

The Ethno-Cultural Approach to Training Bachelors Teachers in the Context of Preschool Education Modernization

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Abstract

Background/Objectives: The purpose of the article is to justify the ethnic and cultural bases of students' vocational training in pedagogical university, focused on formation of ethnic identity, tolerance and prevention of intolerance.

Methods: Sociological surveys were conducted among employers, students, parents, graduates of various years and the questionnaire results were analyzed to substantiate our approach to vocational training of teachers and to the development of the Basic Educational Program (BEP) for applied bachelor degree course. The results of a sociological survey confirmed the relevance of the problem. **Findings:** The bachelor teachers' vocational education modernization is justified with regard to the ethno-cultural situation in the region. The Basic Educational Program (BEP) for applied bachelor degree course majoring in 44.03.01 Pedagogic Education, the profile of "Preschool Education" is developed and introduced. The program focuses on providing specialized, fundamental, practical training of preschool teachers taking into account regional peculiarities of the republic. A distinctive feature of applied bachelor degree program is close interaction with the pre-school educational institutions. The integration of activities of university teachers and skilled practitioners of preschool educational organizations provides a high level of teacher training. Scientific and Pedagogical School "Scientific and Methodical Support of the Pre-School Education Development in the Conditions of North" is operating", within which more than 40 research projects were implemented in experimental sites of the republic. The activities of the scientific school have made a certain contribution to the theoretical and scientific-practical development of ethno-cultural education in the North. As a result, a laboratory of ethnic and cultural education was established. **Applications/Improvements:** Ethno-cultural approach in vocational education will allow for qualitative training of future teachers, forming their civic identity, aimed at strengthening peace, respect for people, friendship and solidarity.

Keywords: Applied Bachelor Degree Course, Ethno-Cultural Education, Education Modernization, Professional Competences, Vocational Training

1. Introduction

In modern conditions of globalization and cultural diversity, there are multiple serious problems for society in which our children are growing up. The political situation in the world is getting worse every day; the society is torn by conflicts and aggression; we see war and destruction, killing of civilians, terrorist attacks in the

different parts of the world, migrants' flows on TV. All these negative realities of our time have a negative impact on the moral development of modern youth, destroy the world view. These factors aim at the need for social and cultural modernization of education, which should be focused on the formation of ethnic identity, tolerance and prevention of intolerance among the younger generation. "An important role in solving these problems is played by

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ethno-cultural education as a component of intercultural education, the main social and cultural purpose of which is consolidation of the multi-ethnic society, the formation of an attitude of tolerant consciousness, prevention of xenophobia in the period of establishing a civil society and civic identity in the Russian Federation¹. As stated in the "Declaration of Principles on Tolerance" of UNESCO, "tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, ... Tolerance is harmony in difference"². The aim of education in modern conditions is to educate a harmonious personality, combining ethnic identity and respect for other cultures.

2. Literature Review

The works by A.G. Asmolov, A.B. Afanasieva, S.A. Borgoyakov, G.N. Volkov, I.L. Nabok, A.B. Pankin, A.M. Tsirulnikov and others are devoted to the issues of modernization of modern ethno-cultural education.

According to S.A. Borgoyakov,¹ the theoretical and methodological provisions consider ethno-cultural education as a process of a person's cultural inclusion and at the same time as a result of culture internalization, socio-cultural system providing for cultural continuity, ethno-cultural identity and development of human individuality, which constitute a conceptual basis for various models of ethnic and cultural education. Precisely ethno-cultural approach to education enables to create a basis for the development of the student's personality as a representative of his nation and a citizen of the state.

The concepts of studying ethnic cultural and pedagogical heritage, and the dialogue of cultures are presented in the works by M.M. Bakhtin, V.S. Bibler, D.S. Likhachev and others. The study of the traditions from the standpoint of semantic and functional importance in the fields of culture and social life was carried out Yu.V. Bromley, N.I. Kostomarov and other scholars. Ethno-pedagogical approaches are described in the works of V.F. Afanasyev, V.S. Bakhtin, L.N. Berezhnova, U.A. Vinokurova, A.A. Grigorieva, B.A. Kadyrov, A.G. Kornilova, N.D. Neustroev, Yu.A. Rud and others.

