

Intercultural communication as a medium future specialists' ecological culture formation

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Abstract. A significant role in intercultural communication is assigned to language as a means by which representatives of different linguistic and ethnic communities are mutually understood and interacted. The relevance of given study is in the fact that intercultural communicative competence ensures the development and acceptance of general rules and norms of behavior that constitute international communication etiquette. The object of this article is the university educational system. The subject of the paper is intercultural communication as one of the mechanisms for an individual's ecological culture formation. The study is aimed to identification of the role of intercultural communication in an individual's ecological culture formation. The author presents intercultural communicative competence as a skill of mutual understanding of different cultures representatives. Experimental training using interactive technologies and test the effectiveness of the designated conditions in the process of forming intercultural communication was conducted. It was established that intercultural communication was an effective mechanism in the formation of an individual's environmental culture.

1 Introduction

Social representations and its influence on professional becoming have not been considered yet. An urgent need of modernity is focused formation of person's ecological culture. As the most important social institution for the formation of an ecological culture, the education system should provide the conditions for solving this problem within the framework of the sustainable development of our country.

Sustainable development allows to preserve the vitality and diversity of living and inanimate nature on the planet, improve the quality of life for current and future generations, involves changes in the behavior of individuals and organizations - the way they satisfy their needs today should not prevent future generations from satisfying all living beings your needs in future. According to the position of UNESCO, the leading factor in solving most environmental problems is global environmental education. The relevance of the study is due to the fact that "intercultural communicative competence ensures the development and acceptance of general rules and norms of behavior that constitute international communication etiquette" [1, p. 52].

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In modern conditions, the process of changing the content of professional training is aimed at humanization of education, which is designed to educate the younger generation in the spirit of a humane attitude towards other cultures, as well as to determine effective ways to eliminate barriers within the framework of intercultural interaction [1].

D. Valko admitted that the environmental culture was emerging and there were no positive social inducements. He “outlines how some psychological factors such as attitudes and contextual stimuli influence the tendency towards pro-environmental behavior” [2, p. 2075].

V. Plumwood presents a radically new picture of how our culture must change to accommodate nature. The scientist argues that our society needs “to see nature as an end itself, rather than an instrument to get what we want” [3, p.4].

H. Spinola stated that “in order to mitigate the ecological crisis in which we live and to re-establish natural balances, we need profound cultural transformations in our societies, abandoning an anthropocentric view and embracing biocentrism/ecocentrism, the approach to environmental education cannot be limited to classical teaching models based on the schools and classrooms” [4, p. 983]

A.C. Moreira, C.P. Ribau, C.da S. Ferreira Rodrigues proved that the proper decision of environmental problems was “crucial for the sustainability of the industry and the planet” [5, p. 88].

Intercultural communicative competence is becoming in demand, since it is the basis for professional mobility, as well as for resolving conflicts that arise in intercultural communication. Currently, a number of scientific directions have emerged in the study of environmental culture: philosophical and methodological justifications are presented in the works of D.S. Likhachev, E.V. Girusov, O.N. Yanitsky, B.V. Preobrazhensky and others. Theoretical, methodological and methodological approaches to the integration of environmental education and enlightenment are stated in the works of A.V. Yablokov, N.M. Chernova, I.N. Ponomareva, V.V. Pasechnik, S.V. Sumatokhin and others.

The analysis of scientific literature showed that the problems of intercultural interaction were considered by A.N. Dzhurinsky, I.D. Lelchitsky, V.V. Makaev, V.I. Mathis, L.L. Suprunova and others. They analyzed multicultural education taking into account the multiethnicity of the modern world. S.G. Ter-Minasova, V.G. Kostomarov, E.M. Vereshchagin, N.D. Galskova, G.D. Tomakhin, I.I. Khaleeva, etc. studied intercultural communication in the process of teaching foreign languages.

The issues of the psychology of intercultural communication, ethnic conflicts, and mechanisms for the formation of a tolerant personality are presented in scientific works by: B.G. Ananyev, V.S. Ilyina, B.C. Bibler, V.V. Vorobyov, I.A. Zimnyaya, S.A. Arutyunov, A.G. Asmolov, B.Z. Wulföv, G.W. Allport, C. Heller, W. Vogt, R. Wandberg, etc.

Intercultural interaction at the stage of integration of educational systems is considered as a personal and professional characteristic of a specialist. The problem of culture in a general philosophical context was studied by A.A. Bodalev, L.N. Makarov, E.G. Zlobina, A.F. Losev, M.S. Kagan et al.

