

ETHNO-PEDAGOGY AS A MEANS OF ETHNIC IDENTITY FORMATION OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS IN RUSSIA

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Abstract

In this study, the up-to-date problem of the formation of ethnic identity modern Russian society faces up to, was examined. The relevance of the study is attributed to the changes in the present day social medium: alongside with the growth of the unification of spiritual and material values, there arises a tendency with people to preserve their own unique culture, history and ethnic identity. Under modern conditions of social instability, any ethnicity can carry out the function of protection, support, and a reliable source of national values. The ethnic identity formation is particularly significant for multicultural population of the Republic of Tatarstan (Russia) with 173 ethnic groups. Numerous surveys show that today young people in the Republic of Tatarstan, although being aware of their ethnic identity, often experience lack of knowledge of their native language, history and culture. Other, not less important, problems that might arouse from ethnic identity are associated with the appearance of the phenomena of ethnocentrism, negative stereotypes, and intolerance towards strange ethnic groups. In this respect, the most important tasks of Russian educational institutions, higher schools training pre-service teachers in particular, should comprise, on the one hand, the need for the knowledge of ethno-culture that contains priceless historical, spiritual and moral experience of generations, and, on the other hand, the necessity for the formation of the most important and socially significant personal qualities which can enable young people to interact in the multicultural world. In the authors' viewpoint, ethno-pedagogy included into the block of general professional and pedagogical disciplines as one of the branches of pedagogy, can meet these challenges. This assumption of the authors defined the research objectives - to identify the potential of ethno-pedagogy and to experimentally prove that ethno-pedagogy plays a great role in ethnic identity formation of pre-service teachers. Theoretical approaches to:

- the definition of ethnic identity;
- the content, and teaching techniques of multicultural education;
- the formation of interethnic tolerance

became the methodological basis of the research. In this paper, the concept of ethnic identity, its characteristics, structure and types were suggested. The leading research methods were a theoretical analysis of scientific literature, a content analysis of educational literature, a pedagogical experiment, a questionnaire. At the first stage of the experiment with the use of the method of "Ethnic identity" (Phinney, J. S.), the average group indices of cognitive and affective components, and the general indicator of ethnic identity were determined. At the second stage on the base of the analysis of theoretical sources there were selected didactic units for the syllabus of the discipline "Ethno-pedagogy"; the training of pre-service teachers was also conducted at this stage. The re-survey at the final stage of the study showed the increase of the average group indices of ethnic identity. The obtained results indicate that the potential of ethno-

pedagogy can be used for the formation of ethnic identity in University with the aim in view to help solve the problem of the formation of pre-service teachers' ethnic identity and interethnic tolerance.

Keywords: ethnocentrism, identity, tolerance

1 INTRODUCTION

With the growing unification of spiritual and material values, the present day society in Russia is characterized by the desire of most ethnic groups to preserve their culture, history and identity. Under social instability, ethnic communities have always performed the functions of protection, support and the source of values.

Ethnic self-awareness appears to have been a must for the organization of ethnic groups, allowing them to become active participants of current socio-cultural and political processes, for interests, needs, and values of many generations of ethnic communities have always been its constituents.

However, numerous surveys show that young people in modern Russian society, although being aware of their ethnic identity, demonstrate lack of knowledge of their native language, history and culture. Very often, they claim that folk culture (national traditions) is a relic of the past, and therefore has lost its relevance, and has become outdated and uninteresting. Another problem that arises among the youth is the appearance of ethnocentrism, negative stereotypes, and intolerance towards strange ethnic groups.

The Republic of Tatarstan, located in mid-Russia, is a multiethnic region with 173 nationalities and ethnic groups. The awareness of ethnicity and the nature of its manifestation has to be the determining vector of the development of interethnic relations in this area.

A special role in forming ethnic identity of the youth belongs to educators who can implement this task in the pedagogical process. Consequently, the most important tasks of higher schools training pre-service teachers should comprise, on the one hand, the need for the knowledge of ethno-culture with its priceless historical, spiritual and moral experience of generations of ethnic communities, and, on the other hand, the necessity for the formation of the most important and socially significant personal qualities for interrelating in the multicultural world. The solution of these tasks will allow pre-service teachers to competently carry out their professional activities in the education of ethnic self-awareness of school students.

