

АКТУАЛЬНІ ПРОБЛЕМИ МЕТОДИКИ ВИКЛАДАННЯ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ

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METHODICAL TECHNIQUES OF FORMATION OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AT THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LESSONS

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The article deals with the theoretical questions of the formation of intercultural competence at the English language lessons. The main peculiarities that characterize abovementioned competence are underlined. Main methods and techniques of English language teaching that promote intercultural competence formation are analysed. **Keywords:** intercultural competence (IC), communicative competence, method, technique, English language teaching, foreign language teaching (FLT).

Introduction. These days there has been a huge interest in the cultural dimension of foreign language education, and teachers today are expected to promote the acquisition of intercultural competence in their students.

One of the most important changes in language teaching and learning over the last decades has been the recognition of the cultural dimension as a key component. This has changed the nature of the experience of teaching and learning languages to a great extent. The objective of language learning is no longer defined in terms of the acquisition of communicative competence in a foreign language, which refers to a person's ability to act in a foreign language in linguistically, socio-linguistically and pragmatically appropriate ways.

Literature review. The importance of developing IC supported by numerous studies and reflected in the policy documents has caused the great pedagogical challenges. The question of how the English language teachers consider language and culture teaching, interculturality, and their role as culture teachers have been reflected in a number of researchers both domestic and foreign.

It has been recognized that even a minimal exchange of information between speakers of different languages requires the presence of the people's identity and culture. Thus, during the last several decades we have met a major change in the character of the objectives in foreign language teaching (FLT). There has been a shift in importance from linguistic competence through communicative competence to the current emphasis on IC. Previous and present interpretations of IC and various insightful studies presented by C. Alptekin, M. Byram, M. Celce-Murcia, G. Chen, D. Deardorff, A. E. Fantini, D. Hymes, C. Kramersch, E. Larzén, L. Sercu and many others that rationalize them provide many ways of understanding the topic.

Plenty of researches in this field are made by Ukrainian scholars A. Anisimova, O. Bihych, H. Boretska, T. Hrynkevych, R. Hryshkova, S. Nikoayeva, I. Pluzhnyk, S. Radul, N. Samoilenko, O. Vol-

chenko, I. Zarubinska, O. Zelikovska, I. Ziazium and others.

According to the researches of abovementioned scholars it has been determined that IC is presently the most valued type of competence in foreign language teaching and learning after the dominance of linguistic competence and communicative competence.

Aims and tasks of the article are investigation of the theoretical principles and characteristics of the Intercultural Competence (IC) and considering appropriate methodical techniques used at the English language lessons for the formation of IC.

Main points. The concept of intercultural competence has been widely used in recent years. There is no single definition of intercultural competence. There are a lot of various opinions on what intercultural competence is and how it is understood. Scholars offer different definitions and descriptions of intercultural competence. Usually it is described as an ability to adapt and work in a different cultural environment, to understand different cultures and their values. Michael Byram describes intercultural competence as 'the ability to see relationships between different cultures – both internal and external to society – and to mediate, that is interpret each terms of the other, either for themselves or for other people' [4, p. 121]. This is true, but intercultural competence is not only about relationships between different cultures, it is also the ability to work with them, translate them and adapt.

Alvino E. Fantini says that intercultural competence is 'the complex of abilities to perform effectively and appropriately with members of another language-culture background on their terms' [8, p. 226]. Language, however, is not the only measure of intercultural competence. Some cultures can speak the same language, but their culture can be completely different. Intercultural competence is a mutually negotiated process with varying degrees of appropriateness and varying

outcomes. Adjustment and positive attitudes toward different cultures prompts people to take active roles in the diverse society. Intercultural competence is therefore a key to success in today's changing world, the way to be successful in communication with different cultures and people from various cultures.

The intercultural dimension in the teaching of foreign languages has become a special concern for teachers and researchers. Studies in the field of social psychology, as well as studies of intercultural communication have provided insights into the linguistic and social skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural contact situations. The intercultural dimension in foreign languages emphasizes effective cross-cultural communication based on the acquisition of a key set of competences as suggested by Byram's model of intercultural communicative competence. This model identifies five different factors involved: knowledge, attitudes, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction and political education including critical cultural awareness [5, p. 89].

Knowledge includes learning about social groups, products, practices and processes of interaction. Attitudes involve curiosity and openness towards the other as well as readiness to revise cultural values and beliefs and to interact and engage with otherness. Skills of interpreting and relating mean ability to identify and explain cultural perspectives and mediate between and function in new cultural contexts.

Skills of discovery and interaction are related to the ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication.

