

Preparing Students for Intercultural Interaction in the Context of the Content and Language Integrated Environment

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Abstract. *The problem of preparing students for intercultural interaction in conditions of a subject-language integrated environment is quite relevant, and in theory and practice some experience has been gained in this process. The authors address the idea of the complex use of various methodological approaches in the study of certain pedagogical phenomena, as the most effective and therefore popular in modern pedagogical science. The paper emphasizes the idea that the complex of methodological approaches allows obtaining diverse characteristics of the studied phenomena. The widespread complexity of pedagogical phenomena is noted, implying that they cannot and should not be studied from one point of view. Based on this, the authors conclude that the multifaceted consideration of such a multifactorial phenomenon as the preparation of students for intercultural interaction in the context of the subject-language integrated environment is provided by a set of four mutually complementary approaches: systemic, activity, cultural and integrative ones.*

Key words – *methodological approach, systemic approach, activity approach, cultural approach, integrative approach, intercultural interaction, content and language integrated environment.**

I. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study is to develop a pedagogical system to prepare students of non-language faculties for intercultural interaction in the context of the content and language integrated environment.

We consider the *content and language integrated environment* (or CLIL) as an integral set of factors for preparing students of non-language faculties for intercultural interaction. CLIL also determines the coordinated study of various courses and stimulates increasing of the academic

level of education. Content and language integration contributes to the intensification of the educational process since it is aimed at deepening the relationship between educational courses.

It is significant to develop the theory of content and language integrated studies and to develop a theoretical model of how students of non-language faculties can be prepared for intercultural interaction in the modern global world.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The preparation of the students of non-linguistic faculties for intercultural interaction is a pedagogical activity, which implies a clear goal, motivation of students, practical orientation and effectiveness [2; 11]. However, the essence of these components in preparing the students of non-language faculties for intercultural interaction is not yet considered.

According to I.V. Blaumberg and E.G. Yudin, the methodological approach is the principal methodological orientation of the research, the point of view from which the object of study (the method of defining the object) is considered as a concept or principle guiding the general research strategy [1, p. 74]. In our study we will follow the above definition of the term “methodological approach”.

Consideration of issues in the pedagogy of today is carried out from the point of view of the following approaches: systemic (T.I. Dmitrienko, N.V. Kuzmina, V.A. Yakunin, etc.), activity (V.A. Kan-Kalik, A.N. Leontiev, V.A. Slastenin and others), environmental (L.V. Volkova, R.A. Kassina, Yu.S. Manuilov, E.V. Orlov, etc.), axiological (A.V. Kiryakova, V.A. Slastenin, G.I. Chizhakova, etc.), cultural (B.M. Bim-Bad, M.S. Kagan, etc.), person-centered (Sh.A. Amonashvili, E.V. Bondarevskaya, V.V. Serikov, I.S. Yakimanskaya etc.), participative (E.Yu. Nikitina, M.V. Smirnova, etc.),

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integrative (O.B. Akimova, I.A. Zimnaya, E.V. Yakovlev, N.O. Yakovleva) and others.

Analysis of these in pedagogy shows that the most effective and therefore popular in modern pedagogical science is the idea of the integrated use of various methodological approaches in the study of certain pedagogical phenomena proposed by N.M. Yakovleva [15] and her followers [14; 16]. Its essence lies in the fact that pedagogical phenomena cannot and should not be studied from one point of view due to their complexity, which means that it is necessary to use a set of methodological approaches that make possible obtaining diverse features of the phenomena studied.

In view of the above, we put forward the hypothesis that the versatile consideration of training the students for intercultural interaction in the content and language integrated environment is provided by a set of four mutually complementary approaches: systemic, activity, cultural and integrative.

First, it is necessary to refer to the systemic approach to understand and define its structure and to substantiate its contents and to identify intra-system links.

Second, effective preparation for the student's personality growth in the conditions of the content and language integrated environment implies the disclosure of its activity features, therefore, it is necessary to use the activity approach.

Third, the study of the essence of intercultural interaction, its content and features, the justification of the intercultural training mechanism require the involvement of a cultural approach.

