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### THE FORMATION OF SOCIO-CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Learning a language without knowing the cultural realities of the people can lead to a distorted and limited use of the language. While studying a foreign language, modern learners do not only acquire communication skills, but broaden their minds, develop their personalities, and become ready to discover and accept a different cultural reality and perspective – not only foreign language units, but foreign mentality through geography, history, customs, values, fairy-tales, cultural concepts etc.

Having studied these aspects of foreign culture, the learner is able to create a true intercultural contact that is an integral part of successful interpersonal communication [2, p. 138]. Therefore teaching a foreign language assumes formation of foreign-language communicative competence of students, which can be defined as a language user's grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology and the like, as well as social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately.

Along with speech and language competence, socio-cultural competence is also one of communicative competence structural components. It involves the knowledge of culture, traditions, and mentality of the studied language [1, p. 257].

According to M.S. Safina, socio-cultural competence is 'the possession of and the ability to apply a set of multicultural knowledge, skills, and qualities in the process of intercultural communication in the specific conditions of life and tolerance towards people of other nationalities' [3, p. 82]. N.O. Fedorina defines socio-cultural competence as 'the ability and willingness of language learners to recognize, understand and interpret native and foreign views of the world and on this basis to successfully carry out cross-cultural communication' [2, p. 140].

We understand socio-cultural competence as the knowledge of national and cultural traits of social and language behaviour of a native speaker (their customs, etiquette, social stereotypes, history, and culture) and ways of using them in the process of communication. The formed socio-cultural competence is nowadays a compulsory condition of effective cross-cultural communication, i.e. an adequate interaction with representatives of other cultures. It is a complex phenomenon which includes the following components:

- linguistic-cultural component (i.e., knowledge of lexical items with the socio-cultural semantics (e.g. greeting, forms of address, and farewell, in oral and written speech);
- sociolinguistic component (i.e., knowledge of the language features of social classes, different generations, genders, social groups);
- cultural component (i.e., knowledge of cultural peculiarities of English-speaking countries, their habits, traditions, standards of behaviour, etiquette, and the ability to understand and use them appropriately in the communication process, while remaining a carrier of another culture) [3, p. 82].

The important aspect of the formation of socio-cultural competence is application of new technologies in training.

By acquiring socio-cultural knowledge and abilities, students expand their knowledge of a foreign country's language, science, culture, realities, and famous people [1, p. 259].

The formation of socio-cultural competence is carried out in three stages.

The first stage is motivational. It provides psychological readiness to communicate with all learners. The objective of this stage is to interest students in gaining knowledge about different peoples and their cultures, to show how diverse the world and the people living in this world are, to achieve a positive attitude towards learning about other cultures and to encourage the students to interact with representa-

tives of other cultures. Watching videos describing the way of life, traditions and customs of different nationalities, and discussing them appears to be effective. Awareness of and understanding the problems and contradictions, identification of available information, revision of knowledge, development of skills to argue and justify the point of view, inclusion of knowledge in a new context are the main substantial objectives of discussion. Sensible people all around the world, regardless of their nationality or religion, show tolerance of and respect for each other and appreciate the cultural heritage of the community. Discussing the movies helps students to penetrate the essence of the question, and gives them a chance to ask questions and express their opinion, which makes it possible to achieve the goal – to form a person's willingness to cooperate.

The second stage is informative. It comprises collecting and processing of learning material. The content of education should promote understanding and cooperation between peoples and nations, irrespective of race, nationality, ethnicity, religion or social origin. The content of education is not only the subject of what you can hear or see in the lesson that is explicitly expressed or clearly represented by a teacher or a student, but also what they think, feel and experience when one opens up and the other develops the world of a different culture.

Students enrich their vocabulary and broaden the outlook by being immersed in a foreign cultural environment, which increases their motivation for learning a foreign language. During language practice, the teacher helps the students organize their thoughts, clarify the solution to the problem of communication, find ways for its implementation, and create the conditions of natural communication in the target language. Material for communication should not require specialized knowledge, but must arouse interest, inducing the expression of one's own opinion and assessment.

The final stage of the work is the formation of the concept of 'socio-cultural competence' together with the students, defining the means of its manifestations in contemporary conditions and its practical consequences. The students make up some possible strategies to oppose prejudice and preconception. Filling out a questionnaire with the list of countries and nationalities is followed by discussion and determining the slogan for life [3, p. 83].

Socio-cultural competence and socio-cultural knowledge allow students to adjust to foreign language environment by following the principles of politeness towards a foreign language environment and respect for the traditions, rituals, and life style of representatives of another culture. The development of socio-cultural competence in the process of learning a foreign language contributes to humanistic attitude to oneself and to other people, and develops a person as a subject of culture.

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### **КОМПЬЮТЕРНОЕ ТЕСТИРОВАНИЕ В ПРОЦЕССЕ ОБУЧЕНИЯ АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ УЧАЩИХСЯ КАК СРЕДСТВО СОВЕРШЕНСТВОВАНИЯ КОНТРОЛЯ ЗНАНИЙ НА УЧЕБНОМ ЗАНЯТИИ**

Цель данной работы: представление опыта повышения эффективности контрольно-оценочной деятельности учащихся IX классов на уроках английского языка посредством использования программы «МуТест».

Задачи: способствовать повышению качества образовательного процесса через совершенствование контрольно – оценочной деятельности учащихся на урок.

Главной задачей образовательного процесса является повышение качества образования. На пути к реализации этой задачи перед преподавателем встает вопрос: как сделать образовательный процесс эффективным?

Основным критерием эффективного занятия является результативность. Результат работы педагога – высокий уровень учебных достижений учащихся. Поэтому особенно важно привить интерес к предмету, сделать учебное занятие разнообразным и нетрадиционным, но в то же время продуктивным и эффективным.