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## **CULTURAL SELF-IDENTIFICATION OF A TEACHER IN THE CONTEXT OF REFORMS IN PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION**

**Ключевые слова:** открытая профессиональная среда, культурное самоопределение, языковая турбулентность, самообразование, психологическое равновесие.

### ***Cultural self-determination and language actualization as a value***

In the context of the global changes since the 1990s (innovations in social and cultural lifestyles, modernization and reforms of all kinds and types in educational systems, both native and international) the preparation of practitioners (in our case, RL and EL teachers) for both immediate and long-term effectiveness of the training process and the permanent intelligent development, professional competence, fresh learning styles and skills, is of paramount importance.

The past two decades of professional education and self-education of a pedagogue are temporarily characterized by novel projects in the field of upgrading and improvement skills at specialized institutions. And one of them is the author's project (since 1993) that concerns the system of the formation of a culture-oriented personality of a teacher that is emerging into the field that is recognized increasingly as one establishing itself as a fruitful approach and technology within the broad range of approaches, conceptions, paradigms, teaching methods and devices of other educators-scientists (Bondarevskaya, 2012, 2013; Efremova, 2016; Kulikovskaya et al., 2016; Sergeev, Serikov, 2013; Sinenko, 2015).

The revision of the relationship of the characteristics of the productive educational process (Antropyanskaya et al., 2013; Boser, 2017; Clark, 1990; Curtis, 2016; Davis, 2003; Kruijer, 2010; Passov, 2016; Sinenko, Bulankina, 2017; Vyrshchikov, Yastrebova, 2013) contributed to the author's understanding of the teacher's planning another interpretation of the results of the formation of a personality, the essence of which is CSD as the manifestation of language consciousness and national identity, as well as the informed professional choice (Bulankina, 2016, 2017; Sinenko, Bulankina, 2017).

First, the above concept is based on the studies on the problem of the status of a teacher. The status is currently under change, from the one of a transmitter of knowledge, and a mediator in the sea of information and fundamental knowledge of laws and regularities, a sensitive companion and mentor of positive experience, to the tutor who knows and feels the difference in the world, education and the development of language personality of a student (Antropyanskaya et al., 2013; Sinenko, Bulankina, 2017; Van der Ven, Tittnich, 1986; Vyrshikov, Yastrebova, 2013). Second, before the modern teachers, there appears the issue of finding adequate ways and means of self-preservation and self-sufficiency, discovering the possibility for reconstructing value preferences, and needs assessment for building diverse social connections (Bondarevskaya, 2013; Efremova, 2016; Sergeev, Serikov, 2013; Sinenko, 2015; Vyrshikov, Yastrebova, 2013). Third, in the meantime, we have to admit that the personal responsibility is increasing, and is under change daily, as well as the social status and social responsibility of a personality. Man needs another updated and constantly changing strategy and tactics of language behavior, communication of meaning to save cultural identity in the natural multicultural world, and in the zone/space of languages (natural/artificial) and language turbulence (McCrae, Allik, 2002; Passov, 2016; Searle, 2004; Sergeev, Serikov, 2013; Sinenko, Bulankina, 2017). Fourth, by the same token, the methodological function of communicative competence of the participants of the educational space we see in a number of the investigations in provoking the usage of the specific means for professional upgrading and self-development of the modern teacher (Boser, 2017; Clark, 1990; Curtis, 2016; Davis, 2003; Efremova, 2016; Huffer,

2016; Kruijjer, 2010; Sinenko, 2015; Van der Ven, Tittnich, 1986; Vyrshikov, Yastrebova, 2013).

Thus, our attempts of theoretical comprehension of the results of the above investigations of the phenomenon of the multilingual educational space from the view-point of the humanistic approach and the actualization of the traditions of psychological balance in a modern, multicultural education have allowed us to substantiate the following concept:

The way out is seen in cultural self-determination (CSD) of a personality via language identity in the poly-lingual educational space. The essence of it is the following – linguistic and communicative components should be updated in the information-educational environment of public schools for the sake of intellectual development of the participants (both teachers and students) of the educational process. The concept of the psychological balance (PB) of a personality is regarded primarily as the basics for the humanization of the educational process.

