

Diagnostics of Ethno-Cultural Competence of the Future Teachers

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Abstract: In today's world there is an increase in migration, ethnic assimilation, acculturation and consolidation that has led to the intensification of inter-cultural and inter-ethnic interaction. Preparing the younger generation for life in a multicultural world is stated as a main task in the various international documents. Poly- and ethno-cultural orientation strategy is specified as one of the priorities when reforming the Russian education system. The organization of the educational process in a multi-ethnic Russia largely depends on teachers who must accustom children to their native culture, as well as to the cultural heritage of other ethnic groups. It is important that teachers possess ethno-cultural competence. In order to achieve this goal it is necessary to have a clear understanding of how high is the level of ethno-cultural formedness. The paper presents the results of an empirical study on the diagnostics of ethno-cultural competence of future teachers. It was carried out based on the cognitive, motivational, affective and behavioral components of ethno-cultural competence. The information obtained serves as the guidelines to improve ethno-cultural training of future university teaching staff.

Key words: Ethno-cultural competence of future teachers • Diagnostics of ethnocultural competence of future teachers • Criteria • Indicators • Levels of ethno-cultural competence • Ethno-cultural training of future teachers

INTRODUCTION

At present we are witnessing the ethnic revival. People are realizing a multiplicity of ethnic differences as a necessary condition for the human existence and development. New requirements defined to the education system would allow one to prepare the younger generation for the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural environment. An important role in this process is assigned to a teacher. According to the Pedagogical Constitution of Europe, which provides the definition of a common platform of values and methodological training of XXI century teachers, the teacher is called for "raising the younger generation aspiration for mutual understanding, solidarity, tolerance and effective cooperation of living environment in the common European house" [1].

The idea of preparing future teachers to work in a multicultural society is increasingly reflected in recent research (J.A. Banks [2], K. Nirmala [3], A. Portera [4], O.P. Nesterenko [5], S.N. Fedorova [6]). The formation of

multicultural / intercultural / and ethnocultural competence of the teacher is considered as one of the training aspects. These concepts are often treated as synonyms, though virtually they have a different interpretation.

Thus, in the context of the "multicultural education" theory (Multicultural Education), widely elaborated in the USA, Canada and Australia, the multicultural education of future teachers is of particular importance (S.St. Clair [7], J. Castellanos [8], R.L. Pope [9]). Multicultural competence allows the teacher to participate effectively in the social processes of a multicultural society, to cooperate on the basis of cross-cultural interaction, taking into account the multicultural character of the professional subjects and use its specificity to address the educational tasks, as well as implement multicultural education of young people.

In European countries, the researchers proved the idea of "Intercultural Education" which is considered in the context of the mutual enrichment of cultures, intercultural interaction and communication in addressing

topical social and economic issues. Training of the teachers in appropriate manner results in formation of cross-cultural competence. V. Fisher, when analyzing the essence of the intercultural competence concept, gives the following interpretation: intercultural competence covers the knowledge, skills, attitudes, relations and ways of acting on the cognitive, affective and psychomotor levels that allow one to act adequately in the situations of cultural diversity [10].

Russian researchers have substantiated the concept of ethno-cultural competence, though its interpretation is debatable. With regard to the professional training of teachers the ethno-cultural competence is considered as:

- A complex of integrative characteristic suggesting a high degree of theoretical, practical and personal qualification needed for the full implementation of the tasks of ethno-cultural education of children in accordance with the national ideals and with due regard to ethno-psychological characteristics of their evolution [6];
- A combination of knowledge, skills, practices and abilities to implement the education based on ethno-cultural principles, as well as personal qualities that define value attitudes of the teacher [5];
- Body of knowledge, skills and abilities that allow the teacher to evaluate properly the specificity and conditions of interaction and relationships with members of other ethnic communities, find the appropriate forms of cooperation with them to maintain an atmosphere of mutual trust and consent [11].

Accepting the attitudes of the above mentioned authors, we believe that the formation of ethno-cultural competence of future teacher involves two interrelated aspects: the assimilation of certain ways of life in a multiethnic Russian society and professional and teacher training required for the implementation of the educational process, based on the ideas of ethno-cultural education.

We understand the ethno-cultural competence of the teacher as an integrative property of the individual, which is characterized by willingness and ability of the teacher to implement general competences (world outlook, communicative, psychological, pedagogical, reflexive and regulatory) as well as special (subjective and technological) ethno-cultural competences [12].

