

# The Development of a Tolerant Personality in Terms of Multilingual Education

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**Abstract.** *The educational possibilities of the Urals attract foreign students from both near and far abroad countries. There appears a need for effective interethnic communication during educational process. The authors put forward the hypothesis that the development of a tolerant personality at the university is possible when a systemic joint work of representatives of various ethnic communities is organized. The authors focus on such concepts as polycultural education, a multicultural educational environment and a tolerant personality. The experimental part of the study is conducted among undergraduate students of the Ural State University of Economics. It allows presenting the principles of interethnic interaction and the four blocks of the model as well as conditions and methods of development of a tolerant personality. The authors conclude that modern Russian education should take into account the multi-ethnic structure of society. It should be based on the exchange of cultural heritage aimed at the development of a tolerant personality.*

**Keywords** – *cultural heritage, tolerant personality, types of ethnic identity, system model, principles of interethnic tolerance, conditions for effective development of a tolerant personality\*.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the modern world, all countries deal with globalization and expansion of migration processes. The opening of national borders and mass migration to European countries define the status of society as multi-ethnic and multilingual. As a result, there arises a natural need for interethnic cooperation, which is a powerful prerequisite for the formation of a qualitatively new multicultural and multiethnic educational space. In this case, education is the leading mechanism for the development of society and civilization, the basis of an individual's quality of life self-realization in the changing world [13].

The peculiarity of the dialogue in interethnic interaction in the educational process is that each participant of the dialogue in the process of searching for meaning and verbalization comes to his truth. It may coincide with the truth revealed by another participant though. The formation of such preconditions provides the possibility of mutual understanding. Thus, interethnic interaction can be seen both as a process and a result of the change in the identical characteristics of the person and ethnic groups when an

immediate or indirect understanding of each other happens. Consequently, the cultural base and an additional resource for successful interethnic interaction is the similarity of life values on which a common core of spiritual and moral values shared by representatives of ethnic groups is formed [14, 20].

At present, international cultural exchange is not only a necessary condition for the movement of humanity along the path of progress, but also an important factor in international relations in conditions of democratization and integration of the world society.

Modern cultural ties are notable for their great diversity, wide geography, and they flow in various forms and directions. The processes of democratization and transparency of borders give even greater importance to cultural exchange in the system of international relations since it helps unite peoples regardless of social, religious or political affiliation.

In addition, many issues of cultural interaction are actively discussed by authoritative international organizations today, and there appear more and more new intergovernmental associations, which attach great importance to the problems of intercultural dialogue.

In modern international relations, issues of international cultural cooperation are of particular importance. Nowadays, there is no country that would not pay close attention to developing strong cultural contacts with the peoples of other states.

Culture, being a process of spiritual, creative, and intellectual communication, implies mutual enrichment with new ideas. It is realized in the context of cultural exchange and performs an important communicative function, uniting groups of people with a different social, ethnic and religious background. It is culture that is becoming the "language" on which the whole system of modern international relations can be built [7].

The question arises about the possibility of creating conditions for cultural exchange through the formation of a tolerant self-consciousness at the stage of future specialists preparing.

The urgency of the stated problem is obvious, it is due to the factors given below.

- *At the socio-pedagogical level:* There appear new requirements for the training of qualified specialists in the

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framework of integration of international professional communities.

- *At the scientific and theoretical level:* The issues of the formation of a tolerant personality in the process of teaching at the university are elaborated insufficiently.

- *At the scientific and methodological level:* There is a need to make a model for organizing educational and nurturing work focused on developing a tolerant person in the context of interethnic interaction.

Analysis of scientific and methodological literature and dissertation papers allowed formulating some contradictions.

- *At the socio-pedagogical level:* There is a contradiction between the scientific-oriented demands of the economy and the unavailability of higher education institutions to provide professional training at an appropriate level.

- *At the scientific and theoretical level:* There is a contradiction between the new requirements of the Federal State Educational Standards of Higher Professional Education for the development of students' intercultural communicative competence and the lack of a developed system that meets these goals.

- *At the scientific and methodological level:* There is a contradiction between the possibilities of educational work for the development of a tolerant person and the lack of use of their potential in this process of vocational training.

