the key idea of a foreign language education, which states that teaching a foreign language should go along with learning about the culture of a foreign country. According to the authors' view, this process should provide the basis for learning more about the native culture and establishing national identity. The article reveals the idea that a comprehensive analysis of the foreign system of values may establish a better understanding of the learners' own culture and its system of values. The authors provide an example through their guidance for the seminar, devoted to the topic "The problem of understanding in intercultural communication. Identity, socialization, enculturation" as part of the discipline "Theory and practice of intercultural communication".

Key words: foreign language education, intercultural communication, social and cultural personality development, mindset, system of values, foreign culture, native culture, national identity.

Introduction

The goal of foreign language education is learning about the system of language as well as the peculiar features of a foreign culture. Learning a foreign language is also a necessary means of accumulating knowledge about one's own native culture and national identity.

Foreign language education implies learning more about the system of values of a native speaker in order to understand their essence. It also serves the formation and strengthening of the system of values within the native culture.

A system of values is a set of "systemic representations of the values that determine a person's unique behavior and lifestyle" [1, p. 152]. They are formed in the process of socialization of an individual and reveal the focus and attitude of a person towards social realms. By means of considering a person's moral and spiritual values, it becomes possible to analyze the social and cultural determination of the behavior and certain features of the

Аннотация. Рассматривается обучение студентов лингвистических специальностей межкультурной коммуникации в контексте иноязычного образования. Автор обосновывает ключевое положение иноязычного образования о том, что обучение иностранному языку должно осуществляться в неразрывной связи с культурой страны изучаемого языка, а также являться необходимым средством овладения родной культурой и формирования национальной идентичности. Данное положение обосновывается рассмотрением овладения ценностными ориентациями представителей иноязычной культуры посредством анализа и сопоставления с ценностями родной культуры. В качестве примера приведена методическая разработка семинара по дисциплине «Теория и практика межкультурной коммуникации» по теме «Проблема понимания в условиях межкультурного общения. Идентичность, социализация, инкультурация».

Ключевые слова: иноязычное образование, межкультурная коммуникация, социокультурное развитие личности, менталитет, ценностные ориентации, иноязычная культура, родная культура, национальная идентичность.

mindset. The analysis of values contributes to a holistic designation of the socio-cultural activities, phenomena and processes – all of that accumulates the incentives for human behavior. Value-based self-determination implies comprehension of social realms as well as a certain social behavior code [8, p. 23]. The system of values influences a person's manner and form of activity; they also pre-determine a person's perception and understanding of social realms. Thus, the difference in understanding a communicative situation by the representatives of different cultures may be explained by analyzing the differences in their systems of values. In the process of interaction, different value systems manifest themselves in the national and cultural peculiarities of verbal behavior.

The system of values includes universal and culture-specific concepts. The universal values include such concepts as beauty, kindness, love and respect for the Motherland, family, friendship and others. Culture-specific values determine a certain

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perception of the social realm and behavior in certain situations. In order to perform effective communication, the speaker needs to know the national values of a foreign partner and should also be able to adjust his own verbal behavior to certain values of the interlocutor. On the one hand, it is crucial to recognize and respect the values of a foreign culture, while on the other hand, it is important to preserve and establish the national identity of a representative of the native culture.

The system of values characterizes and determines the mindset of a speaker that represents a certain culture. Mindset is a synthesis of universal and specific characteristics. Any system of values may not belong exclusively to one nation, but its manifestation among different peoples has its own specific features. Different values within one culture determine the national and cultural specificity of views, assessments, attitudes and beliefs that are manifested in the national and cultural specificity of verbal behavior [2].

Not only do nations differ in the essence of their psychology as a whole, but also in the form of its manifestation. A lot depends on the value and the forms of its manifestation in behavior. If a certain value is noticeable for its importance, attributed to it by the representatives of a native culture, then this value is usually considered as a characteristic feature [3, p. 123]. Consequently, the system of values of a particular culture are specific and typical at the same time, since they represent psychological qualities typical of all mankind [4, p. 70].

The goal of education lies in a mutual understanding of the different systems of values. This should be based on the principles of recognition of and respect, as well as on the rights of other individuals to have certain values. This implies understanding the opinions of an interlocutor in the process of communication, as well as respecting his or her values and the right to propagate other values [6, p. 25–27]. Thus, the effectiveness of teaching intercultural communication depends on the student's ability to recognize and respect the national peculiarities of a foreign interlocutor.

