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SOCIOCULTURAL COMPETENCE: PECULIARITIES OF FORMING IT IN AGRARIAN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

Abstract. *The research deals with the analysis of effective strategies of forming future agrarians' sociocultural competence. Interdisciplinary ties between humanitarian disciplines are defined as one of pedagogical conditions for forming future agrarians' sociocultural competence. Studying humanitarian disciplines provides cognition of native and foreign countries, national character and mentality; develop personal qualities. Professional values and personal qualities of future agrarians necessary for intercultural communication and professional socialization are highlighted as well.*

Key words: *sociocultural competence, future agrarians, humanitarian disciplines, professional values, intercultural communication.*

I. Introduction

One of priority directions of higher agrarian education modernisation in Ukraine is an increase of graduates' competitiveness in the international labour market that envisages the transition to a new model of a specialist. In modern conditions not future agrarians' professional skills but their key competences, which include skills to apply knowledge in life situations, personality's development and adaptability become more actual. We define sociocultural competence as key competence, as an important factor in the development of personality's socialization in modern society, self-actualization and cultural self-determination.

Agricultural industry needs competent, mobile and competitive professionals to function in multicultural environment for effective socialization, communication with representatives of different cultures and peoples. Sociocultural changes in the

European integration process determine the establishment of new type of intercultural relations. Future agrarians have new opportunities and prospects for cooperation with foreign countries that contributes to development the dialogue of cultures, interaction and understanding other cultural values. Modern personal development of future agrarians, who are ready to intercultural communication, is impossible without sociocultural competence.

II. Problem Statement

The analysis of psychological and pedagogical literature shows that foreign and home scientists, examining the concept of "sociocultural competence", pay special attention to co-learning of languages, cultures and civilizations, the relationship between language and society, language and culture. There are several interpretations of this phenomenon, methods of interpreting its essence and structure. Some aspects of students' training in agrarian higher educational establishments are covered in the researches of N. Kostytsya (cultural training of future specialists of agricultural sector) [1]. I. Lyashenko (forming future agrarians' readiness to the participation in the international professional programs) [2], Y. Nikolaenko (training students of agrarian specialties for professional communication in a foreign linguistic environment) [3] and others. The issue of forming future agrarians' competences is considered in the researches of home scientists. However, the issue of forming future agrarians' sociocultural competence hasn't been the object of a separate study.

The aim of the research is to analyze the strategies of forming future agrarians' sociocultural competence. To achieve this aim such general scientific methods as the analysis of pedagogical sources on the issue of research, compilation and synthesis of scientific knowledge about peculiarities of forming future agrarians' sociocultural competence were used.

III. Results

The professions of agrarian industrial complex are adjacent and are at the junction between different professional sectors. According to job description, agrarians belong to such types of professions as "a man and nature", "a man and machines" and "a man and a man". However, recently there has been a change in

belonging to a traditional type of agricultural profession "a man and nature" in the direction of the system "a man and a man". According to the requirements of agricultural production, the role of communication in the professional activity of agrarians increases. The gradual development of contacts with foreign partners for the supply of agricultural machinery, seeds and fertilizers, the growth of interpersonal communication in the professional activity of agrarians, the expansion of cultural boundaries significantly affects the role of humanitarian knowledge in the process of professional training of future specialists. That is humanitarian education becomes fundamental in future specialists' training.

A modern specialist of agricultural sector should master the professional culture, foreign language and intercultural communication, be able to express his or her thoughts, using different stylistic means in Ukrainian and foreign languages, to enrich his or her knowledge. So, personality and professional development of future specialists, effective professional socialization largely depends on the level of communicative and sociocultural abilities. Studying humanitarian disciplines contributes forming such abilities.

The concept of humanizing educational process in agricultural higher educational establishments is to strengthen the role of humanitarian disciplines and humanitarian-oriented study of other disciplines; maximum approximation of educational disciplines (informatively) according to requirements to future specialists; differentiation of learning, creating conditions for testing student's inclinations and aptitudes in various activities and researches; combination of universal and national values, upbringing on Christian moral principles [1].

We consider the implementation of interdisciplinary ties between humanitarian disciplines to be one of the important pedagogical conditions for forming sociocultural competence. In agrarian higher educational establishments such humanitarian disciplines as "Ukrainian language for professional purposes", "Foreign language", "History of Ukraine", "History of Ukrainian culture", "Ukrainian studies", "Religion studies", "Psychology", "Sociology", "Philosophy" are taught. The analysis

of the educational programs of humanitarian disciplines suggests that sociocultural competence as a key competence is not allocated.