In this paper, the authors suggest that the potential of ethno-pedagogy helps to cope with these tasks.

2 METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to identify the educational potential of the discipline "Ethno-pedagogy" as a component of ethnic self-awareness formation and to experimentally prove that it plays a great role in ethnic identity formation of pre-service teachers.

The following theoretical approaches to:

- the definition of ethnic identity by Lebedeva (Lebedeva, 2011), Stefanenko (Stefanenko, 2002), Khotinets (Khotinets, 2010), Smith (Smith, 2002, pp.5-32), Barth (Barth, 2010, pp.11-32),
- the content, and teaching techniques by Arakelyan (Arakelyan, 2002), Dmitriev (Dmitriev, 1999), Auhadeeva (Auhadeeva, 2017, pp.782-791),
- the formation of interethnic tolerance and national self-awareness by Asmolov (Asmolov, 2001, pp.61-63), Soldatova (Soldatova, 1998), Bennet (Bennet, 1986, pp.179-196), Yarmakeev (Yarmakeev, 2016, pp.170-177), Salpykova (Salpykova, 2016, pp.7822-7829) became the methodological basis of the study.

According to Stefanenko (Stefanenko, 2002), ethnic identity is a psychological category, which refers to one's awareness of belonging to a certain ethnic community. Phinney (Phinney, 1990, pp.499-514) considers ethnic identity to be a multidimensional construct that involves ethnic feelings, knowledge, attitudes and behavioral responses, which is most fully formed in multicultural environments.

Ethnic identity is the core of ethnic self-awareness. It contributes to the preservation of ethnic groups, gives a person a sense of security, satisfies his need in belonging to an ethnic community, shapes knowledge about the peculiarities of other ethnic groups and forms a certain attitude to these groups, thereby acting as a basis of constructive interethnic and intercultural interaction.

Language, origin, life style, traditional culture, values and norms, historical memory and mythology, religion, a sense of homeland, citizenship, and appearance are considered to be the differentiating signs of ethnic identity.

A conscious identification of a person with an ethnic group is a result of comprehending new information during the process of his socialization and formation of his capacity for reflection. Stefanenko (Stefanenko, 2002) points out that people's awareness of their ethnicity varies significantly and dependently on the fact whether they live in multi-ethnic or mono-ethnic environments.

Researchers classify the following components in the structure of ethnic identity:

- ◆ cognitive (What do I know about my people?);
- ◆ affective (What kind of feelings do I have for my people and myself as its representative?) (Stefanenko, 2002);
- ◆ behavioral (What do I do as a representative of my people?) (Drobizheva, 2010, pp.49-58).

Here it is necessary to take into consideration the fact that the complex process of socialization includes both negative and positive ethnic identity backgrounds. Researchers state that a tolerant attitude towards cultural differences of other ethnic groups is formed thanks to a positive ethnic identity background, the formation of which is regarded as one of the tasks of ethno-cultural education.

In Soldatova's point of view (Soldatova, 1998), the transformations of ethnic self-awareness begin with its core - ethnic identity. The researcher claims that these transformations manifest themselves in the changes of the positive ethnic identity background, which can show up in three forms: first, in ethnic identity blurring; second, in self-excluding from one's own ethnic group; third, in the hyperbolization of ethnic identity with the discriminatory signs being featured.

The issue of identity is particularly relevant to teenagers with their propensity to self-determination. Erickson (Erickson, 2006) regards the formation of identity to be the main barrier that young people have to overcome in order to make a successful transition from childhood to adulthood.

Khotinets (Khotinets, 2010) claims that the period of life between the ages of 18-20 (the study period in University) is the crucial one for ethnic identity formation. The formation of ethnic self-awareness at this stage is based on the principle of "we" – "they".

To form tolerance in multicultural environments, it is important to know the national and cultural features of the region and the ethnic composition of teenagers, and to take into account the individual manifestations of their family culture (Salpykova, 2016, pp.7822-7829).

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research site was Leo Tolstoy Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication of Kazan Federal University (Russia). 109 four-year pre-service teachers at the age of 20-21, doing BA degree in Pedagogy, took part in our study.

