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To the issue dealing with the development of sociocultural competence of gymnasium high school students

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Annotation. The article is devoted to the problem dealing with the development of sociocultural competence of gymnasium high school students. The essence of the notion “sociocultural competence” is specified; the conditions facilitating the designated development are analysed.

Keywords: sociocultural competence, gymnasium high school students, development of sociocultural competence of high school students

Within the global integration of the world countries it has become significant to be culturally aware in order to understand the social and cultural background of representatives of different countries. On the other hand, there are reasonable perspectives for Ukraine to collaborate with foreign countries, which facilitates the development of dialogue of countries and interaction. Better understanding of sociocultural peculiarities of a partner-country (countries) enables efficient cooperation in any sphere of life.

Younger generation is very flexible about establishing contacts with foreigners-teenagers, communicating with native speakers on “urgent” topics. After graduating from institutions of high and higher education they have an excellent opportunity to continue their education abroad as well as find there a job. Linguistic competence combined with the sociocultural one makes it easier to orient oneself in a vast foreign expanse. It is expedient to develop a sociocultural competence at the age of 14-17 when adolescents are aware of the necessity to follow definite patterns of communicative behaviour according to both social and cultural features of their interlocutors’ country, besides this awareness lets the youth feel at ease while dealing with foreigners within an alien environment.

Thereupon it is desirable that teachers (philologists in particular) should focus attention on the culture study while educating high school students. The Ukrainian and foreign scientists (M. Byram, N. Baryshnykov, I. Bim, R. Lado, S. Nikolaeva, V. Safonova, Yu. Pasov, P. Sysoev, A. Vartanov and others) have contributed into the elaboration of the didactic models aimed at facilitating the development of the sociocultural competence, nevertheless, the problem of teaching high school students social and cultural aspects within the system of linguistic education is not highlighted to the full in contemporary science, which conditions the necessity to solve the following *tasks*:

– to specify the notion “*sociocultural competence*”;

– to analyse the conditions facilitating the designated development.

It is practically proved that mastering a foreign language is impossible without penetrating into its culture, social peculiarities of native speakers and their history. Language and culture are interconnected:

– language reflects country’s culture, customs, traditions;

– vice versa, country’s culture, customs, traditions realize through language;

– by means of language surrounding reality, known as “*linguistic picture of the world*” is adopted by students;

– the sociocultural content as well as experience are represented by language.

A student (or any other person studying a foreign language) widens his or her mind and transforms it in a way by learning a foreign language. A competence-oriented approach to education has recently gained its popularity; it means that when teaching students a discipline, there should be specified a complex of specific knowledge and skills (competences) to be obtained and mastered by the end of study which are necessary in their future profession or everyday life. These competences are usually designated in the State and European educational standards [10] in accordance with students’ grade, age, physiological peculiarities and degree of competence need.

The importance of sociocultural competence starts growing in high school since adolescents become especially involved and concerned about the world’s culture; they have mastered a B1-level of language proficiency by that time in the field of different foreign languages (English, German, French, Russian or some other language) and a native one. It is essential that they should adequately interpret the “non-likeness” and / or overlapping of different cultures (in definite cases even intrusion into a native one) and have a tolerant attitude to this phenomenon otherwise they may develop a wrong idea about the modern world culture alongside with misunderstanding of the native tongue’s role against the world cultural background.

High school students occupy an intermediate position on their way to adult life with their own stereotypes, feelings and perceptions. Undue interference into the process aimed at absorbing knowledge has grave consequences in further education or professional activity. They must be ready to improve their basic communicative and sociocultural skills in high school.

Thus, the aggregate complex of competences to be obtained in this connection is:

• *Linguistic competence* – as the knowledge of and the ability to use language forms – comprises lexical, grammatical, semantic, phonological, orthographic and orthoepic competences.

• *Sociocultural competence* – aims at developing understanding and interpreting different aspects of culture and language behaviour in the world of work. It encourages the development of the skills involved in appropriate behaviour and responses to different cultural and professional situations.

• *Professional communicative competence* – is acquired by students of different specialism for real life, academic and

job-related areas and situations. The language behaviour requires the acquisition of linguistic competence (language skills and language knowledge), and the socio-linguistic and pragmatic competences needed for performing study and job-related tasks. The development of communicative competence relies on the students' ability to learn, on subject knowledge and prior experience, and occurs within a study- and specialism-related situational context.

The indices signifying the development of sociocultural competence by high school students are:

- their comprehension of the notion "culture" as a unit of culture products (literature, folklore, works of art, music, artefacts), ideas beliefs, customs, taboos, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, rituals, ceremonies, and symbols.
- their realization that person's behaviour is greatly conditioned by his or her cultural characteristic;
- their understanding that all social diversities (age, sex, social class, place of residence) influence person's speech;
- their tolerant attitude towards other cultures;
- their understanding of the conventional character of communicative and non-communicative behaviour of people who represent different countries in different situations;
- their adoption of their own cultural behaviour;
- developed skills of its analysis;
- developed abilities to identify cultural connotations and decode them;
- developed skills to identify, distinguish and use effectively cultural codes for the achievement of the main communicative aim;

- developed skills to identify cultural peculiarities reflected in speech;
- mastered methods aimed at analyzing diverse cultural phenomenon as well as developed critical thinking;
- developed skills to define the way their own sociocultural characteristic influences their behaviour;
- developed skills to correct their behaviour according to a situation.

Visiting foreign countries, participating in educational and cultural events dedicated to foreign countries, meeting native speakers, conducting joint projects with foreign teenagers, staying in summer and winter camps with foreign teenagers facilitate the development of the high school students' sociocultural competence.

To make a conclusion, the mentioned sociocultural competence within high school curriculum constitutes general communicative competence and functions as the basis of cultural identification which presupposes successful intercultural communication in future due to properly developed specific sociocultural skills. This competence is extremely important in the sphere of foreign and native language study; it is mastered by students in parallel with oral topics and corresponding assignments in high school. Higher school helps to develop it according to professional specifications. It is considered to be substantial to devote further research to the problems of criteria elaboration aimed at evaluating levels of high school students' sociocultural competence development.

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Топчий Л.С. К вопросу формирования социокультурной компетентности учеников старших классов гимназии

Аннотация. Статья посвящена проблеме формирования социокультурной компетентности учеников старших классов гимназии. Определена сущность понятия «социокультурная компетенция»; проанализированы условия, способствующие формированию обозначенной компетенции.

Ключевые слова: социокультурная компетенция, ученики старших классов гимназии, формирование социокультурной компетентности учеников старших классов гимназии