Application of the above concepts relate to all aspects of teaching: beginning and advanced level course, curriculum development, and to field work in terms of how fruitfully they work in the process of the harmonization of social life via acculturation, how they could help in making the corresponding changes in the educational system characterized at the moment by the language/value turbulence, how they influence interaction/communication of the participants of the teaching process, how these phenomena stimulate self-education of both adults and the young, etc. The purpose of the following research we see in providing the conditions where these variables might serve as impediments or barriers in the process of the author's vocational program for upgrading teachers.

***Cultural self-determination  
as a methodology for the formation  
of the culture-oriented personality  
of a pedagogue in the open  
professional space***

In other words, the above conditions that pretend to be working systematically and consistently, grow up into the approach, the basics for the positioning of true communication as an integrative element in the development of vital forces of a student/teacher, contributing to psychological balance in the zone of language turbulence of a multicultural learning environment and maintaining psychological equilibrium, based on individual linguistic thesaurus, intelligence and language status of the participants of the educational process. The teachers' methodological and theoretical competence along with their motivational preparedness for cultural self-realization in life and work, remain essential and important factors for the successful formation of a holistic educational space in light of the solution of humanitarian problems of self-organization of a culture-oriented personality as a result of cultural self-determination at the modern schools.

Our longitudinal research shows that communicative competence (CP) as an integral element of professionalism is considered to be an important mechanism for development of teaching creativity via creativity approach. Communicative competence is the basics for creative speech and creative professional discourse of a teacher. The discourse is associated with the attempt to meet varied challenges of the multidimensional, ever-changing world, including linguistic and educational space, and revealing a holistic approach to varied problems in teaching both the Humanities and Sciences (Sinenko, Bulankina, 2017). By the same token, one of the most crucial

points of our research is cultural and national identity along with language capability/competence which could serve the purpose of communication better than attempts to artificially fit in the others' cultural practices.

CSD as a technology for the formation of the culture-oriented personality in the Open Professional Space which aim is a) to make the most of human service disciplines (as one that is identifying the criteria and methods which are essential for educating and training competent pedagogues), b) to neutralize the complexity of social life, the instability of the human being existence, in particular, the occurring of the deformation of public traditional values, ideals, social relations, forms of real communication of man, and the means of saving his life, and in the long run, c) to highlight the means for realization of the situation of what is happening adequately, determine the personality's own attitude to it, and also find his/her place according to the changes around (Bulankina, 2016).

The present research studied the analysis of the four variables required for the development of software and methodological support of the teachers' development, i.e. the stage of professional development of teachers, their learning styles and level of knowledge, past experience and value system/preferences.

CSD is considered as the real educational situation for choice which opens up the possibility of choosing aims, content and context, methods and results, as variables. First, it is the choice that helps the teachers to discover what to do next in different framework of the training and learning sessions, sometimes critical and unpredictable situations of the educational process. And, second, any language personality/teacher after the training session should feel satisfied with the experience because he/she had re-

ceived help for immediate problems, and also he should have the opportunity of choosing innovations and inventions that came from fruitful educational experiments or projects on novel issues.

That is why in the focus of the author's attention while organizing the research at RC there appeared several specifics for providing optimal results of the training sessions: a) developing novel programs named "Intellectual Development in English language classrooms in light of Federal State Educational Standard"; b) creating and planning cultural activities for training sessions, and c) choosing the surrounding cultural development context of the sense for teaching the novel course.

