

SOCIAL AND MORAL IMPERATIVES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TRAINING

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In the history of educational reform in the Republic of Belarus certain recurring themes have dominated the concerns raised by educators. Educational reformers have repeatedly examined the role of schooling in the civic and economic welfare of the nation.

The constantly changing features of our society affect the ways in which human diversity can be accommodated within the major institutions of education.

We deal with the ways in which schools respond to differences in intelligence, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, language. Our concern is general, so we touch on teaching methods only to the extent that they suggest solutions to problems arising from human diversity.

The fact of human diversity is so obvious and its influence so prevalent that it is seldom ignored in the planning of school policy, curricula and instruction. Yet, for all of this, people are seldom satisfied with the ways we deal with human diversity. In this article we will be dealing with how differences among human beings are translated into school practice.

We think how children should be treated in school and whether or not the outcomes of schooling are fair and just. We introduce the concept of social and moral imperatives as a way of further explaining how educational policy is guided by systems of beliefs that underlie our moral and social ideals.

The child's social niche changes over time, firstly, as a function of the child's own cognitive development: the child's cognitive level and motivational state at any given moment in time determine the type of social information which the child actively seeks out in the environment. Secondly, the child's social niche also changes over time as a function of the different social discourses and practices which are applied to the child at different ages by the various socialization agents that are present within the child's sociocultural setting. Thirdly, however, those socialization agents can only exert their effects if the child's cognitive system is sufficiently developed for the child to be able to attend to and assimilate that kind of influence.

The subjective sense of national identity is a complex psychological structure which has many different cognitive and affective aspects. The cognitive aspects include: knowledge of the national group; categorization of the self as a member of the national group; knowledge of the national territory; knowledge of the national emblems, customs, traditions, historical events and historical figures which symbolically represent the nation; beliefs about the typical characteristics of members of the national group; and beliefs about how similar the self is to the national type. Affective aspects include: the importance which is attributed to the national identity; an emotional attachment to the national homeland; a sense of belonging to the national community; feelings towards the people who make up the national group; and numerous social emotions such as national pride, national embarrassment and national shame.

It is necessary to say that the idea of national identity depends on social and historic conditions in which the society exists. Historic processes show that a rapid shift of social values is happening at the moment. Individualism replaces collectivism, individual freedom often associated with selfishness is playing the main role.

This is not surprising because channels and means of socialization are diverse and quite influential. Young people are under the influence of Internet and mass media (they spend much more time online than reading books or attending cultural events), noisy advertising, often quite aggressive, take away the freedom of choice. Free Internet access, feeling of belonging to the whole world determines the necessity of taking the influence of life and its factors in young people into account. Recently many people have even got a chance to get a passport of "the citizen of the world". To get

such a passport you only need to fill in a form and pay 45 – 400 dollars depending on the term of validity of the document.

The education including training and upbringing is considered as a means of socialization of the young maturing people being a part of society in terms of the changed value system.

The great number of students lives in the Republic of Belarus. And it is obvious that the future of our state is determined by the level of their education, training, physical and spiritual development, citizenship and the world outlook. Practice convincingly proves that insufficient attention to educational function of training affects not only the distorted relation to study, but also to life in general. Negative qualities of the students' personalities are being formed.

By integrating upbringing and educational goals in a real interactive training process, formation of student citizenship and ideological ethical principles in the context of hyperinformatization of the society and development of multimedia interactivity, formation of a strong morale as a basis of social thinking of a future teacher acquires particular relevance and importance.

Formation of active citizenship in young people is necessary for successful development of any nation and society. The whole process of historic development of the society proves the fact that its consolidation is impossible without the dialogue between the society and authorities, educational and social institutions. The development of healthy national identifications in students has important implications for the construction of democratic states in culturally and linguistically diverse societies.

Now - unlike in the past - it is necessary to speak not only about public activity, but also about public passivity as the prevailing characteristic of the youth.

The alarming tendency is high self-esteem of young people, their non-critical opinion about themselves.

The modern strategy of development of education of young generation is aimed, first of all, at providing compliance of content and quality of education to urgent and perspective needs of the personality, society and state; building up the role of educational activities in humanization of social and economic relations, forming of new values; developing of diverse models of content of education in educational institutions taking into account current trends of development in socio-cultural background.

Intensification of the process of professional training of future teachers is ensured by integrated efforts of all components of teaching and educational activities of the pedagogical university. Great opportunities for raising ideological and political, moral and professional levels of future specialists are provided by educational and extracurricular activities of students within a training course in any foreign language.

Considerable stock for raising the efficiency of the teaching process can be obtained by implementation of the principle of the upbringing training at classes in a foreign language.