But the means of intercultural communication in an individual’s ecological culture formation have not been sufficiently studied.

2 Materials and Methods

The theoretical methods of research were literature analysis, synthesis, generalization, which made it possible to study the possibilities of intercultural communicative competence mechanism in the formation of an individual’s ecological culture. An empirical study was conducted to diagnose the levels of development of intercultural competence. The

participants are students of Institute of Social Sciences and International Relations (ISSIR) of Sevastopol State University (SevSU) (N=25 respondents).

The methodological basis of this work is the research of domestic and foreign psychologists: L.S. Vygotsky, S.L. Rubinstein, P.Ya. Galperin, A.N. Leontiev, I.A. Zimnyaya, etc., who raise psychological issues of communicative student activities control.

The object of the paper is the university educational system. The subject of one is intercultural communication as one of the mechanisms for an individual's ecological culture formation. To identify the role of intercultural communication in the formation of an individual's ecological culture is the subjective of given study. The following tasks are set:

1. To identify the main conditions that provide effectiveness of the communication process with representatives of different cultures.
2. To describe a possibility of intercultural communication competence in persons' ecological culture formation.
3. To conduct experimental test in order to define the effectiveness of conditions in the process of intercultural communication formation and establish that intercultural communication is an effective mechanism in the formation of an individual's ecological culture.

3 Results

Environmental education is referred to environmental study aimed at sustainable development of our society. It is learning for sustainability. One of the components of environmental culture is ecological literacy.

Environmental education as a study of maintaining the desired condition of the environment and preventing undesirable phenomena is based on the knowledge of both the natural sciences and the humanities and social sciences and implies on:

- understanding of biological and physical processes affecting the state of the environment, its conservation/depletion and development [6];
- connection of the surrounding world with cultural traditions and history of one's region, country;
- understanding of the essence of man: man is part of nature, but (unlike other living organisms) is able to predict the future and make responsible rational decisions;
- understanding conflicts of interest regarding natural resources, as well as the contradiction between short-term benefit and long-term balance, moral choice
- aesthetic understanding of the beauty of nature and biological diversity [6].

Environmental education involves components of universal competencies: interaction with other people, including intercultural: assesses what kind of communication is required (with whom, in what format, how to contact); are able to generate ideas together, develop and complement each other's ideas; capable of compromise solutions; plans the organization of work, one's role and the distribution of tasks among team members; ability to relinquish one's interests if they interfere with the solution of the group task being performed. A common understanding of the situation is developed together with other community members; the situation is placed within the value-normative framework accepted in this community [6].

Pedagogical approaches to environmental education realization are ются 1) concept-based learning; 2) inquiry-based learning; 3) project-based learning [7].

The problems and challenges of higher education include students' intercultural communicative competence development through its enrichment with both universal and national values of one's own and other cultures.

A special form of activity that requires knowledge of languages [8], the spiritual culture

of peoples, their religion, moral principles, worldviews is a process of intercultural communication that ensures effective communication. Intercultural communication has a special role. An increasing number of people are showing interest in the culture of representatives of different nations and the most important spiritual values. The information wealth accumulated by each individual nation is transmitted to a new generation by means of linguistic units. A person's worldview is formed with the help of language as a perfect means of cognitive activity.

Intercultural communication is media in which "processes of both direct and mediated interaction between representatives of different cultures take place. Overcoming cultural barriers is a favorable factor for reflection and self-esteem of the individual. In the conditions of intercultural communication, otherness reaches extreme values and, thus, contributes to the formation of a stronger reflexive attitude and a change in consciousness. Intercultural communication provides with possibility of mastering new forms of attitude towards nature" [6, p. 45] and states "understanding of the global nature of environmental problems and their solution by referring to the best world experience in relations with nature" [6, p. 45].

"In the context of intensive mutual penetration of cultures, different communication models development, the prospect of using intercultural communication as an effective cultural approach to improve methods for the formation of other forms of culture, in particular, artistic" [6, p. 45] in the sphere of spirit and moral education, etc., is outlined. Particular attention should be paid to the search for conditions that can ensure the effectiveness of the communication process with representatives of different cultures. Intercultural communication is considered in the mutual influence of cultures (cultural forms) through cultural values, works or texts, artifacts, customs, etc. In the conditions of another culture, intercultural media, communication mediators are language, written texts, moral norms, customs, various kinds of instrumental techniques (communicative technologies). A significant role is given to the subject "Russian Language" in the formation of a person's readiness to intercultural communication. «Russian language teachers provide a "bridge" connecting the students' personal culture with Russian culture. "The teachers with stronger personality traits of agreeableness, extraversion, emotional stability, and openness to new experiences tend to have higher levels of intercultural sensitivity" [9, p. 2].

