DETERMINANTS OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

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Abstract

Purpose of the study: The article aims to identify the determinants of intercultural education and describe their essence.

Methodology: The authors used the cluster of methods: the diagnostics of cultural identity and a foreign cultural-reflexive position in communication with representatives of other cultures, the analysis of activity-related products, rapid assessment questionnaire "Tolerance index", questionnaire. The study comprised 135 students of the South Ural State Humanitarian-Pedagogical University (Chelyabinsk, Russia).

Main Findings: The authors have determined typical features and target-oriented aspects of intercultural education and presented them in the form of a matrix. The authors have also developed and tested the course "Basics of intercultural communication", considered the formation of the cultural self-identity and foreign culture-reflexive position of students, as well as their tolerance index and types of ethnic identity.

Applications of this study: The study results can be used in teaching courses concerned with problems of intercultural communication to students of foreign language faculties, international faculties, and other humanities faculties. The research materials are of scientific significance for undergraduate and graduate students working on their dissertations.

Novelty/Originality of this study: The study novelty is as follows.: At the theoretical level, it determines the typical features and determinants of intercultural education. At the practical level, it introduces and tests the course "Fundamentals of intercultural communication". It analyzes the formation of the cultural self-identity and foreign culture-reflexive position of students, as well as their tolerance index and types of ethnic identity.

Keywords: Intercultural Education, Determinants, Self-identity, Foreign Cultural-reflexive position, Tolerance, Cultural Relativism.

INTRODUCTION

The idea of intercultural education has been actively discussed in pedagogical science for decades. Nowadays, there are numerous studies on this issue but their results are not systematic and are not properly used in theoretical and practical teachers' training. At the same time, the conceptualization of intercultural education is relevant and has a meta-theoretical focus. In particular, scholars discuss conditions for the possible implementation of intercultural education at different educational levels.

Intercultural education is closely connected with general pedagogy. This connection is conditioned by the fact that tasks of intercultural education and training are interdisciplinary. They are discussed and solved in the framework of not only school but also pre-school, extracurricular, vocational and special education. The problems of intercultural education are also studied in the context of social pedagogy, special education, and recreational activities. In addition, media, sexual and environmental education play a significant role in the implementation of the above-mentioned tasks of intercultural education.

Intercultural education is defined as a task and a component of general education since its objectives are equally relevant for all educational levels. This status is determined by the need for the reasonable coexistence of different peoples in a multicultural society, as well as the risk of intercultural conflicts and discrimination against minorities (Balitskaya, 2008).

Currently, the most important experience is the integration and implementation of the existing approaches to intercultural education. To this end, it is necessary to define the fundamental concepts of intercultural education and upbringing and to determine their internal connections, i.e. identifying its determinants is the most relevant task.

METHODS

To fulfill the study objectives, we conducted a theoretical analysis of Russian and foreign scientific works on intercultural education and its determinants. In the process, we used the following methods: empirical (conversation, interviewing, questioning, testing) and interpretational (quantitative and qualitative analysis, mathematical processing of diagnostic results).

One hundred and thirty-five students of the South Ural State Humanitarian-Pedagogical University (Chelyabinsk) participated in the experiment.

We used the following groups of methods in the study:
1. The diagnostics of the cultural self-identity and a foreign cultural-reflexive position in communication with representatives of other cultures and the analysis of activity-related products (essay, reflexive-practical notebook "Intercultural diary");

2. The rapid assessment questionnaire "Tolerance index" (Soldatova et al., 2002);

3. The questionnaire "Types of ethnic identity" by G.U. Soldatova and S.V. Ryzhova (Grishina et al., 2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Throughout the study, we tried to integrate the existing approaches to intercultural education, distinguish and present its typical features in the form of a matrix. We emphasized the connection of intercultural education with pedagogy, as well as media, sexual and environmental education. We defined and analyzed the following determinants of intercultural education:

1. The formation of cultural identity and recognition of one's ethnocentrism;
2. The formation of a foreign cultural-reflexive position in communication with representatives of other cultures;
3. The formation of tolerance foundations;
4. The formation of one's readiness to resolve intercultural conflicts and the practice of conflict resolution (the conflict of cultures and cultural relativism).

The determinants of intercultural education and upbringing presented below are heuristic and reveal the systematization of the existing knowledge in this field.

Let us consider the first determinant of intercultural education. Cultural self-identity is based on the "self-concept", i.e. the person's systematic ideas about themselves or the individual's ideas of themselves as unique personalities in the time-related and socio-cultural framework (Shavayeva, & Dzamikhova, 2015). These ideas about themselves are somehow reflected in one's consciousness and are relatively stable.