During the preliminary study, a hypothesis was put forward: The formation of a tolerant personality in the process of educational activities at the university is possible, provided that there is systemic joint work of representatives of various ethnic communities when principles of interethnic tolerance and priority of peaceful interaction are taken into account.

Following the hypothesis, the goal of the study was formulated: to substantiate, develop, and test the methodology for forming a tolerant personality in the framework of education at the university.

To achieve the goal and test the hypothesis the following objectives were set:

- 1) to characterize features and prerequisites for the creation of a multicultural educational environment;
- 2) to identify the structural and substantive aspects of a tolerant personality;
- 3) to substantiate and describe the system model of the formation of a tolerant personality in the conditions of education at the university;
- 4) to characterize the levels and criteria of a developed tolerant personality;
- 5) to test the effectiveness of the proposed model for the formation of a tolerant personality.

## II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Studies in the field of interethnic communication originated in Russia and abroad in the second half of the 20th century. In the works of K.D. Ushinsky, P.A. Kropotkin, P.I. Kovalevsky the ideas of ethno-pedagogy aimed at exploring the peculiarities of the formation of a national character as a result of education in the interethnic environment are traced [9, 11, 18].

The examination of current conceptual discourses on intercultural education by P. Mikander, H. Zilliacus and G. Holm shows vitality and timeliness of the fundamental quest of intercultural education as a field of research. They conclude there is a need to research what intercultural and social justice education imply in different educational settings [12].

In foreign works, the ideas of multicultural pedagogy are reflected in the research works of M. Gordon, J. Bruner, J. Banks, D. Dustin, N. Colandzhelo and others [4, 6].

In the book "Assimilation in American Life", M. Gordon defined the multicultural environment as a process by which two or more individuals or groups adopt certain behaviours [6].

In Russia, the multicultural environment and the problem of multicultural education acquired particular relevance in the 1990s. According to G.V. Palatkina, the development of the multicultural content of education increases the interest of teachers in ethno-cultural issues [13]. The subjects of the educational process, including the community as a consumer of the results of the pedagogical activity, begin to understand the need for more active enriching of the educational process with cultural components. That creates conditions for spiritual development of an individual, while human values can provide new socio-cultural needs.

L.L. Suprunova and Yu.S. Sviridchenko identify polyculture education with the formation of a person's personality capable to active and effective life in a multinational and multicultural environment, having a developed sense of understanding and respect for other cultures, skills to live in peace and harmony with people of different nationalities, races, and religions [17]. The authors link the readiness to perceive a different culture, a different way of life with manifestations of tolerance because only mutual tolerance of people of different nationalities can resist hatred.

Following M.A. Vikulina and E. Pugacheva we understand multicultural environment as coexistence and interaction in a specific social space of diverse cultures and their representatives, equal in rights and of equal value, as well as a certain attitude of individuals to this diversity [20]. Thus, we consider multicultural environment of the educational space not only as an important socio-pedagogical factor of positive interaction of different cultures and as a source of intellectual, professional development of an individual, but also as a result and a condition for the preparation of a highly moral, creative personality rooted in the spiritual and cultural traditions of people of the multinational society.

We share the position of M.V. Sleptsova regarding the fact that multicultural educational environment contributes to the personal and cultural growth of an individual when intercultural content turns into the content of education as a pedagogic system [15].

Taking all the foregoing into account, we conclude that to guarantee a successful intercultural communication means:

- to ensure a tolerant attitude and effective interaction between the subjects of the educational process, provided that an environment is created that allows future specialists to comprehend the cultural values, norms and patterns of behaviour of their own and other peoples;

- to get an experience of positive interethnic and intercultural interaction.

Thus, a multicultural educational environment contributes to the development of a tolerant personality capable to understand other cultures, of recognizing and accepting cultural diversity.

As for the concept of a tolerant personality, one of the most well-known concepts is that of the American scientist, G. Allport, within the framework of the dispositional approach to the theory of personality. According to the American psychologist, a tolerant person in the most general form is a person who is friendly to people, regardless of their group affiliation [1].