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Based on above stated theorizes, we have carried out the investigation to elucidate ethno-cultural competence of future teachers. The respondents were undergraduate students of the first year (major #050100.68: Teacher Education; training profile: Elementary Level of Education) at the Faculty of pedagogical and art education of the Mordovia State Pedagogical Institute named after M. E. Evseev. The experimental study was conducted in the first semester at the initial stage of training.

In order to collect empirical data authors have used various proven and complementary diagnostic techniques ("Who am I?" technique by M. Kuhn and T. McPartland, "Motivation to ethno-cultural professional practice" technique by K. Zamfir modified by A.A. Rean, the "Types of ethnic identity" technique by G.U. Soldatova and author's questionnaire to identify the ethno-cultural competence of future teachers.

Diagnostics was carried out in accordance with the criteria previously defined by the authors (cognitive, motivational, affective and behavioral criteria) and indicators that allowed authors to reveal the levels of ethno-cultural competence of future teachers (high, medium and low levels) [13].

The Main Part: Let us represent the results of the study in the generalized form for each of the ethno-cultural competence criteria of future teachers.

For a holistic study of the cognitive criterion of the ethno-cultural competence of future teachers, we explored the knowledge of the respondents concerning the concepts of "ethnicity" and "ethnic culture", perception of their own ethno-culture as well as the ethno-culture of the various nationalities of Russia, their knowledge about national and universal human values, ethno-cultural norms and rules of conduct, adopted in a particular ethnic group, as well as theoretical and practice-oriented knowledge of ethno-cultural content.

Defining the essence of the "ethnic group" concept, most of the bachelors (98.2%) described it using synonyms "people" and "nation" without revealing differences between them. 26.7% of respondents specified certain ethnic groups. 24.5% of respondents characterized the ethnic group by its main features, including the language, folk customs and traditions, living together, the outward appearance of ethnic individuals, folklore and artistic culture.

Describing the concept of "ethnic culture", the students limited themselves to general statements such as "culture of any nation" and "national culture". At the same time, the study revealed that the majority of respondents (68.3%) were referring to those components of ethnic culture which occur in their everyday life. Among them were traditions, customs, rituals, festivals, folklore, national cuisine and clothing, dances, games, as well as arts and crafts.

Defining the possible influence of ethnic culture on world culture, future teachers (24.5%) noted that the "world culture is a mix of ethnic cultures", "ethnic culture does not exist in isolation and cultures of various ethnic groups interact with each other", "there is a dialogue of cultures", "the value of different nations have identified the moral code of humanity" and "every ethnic culture carries wisdom for the present generation and a foundation for the future generations".

It was revealed that future teachers have a superficial (41.7%) and shallow (35.3%) knowledge about the culture of the titular ethnic groups living in the Russian Federation (history, traditions and customs). At the same time, it should be emphasized that most of the bachelors (72.6%) expressed interest in their own and other ethnic cultures. Such an attitude extends the understanding horizons of other national cultures since in apt words of M.M. Bakhtin, the famous Russian philosopher and cultural studies scholar, "only one who knows his own national soul can feel and know a foreign national soul" [14].

Future teachers take interest in the object-matter of ethno-cultural education. Unfortunately, only 16.6% of first-year students possess the knowledge about the values of ethno-pedagogics and child-rearing traditions of various nationalities. It should be noted that the respondents are not familiar with the methods and techniques of integration of folk traditions into the modern educational process; they are not ready to implement various forms of ethno-cultural education of pupils, selection of the best practices, tools and technologies to organize this process.

The study of the interrelation between internal and external motivation to the professional ethno-cultural activity has shown that 85.1% of respondents possess positive motivational complex, while 15.9% of future teachers have negative motivational complex.

Simultaneously with the study of cognitive and motivational components of ethno-cultural competence of the students, the reflection of ethnic identity in their self-awareness was studied as well. The results of the

study based on "Who am I?" techniques by M. Kuhn and T. McPartland have shown that the ethnonym, as an indicator of self identification with the nationality and a criterion of the ethnic identity formation was found in the answers of just 12.2% of respondents. This fact testifies to the objective complexities in forming civic stance of today's youth that is associated with heritable cultural stereotypes.

At the same time, a biographical interview allowed us to clarify the ethnicity of the respondents and to identify its role in the life values of future teachers, as well as to explore the emotional and overall values experienced by respondents in view of their ethnicity recognition. It should be noted that the ethnic affiliation as the value was relegated by the students to the sidelines. The survey results have shown that the future teachers feel proud (57.6%), confidence (28.4%) and a sense of responsibility (11.3%) with reference of their ethnic affiliation. The lack of any senses associated with the ethnic affiliation was shown by 13.7% of respondents.

