

THE ROLE AND PLACE OF SOCIOCULTURAL COMPETENCE AMONG OTHER TYPES OF COMPETENCIES AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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Abstract

This article focuses on the problems of developing socio-cultural awareness while teaching a foreign language, integrating socio-cultural components into teaching and through foreign languages. The efficiency of this process is directly dependent on the reached level of mutual understanding between communicants. To achieve this aim partners should have the willingness and capacity to form dialogue of cultures which presupposes the existence of a socio-cultural competence. Sociocultural competence includes knowledge about values, beliefs, behavior patterns, customs, traditions, language and cultural achievements peculiar to society.

Keywords: socio-cultural competence, intercultural communicative competence, intercultural awareness, sociocultural paradigm, sociocultural conflicts, cross-cultural interaction, dialogue of cultures.

Currently, the development of intercultural competence among students and the formation of a holistic cultural and linguistic personality are put forward as the goal of teaching foreign languages. Such a development of methodological views is legitimate, because even the formation of communicative competence presupposed not only the mastery of the appropriate foreign language communication technique, but also the assimilation of extralinguistic information necessary for adequate communication and mutual understanding, since the latter is unattainable without the fundamental equality of the basic information of communicants about the surrounding reality. The difference in information is determined by the different material and spiritual conditions for the existence of the respective countries and peoples, the peculiarities of their history, culture, socio-economic system, political system, etc. Hence the conclusion about the need to deeply know the specifics of the country of the language being studied, and thus the need to take into account regional and cultural approaches as one of the main provisions of the methodology of teaching foreign languages.

Of course, intercultural learning is not the prerogative of teaching only foreign languages, but it is obvious that, first of all, mastering a foreign language contributes to penetration into the mentality, life and spirit of another people and involves acquaintance with the views and experience of another cultural community, because Behind every foreign language is the national and cultural specificity of the picture of the world. Therefore, it is a foreign language lesson that should represent a process that will provide students with the opportunity to expand their curtain of the world, bearing the imprint of their own culture, to a broader, more flexible multicultural picture of the world. Thus, teaching intercultural communication in a foreign language course is today a paramount task, the solution of which requires new ways, means and methods. The theoretical underdevelopment of the problems of forming linguo-sociocultural competence, the lack of scientific foundations for solving this problem predetermines the relevance of the chosen research topic, its theoretical significance and practical necessity.

The term "competence" (from Latin *competere* - to be capable of something). The primary one should be

regarded communicative competence, which is commonly understood as the capacity to select and accelerate progress of target language speech behavior based on communication objectives and content.

Linguistic competence, which may be described as the capacity to understand and make statements of various levels and volumes relying on knowledge acquisition of the linguistic structure and its fully functioning types, provides a base for the implementation of effective communication [5, p.134].

Thus, the study of sociocultural competence is primary in teaching a foreign language. The term "sociocultural competence" is viewed in the frames of communication competence. Communication competence refers to the student's capability to communicate effectively through language. The term was coined by Canale and Swain in 1980 and defined communicative competence in four areas:

- Rules and words
- Conformity
- Cohesion and consistency
- Using communication strategies [2, p. 21].

Considering the definitions of communicative competence we have turned to IGI Global dictionary which views the notion as "a person's ability to communicate in one or all types of speech activity, which is a special quality of a real linguistic personality acquired in the process of natural communication or specially organized training" [3].

After analysis of the definitions of sociocultural competence we conclude that it can be characterized as:

- 1) knowledge of the universal human system of cultural values;
- 2) knowledge of native culture set of values and forms and methods of their manifestation in the institutions of society, behavior pattern of people, linguistic picture of the world, acceptable speech practices;
- 3) knowledge of cultural values system of the studied language, forms and methods of its implementation in the state system, media behaviors, their speech;
- 4) knowledge of interaction principles between cultural beliefs and norms in the meeting of different cultures;

5) the ability to isolate cultural values by observing other cultures and interact with them without referring to them in direct questions.

Consequently, sociocultural competency is defined as knowledge of the national and cultural features of the target language's nations, the norms of verbal and nonverbal conduct, and the capacity to govern their behavior in real-life communication settings in line with this information.

Many methodologists (L. Bachman, M. Canale, R. Cooper, H. Helmich, H. Melenk, A. Palmer, M. Swain, and others) feel that communicative competence is a complex multi-component education that incorporates linguistic, sociolinguistic, paralinguistic, topic, and other parts.

D. Hymes was among the first to demonstrate unequivocally that language mastery requires not just knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, but also understanding of the social contexts in which they are used.

Thus, in Western didactics, communicative competence is now defined as students' capacity to speak appropriately in various communicative circumstances as well as their ability to arrange verbal communication.