This position is reflected by Russian authors researching the communicative tolerance. For example, E.I. Kas'yanova and N.I. Vinogradova believe that communicative tolerance is the main quality of a person, manifested in liberality, non-conflict as well as stability, trust and ability to accept other people's individualities calmly and without irritation [8].

According to V.V. Bojko, tolerance is a systematizing characteristic; many other qualities of an individual, primarily moral, characterological and intellectual ones, are coordinated with it and constitute a kind of psychological set with it. Therefore, the features of communicative tolerance may indicate mental health, internal harmony or disharmony, the ability to self-control and self-correction [3].

A.G. Asmolov characterizes tolerance as a civilized norm that ensures sustainable human development and social groups in the world of diversity [2].

Tolerance is acquired through education, information and personal life experience. As an action, tolerance is an active stance of self-restraint and intentional non-intervention, voluntary consent to mutual tolerance of different cultures that opposed to disagreement [19].

Development of such functions of tolerance as empathy, trust, emotional acceptance, social sensitivity, social support, social adaptation, and cooperation allow developing a tolerant personality. Moral education of an individual in a tolerant environment is considered to be a reflection of the unity of the socio-cultural and spiritual life of society and the continuous education system.

I.G. Pchelintseva identified some laws that determine the orientation of the educational process towards a tolerant personality and principles of their implementation. The main law is the open nature of a tolerant environment. It manifests itself in its openness to various beliefs, faiths and nationalities; it is open to critical dialogue, interpersonal and group communication [5].

Among the conditions for developing tolerance, many authors highlight activities of an individual and her/his

lifestyle, aspirations, plans, and social roles. Considering mechanisms of interpersonal tolerance, G.S. Kozhukhar' treats them as a stable structure of mental actions related in a certain way, the activation and integral manifestation of which facilitate changes in the totality of personality traits [10].

The review of existing research on the topic shows that researchers indissolubly associate the notion of tolerance with personality and its formation. The notion of tolerance is actively used in the psychology of personality development as a personal formation that both makes and integrates various personality traits.

At the heart of our concept of developing a tolerant personality there lies the idea of the expediency of interaction between representatives of various cultural communities in the process of students training. This concept is focused on the creation of optimal didactic conditions for free dialogue in the process of solving professional tasks at the international level. The study of the stated problems allowed to actualize the need to create a multicultural environment conducive to the formation of a tolerant self-consciousness of all the participants of the dialogue.

The theories and approaches analyzed, focus on the formation of qualities of a tolerant person, they mainly describe methods of developing the individual qualities. However, it should be noted that the presented approaches are not systematic and do not offer a structured plan for the development of a tolerant personality in the conditions of students professional training in a multicultural educational space.

### III. METHOD

For further consideration, we present a model of development of a tolerant personality, tested at the Ural State University of Economics [16]. The process of developing a tolerant personality at the university is given considerable attention due to the national heterogeneity of student groups. Every year, 350 students from 31 countries from the near and far abroad countries study at the university, which, in turn, actualizes the need to create favourable conditions for cooperation between representatives of various ethnic groups in the learning process.

The system model of forming a tolerant personality developed by the authors includes four blocks (intellectual, emotionally motivational, subject-practical and self-regulation blocks), principles of interethnic interaction, conditions of development, as well as a set of methods and forms of active education and training. We illustrate the essence and content of the system model.

The study of the possibility of developing tolerant behaviour and self-awareness in the framework of the proposed model was conducted on the basis of the Ural State University of Economics in 2017. The study involved first, second, third and fourth-year students specializing in Economics, Management, Public Administration, Human

Resource Management. The total number of experiment participants was 150.

The centre of the model is a student with her/his interests, level of tolerant self-awareness, tolerant attitude towards others, tolerant behaviour and tolerant culture. The teacher should act as a kind of a conductor in the process of developing the tolerance of students, directing and organizing educational activities aimed at expanding students' knowledge about the principles of tolerance in the modern multicultural and multi-ethnic environment.

The intellectual block is aimed at shaping the volume, depth, and effectiveness of knowledge about the values of tolerance: the ideals of tolerance, the principles of relations with people from other social and national groups.