In addition to these ideas, people understand that they really and virtually belong to a social group, which is expressed not only externally but also within the system of ideas about themselves. This approach is based on E. Erikson's "self-concept" and is regarded with due regard to ego-identity (understood as a product of some culture), whose source is "a culturally significant achievement". The boundaries of such an identity can form a circle of people outside or within one's ego zone (Erikson, 1974).

Taking into account the coexistence of different cultures in the territory of some national state, intercultural education aims to overcome the tendencies of hostility and demarcation, namely hostile perception and rivalry. These deeply emotional reactions enable us to define identity boundaries, i.e. the boundaries between affection and resentment, hostility or indifference to those outside this boundary. The ethics of planetary responsibility makes people reconsider the definition of identity. It should go beyond the territorial boundaries of some state (Beamer, & Varner, 2001).

Intercultural education and upbringing aim to form global responsibility not limited to local coexistence in small territories (city, neighborhood, school, etc.). However, one should not underestimate the difficulties arising during the implementation of this goal since any nation is not an artificial collective identity but a product of historical development. For instance, the United Nations has failed to convincingly demonstrate that it is able to ensure stability for all humanity. In this regard, it is necessary to reconsider ways of resolving conflicts between representatives of different cultures and do it without violence or wars. This concept of intercultural education and upbringing can be called the "pedagogy of the third millennium", according to which the younger generation should be educated in the spirit of coexistence in "one world".

Thus, the above-mentioned typical features of intercultural education can be represented in the form of a matrix where they are distributed depending on cognitive, affective and behavioral target-oriented aspects (Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Target-oriented aspects of intercultural education</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target-oriented aspect</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral</td>
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</table>
One aspect of intercultural education is the recognition of one’s own ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism means the integration of one's consciousness and life values into the perception of the world, traditions, and values of an ethnic group (Berezina, 2015). On the one hand, this perception is often an obstacle to the conflict-free interaction of ethnic groups. On the other hand, it supports ethnic identity and preserves its uniqueness and integrity. Ethnocentrism reveals itself in confrontation with other ways of perceiving the world around. Problems with mutual understanding may arise if representatives of one culture impose their own views and try to establish their rules and regulations, while representatives of another culture do not know them or have their own opinion on this matter (Kalabekova, 2008). Intercultural education aims to discover such case problems and identify them within the framework of cultural conditionality, thereby preventing misunderstanding and raising awareness about the fact that everyone can be misled by their cultural centrism.

Thus, it is necessary not only to inform young people about cultural differences but also to work out behavioral patterns used in intercultural communication since unstructured information can easily strengthen the existing prejudices and cause the opposite effect.

The integration of one's consciousness and life values into the world perception is crucial for orienting in intercultural communication. In this regard, we mean conscious ethnocentrism, i.e. the realization that other participants of intercultural interaction have their own values-based reference points. Thus, conscious ethnocentrism is the basis of intercultural communication, free from prejudice and cultural stereotypes (Bredella, 2002).

The second determinant of intercultural education is the formation of a foreign cultural-reflexive position of students in communication with representatives of other cultures.

The perception and understanding of a foreign culture play a key role in the process of intercultural communication. It is not only about perceiving physical characteristics of some object (height, appearance, clothing, etc.) but also about perceiving its culture-specific behavioral characteristics and forming ideas about its intentions, thoughts, abilities, emotions, attitudes, etc. The younger generation should understand the manifestations of a foreign culture and adequately respond to them (Bartholy, 1992).

To better understand the process of forming a cultural-reflexive position in communication with representatives of other cultures, one should consider the very concept of reflection. Successful intercultural communication is determined by the following condition: how the other (interlocutor) understands me because it influences the interaction itself. It is no longer the knowledge or understanding of the other but the knowledge of how the other understands me, i.e. a peculiar process of "mirroring" each other, "deep and consistent interrelation reflecting the interlocutor's inner world that, in turn, reflects the inner world of the first explorer" (Krewer, 1996, p. 149). The German scholar K. Knapp fairly stated that multicultural reflection is a conscious restriction of some foreign ("alien") culture undertaken to strengthen the so-called "I" or "We" feelings. We define a foreign cultural-reflexive position as an interaction between two partners who want to understand each other but have different culture-specific behavioral patterns. Their knowledge and experience, hopes, desires, and inclinations fall within the "pattern" category (Knapp, 1996, p. 67).