Based on the present understanding of linguo-sociocultural competence and its definition, we may identify three major characteristics of linguo-sociocultural competence: linguistic, social, and cultural. As a result, three components of linguo-sociocultural competence may be identified:

- 1) Linguistic and cultural knowledge and skills;
- 2) Socio-psychological knowledge and skills;
- 3) Cultural knowledge and skills [4, p. 131].

Sociocultural competence involves the following elements:

- The establishment and accomplishment of this intellectual ability in a foreign culture;
- True representation of one's culture and the courage to interpret about it in a foreign language;
- Accomplishing intercultural understanding leading to tolerance and respect. [5, p. 138].
- Sociocultural competency encompasses a wide range of skills. Linguo- regional, local, sociolinguistic, and broader cultural elements are required. This brings up a plethora of options for young participants in intercultural discussion to receive professional and ethical learning.
- Sociocultural competence allows for the modeling of a student's conduct in genuine language skills, allowing for the prediction and avoidance of challenges in various sociocultural environments;
- The foundation of sociocultural competence is culturological research, which provides a true picture of the nation's socio-cultural image, such as history and contemporary knowledge, morals, and lifestyle of the country's persons. [6, p. 88].

Hence, sociocultural education should help not just understanding and cognition of some other culture, as well as the conscious effort depicts one's own society.

It is not simply about the acquisition of linguistic information in foreign language classes. Many Western

courses offered in a foreign language require students to gain intercultural competency.

Furthermore, the relevant approaches are possible for developing intercultural competence:

1) The comparing method incorporates several sorts of argumentation.

Traditions and practices that are substantially distinct from the original culture are explored in the classroom.

2) The "critical incidents" technique, which intended to discover discrepancies in language and communication. This technique presents the learner with a representation of a communication instance wherein the interaction of representatives from other cultures is challenging due to cultural differences and a participant's lack of grasp of the situation.

3) The "culture capsules" method. It highlights one of the cultural contrasts, such as the gap between German and Russian purchasers.

4) Role-playing. The instructor advises the class to plan a festival that will include representatives from some other culture. Students are required to welcome visitors politely. They should not overlook the use of jokes and tales, since failure to communicate is frequently caused by a lack of comprehension of humor. The teacher and the other trainees should not only watch, and also critically analyze the learners' forms of communication. The rising frequency of interactions between peoples of the world dictates the shift in the socio-cultural objectives of language instruction. The task of acquiring a foreign language not just as a form of communication, but also as the establishment of "cultural and linguistic identity," which defines the development of new methods of teaching a foreign language, such as communication skills and intercultural learning principles [5, p. 137].

Sociocultural competence consists of three main of knowledge:

- Understanding of linguistic studies. Knowledge of language forms with sociocultural interpretation and the ability to utilize them in intercultural education settings;
- Understanding of cultural contextual scenarios that are locally distinctive patterns of behavior based on communication technologies that are widely accepted in this society;
- Cultural awareness. Awareness of socio-cultural, historically, intellectual, ethnic, and cultural aspects, as well as the capacity to apply these qualities to develop common understanding with representatives of this culture [7, p. 94].

The concept of sociocultural competence takes into account:

1) Characteristics of social communication, national and cultural standards of sociocultural conduct, and awareness of communication etiquette and communication ritual;

2) Characteristics of historical identity: art and creative values;

3) Characteristics of people's collective identity. Foreign languages, original literature, the media, and the Internet are not the only ways to develop prosocial behavior; movies may also play an important role. The

solving of socio-cultural problems necessitates new techniques, means, and methods of teaching, the selection of which is determined by the duties assigned and the subject matter of instruction. The new idea of socio-cultural learning necessitates the creation of new generations textbooks that take into consideration the cultural characteristics of everyday and professional communication in their nation and the countries involved [1, p. 60].

The availability of suitable intercultural didactic resources to students is the most critical criterion for the development of sociocultural competence.

Linguistic and cultural element, include knowledge of linguistic forms with national cultural semantics and the capacity to use them in intercultural competence circumstances. National proverbs and idioms, as well as lexically units, represent the people's attitude. They teach pupils about the rules and principles of communication between authorities of a certain nation, as well as about goals and principles.

To sum up the mentioned above we can state that according to sociocultural theory of learning, mastering a foreign language involves better penetration into another people's individual and social awareness and heritage, as well as familiarity with the viewpoints, evaluations, and experiences of the specific culture, because each official language is a reflects the concept image of the globe, consisting of components and phenomena that are fundamental and incomparable for people. And

that's why a well-organized method of teaching a foreign language may train a person for a more tolerant vision of different cultures, compassion, and the "erosion" of incorrect preconceptions. In principle, this entails educating a person to be capable of intercultural communication.

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