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FORMATION OF SOCIOCULTURAL COMPETENCE OF STUDENTS IN THE VIRTUAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT

V. E. Krasnopolskyi

The article is devoted to the problem of forming of the sociocultural competence of students of the non-philological profile of training in a virtual foreign language educational environment. In the given article, components of the sociocultural competence (regional competence, linguistic and cultural competence, socio-cultural competence) are defined. Sociocultural competence is considered as an integral part of the content of foreign language vocational training – aims at developing understanding and interpreting different aspects of culture and language behavior in the world of work. The content of the foreign language training is standardized by means of educational software shell, and the development of the linguistic and cultural competence is achieved with specialized and non-specialized training and information electronic resources, work with reference services and search engines, publications, etc. Individual and group quests and Web- projects, participation in online games and communities of interest, intercultural contacts, etc. The necessity of using a virtual foreign language educational environment is substantiated. Specialized and non-specialized training and information electronic resources, work with reference services and search engines, publications, individual and group quests and Web- projects, participation in online games and communities of interest, intercultural contacts are considered as an effective means of forming the sociocultural competence of students. The author suggests some ways of solution to the problem by creating virtual foreign language educational environment with the purpose of formation of socio-cultural competence of students of the non-philological profile of training.

Keywords: Sociocultural competence, virtual foreign language educational environment.

Problem statement in a general view and its connection with important scientific and practical problems. The modern level of informatization, globalization and integration of various countries, led to the formation of an essentially new socio-cultural space. The expansion of political, economic, scientific and cultural cooperation, the rapid development of information and

communication technologies contribute to unrestricted communication of people, the organization of joint business and production from different countries.

The society set the task before the system of higher education to prepare specialists for professional and personal communication and cooperation with representatives of countries with different social traditions, social structure, creeds, mentality and language culture, therefore necessity of strengthen sociocultural aspects of language learning is arises.

In connection with the fact that the global network plays an increasing part in modern specialist's life, there is an urgent necessity to develop new concepts for the use of new information and communication technologies in the formation of foreign language competence and socio-cultural competence as part of it. Above mention predetermines the search for new, expansion and improvement of the known ways of forming and optimizing the socio-cultural competence in the foreign language training of future specialists.

Aim of the article is the substantiation of the theoretical and practical significance of the formation of sociocultural competence in a foreign-language virtual educational environment.

Statement of the basic research material with full substantiation of the received scientific results. The goals of teaching have changed in the modern methodology of teaching foreign languages at non-lingual higher schools: from "teaching the language" to "studying foreign language", and then "teaching foreign-language communication." One of the main components of the content of teaching is the cultural orientation, because studying the language, we study the culture of native speakers. Mastering the national culture by means of country studies information in the educational process ensures an increase of students' cognitive activity, expands their communicative opportunities, favors the creation of positive motivation in class, and stimulates students to study foreign language independently (Tarasevich, 2007, p. 87).

That is why now it is legitimate to talk about the increased role of the socio-cultural aspect of education and the need to include relevant materials in university textbooks and tutorials.

Increasing the humanitarian content of teaching is a prerequisite for foreign-language training in modern conditions. It is necessary to realize the educative, educational and developing potential of the academic discipline.

Analysis of the last researches and publications in which the decision of the problem has begun and on which the author grounds his research. There are many studies on sociocultural competence in foreign teaching methodology.

The role of sociocultural competence in the process of teaching foreign languages in the studies of R. P. Millrud, P. V. Sysoev, M. Bayram, G. Noyner is considered.

The problems of forming the foundations of socio-cultural competence among students of non-linguistic universities in the studies of E. A. Astafurova, M. A. Bogatyreva, E. H. Elina, N. B. Ishkhanyan are analyzed. G. A. Vorobyov, E. I. Vorobyov analyzed peculiarities of forming the socio-cultural competence of future teachers of foreign languages. E. V. Kavnatskaya, L. G. Kuzmina, V. V. Safonova, E. V. Smirnova analyzed peculiarities of forming the socio-cultural competence of postgraduate education.

The problem of the formation of socio-cultural competence in the teaching of communication among students of different types of educational institutions has repeatedly attracted N. V. Bagramova, E. V. Kavnatskaya and etc. T. N. Astafurova considers the methodology of forming intercultural business communication skills of non-linguistic students. L. H. Polushina studies ways of integrating the socio-cultural component into the textbook of a foreign language. O. N. Igna's research is devoted to the problem of developing the sociocultural competence of students on the basis of authentic materials in vocationally-oriented teaching of foreign-language communication. G. A. Grishenkova examines the problem of linguistic and socio-cultural training of managerial personnel through the organization of business games. A number of researchers (L. M. Vyripaeva, E. V. Malkova, I. B. Smirnov, O. V. Sokirkina, L. N. Yakovleva, N. D. Yakusheva) comprehends the role of the text as a source of information about the country of the studied language.

