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DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF FUTURE TEACHERS ON THE BASIS OF ETHNIC AND CULTURAL VALUES INTRINSIC TO HIGHLANDERS OF THE UKRAINIAN CARPATHIANS

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Abstract. The article presents challenges and methods of teacher training activities aimed to develop communicative competence and prepare teachers for work in mountain area schools in the Ukrainian Carpathians. Research shows that specifics of social and cultural environment should be taken into account in the process of teaching native language and developing communicative competence of future teachers. Sociocultural approach defines language teaching strategies in the light of national culture, traditions of ethnic regions and the Ukrainian Carpathians in particular. Teacher training programs should include studies on material, cultural and spiritual values of highlanders. Such topics can be incorporated in the main native language course. Study and analysis of fiction pieces, especially those that reflect the socio-cultural peculiarities of linguistic community of the Ukrainian Carpathians can be of great value in achieving the goal. Small classes in mountain schools also place a demand upon educators to constantly upgrade approaches, forms and methods of teaching.

The article offers an integral teacher training system aimed at developing communicative competence and preparing teachers to work in the mountain areas schools. A special place in this system is given to folk pedagogy, which accumulates the national and regional spiritual values. The author presents the components of communicative and socio-cultural competence of future teachers. The suggested algorithm for training primary school teachers insures reaching an appropriate level of socio-cultural, historical, linguistic and communicative competencies necessary for language teaching at primary schools in mountain regions of the Ukrainian Carpathians.

Keywords: ethnic regions, linguistic community, communicative competence.

The Ukrainian Carpathians – are not just amazing landscapes, steep cliffs and rapid rivers, rich and interesting historical heritage. First of all they represent highly spiritual highlanders, who are always sincere, friendly, hospitable, and maybe at times a bit terse. People who live in the mountains are not talkative due to the mountain settlements specifics; there's often a significant distance between the villages or farmsteads. Scattered location of the houses makes it difficult and sometimes impossible to communicate actively. Remoteness from major highways, industrial and cultural centers is a common characteristic of mountain areas in any country of the world: whether the Ukrainian Carpathians are considered or the Appalachian Mountains in the United States. It has an effect on the development and

formation of certain traits of character of highlanders. Today one can observe a combination of practicism and rationalism with high spirituality of Highlanders³. There's a significant impact of ethnic and cultural environment on the development and formation of moral, civic and aesthetic values, including recognition of the important role of the native language (mother tongue) in the life of the nation. Linguistic perception of the world is formed through the prism of natural environment; a human being gives names to plants, animals and places where he/she lives¹⁰. It is obvious that special attention should be paid to the socio-cultural aspect as a part of professional competence in educating teachers to teach native language in primary schools of the mountain regions of Ukraine. Attention is drawn to another feature of the Ukrainian Carpathians. Mountain villages do not only lack people in general, but they also lack youth of school age. One would think that little number of students in classes should have a positive impact on the quality of knowledge, but in reality we face a number of serious psychological and educational challenges⁵. Therefore, proper functioning of small mountain schools requires implementation of effective approaches in the educational process, taking into account social, regional, economic, geographic and demographic characteristics of the region². An appropriately trained and educated teacher will be able to make necessary changes and benefit from the small number of students in mountain schools classes (for example, this will allow for a better quality of individual work with students, systematic control of their knowledge); such teacher will have instruments to solve specific problems (such as weak organization of students' independent work, lack of communication and sharing information among the student, peers etc)⁴.

Exchanging information is an essential component of the educational process, since in this case communication is not just the easiest means of conveying information, but it also serves as a means of expressing the spiritual world of native speakers, which is a crucial factor of national identity of the people or ethnic groups. The phenomenon of socio-cultural competence as one of the important indicators of teachers' professional development and their readiness to interethnic and intercultural communication has been actively studied during recent years. Therefore, the development of communicative competence of teachers based on ethnic and cultural values of the region has been acknowledged to be an important element in preparing the teachers to work in mountain schools.

Mastering professional and personal communication and language skills with an emphasis on the linguistic environment of the region and ethnographic peculiarities of various linguistic units functioning in the area is the basis of effective professional and personal communication.

