

Formation of sociocultural competence among students of a pedagogical higher education institution using ICT when learning foreign languages

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Abstract. The article deals with the problem of formation of sociocultural competence among students of pedagogical higher education institutions majoring in information and communication technologies (ICT) when studying foreign languages. The authors analyzed the main trends of studies in this problematic area. The analysis is based on theoretical sources and practical experience identifying the pedagogical conditions aimed at effective formation of sociocultural competence among students of pedagogical higher education institutions, namely: actualization of the sociocultural aspect of studying foreign languages using the ICT means; preparation of students to independent work when studying foreign languages with the ICT means; creation of information and communication training medium of studying foreign languages with relevant scientific and methodological support. The article describes the methods and results of experience and experimental studies of formation of the sociocultural competence among students of pedagogical higher education institutions with the ICT means when studying foreign languages. These studies were conducted at The Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Professional Education «Mordovian State Pedagogical Institute named after M. E. Evseyev» (MordSPI).

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Introduction

The modern situation in professional education evidences that its content should not deal with the formation of professional qualities of students to make them capable to compete in society. The analysis of studies of C. Kramsch [1], T. Mughan [2], S. Rathje [3], I. A. Zimnaya [4], V. V. Safonova [5], V. P. Furmanova [6] and educational practice have manifested that nowadays it is acute to format sociocultural competence among future pedagogues presupposing the ability to obtain and reproduce various information in native and foreign languages. Works of J. Campinha-Bacote [7], S. Reich [8], L. Rew [9], R. Stuart [10], B. Tomalin [11] and other authors draw attention to the formation of skills to communicate in the polycultural space with social partners and colleagues, to enter into professional contacts with team, to build professional career by constantly replenishing knowledge from various sources, including those in foreign languages.

It is essential to select the optimum means of formation of the sociocultural competence. The scientific studies by D. Teeler [12], J. Twiss [13], V. A. Efremenko [14], T. A. Lavina [15], and I. V. Robert [16], many years of practical experience of the authors manifest that comprehensive adoption of information and communication technologies (ICT) into the educational process has a number advantages for formation of competence among future

pedagogical workers.

It is a challenging task to conduct studies of formation of sociocultural competence among students of pedagogical higher education institutions with the ICT means when studying foreign languages. For our research we have polled the instructors of the foreign languages department of the MordSPI and school teachers in Saransk. For instance, the question «Do schoolchildren have an opportunity to study foreign languages with the ICT means?» 87 % of the polled answered negatively, and just 13 % positively. The question «Do you believe that the ICT should be incorporated into studying foreign languages at school and university?» was answered by all polled persons affirmatively (both teachers and instructors).

The evaluation of the data evidences that students of initial courses are school leavers who possess insufficiently the sociocultural knowledge and have a weak idea how to apply the ICT means to the preparation to laboratory studies of a foreign language in order to accumulate the sociocultural knowledge. The polling and interviewing teachers and instructors have helped to reveal the references for scientific and practical work, to select activity types to be fulfilled with using the ICT and which are to be incorporated into the experience of experimental work. The experience of experimental work in formation of sociocultural competence

among students of pedagogical higher education institutions with ICT means when studying foreign languages incorporated three mutually related stages during 2009 to 2013 years at FSBEI HPE «Mordovian State Pedagogical Institute named after M. E. Evseyev (MordSPI).

The levels (low, moderate, high, advanced) of the sociocultural competence among students of pedagogical higher education institutes based on the indicators of relevant components of sociocultural competence – availability of sociocultural knowledge (cognitive), availability of positive motivation (motivational), acquirement of skills and habits (activity), manifestation of creativity (creative) – are determined using a complex of techniques (the techniques of elementary and operational analysis worked out by A. V. Usova; the technique «Motivation of education at a higher education institution», elaborated by T. I. Iljina; the test of creativity determination proposed by V. I. Andreev; different questionnaires developed by authors and adapted to the conducted research). When determining the level of education, each indicator was estimated quantitatively to reveal the diagnostic results.

At the stating stage the evaluation of experimental data reveal that students of non-linguistic faculties of pedagogical higher education institutions have little understating about the sociocultural competence. The initial assessment of sociocultural competence of tested students was at the advanced level – 3 %, at the high level – 21 %, at the moderate level – 49 %, at the low level – 27 %.

At the educating stage of experiment the control (CG – 36 persons) and experimental (EG – 34 persons) groups were set up which combined the students of I and II years of non-linguistic faculties studying French and of the philological faculty studying Latin language. To implement the experiment idea the pedagogical conditions were justified scientifically and put into practice.

To implement the first pedagogical condition, an *actualization of sociocultural aspect of studying foreign languages using the ICT means* was used to access the web resources to observing, studying, summarizing the sociocultural information and elaborating presentations. For instance, to acquire the needed lexical material and to form the skills of statements about students' life, the site www.studyfrench.ru/ was visited. Using the strong appeal of this topic, the table for comparison «L'enseignement supérieur en France et en Russie» was offered to fill in. The site www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french/mafrance/ – Ma France contains BBC videos over entire France. This resource permitted students to learn new words and

expressions, to get acquaintance of French culture and life in France.