V. V. Safonova (1992) emphasized the following components of socio-cultural competence: 1) lingvo country studies component (lexical units with national cultural semantics and the ability to use them in situations of intercultural communication); 2) sociolinguistic component (linguistic features of social strata, representatives of different generations, social groups, dialects); 3) socio-psychological component (national-specific models of behavior using communicative techniques adopted in a given culture); 4) cultural component (sociocultural, historical and cultural, ethnocultural background).

P. V. Sysoev (2003) notes that socio-cultural competence consists of: a) socio-cultural knowledge (information about the country of the language being studied, spiritual values of cultural traditions, including representatives of different ethnic groups, features of the national mentality of behaviour); b) experience of communication (the choice of an acceptable style of communication, the correct interpretation of the phenomena of foreign culture); c) personal attitude to the facts of culture (including the ability to overcome and resolve sociocultural conflicts in communication); d) mastering the ways of using the language (correct use of nationally-marked linguistic units in speech in various spheres of intercultural communication, susceptibility to similarity and differences between native and foreign-speaking sociocultural fields).

Mastering of foreign language, according to G. D. Tomakhin is inextricably linked with the mastery of the national culture, which involves not only the assimilation of cultural knowledge, but also the formation of the ability and readiness to understand the mentality of the speakers of the studied language, as well as the features of communicative behavior of the people of this country (Tomakhin, 1997, p. 13-15).

Setting of the unsolved parts of the shared problem. In the framework programs for English and German for Specific Purposes sociocultural competence is considered as an integral part of the content of foreign language vocational training – aims at developing understanding and interpreting different aspects of culture and language behavior in the world of work. It encourages the development of the skills involved in appropriate behavior in and responses to different cultural and professional situations.

Sociocultural competence consists of components that are subject to the formation in the process of foreign language preparation: regional competence, linguistic-cultural competence, socio-cultural competence (Fig. 1).

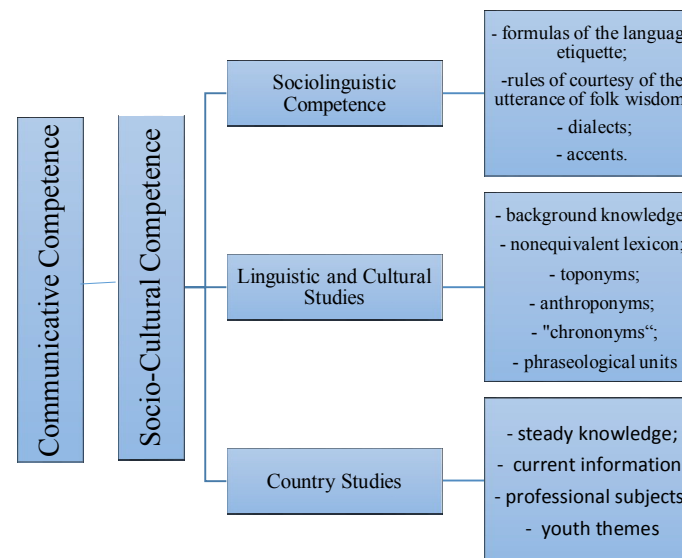


Fig. 1. Structure of sociocultural competence of students of non-philological training profile

Sociolinguistic competence is "the ability of a linguistic personality to organize its speech behavior adequately to the situations of communication,

taking into account the communicative purpose, intentions, social statuses, roles of communicants and the environment of communication in the sphere of activity, the situation and the topic of communication, the communicative goals and intentions of communicants, their communicative, social and psychological roles" (Ovchinnikova, 2007, p. 28-29).

Linguistic and cultural competence presupposes the mastery of the equivalent vocabulary (within the framework of the subjects studied, subjects of speech) and the ways of its transmission in the native language; background vocabulary, realities characteristic of the authentic texts used in the teaching process; ways of transferring the realities of the native language in a foreign language (within the framework of the topics studied, subjects of speech).

Country Studies Competence – the study of information about the country of the studied language, their geographical location, natural conditions, sights; on the state structure, the media, on the national peculiarities of life and culture of countries, national holidays, outstanding figures of science and art; social movements; about the youth subculture etc.

The figure shows the structure of sociocultural competence as integrative formation.

The virtual environment is considered as the context in which the daily life of a person is taking place, gets under way an increasingly important part in the professional activity of a modern specialist. The realities of the existence of an information society are the activities of virtual professional societies, which suggests the emergence of a new type of professional communication, the main feature of which becomes virtual.