The emotionally motivational block is aimed at the formation of moral experiences associated with norms or deviations from the norms and ideals: pity, empathy, trust, gratitude, responsiveness, self-esteem, empathy, shame and others. Fostering tolerance brings results if it occurs in the right emotional tone if it is possible to combine insistence and kindness. The method that influences the emotional sphere is suggestion. Under the suggestion, we understand the mental impact, verbal or picturesque, which causes uncritical perception and assimilation of any information. The activities of the emotional block are aimed at acquaintance with the history of the country and the region. These may be visits to theatres, museums, followed by a discussion of what one saw and heard.

The basis of the subject-practical block is the stimulation of the processes of conscious activity. As a result of stimulating tolerant behaviour, sustainable motivation for tolerating people should be formed, blocking aggressive actions. Tolerant behaviour can be stimulated through organizing communication and joint activities of representatives of various national and social groups.

The self-regulation block is aimed at shaping the moral legitimacy of choice: conscientiousness, self-esteem, self-criticism, the ability to correlate one's behaviour with others, decency and self-control. Self-regulation is a system of internal ensuring of the action direction when there is a multitude of external conditions, opportunities, and tasks. In the process of self-regulation, the organization of the activity of the subject and its systemic nature are revealed. The correction method aims to create conditions under which the subject will make changes in their behaviour in relationships with people. Correction is impossible without self-correction. A person can often change her/his behaviour and regulate her/his actions.

The development of a tolerant consciousness can be implemented taking into account certain principles of interethnic tolerance:

- self-preservation and life support of ethnic groups in multicultural space, subject to the revival of national identity;
- removal of ethnonational tension;
- formation of tolerant self-awareness;
- formation of national identity.

The level of a tolerant personality development was graded at the end of the fourth year. It bases on the procedure of the assessment of communicative personality by V.V. Bojko [3]. The grading included an assessment of nine properties of tolerant behaviour and self-awareness:

- rejection or misunderstanding of the individuality of another culture representative;
- using oneself as a reference when evaluating partners of other nationalities;
- rigidity or conservatism in evaluating partners;
- inability to hide or smooth out unpleasant feelings regarding representatives of other nationalities;
- desire to remake, rehabilitate the partner in communication;
- desire to customize other participants of the communication for yourself;
- inability to forgive the mistakes of a representative of another culture;
- intolerance to uncomfortable states of a teammate;
- inability to adapt to other participants of inter-ethnic communication.

The presented system model of the development of a tolerant personality is a combination of forms, principles, conditions and methods of coordinated phased work, aimed at further orientation of students to mutual understanding and priority of peaceful coexistence with representatives of various ethnic communities.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The model proposed by the authors reflects the structural and substantive side of a tolerant personality, which served as the basis for the inclusion of model blocks filled with appropriate methods and forms of educational and educational work of students.

The system model of developing a tolerant personality with its four blocks (intellectual, emotionally motivational, subject-practical and self-regulation) was implemented in the following way.

The *intellectual block* is an adaptation program that includes practical lectures ("Diplomat Hour", "Educational program: Fighting Extremism", "Heroes Among Us"), as well as excursions around the city and its surroundings. Lecturers at such events are invited diplomats, representatives of municipal authorities, artists and other influential people. These lectures provide theoretical knowledge as well as live communication with professionals in their field and at the same time with people of different nationalities and cultures. Our experience shows that such activities have a positive influence on the development of the future specialists' tolerant behaviour.

The *emotional block* is implemented with the help of theatre. Visiting local theatres and taking part in theatrical performances give the emotionally coloured experience of perceiving cultural heritage. Students involved in cultural life of the University quickly adapt to new conditions and feel more satisfied with the learning process. They experience fewer problems and difficulties in interpersonal interaction when communicating with groupmates and

teachers. Students accept social, ethnic, religious and other differences easier.