The purpose of the experiment is to determine the nature of the content of the discipline "Ethno-pedagogy" as well as pedagogical technologies contributing to the effective formation of ethnic identity of pre-service teachers by means of this discipline.

The hypothesis of the study was to assume that ethno-pedagogy can play a positive role in ethnic identity formation of pre-service teachers, if the content of the discipline meets cognitive, behavioral and value orientation criteria.

The experiment consisted of 3 stages. At the ascertaining stage, pre-service teachers' ethnic identity exposure was examined. For this purpose, the method of "Ethnic identity" by Phinney (as cited in Stefanenko, 2006), that detects cognitive and affective components in the structure of ethnic identity, was implemented.

The questionnaire included 12 items disclosing pre-service teachers' ethnic identity, their ethnic groups and their attitude to belonging to these ethnic groups. The questionnaire presented two subscales: the cognitive component of ethnic identity exposure and the affective component of ethnic identity exposure. The four-point scale ("totally agree", "rather agree than disagree", "rather disagree than agree", "strongly disagree") was used to assess the responses. The subscales indices were calculated by finding the arithmetic mean of the total score. The average score with the coverage of all 12 questionnaire items was considered to be an overall indicator of ethnic identity. The interpretation of the results was expressed by the following indices: the lowest indicator; decreased indicator; average indicator; increased indicator; high indicator. The survey

showed that the cognitive component of ethnic identity exposure corresponds to the average indicator of ethnic identity; the affective component of ethnic identity exposure corresponds to the increased indicator of ethnic identity; the overall indicator of pre-service teachers' ethnic identity exposure corresponds to the increased indicator.

The results of the survey obtained at the ascertaining stage of the experiment are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Indices of pre-service teachers' ethnic identity exposure

Scales	Ethnic identity indices in scores
The cognitive component of ethnic identity exposure	1,92
The affective component of ethnic identity exposure	3,16
The overall indicator of ethnic identity	2,64

At the formatting stage of the experiment, in accordance with the purpose of the study after the thorough analysis, there were selected didactic units for the syllabus of the discipline "Ethno-pedagogy" (Table 2). The following criteria were used as the selection instruments of the didactic units:

- cognitive criterion that implies the understanding of ethnic identity nature and its significance in the formation of a positive attitude to its development;
- behavioral criterion that identifies a person's behavior based on ethnic norms and national values of society;
- value orientation criterion that aims at the acceptance of ethnic norms of life of one's ethnic group.

Table 2. Didactic units selected for the syllabus of the discipline "Ethno-pedagogy"

#	Syllabus modules	Didactic units contributing to the formation of ethnic identity
1.	Ethnic self-awareness. Socio-cultural features of ethnic groups of Russia and overseas ethnic groups. Inter-ethnic relations.	The identification of the notions of "ethnicity", "nation", "nationality" and "ethnic self-awareness". Psychological factors' impact on the formation of ethnic identity. The problem of ethnic conflicts in the modern world. Forms of coexistence of ethnic groups. Socio-cultural features of ethnic groups in modern Russia. The problem of self-preservation of ethnic groups. Behavior patterns of interethnic interaction. Ethnic mentality. Mentality features of different ethnic groups. Interethnic relations culture formation. Ethnic tolerance. The problem of interrelatedness and autonomy of cultures. Behavior patterns in different ethnic environments. Communicative tolerance as a condition for effective interethnic interaction. The national language and its functions.
2.	Folk pedagogy and continuity of generations.	Education as a means of preservation and spreading ethnic culture. Universal human values of folk pedagogy. The role of folk pedagogy in the formation of ethnic identity. Folk wisdom as a means of ethnic self-awareness formation. Cultural and educational traditions of different ethnic groups. Cultural traditions, customs and folklore of the peoples of the Volga region as instruments of ethnic identity formation.
3.	Classroom teachers' methods of the education of school students' ethnic culture.	Features of ethnic identity formation in the multicultural educational environments. Teaching techniques introducing students to ethnic culture. The use of ethno-pedagogical materials in the educational process. The development of ethnic tolerance and positive interethnic communication competencies of school students. Ethnic identity self-development.