In the scientific literature, the main areas of ethnic and cultural pre-school education are reflected in the works of A.A. Grigorieva, M.I. Baisheva, N.N. Lebedeva, O.I. Mikhaleva, M.M. Prokopieva and others.

Ethnic and cultural education is regarded as a set of mastering the mother tongue, culture and preservation of the progressive traditions of the people by the person.

"Preserving the past is a key characteristic of any culture. Culture is there and then, where and when the memory of the past is specially supported and cultivated"³.

Thus, language and culture are inseparable. It is no coincidence that the linguistic rights of peoples are enshrined in the Resolution of the European Parliament adopted in 1987: The right to use native language is one of the fundamental rights of each people, all persons are entitled to express themselves in their mother tongue without any restrictions"⁴.

According to A.G. Asmolov⁵, value orientation of methodology of social and cultural construction of education represents the problems of formation of civil ethno-cultural and universal human identity. Formation of civic identity is aimed at the man becoming a citizen of his country, at educating civic patriotism and love for the homeland, at forming ethno-cultural and regional identity (solidarity with the 'small motherland' - a village, city, region); it represents introduction in the national culture, the history of the native land, native language, etc. Formation of universal human identity is aimed at familiarizing with the products of the world culture, common human values, making the man kin to all mankind, etc.

A.G. Asmolov⁵ considers the following qualities to be standard value characteristics of the person as a representative of civil society:

- Awareness of oneself as a citizen of the Russian society, respecting the history of the country and responsible for its fate in the modern world;
- Taking the leading values of the national culture, the culture of 'small motherland';
- Readiness for dialogue and cooperation with people of different beliefs, different cultures;
- Tolerance to a different view, a different position, a different view of the world, generosity;
- Awareness of their involvement in the fate of mankind.⁵

Studies of U.A. Vinokurova⁶ echo with these provisions; she believes that "ethno-cultural education is a creative tool of socialization and is aimed at raising the foundations of civic competence through the assimilation of ethnic and cultural connotations and values, inclusion in the communication channels of interpersonal, inter-ethnic, inter-cultural interactions on the local, regional and global levels.

People see the world through the prism of a single ethnic world view, depending on their needs, plans and their

feasibility. Ethnic constants of each culture are unique and cannot be found in the cultures of other nations, they are the same for all its members, are unchanged for the ethnic group⁷.

Robert Lado⁸ emphasized that learning a foreign culture should be carried out through comparison with own culture. According to R. Lado, units simulating the behavior, being inherent in every culture, have a form, meaning, distribution, comparison of which can help in overcoming difficulties of understanding foreign culture.

One of the basic principles of the education policy of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) is the need for state support of students in obtaining a quality education with regard to the linguistic and ethno-cultural peculiarities. The Law of Sakha (Yakutia) "On Languages in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)", "The Concept of Renewal and Development of the National School", "The Concept of Early Age Education in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)", "The Concept of School Language Education in Sakha (Yakutia)", "The Concept of Pre-School Education in Sakha (Yakutia)" and a number of other acts in the republic govern ethno national education problems. The national languages of the Republic are Russian and Yakut; official languages are five languages of the indigenous northern peoples. Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger,⁹ established by UNESCO identifies the languages of Northern peoples as languages endangered with extinction from the linguistic map of the world. These are Even, Evenki, Yukaghir, Dolgan and Chukot. But "language is the main indicator of personal and ethnic identity, the most important structural element of the culture of the nation, the basis of national intellect; it is the language that forms its own ethnic singularity"^{10,11}.

Under these conditions, the preservation of cultural diversity in the republic involves, first of all, the preservation of native languages, ethnic and cultural specificity, spirituality of the nations. Preservation of the mother tongue, literature, and culture provides the full-fledged functioning of bilingual education, creation of conditions for utmost development of the personality understanding and respecting own culture and culture of other nations in the successive chain 'pre-school education - school - high school'.

In the regional system of pedagogic education renewal and modernization of the content of future teachers' training provides introduction of new experimental profiles of bachelor and master degree programs and others.

3. Methods

In order to develop the BEP (Basic Educational Program) of the applied bachelor degree course we carried out a sociological survey of employers, students, parents, and alumni of different years.