On the surface, the formation of a reflexive attitude to another culture in communication with its representatives implies self-reflection, i.e. pondering how personal opinions and values arise, as well as recognizing that representatives of a foreign culture possess the same acceptable perception of the world and readiness for a dialogue (Khaleyeva, 2000).

Foreign culture and reflection are dual categories that imply the existence of "I" and "opposite". In this regard, the general ability and willingness to conduct a dialogue cannot be overestimated. This dialogue can be realized both literally (interpersonal communication of people belonging to different cultures) and figuratively (communication with foreign texts, paintings, and sculptures representing the art of other peoples).

Different cultures can be seen in a new and unfamiliar way in game-related and informal situations. However, they often clash with one's own convictions and values in everyday life. It is impossible to level this emotional reaction by providing proper information in the course of cognitive learning. It requires special education where the experience of confrontation is acquired through emotional participation (Zasedateleva, & Belova, 2018).

Intercultural education should include knowledge about the culture of the country whose language is studied and one's own culture. At the same time, forms of organizing the educational process should comprise the following interactive technologies: discussions, intercultural insights or intercultural training. Role-playing games, communicative-pedagogical situations, pantomime and non-verbal forms of expression also contribute to the formation of a foreign cultural-reflexive position of students.

The next determinant of intercultural education is the formation of tolerance foundations.

Tolerance is the main virtue necessary for living together in a pluralistic democracy and a society of freethought and freedom of expression. Therefore, teaching tolerance should be a natural component of the educational process. Within the framework of intercultural education, the formation of tolerance foundations plays a special role. In the conditions of multicultural modern society, it is necessary to develop tolerance as one of the main personal traits, i.e. a tolerant attitude.
towards those who live in a different way and have another worldview, world perception and culture, even if some parts of this world and culture contradict their own beliefs and values (Gershunskiy, 2002, pp. 3-12).

Tolerance is a personal and social characteristic of all individuals. This personal characteristic implies the absence or weakening of the person's reaction to a factor contradicting the inner perception of the behavior of foreigners.

When treating tolerance as a social characteristic of people, one should comprehend the multidimensionality and multipolarity of the world and social environment, the formation of respect and acceptance, understanding the diversity of cultures, forms of self-expression and manifestations of human individuality.

Tolerance is expressed by self-possession, self-control and adaptive capabilities of the modern personality (Thomas, 2003). In the context of intercultural education, it is necessary to prepare people for intercultural communication in the following forms:

- Interethnic communication, which implies the communication between representatives of different nations, in particular, ethnic groups;
- Countercultural communication, which is realized between representatives of the maternal culture and its subculture and is expressed as the disagreement of the subculture with values and ideals of the maternal culture;
- Communication between representatives of different social strata and groups;
- Communication between representatives of different demographic groups: religious (for example, between the Orthodox, Catholics, and Muslims), age and gender (between men and women, representatives of different generations);
- Business communication determined by differences in corporate culture.

Summarizing the above-mentioned information, we should note that it is possible to adequately perceive intercultural differences only if each participant of communication has well-formed tolerance foundations.

The next determinant of intercultural education is the formation of students' readiness to resolve intercultural conflicts. We consider the ability to resolve conflicts based on the main provisions of cultural relativism as a component of this determinant.

The field of intercultural education and upbringing is connected with conflicts regarding one's behavioral patterns and values. While communicating, participants of the educational process go through disagreements and conflicts due to their belonging to different cultures (Azizova, 2017). Currently, there are multinational classes in Russian educational organizations where different viewpoints and values-based orientations of majority and minority, teachers and migrant parents clash. This kind of conflict is common to the Western European education system. In particular, parents of Turkish origin often prohibit their daughters from attending swimming lessons at German schools. On the one hand, this conflict is determined by the position of fathers as representatives of a foreign culture. On the other hand, a teacher performs a public educational mission (to teach everyone to swim). In addition, students can face contradictions between their parental attitudes and the viewpoint of other students who, as a rule, cannot understand why an exception should be made for representatives of the Turkish culture. Young men brought up in the masculine Turkish culture often display their gender specifics in a disrespectful attitude towards female teachers and demonstrate their dominant behavior. The parties involved in an intercultural conflict should know the possible solution to this problem and understand the consequences of its alternative resolution.

Therefore, intercultural education should be realized from the standpoint of cultural relativism. This approach considers all cultural differences and the behavior of foreigners without prejudices. It proceeds from the fact that one's values are equal to the values of other cultures, rather than the belief that the values-based orientations of their own culture are the only true (Dzhurinskiv, 2012).