***Didactics of cultural self-determination for professional upgrading and self-development of a teacher***

The highly shared concept in light of the author's theory of CSD of a personality (since 2002), where the specific focus was put on intellectual identity, status, and thesaurus of a teacher for expressing native language identity, social and professional, which could be of help for the teachers' acquisition and realization of their professional competence to the fullest, i.e. their linguistic, communicative and social skills, and their values and preferences in the classrooms, stimulated the changes of the process of making the most of the cultural practices of a humanistic value and the impact of the surrounding development information context of the author's training sessions at a specialized institution for almost 25 years (Novosibirsk Institute of Professional Skills Improvement and Professional Retraining of Education Workers).

But there were some other issues to be considered that can enhance the development of the above investigation program and which can provide opti-

mal results. Not once the author of the following research asked one and the same question whether the program of the courses should pursue a) the teaching of the course by increasing and expanding the students' (teachers, in our case) knowledge and skills repertoire or whether b) CSD as a fruitful technology.

The SDC technology means that our training sessions should focus upon transforming a) thinking of a personality, thereby b) bringing the teacher to a different level of operation and with this, c) the possibility of opening alternative conceptions, capabilities and approaches. Both of the above teaching approaches are legitimate educational aims for the teachers' learning at RC.

Which mode of learning is appropriate, and how and when each is suitable, are significant queries for teaching specialists in ELT practice, particularly, in the system of both further education and upgrading during the training sessions at specialized institutions (Institute of Professional Skills Improvement and Professional Retraining of Education Workers). At long last, we came to the conclusion that CSD could be considered appropriate for solving one of the crucial issues for intelligent development of language teachers of public schools in contemporary society. The fruitful results received by the author of the article in the process of the longitudinal researchers of SOD in the poly-lingual educational space (since the early 1990s) proved the above idea.

For the study fulfilled in April/June, 2017 at RC in the framework of the vocational program on the problem of "Intellectual Development in English language classrooms in light of Federal State Educational Standard", several considerations have been taken into account while highlighting the methodology and programming the structure of micro investigation, innovative framework for

the problem of didactics of the training process itself, the cultural context of training sessions, specific activities, response material, etc. The program of this micro investigation covers the innovative framework for the didactics of the training process itself, the cultural context of training sessions and specific activities, response and diagnosis material, etc. The following investigation focused on the above four variables considered for the successful design of our training program for teachers. The RC under our guidance was delivered in the educational environment of Novosibirsk Institute of Professional Skills Improvement and Professional Retraining of Education Workers, 250 teachers were enrolled to upgrade and the training sessions.

One of the reasons is the preparation of practitioners for both immediate and long-term effectiveness, i.e. training for short-term skills and educating for long-term practice. While both are in need of, there has been more emphasis on training and less emphasis on educating practitioners to develop higher level skills. To enable them to function at higher levels, they need a conceptual framework for solving complex problems.

Application of the above concept is related to the following aspects of teaching the author's Course of 3 modules, two training session modules and one self-study module, guided by topical written texts, video-lectures on the Internet, and the list of literature on the problem under discussion. One of the aspects is that RC is intended for both low experience level and advanced level teachers, covering the changes of the curriculum, and the field work/practice. The modules contained the course information and dealt with various aspects of the phenomenon of development education and development tasks; they also covered the development tasks (models

and examples from the textbooks) to be taught as well as teaching techniques of problem solving character. Since our government want to educate all teachers to reach the same standard, the content of these modules is taken from the curriculum of the regular national teacher training course (Federal State Educational Standard).

For this purpose we have chosen three texts (theory and practice) how to make up the development tasks for students in the classrooms, the author's three video-lectures of practical importance produced in both languages, Russian and English, on the problem of development tasks in English textbooks of different Russian publishing houses, and two final test-works of two levels (both short-term and long-term skills/long-term practice). The first work was a must for the teachers to fulfill the test to get a certificate. The second one was for a choice, an optional one.