The questionnaire survey among the employers was aimed at defining the modern qualification requirements for teachers of pre-school education. Information was received from 115 employers: specialists of the Ministry of Education of RS (Yakutia), the heads of municipal educational institutions of preschool education, directors of preschool educational institutions of Yakutsk and uluses (nomad camps) of the republic in order to identify the most important competences for the graduates and discuss the draft curriculum and the basic educational program. The analysis of the results showed that the most important competences, according to employers, are:

- General cultural competences (the capacity to work in a team, to perceive tolerantly social, cultural and personality differences (93%),
- General professional competences (the capacity to carry out training, bringing up and development taking into account social, age, psychophysical and individual features, including the special educational needs of the students (82%), occupational ones (the capacity to solve the problems of education and moral development of students in academic and extracurricular activities (72%).

Thus, the most frequent sampling accounted for interpersonal competences (the capacity to criticize and self-criticize (98%), the capacity to work in a team (93%), interpersonal skills (91%). The opinion of employers revealed that the general cultural competences, in particular interpersonal ones, are fundamental for the professional activity of a bachelor having pedagogic education.

Reviews of employers express wishes to deepen the ethnic and cultural orientation of the curriculum content, to increase the hours of teaching practice, which was taken into account by us when developing the BEP.

A sociological survey was conducted among the students to identify the most important BEP competences for them; they were proposed to fill the Questionnaire to determine the level of cognitive ethno-pedagogical interest (R.V. Komrakov), and the Questionnaire to identify the

awareness of the ethnic and cultural education purpose (L.V. Nikolaeva). The study involved 2-4 year students.

General professional competences (the capacity carry out training, bringing up and development taking into account social, age, psychophysical and individual features, including the special educational needs of the students) and general cultural competences (the capacity to work in a team, to perceive tolerantly social, cultural and personality differences) were highly ranked by the students, accounting for 96% and 73%, respectively.

L.V. Nikolaeva¹² studied the grounds for development of cognitive ethno-pedagogical interest in students and their awareness of ethnic and cultural education goals. These investigations of students' motivation to study ethno-pedagogics showed the average level (86%), high level (14%) for the ascertaining stage. After the conducted experiment a high level was revealed in 62% of students in the control phase of the research. They were actively involved in project activities, writing term papers and theses on the ethno-cultural and ethno-pedagogical subjects, participated in competitions, and projects. The average level of motivation was observed in 38% of the students.

Identification of awareness of the ethno-cultural education goals has shown the following results. In ascertaining stage of the study, 16% of students showed low level of awareness. Students did not set themselves an aim to the study subjects of ethno-cultural content; they rather pursued the goal of getting high marks and scores. The average level was demonstrated by 54% of students; they set goals for themselves that were relevant for them in terms of expanding range of vision and getting credit. High level was shown by 38% of students. They consider the study of subjects with ethno-cultural orientation important and attribute this to the increasing of professional level, the possibility of applying the acquired knowledge in their future profession. After the forming experiment, awareness of the goal to study subjects of ethno cultural orientation was 100%.

The survey of parents' opinion revealed that 72% of them want their children to know their mother tongue, native culture and strive to send their children to the Yakut groups in kindergartens and elementary school. 28% of parents are not interested in ethno-cultural education.

The survey of alumni of different years showed that the general cultural competences (the capacity to work in a team, to perceive tolerantly social, cultural and personality differences), occupational (the capacity to solve the problems of education and moral development of

students in academic and extracurricular activities) and general professional (the capacity to carry out training, bringing up and development taking into account social, age, psychophysical and individual features, including the special educational needs of the students) competences are strongly sought-after for them. Ethno pedagogical preparation and the ability to use ethno-cultural knowledge and skills in practical work with children are of the greatest relevance in professional activities in preschool education for them.

4. Results

The department of preschool education of the Pedagogical Institute of the North-Eastern Federal University named after M.K. Ammosov carries out basic bachelor and master degree training of preschool education teachers

As a part of the modernization of education and implementation of new educational programs of bachelor and master training, an efficient system of teaching staff training for the republic has been established at the Department of pre-school education; this system is connected with the systematic and integrated deployment of drawing up curricula and with the content of educational programs that meet state standards in the field of multi-level education.

The system of training teachers of the department includes comprehensive professional training for students, and this agrees to the greatest extent with the integrity of the traditional culture, the solution of problems of its translation and adaptation to new social and cultural realities. This principle is retained when switching to tiered education system, where students after receiving bachelor degree have the opportunity to continue their postgraduate education. Ethno-regional component permeates the entire educational program. Students learn the disciplines directly related to the traditional way of life and pedagogy of Yakutia peoples.