The educational aspect of learning a foreign language involves the acquisition of students' experience in the emotional and evaluative attitude to foreign languages and foreign social realms, which includes feelings and emotions, and which requires learning sociocultural qualities that are necessary to achieve mutual understanding with a foreign language interlocutor.

Adequate perception of a foreign system of values demonstrates understanding and establishing emotional contact with the interlocutor. In this respect, the communicator not only needs to focus on the content of the verbal message of a foreign interlocutor, but also on the emotional component of his statements. This includes the feelings of the speaker, which do not always correspond with the content of his message and may differ from the feelings experienced by a native speaker about the

same communicative situations. A careful attention to feelings helps communicators to perceive the emotional state of each other and to relate to the emotional state of a partner. Foreign language students should develop a certain reception of another culture, which will serve as the basis for establishing mutual understanding between representatives of different cultures. This implies highlighting the similarities between interlocutors, distinguishing specific features, interpreting and evaluating behavior stimuli of a foreign communicator. Therefore, foreign language students need to develop a certain socio-cultural susceptibility, which allows distinguishing the universal and national values of a foreign interlocutor.

At the current stage of social development, a sense of patriotism and civic responsibility is becoming an important and necessary universal and national value. At present, a unified system of patriotic education has been developed in the Republic of Belarus, which is based on the historical experience of the Belarusian nation, as well as spiritual and moral traditions, values, beliefs and guidelines that form the basis of the Belarusian mindset. The core patriotic values include love for the Motherland, knowledge of national history; unity of the modern Belarusian nation and appreciation of the Belarusian consolidation as a core national idea; respectful attitude towards representatives of various confessions, nationalities, social groups; knowledge and respect for the most significant achievements and traditions of national culture.

Patriotism forms a sense of national belonging (to a country, people, ethnical groups) and a willingness to act for the good of the country. The main factors for the Belarusian society unification are the place of residence, common traditions, customs, mindset and citizenship. Being a patriot means loving your country, living and working in your country for its well-being, and appreciating the Belarusian culture.

The national identity formation is carried out through patriotic education, especially through historical and cultural education, which is aimed at popularizing the national history, the historical and cultural heritage of the country, historical milestones, as well as memorable places and their significance in the formation of the Belarusian nation.

In terms of the pedagogical experience, aimed at establishing the Belorussian students' system of values, it is worth mentioning the seminar, devoted to the topic of "The problem of understanding in intercultural communication. Identity, socialization, enculturation", as part of the discipline "Theory and practice of intercultural communication". The purpose of the seminar is to reveal the peculiarities of understanding the values of different cultures.

The basis of the seminar was the theory on the topic, presented to students at the lecture. Therefore, at the beginning of the seminar, students recollected the main theoretical material with the help of test questions in an interactive format. Here are the examples of test questions for the students:

1. What does mutual understanding mean in the process of intercultural communication?

2. What do the quotes of the researchers mean: "Where there can be no misunderstanding, there can be no understanding" (G.I. Bogin, 1986); "Different types of misunderstanding provide an additional illustration of the levels of understanding" (M. Birvish, 1988).

3. In the study of intercultural communication, the opposition "yours and not yours" is one of the important factors that determines the result of communication between representatives of different cultures. What is the difference between the opposition "yours and not yours?"

4. What is ethnic stereotype, and what influence does it have on building mutual understanding in the process of intercultural communication?

5. What is the difference between autostereotypes and heterostereotypes? Give examples of both types.

To revise theory, certain practical tasks with the following instructions were given:

1. "Identify the reasons for unsuccessful communication and establish what both communicators perceived as "the alien". This task suggested various interactions between the representatives of different foreign cultures, who experienced misunderstanding due to different perceptions of social realms and different systems of values.

2. Make a brief image of the Russian-speaking culture representatives;

3. Watch the video and discuss the stereotypes about the representatives of different cultures described in the story; determine the meaning of stereotypes, according to the speaker;

4. Provide the equivalents for the Russian and English phrases that are the examples of misunderstanding. For example, match the equivalents in two languages:

1) vocabulary, push, pull, wet paint, happy birthday, back of the head, conforming to the laws of nature

2) regular, happy birthday, to myself, vocabulary, carefully colored, back of the head, away from myself.