The epistemological position of cultural relativism (all cultures are regarded as equal) should contribute to leveling conflicts in real-life situations of intercultural communication and providing an acceptable solution. According to the concept of cultural relativism, the dominant idea is that there are no superior and inferior cultures, all cultures are unique in their own way and cannot be compared with each other. Thus, cultural relativism recognizes the independence and usefulness of each culture, completely rejects ethnocentrism and Eurocentrism when comparing different cultures.

To resolve intercultural conflicts, it is necessary to form a respectful attitude to different views and values-based orientations, the desire to understand some foreign culture from the inside. We suggest using intercultural games, case problems, intercultural training, etc. as efficient tools for developing mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of intercultural conflicts (Bebina et al., 2009).

These determinants are priority areas in the course of preparing students for intercultural communication with representatives of different cultures, which is an effective measure to prevent possible intercultural conflicts. After conducting an analysis, we have identified the following determinants of intercultural education and its target-oriented
aspects: cognitive, emotional and behavioral. We implemented these aspects in the process of teaching bachelors in conformity with the training program 44.03.05 "Teacher Education".

We have developed and tested the course "Fundamentals of intercultural communication".

Now we should dwell on the implementation of the above-mentioned determinants of intercultural education and its target-oriented aspects.

The cognitive aspect is represented by such themed sections as "Introduction to the theory of intercultural communication", "Structure of intercultural communication", "Cultural shock", "Verbal communication", "Non-verbal communication", "Paraverbal communication", "Modern business etiquette in the intercultural context" and "Written foreign communication". Within these themed sections, students' attention is focused on the main theories of intercultural communication: E. Hall's theory of high and low context cultures, G. Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, the theory of masculine and feminine cultures. Students acquire the following determinants of intercultural communication: attitude to nature, time, space, communication, etc. Such a themed section as "Cultural shock" informs students about its symptoms, manifestations and development mechanisms. When students learn more about internal and external factors of cultural shock it helps them better adapt to a foreign culture: real-life and represented in works of literature and art. As a rule, students are especially interested in such themes as "Verbal, non-verbal and paraverbal communication" (styles of verbal communication, kinesics, tactics, sensors, proxemics, prosodics, etc.) since they allow learners to gain a better insight into a foreign culture. While engaging in professional activities, students will use the knowledge of modern business and speech etiquette, as well as the ability to properly execute business letters.

Such target-oriented aspects as emotional and behavioral are realized in the framework of intercultural games, case problems, intercultural training, discussion, brainstorming, etc.

This method of organizing the educational process allows students to better understand typical features of a foreign culture and their cultural self develop a sense of tolerance and the ability to choose an adequate behavioral pattern in intercultural communication (Bebina et al., 2009).

The inclusion of intercultural games into the system of higher education helps to prepare students for intercultural interaction. For example, an interactive game contributes to the formation of the "outside" perspective to overcome clouding effects in intercultural communication. During the intercultural game "Greetings in different countries", the moderator gives students cards indicating the method of greeting another person. Only two people in a group have cards representing the same greeting. Students divide into two circles and greet each other one by one. Before the game begins, three students are appointed as experts. Participants of this intercultural game greet each other in different ways. In different cultures, people greet each other with a nod of the head, cheek kissing, a bow with folded palms, etc. Students move in a circle until they meet a representative of "their own" culture. At the same time, experts observe the reactions of the "representatives" of different cultures and analyze their behavior, facial expression, and certain emotions. Then students discuss possible ways of overcoming cultural shock caused by a foreign culture in the forum mode under the moderator's guidance.

To prepare students for intercultural interaction and develop their ability to behave adequately in intercultural communication, it is especially relevant to use case problems. Their materials can be texts in a foreign language that accurately reflect the real life of the country whose language is studied or the teacher's impressions of interacting with a foreign culture. The above-mentioned case problems should reliably represent various situations of intercultural communication in which a certain conflict may arise and be accompanied by "cultural shock" (Tulelbergenova, 2015).

The work on case problems involves the following stages:

- The preparatory stage to choose situations of intercultural communication. The teacher introduces students to the problem concerned with the case. A major role is played by the student's background knowledge about the country whose language is studied, its history, the culture and mentality of its representatives;
- The analytic-receptive stage for students to analyze the situation and search for additional information on the problem;
- The interactive stage involves the work of students in small groups to check the correctness of possible ways to solve the problem indicated in the case. At this stage, it is appropriate to use such teaching methods as discussion, brainstorming, etc.;
- The evaluative stage represents the forum-mode work, i.e. students discuss the problem situation under the teacher's guidance, introduce other small groups to the results of their discussion and make a collective decision;
- The application stage is optional-variable, i.e. it is not mandatory and can be implemented as a role-playing game on the situation or a creative product in the form of a college or mind card.