However, the content of the disciplines "English", "English language for professional purposes" includes cross-cultural material to familiarize students with foreign culture (the acquisition of knowledge about the rules of behaviour, everyday life of native speakers etc.) [5]. According to the program, the concept of foreign language education is based on the integrated learning language and culture, the dialogue of native and foreign cultures. Mastering foreign language involves not only training of foreign language communication, but forming a personality, who is ready for intercultural communication, successful participation in the dialogue of cultures.

In the process of studying Ukrainian language for professional purposes, national-linguistic identity of an agrarian is being formed, his culture of communication increases. Students are acquainted with the basic conditions of effective communication, speech etiquette in business communication, aspects of culture speech during the debate; the moral education, respect for others, which are the principles of business communication.

Studying "History of Ukraine", "History of Ukrainian culture", "Ukrainian studies", future agrarians gain knowledge about socio-political system, the Ukrainian nation, its national character and mentality, national achievements of material and spiritual culture, signs of the traditional and everyday culture of the ethnos, traditions and customs. The content of these disciplines gives information to the students about Ukrainian culture, its national priorities, achievement of the Ukrainian people in the context of European and global culture. Students also learn national and universal values, develop ability to protect and enhance cultural heritage of the Ukrainians.

While studying "Religion Studies", "Psychology", "Sociology", "Philosophy", "Political Science" future agrarians acquire knowledge about the peculiarities of speech etiquette of various peoples and their non-verbal behaviour; they also get skills in applying these features in the communication with the representatives of different cultures according to social norms of the interlocutors. The students of agrarian higher educational establishments form the view about the political structure

of countries, different peoples of certain religions, the psychological characteristics of different nations.

Thus, there is a need to optimize the content and structure of humanitarian disciplines concerning strengthening development of sociocultural potential. It is necessary to develop a socially significant personality of a future specialist, whose potential is determined not only as his or her professional knowledge and skills, but also as common culture, including high morals, tolerance, sociability, responsibility etc.

The development of individual's potential is possible only in a sociocultural environment. General requirements to modern sociocultural environment of the higher educational establishment as a set of conditions in which the activity of persons of educational space are: the promotion of self-realization, satisfaction of his or her needs and interests, adapt to social changes; to act as a tool for shaping values and models of behaviour. The primary strategy of humanitarian education is the realization of the objectives of person's socialization: to teach a future specialist to work in changing conditions of professional and sociocultural environment; to adhere to the standards of conduct, to think critically, to develop responsibility, appropriate solutions, to communicate effectively.

Particular importance in higher agricultural educational establishment is devoted to studying foreign languages, which are an integral part of the vocational education system. The conditions of the labour market encourage employers to give preference to the professionals who have not only the most advanced professional expertise, but also speak a foreign language. Agriculture needs the specialists who speak a foreign language with the purpose to communicate and for the sake of self-improvement as the personality who develops in a sociocultural environment. Knowledge of foreign language increases the competitiveness and the mobility of specialists; is important for getting a prestigious job and career.

Note the main factor stimulating the process of foreign language communication, is believed to be a motivation. The research results indicate that students' motivation in the process of learning a foreign language in the higher

agricultural educational establishment is mainly focused on professional activities [6]. As one of the most important conditions for preparing future agrarians is compliance with his interests, aptitudes and abilities for his profession, learning a foreign language should be viewed through the prism of students' attitude toward the future profession. The most motivational factor for students is the professional interest and awareness of theoretical and practical importance of foreign language knowledge for their future professional activity. Therefore, foreign language learning must be professionally oriented. The task of the teacher is to create conditions for practical mastering foreign language, and to choose such forms, methods and means of training that would allow each student to increase their cognitive activity.

Thus, we can allocate the following main principles of foreign language education in the higher agricultural educational establishment:

- the principle of professional orientation of students' educational activity (the process of training should be organized as modelling communicative situations which are close to real professional communication of agrarians);
- the principle of interdisciplinary ties between foreign language and special disciplines, which involves obtaining knowledge for their future profession and mastering the skills of foreign language communication for the implementation of future professional activity;
- the principle of cultural conformity, which includes not only familiarization with the foreign language culture, but also through the appropriate exercise system formation of skills of a standardized communicative behaviour characteristic of professional interactions in countries whose language is being studied [3, p. 97 – 99].