English language teaching theory and methodology has evolved over the decades and this development includes changes in the type of proficiency learners need as well as emergence of numerous theories of the linguistic nature. Different developments in our society had an impact on language teaching strategies and attitudes towards foreign language learning. As a response to the acknowledgement of social and cultural significance in language teaching, a concept of intercultural competence (IC) emerged over the last decades. Research that have followed the emergence of this conceptual framework and practical applications for IC. The purpose of developing IC in all fields of education, and particularly in FLT is to increase international and cross-cultural acceptance and tolerance among learners. Teaching IC does not only entail acquainting learners with knowledge about different cultures, but also with a set of practices that necessitate knowledge, skills and attitudes, including critical cultural awareness, which teachers should incorporate in their classroom practice by advocating cultural and linguistic relativity. The intercultural element in the FLT has become of a great concern not only for linguists or policy makers but also for teachers.

The overview of the development of teaching methods and objectives clearly illustrates that teaching language and culture has not always

been integrated and pedagogically justified. Over the years, the FLT profession had been determined by emergence of teaching methods that increased and declined in popularity. Practical applications of theoretical findings in the field of ELT include a wide variety of methods such as: the classical method, the grammar translation method, the direct method, and audiolingual method, which regard a language as a system of hierarchically arranged, rule-governed structures.

It is very important for the language teacher to know not only the subject matter but also students' cultural background and other personal factors – emotional and psychological are equally important. Language teachers experiment with various language teaching methods and find one or more than one method effective that can practically be implemented in the classroom.

The grammar-translation method had been used by the language teachers for many years. It was also known as the classical method as it was used to teach the classical Latin and Greek. It was believed that this method would help students to read and appreciate the foreign literature. It was also thought that by studying the grammar of the target language students will be able to understand the grammar of their native language and learn to speak and write the native language in a much better way. Though students may not develop communicative fluency in the target language but would become mentally sharp in the process of using target language to understand the native language through some similarities between the two.

The direct method became popular when students fail to communicate effectively using the grammar-translation method. It allows no translation of any kind. Students are helped directly to pick up the target language through the use of demonstration and visual aids without seeking any help from the native language.

Students learn new words in situations. A teacher focuses attention on helping students to think in the target language in order to facilitate communication. Attention is given on the spoken not written. Students are motivated to speak in the target language and discuss the history, geography and the culture of the target language people. They are helped with all the four major skills of the target language – writing, reading, listening and speaking. This method gives an opportunity for two-way interaction between a teacher and students. They are like partners in the teaching-learning process.

The audio-lingual method is orally based just like the direct method. However it does not focus on picking up a vocabulary by using it in a situation like the direct method but drills students in the use of grammatical sentence patterns. Teacher wants students to use the target language communicatively and in order to do so want students to over learn the target language. The teacher provides with models for the students to imitate accurately and as quickly as possible. This way the students form new habits in the target language overcoming the old habits of the native language. Teachers provide with tapes of model speakers and students imitate the teacher's models.

The communicative approach came into lime light in 1970s when linguists realised that students may know the linguistic usage but are unable to use the language. It became very clear that students should learn to perform certain functions such as inviting, declining, praising etc. in a social context. It means being able to communicate students did not require linguistic competence but communicative competence that taught them what to say, when to say, how to say and whom to say. In this method the teacher's role is to establish situations to promote communication. Students interact a great deal with one another in a given context.

The purpose of this communicative method of teaching was to make students speak confidently, apt to a given situation rather than just mastering the language forms. Students were expected to learn beyond sentence construction and understand the linguistic properties of cohesion and coherence that helps binding the sentences together. This communicative interaction gave an opportunity to build cooperative relationship among students making negotiation more meaningful. The given situation helped in providing meaning to the speech of each group. The teacher played her best as a facilitator and an advisor whenever required during the communicative activity. This activity helped students with lot of improvement into listening, speaking and comprehension strategies.

There are yet other approaches making communication as central. These are content-based, task-based and participatory approach to teaching English as a foreign language.

Content-based approach teaches something new using language as a medium. It focuses on what is being taught. Students are able to indulge in advance thinking while learning new information focusing less on the structure of the language. This approach is very student-centred as it depends entirely on the students' ability to use the language. Basically, it produces motivation in students.

Task-based approach task-based learning focuses on the use of authentic language through meaningful tasks such as visiting the doctor or making a telephone call. This method encourages meaningful communication and is student-centred. It encourages problem solving, creativity and spontaneity. Meaning is central to this approach. They got involved into logical thinking. They had to listen to different parts of the same set of information they needed to complete the task, giving them an opportunity to engage in authentic speaking and listening and provide them with tools to improve their speaking and comprehension skills. Student-student interaction became meaningful. This approach is also student-centred.