The aim of the BEP is to ensure comprehensive and high-quality training of qualified, competitive bachelor teachers majoring in "Preschool Education", based on combination of advanced innovative technologies of training with scientific and practical activities. The relevance of training bachelors majoring in 44.03.01 Pedagogic Education, the profile of "Preschool Education" is defined by the fact that at the present stage, the process of modernization of the preschool education system is comprehensive; and it is impossible without agreed solution of

all stakeholders of urgent problems of staffing. Integration undertaken in the period of study at high school by leading professors of universities and highly skilled practitioners provides a high level of teacher training.

The program is focused on providing specialized fundamental practical training of teachers for the PEI (Preschool Educational Institution) taking into account the regional perspective of the republic.

The purpose of the program is to train teachers for the implementation of various activities in modern pre-school educational institutions, owning modern methods and technologies for arrangement of educational process in the preschool institutions, having professionally significant personal qualities, general cultural, ethnic and cultural, general professional competences, capable of carrying out professional activities in the pre-school educational institutions in accordance with federal government standards.

In 2015, the department carried out the first enrollment of applied bachelor degree course. The distinctive feature of the applied bachelor degree program is creating opportunities for students to apply theoretical knowledge in practice during their studies, to check the level and condition of their knowledge and skills in the workplace. 'Applied' means 'attached to the employer'. Education involves close interaction with educational institutions. Creation of such direct contact will help employers be closely related to the future specialists, train them for a specific job, for the subsequent employment.

Approximate structure of the applied bachelor degree curriculum in Pre-school Education provides variable part of the cycle of profile training disciplines, which account for a big part of the credits as compared with the basic labor intensity of the curriculum. The program provides for specialized modules, the content of which has ethnic and cultural orientation. These disciplines include History of Yakutia and the North-East of Russia, Peoples and Cultures of the Circumpolar World, The Yakut Language for beginners and pre-intermediates, History of Pre-School Education in Yakutia, "Ethno-Pedagogical Foundations of Education of Children of Preschool Age, Basics of Museum Pedagogy, Multicultural Education of Children of Preschool Age, Methods of Familiarizing Preschool Children with the Culture of Yakutia.

In addition, all disciplines of the module Theory and Methods of Preschool Education have cross-cutting ethno-cultural themes that deepen students' knowledge on certain topics of national and regional components.

For example, when studying Theory and Technology of Children's Fine Art Development students get acquainted with folk arts and crafts, works of folk artists, Yakut ornaments, national embroidery and so on. Within the discipline Theory and Technology of Musical Education of Children of Preschool Age students master such themes as Folk Musical Instruments, Folk Songs and Dances, Musical Culture of the North Peoples. In the course of studying Theory and Technology of Physical Training of Children of Preschool Age students find out about methods of teaching national outdoor games, etc.

An important role is played by the formation ethno-pedagogical competence of graduates.

Ethno-pedagogical competence is an integrative professional and personal quality of students, covering cognitive-intellectual, operational and activity-related, need-motivational spheres of the student's individuality. It includes formed command of integrative ethno-pedagogical knowledge, skills, and abilities enabling teachers to make productive use of possibilities of ethno-pedagogics in the work with children. Ethno-pedagogical competence should be considered nowadays as one of the central components of general professional culture of the modern teacher as importance of ethno-national constituent of the personality and of the issues of its ethnic and civic identity is increasing for the community. Traditional folk education should be widely used in pre-schools, schools, high school, and in the family.

Ethno-pedagogical competence as a component of general professional competence of the modern preschool teacher is considered as:

- The capability to community-minded activities and implementation of ethno-pedagogically-oriented projects;
- The capability to choose the priority of values in the education of children on the basis of norms, ethics and traditions of folk pedagogy;
- The capability to interact tolerantly in the multicultural society, to show appropriate attitude to themselves and to others from a position of respect for human rights;
- Assuming responsibility for solving ethno-pedagogical problems in the educational process;
- The capability to realize oneself as a representative of a certain culture¹³.

Scientific and Pedagogical School "Scientific and Methodical Support of the Pre-School Education Development in the Conditions of North" is operating

at the Department of Pre-School Education of NEFU Pedagogical Institute, under the guidance of Ph.D., Professor A.A. Grigoryeva, head of the Preschool Education Department.