Professional communication in a foreign linguistic environment is important in forming sociocultural competence. At the result of partnership between higher educational establishments, many students participate in various international programs, conferences that require high-quality language training. To improve psychological adaptation in foreign language environment in the process of future agrarians' training, it is advisable to apply different types of socio-psychological trainings of a personal growth: auditory training, business communication training,

training dialogue etc. The development of students' qualities that contribute to positive conflict resolution, collaboration skills, respect for others and empathy, will help in the future to be competitive in the international labour market [2]. So, formed new social and cultural qualities allow a person to adapt to social conditions, sociocultural norms and rules of life in the society easier.

For successful intercultural communication in addition to knowledge about a foreign country, a future specialist should be familiar with the culture of their own country, and to have a high level of common culture. The peculiarities of students of agrarian higher educational establishments are not only in the variety of youth with different level of culture, character, habits and experience. Rural youth is the majority of the student body, and this, in turn, determines the peculiarities of their thinking and behaviour, social norms and values. City is a new sociocultural environment for rural students to which they have to adapt. Forming depends on positive adaptation of rural students in the university. The interaction with social environment, the degree of person's involvement in the society play an important role in overcoming the cultural barriers of rural youth.

A key aspect of person's socialization and his or her development as a competent specialist is regarded as the acquisition of professionally significant and life qualities. Among professional and personal qualities which are necessary for successful activity and development of agrarians' individuality, we can identify common characteristics such as mobility, the ability to make adequate decisions, endurance, observation, empathy and tolerance, the ability to adapt to new conditions.

One of the important components of students' social adaptation is forming value orientations. The quality of future agrarian specialists' professional training depends on the level of assimilation and mastery of value orientations. During the period of study in the university there is a change of priority needs and values of students; the moral sphere is enriched; the main personality setting is self-determination and self-realization. Professional training of specialists requires updating needs in personal development through adherence to cultural values, in the enrichment of the individual culture. Recently there is an increase of prestige of agrarians' work, hence the

importance of professional values for future agrarians. Updated study of value orientations of modern agrarians, the search for new ideals and purposes, which allow the person to be in harmony with the environment.

The main professional values can be considered values of professional self-realization, self-knowledge and self-esteem; the value of positive attitude to the environment; the value of moral and ethical principles [4]. It is emphasized that values determine the content orientation of the individual and the basis of his or her relationship to the environment, to other people, to oneself and serve as the basis of his or her worldview and the core of vitality that defines the concept of human life. These values contribute to the development of value-semantic sphere of personality, which plays a significant role in the process of forming professionalism of future agrarians.

The study of humanitarian disciplines focused on developing social and personal competencies contributes to more effective socialization and adaptation in changing sociocultural conditions. Social and personal competencies of future agrarians are based on moral qualities, social responsibility, communicative skills etc. As a result, the student has to acquire the following social and personal competences: to possess qualities of citizenship; to be ready to social interaction, interpersonal communication, reflection and teamwork. These competencies are necessary for the occurrence of future agrarians in the society, for their professional adaptation and realization of professional activity.

To improve the efficiency of forming future agrarians' sociocultural competence, in our opinion, it is necessary to promote the use of interactive teaching methods, in particular project method. Practice-oriented, research, creative nature of project activity makes it possible to actively involve students into creative self-employment. Project work forms students' creative activity, cognitive activity and attracts them to search and research activities.

Project method is widely used in the educational process of higher school, because it allows to seamlessly integrate students' knowledge from different fields while solving one problem, makes it possible to apply obtained knowledge in

practice. The value of project method is that it contributes to the formation of such personal qualities, which are assimilated only in the activities. These are such qualities as the ability to work in a team, capacity for social interaction, the ability to perform various social roles, ability to organize and lead discussions, the ability to generate ideas, the ability to listen to other points of view etc.

Participating in project work in the process of studying humanitarian disciplines, future agrarians acquire the following skills for forming sociocultural competence:

- the ability to integrate information from different fields of knowledge;
- search, selection, analysis, structuring the required information;
- ability to work in a team;
- the ability to think critically, formulate hypotheses, defend one's opinion;
- the ability to look at the situation through the prism of universal human values and norms.

Consequently, the use of interactive teaching methods in the process of forming future agrarians' sociocultural competence contributes to the development of value orientations and personal qualities, without which there can't be successful intercultural communication, socialization and adaptation of youth in changing sociocultural conditions.

IV. Conclusions

At the end of our research we came to the conclusion that forming future agrarians' sociocultural competence will be effective by implementation of interdisciplinary ties between humanitarian disciplines and also by application of interactive teaching methods. Thus, forming sociocultural competence in the process of studying humanitarian disciplines involves the absorption of national and universal values of personality, tolerant attitude to cultural values of other nations, respect for the cultural values of their native country, the awareness of its national importance.

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