For the implementation of the educational process on the base of the selected materials, preference was given to the following teaching techniques:

- heuristic conversation;
- debate;
- case study;
- project method;
- role-play;
- reflection of ethnic identity;
- ethnic tolerance formation training.

Pre-service teachers were offered to do research and to make presentations at scientific conferences and seminars on the topics:

- My name's origin;
- My family tree;
- Traditions and rituals of my people;
- Dialogue of cultures in the multiethnic environments of the Republic of Tatarstan, etc.

They also took an active part in numerous debates, e.g. on the topic "Can folk culture solve the modern society's problems?"

Trainings of pre-service teachers included solving problem tasks, writing scenarios of ethno-cultural events, organizing and participating in national games and festivals, developing software and excursions routes aimed at presenting the national landmarks of the Republic of Tatarstan, etc.

At the final stage of the experiment, a test was carried out with the use of the method of "Ethnic identity" by Phinney.

4. RESULTS

In Figure 1, there are presented the obtained results in scores, which indicate that the cognitive component of ethnic identity exposure increased from 1.92 at the ascertaining stage of the experiment to 2.16 at the control stage; it remained within the average indicator of ethnic identity, though. The affective component of ethnic identity exposure increased from 3.16 to 3.32 and fitted the high indicator. The overall indicator of ethnic identity also increased to 2.84 at the control stage if compared to 2.64 at the ascertaining stage of the experiment. It remained within the increased indicator of ethnic identity.

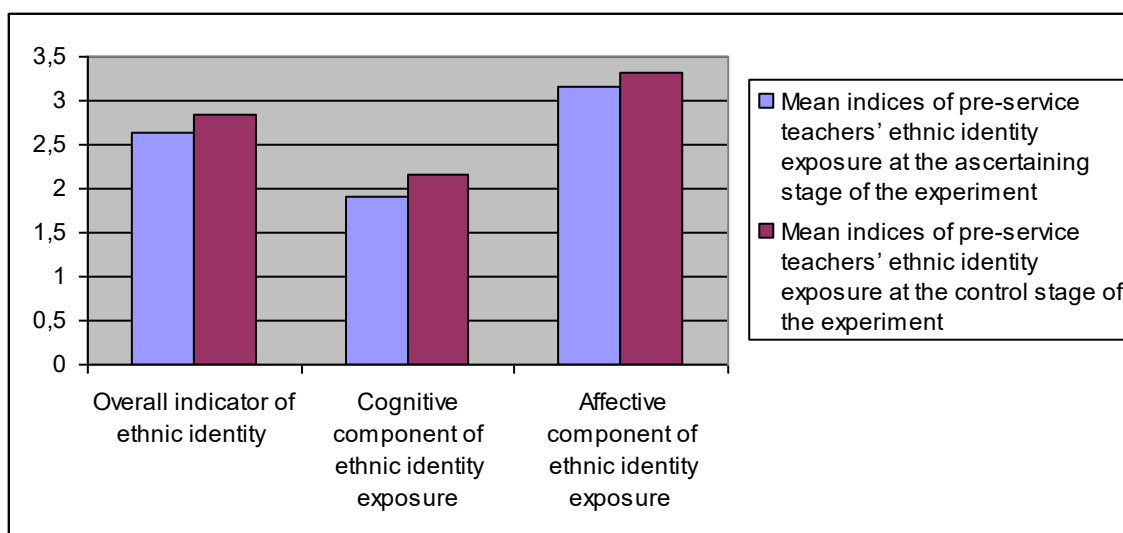


Fig. 1 Mean indices of pre-service teachers' ethnic identity exposure of the ascertaining and control stages of the experiment

5. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine the potential of the discipline of "Ethno-pedagogy" for the formation of ethnic identity of pre-service teachers. To diagnose the results of the study, the authors used the indices of the cognitive and affective components of ethnic identity exposure as well as the overall indicator of ethnic identity. The overall indicator of ethnic identity was implemented, for it characterizes respondents of different ethnicity as a single group in multiethnic environments (Buchek, 2012). The

obtained results confirm the authors' assumption that the potential of ethno-pedagogy can be used for the formation of pre-service teachers' ethnic identity in University. The findings of the research can serve as general recommendations for university faculty to form pre-service teachers' ethnic identity and ethnic self-awareness, and to educate interethnic tolerance.

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