All types of professional communication between members of the above-mentioned societies, who live and work in different countries, are mainly conducted in English. Therefore, the possession of the necessary communicative minimum, which provides the future graduate with the opportunity to realize himself/herself as a potential member of the international community, is an important element of the content of non-philology teaching students' foreign language training.

In the conditions of increasing the role of virtual communication, it is necessary to review the content, forms and means of foreign language training of students for non-philological teaching. Modern programs of the discipline "Foreign Language for Professional Purposes" require a graduate of the university to possess practical skills that assume knowledge of the foreign language of business communication in oral and written speech, and the ability to use it in their future professional activities. Undoubtedly, the foreign language component of the professional communication and cognitive activity of the future specialist will be carried out mainly in the electronic communication

environment. The specialist needs to operate in the world of electronic media: to read and create pages on the Internet, to search for it, to formulate and transmit the message in a foreign language.

V. G. Kremen noted that the future belongs not to small personalities and "labor masses", but to intellectuals who think of individuals who can engage in more powerful, super-personal systems of artificial intelligence (Kremen, 2010, p. 8.)

Integration into foreign language training of students of 'non-philological students' profile of the face to face and virtual interaction of participants allows implementing an information scheme of training in which individualization of language training and organization of effective independent and research work of students in Web-projects are possible.

The content of the foreign language training is standardized by means of educational software shell, and the development of the linguistic and cultural competence is achieved with specialized and non-specialized training and information electronic resources, work with reference services and search engines, publications, etc. Individual and group quests and Web- projects, participation in online games and virtual communities of interest, intercultural contacts, etc.

M. G. Evdokimova notes that the formation of a socio-cultural competence in a virtual foreign educational environment requires a certain level of electronic literacy. It includes *computer literacy* (a sufficient level of general computer skills, the ability to use search engines, the possession of a certain set of knowledge and skills in the field of computer design, knowledge of the types of hyperlinks embedded into the text of the web page and differing in the semantic load and the communicative tasks solved by specialists); *information literacy* (the ability to find and critically evaluate information); *multimedia literacy* (the ability to create and understand multimedia documents consisting of text, images and sound) and *literacy of computer-mediated communication* (literate writing skills, presentation and self-presentation, effective work with various incoming information through the electronic environment) (Evdokimova, 2007, p. 24).

The use of a virtual foreign educational environment solves the problem of the spatial remoteness of participants, and allows the creation of a language environment by involving the carrier of the studied language in the process of learning and learning a foreign language. The global network and training programs provide enough contextual information for simulating communication situations due to the real need for communication, and multimedia tools create additional video and audio conditions that help the student to perform the part he has proposed in a better way.

At the Volodymyr Dahl East Ukrainian National University, information technologies are widely used for forming a virtual foreign language sociocultural competence.

Aim of the given multimedia encyclopedia "America the Beautiful: Short Encyclopedia of American Culture" (developer I. Yu. Guslenko) is to help to understand the role of American culture in development of civilization and its influence on the modern Ukrainian culture; to form cross-cultural literacy of students on the basis of tolerant treatment of another culture and its values; to promote development of national self-identification.

Most of the materials that are included into the multimedia encyclopedia have been taken from the Internet resources and are linked with them. The multimedia encyclopedia demonstrates how to use possibilities of global networks for artistic and aesthetic education of students on English classes.

Multimedia encyclopedia starts with the popular patriotic song, unofficial anthem of the United States, "America the Beautiful" which gave the name of the program. The main part consists of four sections: "Literature", "Music", "Fine Art and Photography", "Holidays".

The section "Literature" includes the material of two American writers (M. Twain and E. Hemingway) and two poets (E. Dickinson and R. Frost).

The second section of "Fine Art and Photography" consists of six big subsections each of which is dedicated to one of the American artists (B. West, E. Hopper, J. O'Kiff, J. Pollock, E. Warhol, E. Adams), prominent representatives of different artistic trends who played a significant role in American and world art.

The section "Music" provides materials about three outstanding American composers-performers (S. Joplin, J. Gershvin and C. Ayvas) whose work became significant for development of different musical trends.

Ten federal and holidays are celebrated in the United States. Six of them (New Year, St. Valentine's Day, Easter, Independence Day, Christmas and Thanksgiving Day) were chosen for the encyclopedia.

Portraits of American artists represented in the program are given on the title pages of "Literature", "Music", "Fine Art and Photography". When you point a cursor on any of them, you can go to the page of the author. In the same way, you can go to the page of one of the holidays from the cover page, from the section "Holidays". Navigation buttons allow moving consequently to the next or previous pages, to the selected unit or to the title page.