3) tough guy, sound sleep, lasting friendship, strong wine.

4) strong friendship, strong sleep, strong wine, strong guy.

5. Determine the type of interference (grammatical, graphic, phraseological, stylistic, phonetic, lexical) in accordance with the definition [10, p. 209–213]. For example:

– deviations from the norm in the use of phraseological units in the production of speech and in the misinterpretation of their meaning in the perception of speech (phraseological interference);

– incorrect identification of the lexical meaning of the word and, as a result, incorrect use in speech or misinterpretation in the perception of the word (lexical interference).

6. Analyze the following examples and determine the type of interference:

1) Russian-speaking communicators interpret the nouns "advice", "money" and "news" as plural nouns, and the nouns "clothes" and "police" as singular.

2) There can be errors in the plural form, for example – childs, mans, foots.

3) There can be mistakes in translation of the opposition "yours and not yours"

Another example of a similar task:

1. You cannot eat your cake and have it too – "you cannot do two mutually exclusive things at the same time"

2. To bark up the wrong tree – "to attack someone else's trail"

3. To put all one's eggs in one basket – "to put everything on the map"

4. N.S. Khrushchev – "But we don't beat flies by the nostrils", "We will show them Kuzkin's mother."

5. To carry coals to Newcastle (English) – Go to Tula with your samovar; Greeks – "to carry owls to Athens"; Arabs – "to bring spices to Iran".

At the seminar students also present their reports and slides on the topic of interference at the linguistic and communicative and behavioral levels. To consolidate the studied information, other training tasks can be performed. For example:

1. Find the English equivalents to the Russian phrases with the component "soul" [9, 166–167]: "Live soul to soul; Smb dislikes sth; Deep down; to think the world of smth; Invest your soul; Smb's heart is heavy; Deep down; Smb is open-hearted; Work with soul; To put one's heart into something; With all my heart; To pull at smb's heartstrings; Take for the soul; To live in perfect harmony; Soul wide open; To put one's heart into one's work; The soul does not lie; To the bottom of one's heart and others".

The task for the development of skills in the use of politically correct vocabulary can also be used:

Find matches in the use of politically correct vocabulary [9, p. 216–218]:

1. chairman; spokesman; cameraman; foreman; fireman; postman; businessman; stewardess; headmistress; invalid; retarded children; old age pensioners; poor; natives; foreigners; short people; fat people; house plants; pets.

2. mail carrier; flight attendant; executive; chairperson; supervisor; fire fighter; spokesperson; camera operator; business woman; head teacher; physically challenged; children with learning difficulties; newcomers; vertically challenged; senior citizens; economically disadvantaged; botanical companions; animal companions; horizontally challenged.

It is also reasonable to use case studies in which the participants of different cultures misunderstood each other because of the difference in their systems of values. Their analysis helps to find and explain the reasons for misunderstanding. It is also useful to compare a native and a target culture by predicting the attitude and reactions of their representatives to different concepts. For example,

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students can analyze the attitude of foreign partners to "success" and clarify their choice:

Choose one point about your foreign partner and answer the same question about the people of your country.

1. Do you believe in the equality of opportunity?

The representative of a target culture:

a) No, the social class of parents matters much.

b) Yes, a person from a family of a low social status can become a real millionaire.

c) Yes, but the equality of opportunity doesn't guarantee success for everyone.

2. Is competition a negative side of success in your country?

The representative of a target culture:

a) No, it is a great stimulus to try and promote.

b) No, but people work under emotional pressure.

c) Yes, it provokes stress and tension.

3. Is success associated with a high quality of living standards?

The representative of a target culture:

a) No, it gives a sense of self-assertion.

b) Yes, material possessions are a measure of success and social status.

c) No, success is associated with hard work.

4. Is hard work both necessary and rewarding?

The representative of a target culture:

a) Yes, but it is not only hard work that brings success.

b) No, proper connections and good education are necessary and rewarding.

c) Yes, hard work guarantees a good standard of living.

Conclusion

Thus, in the process of learning a foreign language and teaching intercultural communication, students elaborate on the system of values of the representative of a foreign culture, and this helps them to establish their national system of values as well as to develop a deeper understanding of their native culture.

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