Personality of a teacher is revealed through the unity of speech and behavior. By means of verbal communication he/she expresses himself/herself, demonstrates moral values, attitude to the education process, emotional mood and speech culture. The WORD is a magical tool which helps human beings to express themselves and explore the world⁸. One of the main tasks of a teacher is to help young people to get to know the world around them and find their place and role in this world. The level of the teacher's success in accomplishing this task largely depends on his/her communication skills and how masterly he/she can use the word - "the fantastic key to self-cognition". It also depends on the teacher's communicative competence, ability to express himself/herself by means of professional pedagogical communication.

Upbringing communicatively competent person taking into account socio-cultural environment requires implementing new approaches in the process of teaching the native language. One the ways to achieve the goal is to actively use the social and cultural resources of the mountain region in the native language classroom, such approach will contribute to the nationally conscious and ethnic -oriented personality. A special emphasis should be made on studying local history, including historical linguistic studies of the region, which will enhance development of linguistic, historical and cultural competencies of university graduates. Linguistic, historical and cultural competencies include skillful use of verbal communication and non-verbal signals (facial expressions, gestures that accompany speech); behavior of native speakers in certain communicative situations, development of a coherent system of ideas and perception about the national and cultural characteristics of the country and region the Ukrainian Carpathians in particular. This helps to associate and connect a particular linguistic unit with the same information/idea as native speakers – highlanders in our case; and therefore to achieve a

better understanding and raise quality of communication with them⁷. Ukrainian scholars recognize four components of socio-cultural competence; this structure is similar to the global model, which identifies the following components: linguo-historical, cultural, socio-linguistic and socio-psychological.

The linguistic component of socio-cultural competence includes linguistic features of different social strata, generations, social groups, dialects: linguistic stereotypes, situational clichés, communicative clichés, speech etiquette formulas, speech patterns and behavior⁷. Developing a linguistic competent personality who possesses skills to freely and confidently use linguistic resources in different forms, fields and genres, which in turn is one of the conditions for their successful socialization⁶ is a time-consuming process. The task of college lecturers is to create active learning environment and provide theoretically justified base to future primary school teachers, who will be able to implement functional-communicative approach in native language classroom and pedagogical activity in general. Combining development of a scientific vision of the language (functional aspect) and applied nature of Ukrainian language as a socio-national idea, as pragmatic implementation of the state's interests and every individual citizen (communicative aspect)⁹ is a requirement of the time.

In determining ways and methods to optimize the learning process one should rely on the best achievements and experiences of traditional/folk pedagogy, since one of the first and most important child's educator's is his/her first language, and language development is based on active speech activity. These ideas are reflected in the works of renowned scholars (K. Ushynskyy, V. Suhomlynsky, M. Stelmahovych). Their works and ideas remain topical today. Speech etiquette is another important component of the linguistic picture of the region. Folk pedagogy demands compliance with regional speech etiquette, because it is the basis of good relationships among the people, a sign of high spirituality and human beauty and dignity. Nationwide norms and rules of speech etiquette are practiced throughout the territory of Ukraine. The generally accepted speech etiquette formulas are not contradicted but complemented by specific communication rules based on local traditions and customs, rites and beliefs. Mountain communities also have their own traditions in the field of communication, which may differ somewhat from the commonly known rules. Teacher training program graduates should be aware of the specifics of communication styles in mountain regions and be able to effectively use this knowledge in their work.

Just as in any other region of Ukraine Carpathian families start teaching their children to be polite in the early childhood. Children are taught to follow the traditional etiquette rules when communicating with/addressing people of different generations and social groups. Folk culture of the ethnic groups living in Ukrainian Carpathians such as "hutsuls" and "boykys", influenced their speech etiquette. Thus, high respect and appreciation are demonstrated to the interlocutor using such words and expressions as "proshu duzhe" (can serve both as "you are welcome" and "please"), "faino diakuyu" (thank you kindly), "gratulyuyu" (a greeting expression). These and other verbal formulas of highlanders should be known to/and used by those who will teach pupils their native language at mountain schools. For this purpose, appropriate linguistic materials that represent speech traditions of communities living in Ukrainian Carpathians should be included in the teacher training educational programs. This can be done through studying and analyzing different pieces of literature because the nature and functioning of every particular linguistic unit can be fully expressed and understood in the context of coherent speech. It is advisable to start with stylistic-semantic analysis of texts that vary in style and genre before working on linguistic issues, because these very texts disclose speech canvas of the region, in our case mountain regions. After all, a language is not just means of communication, it is also the way we perceive the environment we live in and it is a tool to reflect on the world and picture it in our minds. Each nation perceives the world differently; this finds its output in unique regional dialects and variants of the language. Future primary school teachers should understand this and master their ability to use different linguistic and stylistic means of expressing ideas to people, who live in mountain regions of Ukraine. Algorithm for training primary school teachers of Ukrainian language who work in mountain regions of Ukraine includes the following learning stages:

- text analysis of various styles and genres, which represent linguistic and communicative background of mountain regions;
- defining linguistic and communicative attributes of a specific linguistic ethnographic group: vernacularisms (including accent logic, phonetic, derivational, grammatical, lexicological, semantic etc), archaisms, historisms, neologisms;
- finding reciprocal relationship between vernacularisms, archaisms etc and their equivalents in modern language – vocabulary exercises (word definition, word formation, matching literal synonyms and antonyms);
- distorted texts exercises;
- composition of stylistically and ethnographically appellative texts to exemplify linguistic rules.

The use of the foresaid teaching algorithm in institutions of higher education ensures future teachers' preparedness to teaching Ukrainian language in participatory communication manner in primary schools.

Teaching in mountain community elementary schools a teacher should follow the following rules:

- study, explore and analyze the linguistic environment his/her students live in;
- study and explore language specifics and characteristics of his/her students in general and every student in particular;
- select analytical and synthetic exercises to improve literary language of students.

Not only the knowledge of literary language standards, but also awareness of its ethnic features, provides for open communication with local people, and prevents the teacher from losing connection with his/her students because of the language barrier.

The task of primary school teacher training programs at institutions of higher education is to teach students to experience, sense and appreciate the language peculiarities of highlanders and understand the need for their functioning. This approach can be used in presenting any linguistic topic, but most effectively when studying lexicology, phraseology and stylistics. Thus, studying vocabulary we should draw attention to the existence of such linguistic units as dialects, which reflect the process of literary language adaptation to geographical variety of language elements or regional dialects and language variations. Dialect words and expression are commonly used in fiction as means of describing characters and adding ethnically meaningful context. They are richly presented in literary works by V. Stefanyk, Y. Fedkovych, I. Franko and M. Kotsiubynsky. Extracts from the above mentioned works can be used as teaching material in Ukrainian language classrooms.

When teaching lexicology it is advisable to perform lexical-semantic analysis of fiction extracts in order to familiarize students with the specifics of semantic dialects in mountain regions. The novel "Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors" by M. Kotsiubynsky can be a good suggestion for finding suitable texts for such exercises.

When studying the syntax topic «Allocution», linguistic and stylistic analysis of passages from "Zahar Berkut" can be very effective. Using literary works and fiction pieces as study materials not only provides linguistic aspect of teacher training program, but also has historical and educational value.

Role play is an activity that cannot be ignored. Though its value in teacher training programs is often underestimated, it certainly helps to develop communication skills which are essential for working in mountain schools. The goal of role-play activities in studying linguistic topics is not only to gain knowledge and skills outlined in the educational program, but also to create/simulate real situations that depict everyday life in mountain communities. Such situational role plays help to improve communication skills of future teachers, which in turn will make their interaction with students, colleagues and parents more effective and smooth. Mastering specific instructional methods and techniques of teaching native language in mountain school, developing appropriate and adequate speech habits are the expected outcomes. The above described situational role play activities are suitable for studying most linguistic topics.

Using various kinds of exercises and activities based on authentic texts that represent socio-cultural picture of a mountain region in the specified logical sequence - from observations on linguistic

phenomena in the course of communication through analysis of the linguistic phenomena while performing analytical, analytic-synthetic and synthetic exercises to the use of acquired linguistic knowledge in a specific situational conversation (role play), and practical communicative activities (communication training activities) enhances students' motivation for studying grammar topics, helps the students gain necessary linguistic knowledge and develop socio-cultural competence as a component of communicative competence. This means that future teachers will be able to skillfully establish and maintain social contacts, interact with local people in everyday situations and conduct their professional teaching activities in mountain schools and local schools in the Ukrainian Carpathians in particular.

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