Fourth, the implementation of the developed system is carried out within an intercultural content and language integrated educational environment. The integrative approach allows to define the features of the system and to reveal the pedagogical conditions for its productive functioning.

III. METHODS AND RESEARCH MATERIAL

To achieve the research aims and to prove the hypothesis, theoretical scientific methods are used: comparative, system, and structural types of analysis, synthesis, and pedagogical modelling. Pedagogical papers and pedagogical system in Russia, exemplified with teaching foreign languages to the students of non-language faculties is the empirical material in this paper.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

First of all, let us define the components of preparing the students of non-language faculties for intercultural interaction.

The purpose of this process is the development and implementation of effective methods of preparing the students for intercultural interaction in the process of vocational training at the university. The object of the preparation process is the personality of a non-language

faculty student, and the subject is the pedagogical team that encourages the learner's activity, the students. The means of the preparation process are visual aids, technical means of education. The methods of the preparation process include active, interactive, and problem methods. The outcome of this process is a certain degree of readiness of a non-language faculty student for intercultural interaction, determined following the defined criteria-evaluation apparatus.

Second, let us justify the necessity and sufficiency of the four above mentioned approaches for preparing the students for intercultural interaction.

The **systemic approach** is understood in the philosophical (V. G. Afanasyev, I. V. Blauberg, L. Von Bertalanffy, V. N. Sadovsky, E. G. Yudin, etc.) and in pedagogical literature (Yu.K. Babansky, V.P. Bepalko, T.A. Ilina, F.F. Korolev, N.V. Kuzmina, L.I. Novikova, V.S. Semenova, V.I. Dolgova, I.O. Kotlyarova, etc.) as the direction of the methodology of special scientific knowledge and practice, that is based on the study of objects as systems, is understood when objects are studied from the standpoint of their internal and external systemic properties and relations that determine the integrity of an object, its internal arrangement and functioning [6; 7; 12; 16; 17]. The systemic approach aims the researcher at the disclosure of the integrity of the object, the identification of diverse types of connections within it and at their combination into a single theoretical image.

Based on the philosophical definitions of this concept, taking into account the peculiarities of the application of a systemic approach to pedagogical research, emphasized by V.M. Polonsky [9], we can conclude that this approach in our work allows:

- 1) to study the process of preparing students of non-linguistic faculties for intercultural interaction in the conditions of the content and language integrated environment as a complex phenomenon consisting of components that contribute to the gradual implementation of the set goals;
- 2) to determine the backbone factor - the goal, to develop a peculiar research strategy based thereon, representing the creation of a system of learning and educative methods for preparing students of non-linguistic faculties for intercultural interaction in the context of the content and language integrated environment;
- 3) to consider the pedagogical task as an element of the system, determining the purpose of all its components;
- 4) to assess the role and place of the developed system as an integral object within the system of the professional training process.

The **activity approach** is considered as a methodological orientation of the research to the study of the phenomenon under consideration as a pedagogical activity [16]. The concept of the study interpreted in different ways by the researchers is considered to be the core of the activity approach. In our study, we will consider the activity as a specific human way of attitude towards the world, in which a person creatively transforms nature,

thereby turning into an active subject, and making the natural phenomenon mastered by them the object of their activity [9]. Hence, the individual acts as a subject from the standpoint of activity.

The transfer of personality to the subject of knowledge occurs through the pedagogical activity that provides optimal conditions for personality formation and development. E.V. Yakovlev and N.O. Yakovleva understand the pedagogical activity as a professional activity carried out within the pedagogical process, aimed at ensuring its effective functioning and development [14]. Thus, the pedagogical process, organized in accordance with the main components of the student's life, is the most important factor in the development of the student's personality and is characterized by a continuous change of various activities.

The activity approach allows to consider the preparation of students of non-language faculties for intercultural interaction as a pedagogical activity and to identify its key components and features, to reveal the features and stages of this process, to identify ways to optimize researcher's activities. Nevertheless, we consider that the given approach does not define the contents of the phenomenon studied.