When studying the Latin language, the topics «Ancient Rome culture», «Science in ancient Rome», «Roman year. Holidays», «Roman religion» enable students to understand the cause of culture variety. The classes were supported with web resources relating to Latin language: www.latinizza.narod.ru – the site «LATINIZZA», www.latin-room.narod.ru – the Latin language office, www.lingvo.asu.ru/latin/latin.html – the Latin language grammar, www.yaskazal.ru/latin_in_alfavit.php – the aphorisms in Latin, www.trilinguis.ru/linguistic/latina.aspx – the language portal «Trilinguis».

This condition was implemented when the need in relevant cultural information was revealed with ICT means based on the professional criteria of students who constructed their phases having the data about the country culture. It influenced positively the motivation to study foreign languages (French, Latin).

Promotion of the level of sociocultural competence among students of pedagogical higher education institutions, the *preparation of students to independent work with ICT means when studying foreign languages* was favored by teaching students, for instance, various types and techniques of independent work. One of the effective types of independent work, as practice shows, was the project method. It had the content in experiment the sociocultural nature (for instance, the projects «Development of technical means in France: Internet»; «Great inventions of ancient Rome», «Minitel in France», «Development of science in ancient Rome» and other topics) were referred to the category of creativity because they favoured the development among students of the cognitive independence, critical and reflexive thinking, creative abilities.

Preparation of students to independent work with ICT means (electronic manuals, encyclopedias and dictionaries, multimedia manuals, electronic mail, web wide net) when studying foreign languages promoted also the deepening and expansion of the knowledge by students of the selected topic of scientific and research nature; formation of the drive to independent summarization and comprehension of all sum of knowledge ; promotion of appeal to research work of the pedagogical nature; acquirement of practical skills of execution of research, habits to draw conclusion and execute psychological and pedagogical analysis.

The implementation of the third condition was aimed at *creating the information and communication training medium having relevant scientific and*

methodological support with ICT means when studying foreign languages. We consider it the component of educational medium affecting the participants in educational process and providing the opportunity of interrelation, particular material, communication and social condition encouraging the processes of training and teaching. Therefore, the institute has the INFO-institute (home.mordgpi.ru) – a specialized system combining space enabling to resolve the set of professional pedagogical tasks [17; 18; 19].

The technological idea of the INFO-institute when studying the disciplines «Foreign language (French)», «Classic languages», «Ancient languages» is to transfer the scientific and methodological materials saturated with sociocultural subjects (training tasks, text laboratory practical training, text training simulators, databases and other). It is reflected in various databases: «French language: electronic manual» and «Latin language: electronic manual» [20; 21]. These manuals are represented in the INFO-institute system in order to arrange independent work of students. Observations show that students are more responsible towards such type of classes and more interested in electronic studying of foreign languages than training with paper carriers. Application of the INFO-institute as a tool of support of training students creates effective work with teaching materials and optimizes the educational INFO-institute process.

The concluding stage of the experiment served to estimate the level of development of the sociocultural competence among students of higher pedagogical education institutions based on the repeated diagnostics of CG and EG in accordance with the marked indicators. Having analyzed the experimental work comprising the arrangement of studies using the ICT of the studied disciplines «Foreign language (French)», «Classic languages», «Ancient languages», we carried out that only 5.88 % of EG students and 8.33 % of CG students had the advanced level knowledge of sociocultural competence when studying foreign languages with ICT means. After the experiment, the advanced level was reached by 29.41 % of EG students and 11.11 % of CG students. A high awareness of the sociocultural competence before the experiment had 20.59 % of EG students and 22.22 % of CG students. After the experiment, the higher level was achieved by 35.29 % and 19.44 % of EG and CG students, respectively. The moderate level of experimental work was among 41.18 % of EG students and 33.33 % of CG students. After the experiment, the moderate level was achieved by 26.47 % of EG students and 44.44 % of CG students. The EG students with the low level of knowledge of the sociocultural competence numbered at the experiment beginning 32.35 % and

8.82 % at the experiment end; before the experiment there were 13 of CG students or 36.11 %, and there were 25 % after the experiment.

When the experiment was over, the data were distributed by levels of sociocultural competence among EG and CG students when studying foreign languages with ICT means. The results show that during the experiment, the number of students with the advanced level of the sociocultural competence in the EG augmented to 23.54 %. The high level of the sociocultural competence among students in the EG augmented to 14.70 %, the moderate level diminished to 14.71 %. The number of students with low sociocultural competence diminished to 23.53 %. The number of CG students with the advanced level augmented to 2.77 %, the low level diminished to 2.77 %. The number of students with low level augmented to 11.11 %, those with low level diminished to 11.11 %. The data evidence the quality of choosing the ICT means for studying foreign languages for formation of sociocultural competence.

Therefore, the comparative data about the levels of sociocultural competence in EG and CG at the stating educating stages, the experiment justifies the statement that the general level of sociocultural competence among students of higher education institutions with ICT means when studying foreign languages which are higher in the EG than in the CG. It evidences the effectiveness of implementation of outlined pedagogical conditions. The experimental work has made it possible to observe the achievement of the objectives of the research.

Gratitude

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