The use of discussion at the interactive stage helps to level students' egocentrism and allows them to take another's point of view, which is extremely important for developing their tolerant attitude to a foreign culture and improve behaviorally
patterns in the process of intercultural interaction.

Here is an example of one case. A German student came to the USA on a student exchange program. Her host family welcomed her warmly and showed her the room where she would live while studying at the university. The following day, the student locked up her room, took the key and went to the university. This fact puzzled the Americans: why did the student close the door and take the key with her? Did not she trust them? Did she think they would rummage through her things?

In fact, it is typical to have limited personal space for the German mentality and not allow strangers there. It is considered a behavioral norm in the German communication culture. Thus, the use of case problems in higher education helps students better understand a foreign culture, avoid cultural shock when encountering it and prepare for intercultural interaction.

The diagnostics of students' tolerance after the implementation of the course "Fundamentals of intercultural communication" that we developed indicates the improvement of its level. As a diagnostic tool, we used the rapid assessment questionnaire "Tolerance index". The questionnaire consisted of statements reflecting attitudes towards the world and other people, as well as social attitudes in various spheres of interpersonal interaction where respondents' tolerance or intolerance is revealed. Three subscales of the questionnaire aimed to diagnose such aspects of tolerance as ethnic tolerance, social tolerance and tolerance as a personal trait.

The diagnostic results are presented in Table 2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tolerance type</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic tolerance</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social tolerance</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance as a personal trait</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The diagnostics of cultural self-identity and a foreign culture-reflexive position in communication with representatives of a foreign culture, the level of tolerance and readiness for resolving intercultural conflicts conducted after this course let us draw the following conclusions.

The analysis of the reflexive-practical notebook "Intercultural diary" and the notes made by students proved that students are aware of cultural self-identity and their foreign cultural-reflexive position in communication with representatives of a foreign culture. The intercultural diary is the student's practice book for doing tasks in the context of the course "Fundamentals of intercultural communication", conducting an empathic-reflexive assessment of the knowledge gained and analyzing the experience of intercultural communication. The proposed structure of the diary is as follows: module 1 – the practice book (for doing tasks, taking notes during classes); module 2 – one's reflections on intercultural dialogue (to reflect after classes); module 3 – the diary of intercultural communication (for gaining the real or virtual experience of communication with representatives of a different culture); module 4 – one's intercultural glossary (for compiling a list of acquired terms).

We also used the questionnaire "Types of ethnic identity" developed by G.U. Soldatova and S.V. Ryzhova to diagnose ethnic identity and its transformation in the context of inter-ethnic tension. An indicator of transforming ethnic identity is the growth of ethnic intolerance. Tolerance/intolerance is the main problem of interethnic relations in the conditions of growing tension between people and the key psychological variable in compiling this questionnaire. The survey results are presented in Table 3 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of ethnic identity</th>
<th>High-level manifestation</th>
<th>Average-level manifestation</th>
<th>Not manifested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethno-nihilism</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic indifference</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive ethnic identity</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethno-egoism</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethno-isolationism</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethno-fanaticism</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The study results prove that most respondents (82%) combine a positive attitude towards their own people with a positive attitude towards other nations. Thus, the course “Fundamentals of intercultural communication” we developed contributes to the formation of an optimal balance between tolerance towards one's own and other ethnic groups, which let's consider it as a condition of independence and stable existence of an ethnic group, as well as a prerequisite for peaceful intercultural interaction in a polyethnic world.

CONCLUSION

The study novelty lies in the fact that we have selected and identified the following determinants of intercultural education: the formation of cultural identity; the recognition of one's ethnocentrism; the formation of a foreign cultural-reflexive position in communication with representatives of a foreign culture; the formation of tolerance foundations; the formation of readiness to resolve intercultural conflicts; the practice of conflict resolution (the conflict of cultures and cultural relativism).

The determinants of intercultural education that we have identified are priority areas in teaching students for intercultural communication with representatives of different nationalities, which is an efficient measure to prevent possible intercultural conflicts.

The course “Fundamentals of intercultural communication” that we developed and implemented in the process of teaching bachelors in conformity with the training program 44.03.05 "Teacher Education" has allowed us to fulfill the following target-oriented aspects of intercultural education: cognitive, emotional and behavioral.

AUTHORS’ CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors have contributed equally.

REFERENCES


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