You can find different information relating to the works and biographies of famous Americans, traditions of celebrating holidays and history of holidays in the program. Materials in the text format as well as in the form of films, videos, slides, audio materials are provided. Due to this sensory impact on students

during work with the program is made. For example, in the section "Literature" a student can read not only the works of E. Hemingway, M. Twain, E. Dickinson and R. Frost but also listen to most of them or watch filming of some of them.

The program also gives possibility to make video excursions to memorial and art museums, listen to the lectures of the best exhibition guides, witness the festive parades and festivals, learn popular songs to some holidays etc.



Fig. 2. Types of screens of the multimedia encyclopedia "America the Beautiful: Short Encyclopedia of American Culture".

Conclusion and prospects of the further lines of investigation. Thus, the use of a virtual foreign environment in the formation of socio-cultural competence among students of the non-philological profile leads to a qualitative change in the content of foreign language training. The implementation of foreign language training in a virtual educational environment contributes to the effective formation of sociocultural competence among students. In Web-based learning, students demonstrate a high level of foreign language motivation and culture, traditions and customs, critical thinking to evaluate their skills, participating in the group discussions. The educational autonomy of students provides a transition to the individualization of learning.

A variety of electronic resources for teaching a foreign language opens up new opportunities for a polysensory presentation of educational material in a modern, accessible and interesting form. Using the potential of a virtual foreign-language educational environment in the process of teaching a foreign language based on the principle of flexibility and variability allows students determine independently the individual trajectory of learning foreign language, contributing to the formation of their sociocultural competence.

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ФОРМУВАННЯ СОЦІОКУЛЬТУРНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНЦІЇ СТУДЕНТІВ У ВІРТУАЛЬНОМУ ІНШОМОВНОМУ ОСВІТНЬОМУ СЕРЕДОВИЩІ

В. Е. Краснопольський

Статтю присвячено проблемі формування соціокультурної компетенції студентів нефілологічного профілю навчання у віртуальному освітньому середовищі. У даній статті визначено компонентний склад соціокультурної компетенції (країнознавча компетенція, лінгвокраїнознавча компетенція, соціокультурна компетенція). Соціокультурна компетенція розглядається як частина інішомовної професійно спрямованої підготовки, та спрямованої на розуміння і тлумачення різних аспектів культури і мовної поведінки в професійному середовищі. Обґрунтовується необхідність використання віртуального інішомовного освітнього середовища. Спеціалізовані та неспеціалізовані навчальні та інформаційні електронні ресурси, довідкові сервіси та пошукові системи, індивідуальні та групові квести і веб-проекти, участь в онлайн-іграх і спільнотах за інтересами, міжкультурні контакти розглянуті як ефективний засіб формування соціокультурної компетенції студентів. Підкреслено, що дидактична ефективність віртуального інішомовного освітнього середовища досягається за рахунок інтерактивності, полісенсорної презентації навчального матеріалу, індивідуальної траєкторії вивчення іноземної мови. Автор пропонує деякі шляхи створення віртуального інішомовного освітнього середовища за допомогою мультимедійної хрестоматії з метою формування соціокультурної компетенції у студентів нефілологічного профілю підготовки студентів.

Ключові слова: соціокультурна компетенція, віртуальне інішомовне освітнє середовище.

**ФОРМИРОВАНИЕ СОЦИОКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОМПЕТЕНЦИИ
СТУДЕНТОВ В ВИРТУАЛЬНОЙ ИНОЯЗЫЧНОЙ
ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНОЙ СРЕДЕ****В. Э. Краснопольский**

Статья посвящена проблеме формирования социокультурной компетенции студентов нефилологического профиля обучения в виртуальной образовательной среде. В данной статье определен компонентный состав социокультурной компетенции (страноведческая компетенция, лингвострановедческая компетенция, социокультурная компетенция). Социокультурная компетенция рассматривается как часть иноязычной профессионально направленной подготовки и направленная на понимание и толкование разных аспектов культуры и языкового поведения в профессиональной среде. Обосновывается необходимость использования виртуальной иноязычной образовательной среды. Специализированные и неспециализированные обучающие и информационные электронные ресурсы, справочные сервисы и поисковые системы, индивидуальные и групповые квесты и веб-проекты, участие в онлайн-играх и сообществах по интересам, межкультурные контакты рассмотрены как эффективное средство формирования социокультурной компетенции студентов. Подчеркнуто, что дидактическая эффективность виртуальной иноязычной образовательной среды достигается за счет интерактивности, полисенсорной презентации учебного материала, индивидуальной траектории изучения иностранного языка. Автор предлагает некоторые пути создания виртуальной иноязычной образовательной среды с помощью мультимедийной хрестоматии с целью формирования социокультурной компетенции у студентов нефилологического профиля подготовки студентов.

Ключевые слова: *социокультурная компетенция, виртуальная иноязычная образовательная среда.*

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