There are two stages of educational work with students.

At the 1st stage the positive socially reasoned motivation stirring up student activities for mastering professional knowledge, abilities, skills and determining an individual attitude of future specialists to self-proficiency is developed.

At the 2nd stage enrichment of moral experience of professionally significant practical student activities is going on.

It should be noted that ideological moral education of future teachers proceeds more successfully if it does not only train students for future activities, but also helps in situ while at the university promote their moral and world outlook experience and form their citizenship.

The work carried out in these directions shows that active upbringing function of educational process at foreign language classes depends on such pedagogical conditions as development of the scope of training connected with future professional activities of students; establishment of close interdisciplinary links, first of all, with disciplines of social, psychological and pedagogical cycles; involvement of future teachers in moral socially important professional activities; promotion of student creativity in self-study of training materials.

Readiness to autonomy in education is based on several factors of students' identity, namely:

- capability to focus attention on objectives and goals of education to be achieved, in general, or its individual stage;

- aim to self-management of the process of one's education;

- ability to control and assess the dynamics of one's development, to observe terms of receiving credits and passing examinations;

- availability of confidence in one's own capacity in stressful situations, failures, etc.

Rise of students' autonomy in the training process assumes certain freedom of choice of sequence/ volume/ timeframe of learning the materials/ forms of education, time, frequency of reports on task performance; awareness of the individual responsibility for the decisions made.

This model of training imposes certain duties on the teacher, who provides content of training programs, forms and control activities open and accessible for students.

With autonomy of education the teacher refuses from the role of the unique source of information and acts as an assistant and consultant of educational activities, provides necessary training materials and techniques of learning them.

The teacher also promotes abilities in self/ peer control of the achieved results.

With competently structured out-of-class activities interest in a foreign language increases, the need for mastering certain language abilities and skills appears, thus, positive motives of students to study a subject are formed, and they are one of the factors of motivation in the educational process and an important tool to improve the level of language command.

As it was already noted above, foreign language training in a pedagogical university has a huge educational potential and its implementation in the training process is enabled mainly by information in educational texts (social and political, regional, geographic topics, etc.) and additional literature (periodicals, literature for out-of-class reading).

Reading of social and political texts plays an important role in forming the students' ideological views. The teacher's goal is to provide profound study of each text within a certain ideological context, using this material, to help students remember his/ her political concepts and approach assessment of the reality competently.

Each subject within the upbringing and educational process, including Foreign Language, should have an independent responsibility for forming the individual's moral values. Moreover, interaction between various subjects, establishment of interdisciplinary links provide the most effective achievement of the objective.

With this approach to training and upbringing the new objective of the general education is designed: to teach and show the students that cultural diversity is a standard in a modern multicultural society, and the dialogue of cultures is a philosophy of communication between people in modern communities in the countries where the native and foreign languages are spoken. The role of students is to use their knowledge in practice. After having got appropriate education and knowledge of foreign languages, students turn from thinking and understanding to active professional work.

We don't claim that all the students will get rid of stereotypes and prejudices. Stereotypes and ethnocentric ideas will inevitably appear throughout their lifetime. When working with students it is necessary to apply the model of training that would promote formation of critical thinking and strategic readiness to work with information related to language and country studies.

Having reached the stage of cultural self-determination, having seen diversity of cultures and having learned to determine the place within a socio-cultural space, students will be able to view critically the reality. Doing something in this or that situation, they will always be able to ask a question, "Why am I doing this?" - and answer it. Therefore, self-esteem can be the only form of control at the stage of dialogue between cultures.

Identifying cultural self-determination as one of the components of bilingual socio-cultural competence, we consider it necessary to note what self-determination in culture means when the native and foreign languages are used. Students will learn and be able to do the following:

- to realize themselves as multicultural subjects of representatives of several cultural groups (ethnic, social, territorial, religious, language, etc.) at the same time;

- to see cultural similarities between representatives of various cultural groups of the foreign countries, expanding the limits of one's own group over the political borders of one's own country;
- to understand that belonging to a group changes depending on the communication framework;
- to see multicultural nature of modern cultural communities and to perceive cultural diversity as a standard of coexistence of cultures in multicultural communities;
- to realize their place, role and significance in global processes;
- to initiate and take an active part in actions against cultural aggression, cultural discrimination and vandalism as well as xenophobia.

The upbringing need of an individual, who is not indifferent to future of the Motherland and able to realize his/ her role in creating social and cultural values of the nation requires development of new methodological approaches, which would ensure active citizenship based on the moral choice allowing to realize oneself as the citizen.

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