One of the goals of the Scientific and Pedagogical School is the theoretical justification of the research methodology of ethnic and cultural aspects in education;

In accordance with this goal the leading scientific research areas of the school have been determined:

- To develop scientific and pedagogical foundations for implementation of innovative processes in the system of continuous education of Sakha (Yakutia);
- To use ethno-pedagogics in the educational process in the conditions of implementation of the Federal State Educational Standard in High and Pre-school Education;
- To carry out modernization of the system of preschool workers' training.

Within the specified areas the organization of research work is based on conducting fundamental and applied research aimed at solving problems in the sphere of regional pre-school education and application of the obtained results in the educational process. The activity of the scientific-pedagogical school is carried out through the implementation of research projects of competitors, post-graduates, doctoral and research works of students.

Modernization of the system of preschool education of contemporary Russia assumes updating the content and structure of educational activities, technologies of training and education, the system of education quality assessment, improvement of professional competence of the preschool education specialists, etc.

In this regard, the team of the Scientific School in conjunction with practicing teachers in the context of implementation of economic contracts and initiative themes, as well as the orders of the Ministry of Education of Sakha (Yakutia) and state tasks of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation is successfully introducing the scientific and methodological developments in the practice of educational institutions of the republic, for example, such as "Pedagogical foundations of education amplification for children of 5-7 years in terms of continuity of preschool and elementary school education, based on ethnic and cultural traditions of the people of Sakha (comprehensive

variative educational program *Дьохун оҕо* for children of 5–7 years in preschool institutions); "Formation of ethno-cultural competence of preschool children in a multicultural educational environment"; "Innovations in pre-school education in the context of the North"; "The development of inclusive education in the Sakha Republic (Yakutia)", "Pedagogical assurance of security and counter-terrorism in preschool educational institutions" and others.

In connection with the adoption of the FSES (Federal State Educational Standard) for pre-school education the results of the implementation of the initiative theme "Activities for children and adult communities as alternative model of educational process organization in preschool institutions" at the Kindergarten "Suluschan" (Sylan village, Churapcha ulus), where the following projects were implemented: "Open Educational Space 'Aiyy ogotun eygete'"; "The Interaction of Family Alliances and Preschool Educational Institution"; "Algs in Instructional and Educational Space"; "School of Innovation and Partnership 'City sitime'".

During operation of the Scientific School more than 40 research projects were implemented with wide geographical coverage of pilot sites of republican educational institutions.

The professors of the department developed teaching aids, manuals and monographs: "Ethnic and Cultural Development of Preschool Children", "Ethno-pedagogical views Sakha people: as exemplified by olonkho heroic epic", "Ethno-pedagogical foundations of preschool children education", "Pedagogy of Inter-Ethnic Communication", "Methods of Acquainting Preschool Children with the Culture of Yakutia", "Formation of Ethno-Pedagogical Competence of Preschool Education Teachers in High School" and others. According to numerous materials of scientific and practical conferences scientific collected articles are published.

In 2013 the laboratory of ethnic and cultural education was opened in the Pedagogical Institute, the purpose of which is theoretical and practical study of ethno-cultural foundations of education of the North peoples.

Pedagogical traditions of the Department of Preschool Education take into account the accumulated best practice of research and teaching activities in the ethno-cultural education and at the same time are the basis for the development of innovative approaches to ensure a new quality of higher education that meets the demands of modern society.

5. Conclusion

Thus, one of the leading features of bachelor teachers' training is ethno-cultural saturation of the basic educational program content for the purposes of qualitative training of specialists, capable of working in the context of the regional education system.

Ethnic and cultural education is a form of socialization of students in the multicultural world, where they will have to work involving children in ethnic and universal culture, bringing up little citizens of the poly-ethnic country.

Deep and systemic understanding of historical and modern national cultures of peoples of Russia by of the younger generation contributes to the formation of civil identity, tolerance, understanding and acceptance of other cultures.

Civic-mindedness of the future teachers should focus on the foundations of peace in the world, respect for nations, friendship and solidarity. Children are our future. So attitudes and views of life which we will bring up in them will determine the future of our country and the planet. The search for ways of cross-cultural interaction and practical implementation of the dialogue of cultures in the preschool years becomes naturally determined. From this perspective, ethno-cultural component in the future teachers' training is essential.

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