Intercultural communicative competence as person's ability to achieve respect and mutual understanding with representatives of other cultures based on compliance with the norms of behavior and rules that make up multinational communication etiquette.

Conflict in the process of intercultural communication is inevitable, since there are differences in the accompanying values, the meaning of verbal language, and non-verbal behavior among foreign cultures. Significant causes of conflicts, intolerance and clashes are considered to be a very low level of culture of interethnic communication and identification of personality in a multicultural space, which is the cause of psychological barriers in the context of interaction with representatives of other cultures. The dialogue of cultures creates a need for ethnic tolerance among all participants in the communicative act. Comparing one's own and another's culture allows one to identify what is common and what is distinctive, to recognize the special achievements of other nations and their role in universal culture [10].

The basic element of ecological culture is consciousness. Ecological consciousness helps a person determine the degree of personal responsibility for all aspects and manifestations of his own and public life in the natural environment [6].

The main advantages of intercultural communication for the formation of a person's ecological culture are that it serves as a stimulus for the formation of new cultural meanings and values through relationships dialogization – "I am Different", "I am Other Culture". In this conditions, deferences reach extreme values and thereby contributes to the formation of a stronger reflexive attitude. a awareness of one's own cultural values is possible in condition of another culture introduction [6].

The process of intercultural interaction is a form of activity. It is not limited only to a foreign language knowledge, but also requires one of the spiritual and material culture of another nation, values, moral principles, religion, worldviews of the people, which together determine the model of behavior of representatives of communication.

4 Discussion

The conceptual issues of our work, are ones of psychological barriers overcoming within the framework of intercultural interaction. An internal obstacle of a psychological nature is considered a psychological barrier. It may be reluctance or uncertainty that prevents a person from performing actions effectively, which prevents the establishment of trusting relationships between people [11]. Accordingly, the main task of the teacher is to ensure the process of adaptation to new values through the Russian language, personal experience, familiarization with moral values, world art and literature.

A diagnosis of the levels of intercultural communication competence formation among students was carried out during during the research process in 2022. 100 students studying at various departments of ISSIR (N=25 respondents) of SevSU participated in the diagnostic experiment.

When conducting assessment procedures, the intercultural communication competence we characterized it according to a 5-point scale depending on the level: advanced level (5), intermediate level (4), basic level (3), introductory level (2) and level of incompetence (1).

To determine these levels, the technique “Exploring and Assessing Intercultural Competence” by Alvino E. and Fantini Aqeel Tirmizi was used that includes 211 questions, combined into 5 blocks: awareness; attitude; skills; knowledge; language proficiency [12].

The diagnostic results showed that only 9% of respondents have an advanced level, 19 % of respondents have an intermediate level, 31 % of respondents have a basic level, 22% of students have an introductory level and 9% have an incompetence level (figure 1).

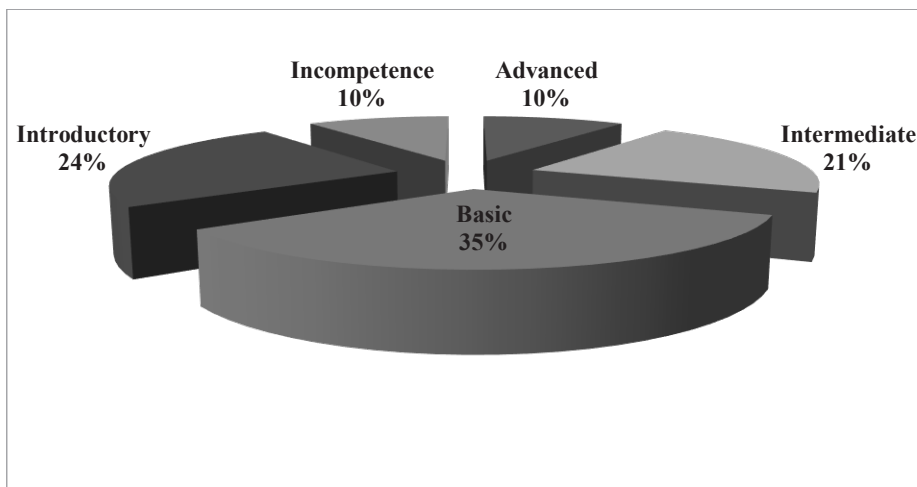


Fig. 1. The levels of intercultural communication competence at the diagnostic stage

To increase the level of intercultural communication competence formation, certain conditions and requirements were outlined. The conditions that contribute to the effectiveness of the communication process with representatives of different cultures are the following:

1. The formation of intercultural communication competence takes place during Russian language lessons through the discursive activities of students. Additional information is used along with grammatical material on the Russian language.
2. It is necessary to determine the possibility of using the traditions of the native culture, as well as the etiquette of representatives of other nations during Russian language classes for the purpose of spiritual and moral education of young people, which ensures the formation of a tolerant attitude towards other cultures.
3. The significance of native culture as the basis for the use and norms of behavior, the experience of folk traditions in the educational process determines the importance of using intercultural communication competence in teaching the dialogue of cultures in a multi-ethnic space.