The **cultural approach** is the main strategy for the renewal of education, as a way of viewing the educational process through the lens of the concept of culture. This methodological approach holds a conceptual position in the theory and practice of the university training of future experts. Such researchers as V.S. Bibler, K.Yu. Bogachev, G.I. Gysin, V.V. Gura, M.S. Kagan, N.B. Krylova, G.I. Lovetsky, E.S. Markaryan, F.I. Sobyenin and others made a great contribution to the development of the theoretical and methodological foundations of this approach.

The concept of "culture", considered in science as a set of material and spiritual values created by human society and characterizing a certain level of its development, is fundamental to the cultural approach [15]. In the educational context, culture is considered to be the level of personal development, characterized by the measure of the development of the accumulated social human experience and the abilities to enrich it [4, p. 118].

It should be noted that the cultural approach considers education as an internal component of culture, a kind of connecting link among all manifestations of social consciousness. In this regard, the essence of the cultural approach is to arrange the educational process in accordance with the cultural heritage of society, its norms and values.

A cultural approach reflects:

1) the study of the general theoretical basis for the development of a multicultural language personality in the process of simultaneous study of languages, cultures and civilizations;

2) focusing on the axiological content of intercultural learning by means of foreign languages, expressed in the total of the mechanisms of interiorization – identification – internalization – exteriorization [13, p. 145];

3) revealing the principles of intercultural interaction through the lens of the socio-cultural aspect of learning foreign languages;

4) the usage of cultural material for educational purposes, its structuring for various educational contexts.

Let us dwell on more details of the mechanisms of formation of personality novelties, which are implemented in the axiological aspect of intercultural learning of foreign languages.

Interiorization represents the appropriation by a person of socially significant values (B.G. Ananyev, L.S. Vygotsky). We consider this process as the transformation of intercultural values into the inner plane of the student's consciousness [10, p. 12].

Identification is considered as a process whereby the person assimilates an aspect, property, or attribute of the other and is transformed wholly or partially by the model that other provides [10]. This mechanism determines, first of all, the empathic experience of intercultural values. We consider it as the non-language faculty students' assimilation of personal implications based on cognitive and emotional identification with a significant other, the development of an evaluative attitude.

Internalization involves the conscious perception of the individual values, the adoption of responsibility for their choices and their activity-related implementation [10]. In the course of internalization, the student takes internal acceptance of the intercultural characteristics of other countries and peoples, as a result, they become a regulator of the student's behaviour.

Exteriorization represents the expression of the student's personality towards intercultural values, which is manifested in an external form.

These mechanisms will serve as a basis for arranging the process of preparing students of non-linguistic faculties for intercultural interaction in the context of the content and language integrated environment.

The educational process arranged in accordance with the ideas of a cultural approach ensures the development of a non-language faculty student as a person characterized by the correct attitude to the cultural heritage of humanity, capable of mastering world cultures and creating new cultural values. In addition, the use of this approach in building a system for preparing students of non-linguistic faculties for intercultural interaction in the context of the content and language integrated environment contributes to the formation of the personality as a cultural product, its representative and carrier.

The **integrative approach** is understood as the orientation of the research, according to which the educational process is considered as a process and result of pedagogical integration. This approach is discussed in the works of K.I. Bazurova, V.S. Bezrukova, E.N. Solovyova, I.A. Zimnyaya, I.V. Zemtsova, N.K. Chapayeva, N.M. Yakovleva, A.N. Yarygina, G.Ya. Grevtseva, E.S. Bessemeltseva and others.

The key concept of the integrative approach is the concept of “integration”, which is interpreted as a state of connectedness of separate differentiated parts and functions of the system or the body into a whole, and the process leading to this state [18]. A.N. Averyanov, V.P. Kapterev, B.N. Kedrov, P.V. Kopnin understand integration as the specific expression of synthesis, the methodological role of which is to deepen the unity of scientific knowledge [18]. In our research, we will follow the latter definition, considering the maintenance and the development of the holistic essence of personality as the highest goal of integration.