Participatory approach adds new dimension to the teaching English as a foreign language by encouraging in students the criteria of problem solving and improving their perspective towards the world. It helps students in shaping their views and motivates in finding out a solution about the approaching problems and promotes a better understanding into the process of proper decision making. In other words, teachers understand that it is insufficient to teach students

to only produce grammatically correct phrases, they also need to use these phrases in actual communicative situations.

In Byram's Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence [5, p. 15] foreign language teachers are asked to guide learners through the process of acquiring competencies in attitudes, knowledge, and skills related to intercultural competence while using a foreign language. Teachers must lead students through activities in which attitudes about the «other» are considered, and ideally transform the learner.

The goal for the students is to start by questioning their preconceived ideas before entering into a process of discovery about the «other» with the intent of becoming more willing to seek out and engage with otherness in order to ultimately experience relationships of reciprocity. As students continue to engage in analysis of other cultures, certain knowledge must be acquired. It is imperative that the foreign language educator allows time to explore the national identity of the home culture and the target culture in relation to history, geography, and social institutions. Once learners have taken time to discover the similarities and differences between their culture and that of the target culture, the teacher must craft activities that will prepare students to build relationships with people of diverse backgrounds and languages. Skills in discovery and interaction allow intercultural speakers to identify similarities and differences between home cultures and foreign cultures resulting in successful communication and the establishment of meaningful relationships. A successful intercultural speaker seeks out opportunities to meet individuals from diverse cultures in order to share information through communication in a foreign language.

Based on the information provided in Byram's Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence, foreign language teachers must reconsider methods for teaching language and culture in the classroom if the goal is to create true intercultural competent speakers of the language [5, p. 18]. Traditional methods for teaching foreign languages emphasized the importance of students practicing language structures, pronunciation and vocabulary in order to become native like speakers.

Rather than pushing students toward using a foreign language like a native speaker, language teachers should guide students toward using language that structures new discoveries about the «other» and about themselves. The focus shifts from preparing students to communicate without error in order to survive a foreign culture to communicating openly in order to build relationships so that they can thrive in a foreign culture.

Content areas to discuss in a workshop or course that intends to develop intercultural communicative competence might be – and this is an open list: the target language culture's social practices, customs and lifestyle; similarities and differences in values, beliefs and norms between two cultures; the nature and dangers of stereotyping; the acculturation process (including culture shock); non-verbal communication and proxemics; attitudes of openness, curiosity, empathy

and non-judgemental thinking; useful communication strategies in intercultural settings; other.

Recommended techniques and activity types: brainstorming (to map out what participants have in mind about certain issues); short presentations (to find out about participants' experiences, to provide input for further discussion); critical incidents (to raise awareness of cultural differences and their importance in communication); role plays and simulations (to experience as much as possible what it is like to communicate with people from other cultures); project work (to give ideas for culturally enriching projects that participants can do with their trainees or students in their teaching work); ethnographic tasks (to give ideas about the learning potential in doing interviews and observations); quizzes (to offer the group concrete information about different cultures and thus stimulate a purposeful discussion in small groups); pair or small group discussion helps the participants loosen up before discussing the ideas with the whole group or class; discussion: essentially after each of the above

activity types it is of great importance to exchange ideas, discuss the participants' own experiences and generate further thoughts. Discussion helps both the workshop facilitator and the participants to clarify their attitude towards the stated questions or the perceived problems.

Conclusions. It is actually difficult to say which teaching method is effective unless used in a classroom of students with different need, learning experience, intellectual levels, cultural background and attitude towards learning English as a second language. Sometimes more than one method is used to bring out the desired results in the language classroom where communication becomes the key factor of teaching-learning process. Unless students learn to utilise the classroom method to express thoughts and feelings outside into the real world situations, the learning cannot be successful no matter whatever teaching method is applied in EFL classroom. Teacher – student role becomes the centre in bringing out the maximum within the limited time in a classroom.

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МЕТОДИЧНІ ПРИЙОМИ ФОРМУВАННЯ МІЖКУЛЬТУРНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ НА ЗАНЯТТЯХ З АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ

Анотація

У статті розглядаються теоретичні питання формування міжкультурної компетентності на заняттях з англійської мови. Виділено основні особливості, які характеризують вищезазначену компетентність. Аналізуються основні методи і прийоми навчання іноземної мови, що сприяють формуванню міжкультурної компетентності.

Ключові слова: міжкультурна компетентність, комунікативна компетентність, метод, прийом, навчання англійської мови, навчання іноземної мови.

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Аннотация

В статье рассматриваются теоретические вопросы формирования межкультурной компетентности на занятиях по английскому языку. Выделены основные особенности, которые характеризуют вышеупомянутую компетентность. Анализируются основные методы и приемы обучения иностранному языку, которые способствуют формированию межкультурной компетентности.

Ключевые слова: межкультурная компетентность, коммуникативная компетентность, метод, прием, обучение английскому языку, обучение иностранному языку.