Joint activities within the framework of the *subject-practical block* are organized in the process of student participation in the Festival of Cultures “Around the World in 7 Days”. The festival is an active project site, during which in the course of group project activities, students not only get acquainted with the traditions, customs, life and cuisine of various ethnic groups but also act as active participants in cultural projects together with students from other countries. In the course of such joint activities, students develop the ability to perform moral actions, to regard reality honestly, the ability to assess the morality of actions, the ability to assess the behaviour of contemporaries in terms of the moral standards of this ethnic group.

Another form of organization of active interaction within the framework of this block is socio-psychological training based on the methods of group work. In the course of the training, knowledge of a socio-psychological nature is mastered, the behaviour is corrected, interpersonal interaction skills are formed, ability to reflect and the ability to quickly and flexibly respond to the situation and rebuild one’s behaviour are developed. Thus, the listed forms of work contribute to the effective formation of an attitude towards tolerance, consisting of the readiness and ability for equal dialogue with representatives of other nationalities.

The *self-regulation block* is represented by a large-scale event – the Eurasian Economic Forum of Youth and Students. The forum is a research and project site, where students participate in group work aimed at interacting with representatives of other cultures. Understanding, acceptance and appropriate tolerant behaviour are the keys to successful joint professional activities. Within the framework of the forum, master classes, contests, competitions, disputes, seminars, conferences are held where conditions are created to defend one’s opinion, attitudes and life positions. Dialogue during these forms of work contributes not only to the formation of a tolerant consciousness but also provides an opportunity to assess the level of formation of a tolerant person.

In the described system model, we observe the following conditions for the effective development of a tolerant self-awareness:

- raising the level of awareness the communicative process participants have about the nature and content of tolerance;
- development of tolerant attitudes in the students' value system;
- tolerant self-consciousness as a principle of interethnic communication;
- development of skills of tolerant interaction.

The system model creates favourable conditions for conducting inter-ethnic communication in real life. The events that fill the model blocks demonstrate situations of real inter-ethnic interaction, stimulate peaceful cooperation in terms of educational, research and professional activities and the adoption of a different opinion as possible.

The final diagnostic results are displayed in Table 1.

TABLE 1. THE LEVEL OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS’ TOLERANCE DEVELOPMENT

High level		Average level		Low level	
number	%	number	%	number	%
50	33.3	90	60	10	6.6

The results of the study presented in Table 1 show that the average level of tolerant behaviour prevails among university students. It is diagnosed in 90 respondents, which comprises 60.0% of the total number of the respondents. The average level of tolerant behaviour means that they are not inclined to make spontaneous decisions, have an average level of introspection and self-control, are restrained in emotions and measured.

The high level of tolerance was diagnosed in 50 students, which amounts to 33.3% of the respondents. This level means that they can find contact with communication partners, accept differences between themselves and those around them easily.

The low level of communicative tolerance was diagnosed in 10 respondents, which is 6.6% of the respondents. They have a certain rejection of a different opinion and demonstrate the inability to adapt to other teammates.

Despite the seemingly sufficiently high manifestation level of tolerant behaviour and self-awareness by students, the development level of such indicators as “inability to forgive others for mistakes”, “rigidity or conservatism in assessing people”, “desire to remake, re-educate others” , “intolerance to uncomfortable states of a partner” is low.

The results obtained during the final diagnosis are important for building and adjusting the content of the plan for further work on the development of tolerant behaviour of university students. Particular attention should be paid to the development of the criteria with low-level numbers. It is probably necessary to include separate measures aimed at the development of these properties of a tolerant personality. It determines the direction of our further research.

## V. CONCLUSION

The concept of modern education should be based on the multi-ethnic structure of society. It is necessary to take into account two fundamental processes: the cultivation of national self-awareness, on the one hand, and intercultural tolerance, on the other. Only under the condition of simultaneous realization of these two processes, it is possible to organize interethnic interaction in education.

One of the primary educational tasks today should be the development of ethno-cultural consciousness among students, without an extreme form of nationalism and ethnocentrism. It should be based on a combination of knowledge and understanding of their own culture with knowledge, understanding and respect for the culture of other nations with which direct contact is most likely.

Communication culture, tolerant behaviour, and a high level of morality determine the civility of any person and

this should be one of the qualitative indicators of a modern educational institution development.

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