We pay a particular attention to the opinion of I.A. Zimnaya and E.V. Zemtsova, who interpret an integrative approach as “a holistic view of a set of objects, phenomena, processes, united by a community of at least one of the features, as a result of which its new quality is created” [19].

The integrative approach is one of the leading methodological foundations in teaching foreign languages in modern pedagogical theory and practice. The application of this approach optimizes the process of teaching foreign languages to students of non-linguistic faculties through integration with other disciplines. This approach entails also a more comfortable and fast mastering of material in a foreign language and contributes to the parallel acquisition of knowledge in other branches of science. This fact is explained by the transfer of knowledge of one academic discipline to another and the mutual enrichment and development of these branches of academic knowledge. This fact is an undoubted advantage of the integrative approach.

In the logic of our research, the integrative approach has practical significance for using the technology of interdisciplinary integration in preparing students for intercultural interaction. It also serves as a holistic awareness and understanding of the essence of creative activity and methodological readiness for its implementation.

L.V. Pavlova proposes to carry out interdisciplinary integration in the context of learning foreign languages in the following aspects:

- informative and informational (by types of activity);
- operational-activity (by types of skills);
- emotional-behavioral (by personal qualities) [8].

G.Ya. Grevtseva et al. emphasize that the main principles of the integrative approach are: the principle of subjectivity, cultural conformity, creativity, orientation to civil patriotic values and axiological attitudes, synergies, self-education, dialogue of cultures, variability in the choice of means of interaction between subjects of the educational process, dialogization and feedback [5].

In our opinion, there may be the following components of an integrative approach: theoretical and methodological, procedural and activity, and procedural and resource ones.

The theoretical and methodological component is related to the use of various teaching methods on an integrated

basis (project method, business games, discussions, round table discussions, conferences, case technologies, etc.).

The procedural activity component implies the integration of creative forms of learning that promote the development of critical thinking and professional qualities of the individual.

The procedural and resource component determines the content of the content and language integrated learning, the means and methods of which will stimulate the process of preparing students of non-linguistic faculties for intercultural interaction.

We consider development of civic consciousness, social, legal, civil-patriotic and moral standards, communication skills, personal and professional qualities of the individual to be important among the main objectives of the integrative approach in preparing students for intercultural interaction.

The great role of interdisciplinary integration as a powerful means of the process of vocational training was emphasized in the works of V.A. Engelhardt [3]. Defining the nature of integration, he distinguished three stages of the integration process: a) the emergence of a system of connections among the parts; b) the parts' loss of their initial identification qualities when entering the whole; c) the appearance of new properties in the emerging integrity [3].

The following indicators characterize the implementation of the chosen approach: return of the educational process to the individual as the main goal; saturation of educational content with human problems; implementation of education in the context of the world and national culture; a significant increase in the pedagogical culture of teachers.

The implementation of an integrative approach within our research allows:

- 1) to strengthen the motivational aspect of learning foreign languages by students of non-linguistic faculties, since this group of students is not always interested in learning a foreign language and does not perceive it as a course contributing to their professional development;
- 2) to make students of non-linguistic faculties interested in the learning process, to form their cognitive independence, creative attitude towards future professional activities and, eventually, to influence the formation of their personality;
- 3) to shift the priority from the acquisition of ready-made knowledge to an independent active cognitive activity, taking into account the need to form an integrated style of thinking in the students;
- 4) to strengthen the generalizing nature of the content of the material being studied, the searching orientation of the educational activity, its collectivity, and the mutual assistance of students in its arrangement; to expand business contacts between students and teachers.

Thus, the systemic approach allows a holistic review of the pedagogical system from the standpoint of its structure, contents and interrelations. The activity approach substantiates the activity features of the process in question. The cultural approach provides a meaningful description of

the process of preparing students for intercultural interaction. And the integrative approach reveals the conditions for the implementation of the designed pedagogical system.

V. CONCLUSION

Taking into account the outcomes of the implementation of the systemic, activity, cultural and integrative approaches, we consider it expedient to develop a system for training students of non-linguistic faculties for intercultural interaction in the context of the content and language integrated environment and substantiating the set of pedagogical conditions for its optimal functioning.

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