Future teachers have determined the factors that involve their awareness of being consonant with the native nation. In particular, 94.6% of respondents attributed the language to the main factors and 86.3% - the nationality of the parents and the original unity. No less significant factors are the folk rites, traditions, customs, art culture (82.6%) and a sense of spiritual commonality (79.3%). The external features as a factor of the consonance with the native nation were mentioned by 34.7% of respondents.

Bachelors (35.4%) reported a slight influence of the ethnical background on their daily lives, arguing that all people are equal regardless of their nationality. When communicating with members of other ethnic groups, future teachers (36.7%), as a rule, note the differences inherent to other ethnic groups that occur in appearance, language and communication manner. 25.6% of the survey participants indicated the ethnophor language as a dominant trait, whereas 15.3% noted the person's character.

The motives of estimating ethno-cultural issues by future teachers are of particular interest. Here are some of the most common views that show certain trends. "I live in the today's world and I care about ethnic conflicts", "Among ethno-cultural issues I care about intolerance towards other nationalities", "Preservation of small ethnic groups is an important problem", "I would like to see people of different nations were more tolerant of each other, respecting and appreciating each other". It is clear from the above

Table 1: Dynamics of formedness of ethno-cultural competence criteria of future teachers

Criteria of ethno-cultural competence	Levels of formedness of ethno-cultural competence, %		
	High level	Medium level	Low level
Cognitive	23.6	29.8	46.6
Affective	19.1	32.5	48.4
Motivational	12.2	35.4	52.4
Behavioral	10.5	18.7	70.8
The average value	16.4	29.1	54.6

statements that the motives include an awareness of not only the public but also the personal relevance in ethno-cultural problems.

Appraising the students' behavior in an ethnic conflict situation, it should be noted that respondents hardly show a tolerance as a personal quality. Half of the respondents (48.4%) in an ethnic conflict situation would prefer to have shown aggression or indifference. The vast majority of bachelors (72%) manifested the need for ethno-cultural activities, both at the level of cognitive interest and at the level of specific actions.

The research allowed us to determine the overall dynamics when moving from one level of ethno-cultural competence to another that characterizes the level of formedness of ethno-cultural competence of future teachers.

The survey conducted has shown that the respondents with low level of ethno-cultural competence make up a majority (54.6%), the respondents with an average level (29.1%) constitute a quite large group as well, whereas the group with a high level of competence (16.4%) is the smallest one.

Final Part: Results of the study suggest that the level of bachelors' ethno-cultural competence is quite low. This is evident in their inability to fully and properly characterize the concepts of ethno-cultural chain such as "ethnic group", "ethnic culture", "culture" and "basic features of ethnic culture". They also failed to express properly the relationship between the ethnic culture, Russian and world culture. Students showed poor knowledge in cognition methods of ethno-cultural phenomena and their manifestation as holistic entities. Unfortunately, the future teachers are poorly prepared for the practicing of ethno-cultural activities in educational institutions. However, most of them expressed a desire to study ethno-cultural heritage of their own ethnicity and other ethnic groups.

For the efficient formation of ethno-cultural competence of future teachers it is important to identify priority targets: to substantiate the theoretical and methodological foundations of optimal educational system for ethno-cultural training of future teachers in a two-tier education system; to determine the pedagogical conditions ensuring the quality achievement of ethno-cultural content of higher education by students; and to develop the educational and methodological support for the ethno-cultural training process of future teachers.

CONCLUSIONS

Formation of ethno-cultural competence of future teachers is a relevant problem. Given the obvious attention of the pedagogic science to understanding and implementation of this problem, a holistic approach to this issue, in connection with the transition of Russian schools on two-tier education system, yet has not been worked through.

There is a need to develop a model that would serve the basis for the complex organization of the educational process, aimed at the formation of ethno-cultural competence of future teachers and making it possible to implement its cognitive, motivational, affective and behavioral components.

It is necessary to identify the effective methodologies and technologies allowing future teachers to master ethno-cultural competence. The dominant position among these technologies should be given to search techniques, problem-oriented and interactive methodologies (discussions, debates, workshops, training sessions, planning and co-operation).

It is important to organize the educational process in such a way that the formation of ethno-cultural competence of future teachers would be associated with the adoption of certain daily living activities in a multiethnic Russian society, as well as vocational and educational training for the implementation of educational work with pupils, based on the ideas of poly- and ethno-cultural education.

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