At the formative stage, the indicated conditions were implemented and the following techniques were used: positive example; democratic dialogue; creating situations of success; analysis of the causes of conflicts, behavioral styles, “competition; methods of collective creative deeds, traditions, rituals and symbols” [10, p. 711].

One of the requirements for the process of organizing and implementing intercultural interaction is the following: when updating communicative means in the educational process, the level of methodological readiness of teachers for communication in multicultural conditions is essential: the teacher plays the role of moderator of pedagogical dialogue in a multicultural environment [7].

At the final stage we checked the levels of intercultural communication competence formation among students by means of “Assessment of Intercultural Competence” methodology by Alvino E. Fantini, Aqeel Tirmizi [12]. As the results of this technique showed, 56% of respondents had an advanced level, 23% of students had an intermediate level, 11% had a basic level, 7% of respondents had an introductory level, and only 3% of respondents had an incompetence level.

The following blocks were studied: awareness; attitude; skills; knowledge and language proficiency. The possibilities of creating a multicultural society that is based on tolerance, sustainability, and mutual understanding [13-15] were realized within the educational space of the university. The results showed an increase in the advanced level from 9 to 36% and a decrease in the level of incompetence - from 9 to 0% (figure 2).

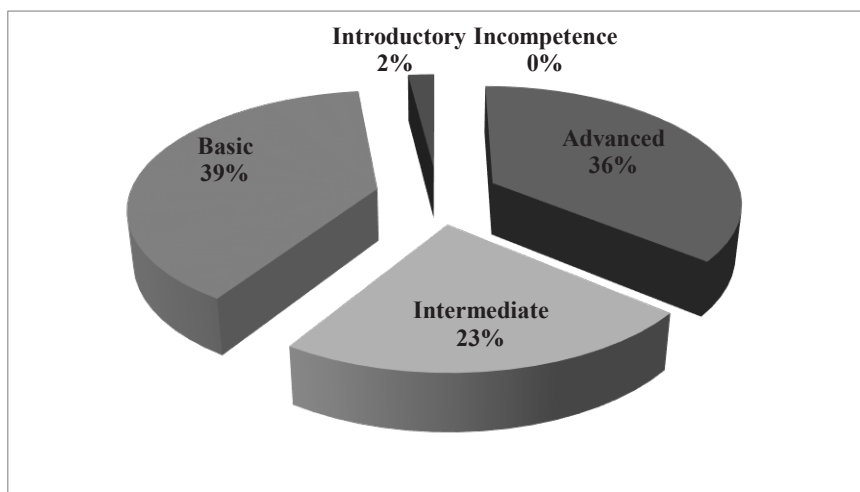


Fig. 2. The levels of intercultural communication competence at the final stage

5 Conclusions

Thus, one of the productive methods for solving psychological barriers in conditions of intercultural interaction is intercultural training. The following conditions that ensure the effectiveness of the communication process with representatives of different cultures are: additional information application with grammatical material on the Russian language to implement the discursive activity of students; use of intercultural communication competence in teaching dialogue of cultures in a multi-ethnic media and learning culture and etiquette of representatives of other nations during Russian language classes.

It has been established that environmental education is based on knowledge of both the natural sciences and the humanities and social sciences and implies an understanding of biological and physical processes, the connection of the surrounding world with cultural traditions and the history of one's region or country; understanding conflicts of interest over natural resources, understanding the tension between short-term gain and long-term balance, moral choice and aesthetic appreciation of the beauty of nature and biodiversity.

The following main advantages of intercultural communication for a person's ecological culture formation are:

- it provides a stimulus for new cultural meanings and values formation through relationships dialogization – “I am Different”, “I am Other Culture”;
- references reach extreme values and thereby contributes to the formation of a stronger reflexive attitude.

6 Prospects for further research

Prospects for further research may include issues of the basic foundations of environmental culture, ecological literacy in the conditions of the emerging modern educational environment.

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