A second related aspect is the training process itself. The growth of the field of adult education recently has yielded both concepts and applications that can radically improve the effectiveness of teaching methods under usage with adult learners thanks to the above variables to be considered (the teachers' stage of development, their learning style, and response readiness (both motivations and preferences). We offer in this case distance education, on-line learning training sessions and individual consultations for our students/teachers. Face-to-face two-week sessions were held at both Institute of Professional Skills Improvement and Professional Retraining of Education Workers and at the best schools where we were supposed to visit Novosibirsk highly-qualified teachers at their workplace for observation and assessment. Distant one-week session intended for self-study of the topical lit-

erature and the written course materials on the Internet in the form of the above three topical texts (the main information vehicle in our upgrading program).

We consider all the above variables while designing training sessions that takes, and it was a must for the author of the article, the program developer, to bear in mind one more factor: the bringing of consistency in the field, and having the content of RC truly reflect the information (theoretical and methodological knowledge and skills) subsumed by it. Nobody would deny the concept according to which the most effective way is to develop curricular content for professionally oriented training and education in accord with extensive needs assessment of a teacher. That is why distance education, on-line learning courses, training sessions and individual consultations on different educational issues for professionals at Institute of Professional Skills Improvement and Professional Retraining of Education Workers were offered permanently for the teachers to become choosy about the suggested programs. Following these considerations, we try our best to fulfill the main goal of RC and to watch and analyze the pros and cons of the investigation delivered quite recently with the distance education practice (partly) programming of the teachers' upgrading courses.

According to the analysis of the positive results at the end of the RC, 90 % (out of 250 teachers enrolled to the RC) have passed successfully the final test, the short-term skills test (work #1), where the question and answer (to choose the right answer from three suggested ones) technique was used. 40% of the participants after the final short-term skills test passed the long-term practice test (work #2) successfully fulfilling the more complex and difficult development tasks. The final written papers of the respondents included the extended analy-

sis of the textbooks (the pros and cons) from the viewpoint of the students' development skills, making the conclusion whether the chosen textbook is appropriate from the above concept and showing the high level of their development skills (analysis, synthesis, classification, etc.), communicative competence (we offer to get to know the articles in the magazine "Foreign Languages. Prosveshenje" dated 7<sup>th</sup> of June, 21<sup>st</sup> of June and 15<sup>th</sup> of August, 2017 where a number of the respondents' material, texts of their final works, are presented to the fullest). Here in the article we have the intention of showing the gist of didactics of CSD for upgrading specialists.

10% of the teachers did not fulfill the final tests (both of the two), they did not get the certificate. The evident reason of their failure is unknown to the author. The final test was provided distantly, and it was prohibited to ask for an answer, according to the ethics of the RC. We supposed that it happened with the respondents who were mostly unqualified non-specialists or under-qualified specialists among the young teachers (1–2 year experience) who tend to have specific deficiencies in their knowledge and skills. In our view, a relevant upgrading curriculum should be instead tailored to identify and target these deficiencies. This very RC should be considered as a kind of a diagnosis for targeting the deficiencies in professional competence of those teachers. To make the content more challenging and relevant for the likely respondents, all the participants of the upgrading courses are needed to be involved in the design of the curriculum material. Unfortunately, this was not the case in the field observations of this study.

### ***Optimistic summery***

To sum up, our present research allows us to highlight the micro-level

context in which the degree of academic content should be appropriate if it is based on an assessment of the actual needs of the teachers in their classrooms, their professional competence, and the psychological equilibrium of the teaching process itself.

In the author's upgrading course subject matter is combined along with teaching methodology. In the process of RC the author of the article did realize that which of these should be emphasized depends on the background of students/teachers and the aim of the program, but both elements have to be delivered together.

Similarly, the teaching methods presented in the upgrading program must have relevance to the actual situations at the modern schools. Most respondents highlighted that they considered the actual classroom situations in schools when exploring new teaching techniques in upgrading programs.

Often the new methods are highly participatory, techniques more individualized. And it is advisable for the participants to discuss in the classrooms the extension to which participatory teaching methods can be adapted to actual classroom situations. The distant education as a possible improvement for CSD of a teacher is also applicable in upgrading programs.

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