

ISSN 2414-4746

MODERN VECTORS OF SCIENCE AND EDUCATION
DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA AND UKRAINE
中国与乌克兰科学及教育前沿研究



2023
ISSUE № 9

ISSN 2414-4746

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**The State institution “South Ukrainian National Pedagogical
University named after K. D. Ushynsky”**

Harbin Engineering University

**2023
ISSUE № 9**

Odesa, Ukraine

Harbin, the People’s Republic of China

SECTION II
LINGUODIDACTIC PROBLEMS OF TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES
AND TRANSLATION IN HIGHER SCHOOL UNDER CONDITIONS OF
MODERN MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

UDC: 378:373.2.011.3-051]008-022.218:005.336.5

DOI: 10.24195/2414-476746-2023-9-6

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MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE AS A COMPONENT OF THE
PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF PRE-SERVICE PRE-SCHOOL
EDUCATORS

The article presents a theoretical analysis of the problem related to the development of pre-service pre-school educators' multicultural competence; the approaches of scientists to the definition of the phenomenon "multicultural competence" have been summarized; the essence of multicultural competence as a theoretical and practical readiness to carry out of pre-service educators' professional activities under conditions of a multicultural society has been revealed; a survey of applicants for the specialty 012 Pre-school education was conducted to determine the state of multicultural competence formation; some ways of further scientific research in the context of multicultural education have been defined.

Keywords: *competency, competence, professional competence, multicultural competence, professional training targeted to pre-service educators.*

One of the important tasks of the modern system of higher education under conditions of European integration processes is the training of competitive specialists capable of carrying out professional activities under today's new, rapidly changing conditions. International relations, which the state of Ukraine is actively developing, put forward requirements for multicultural training of specialists in institutions of higher education. The relevance of the study is determined by the presence of contradictions between social challenges regarding the training of would-be specialists who are ready to successfully interact in the international labour market and the real state of the training targeted to higher school students in terms of effective intercultural interaction within a multicultural environment; insufficiently developed teaching methods aimed at mastering multicultural communication in the process of studying the Humanitarian disciplines at higher education institutions, which negatively affects the formation of multicultural competence which is no less important than professional competence.

The importance of creating an effective system of higher education, which is competitive in the Ukrainian and global market of educational services, is emphasized in the Strategy for the Development of Higher Education in Ukraine for 2022–2032. Note that under conditions of the Russian-Ukrainian war, many teachers and students were forced to leave their places of work and study and to go abroad. However, the insufficient level of foreign language proficiency hindered their successful adaptation of forcibly displaced citizens of Ukraine, their education and employment in the countries of the European Union. Thus, despite the considerable number of regulatory and legal documents declaring Ukraine's entry into the European educational space (Bologna Process 2020 (2009)), the National Framework of Qualifications (2011), the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" (2014), the programmes "Erasmus+", "Horizon 2020", etc.), it is necessary to expand and deepen international contacts, to carry out systematic training of would-be teachers aimed at interaction within a multicultural environment. The combination of the best traditions of Ukrainian and foreign experience in the system of profession-oriented training will allow creating a

dynamic, mobile and competitive model of profession-oriented training, forming practical skills and intercultural communication skills.

Among Ukrainian scientists who considered the problem of multicultural education, the works of O. Bereziuk, A. Bogush, Ya. Huletska, L. Kazantseva, O. Kondratieva, O. Kotenko, I. Lutsenko, V. Liapunova, O. Popova, L. Cherednychenko, H. Shcherbakova and others. In the works of scientists, theoretical positions and conceptual approaches to the problem related to the development of multicultural competence are characterised, however, despite the fact that the problem of multicultural competence occupies an important place in scientific research, systematic research in the field of the formation of pre-service pre-school educators' multicultural competence is not sufficiently covered.

The purpose of the article is to substantiate the phenomenon of multicultural competence as a component of the professional competence of would-be pre-school teachers, their readiness to perform professional functions under conditions of a multicultural society.

It is impossible to reveal the essence of the phenomenon "multicultural competence" without analysing the content of the concept "competence" as a professionally significant, integral quality of an individual. In the study, we will focus on the analysis of fundamentally important aspects of the definition under study which are related to the formation of would-be educators' multicultural competence.

The notion "competency" in dictionary sources is interpreted as: "a set of knowledge and skills necessary for professional activity: the ability to analyse, to predict the consequences of professional activity, to use information" (Professional education: 2000); "a personality trait, his/her ability to communicate with other people, sociability which is formed in the process of a person's life and activity in a social group" (Honcharenko, 1997).

The phenomenon "competence" in dictionary sources is interpreted as: "conversance, awareness, authority; good knowledge of something and the scope of authority of any organisation, institution, or a person" (Busel, 2005: 560).

The foreign scientists (J. Allen, M. Mulder, M. Ott) use an integrated approach to define the essence of the concept "competence" which allows considering the definition under focus through a dynamic set of qualities capable of ensuring a competent activity (action). The synonymic words to the phenomenon "competence" are as follows: capability, ability, mastery, competence, which are similar in definition and refer to a person and his/her ability to achieve something (Universities' contribution to the Bologna process, 2008).

According to A. Bogush, competence is a complex characteristic of an individual that incorporates the results of previous mental development: knowledge, skills, abilities, creativity (the ability to solve tasks creatively: to compose creative stories, drawings and designs according to the plan), initiative, independence, self-esteem, self-control (Bogush, 2007: 161).

Summarising the mentioned approaches to the interpretation of the concepts "competency" and "competence", it can be stated that competency refers to a person's personality and characterises his/her personal, professional, communicative skills as a specialist; competence refers to work and characterises the field of professional activity in which an employee is competent. In our opinion, "competence" is the perfect performance of a certain action in professional activity which is based on knowledge, practical abilities and skills. Competence is a broader concept, its components can be a set of certain competencies.

Scholars explain the concept "professional competence" as: "a personal quality of the subject, a degree of development of knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for high-quality performance of activities" [Dictionary-reference, 2016); "a type of competence that characterises a person in the context of his/her performance of professional duties" (Bielienska, 2012: 99); "a key characteristic of a specialist who must be ready to perform professional activities in order to effectively (competently) perform his/her own professional tasks" (Skvortsova, 2013); "a level of professional preparedness manifested in modern creative forms of performing types of professional activities, thorough scientific and theoretical knowledge about the subject of his/her

activity, manifestation of physical, mental, intellectual, spiritual qualities and personality traits (Sysoieva, 2015).

We understand the phenomenon "professional competency of a pre-school educator" as a unity of theoretical and practical readiness which includes a set of necessary theoretical and methodological knowledge and practical skills necessary for the implementation of effective professional activities: professional (special, specialised) – general erudition, awareness; subject-specialised (psychological, pedagogical and methodological knowledge) – the use of modern information and communication technologies, forms and methods of training, methodological support for the implementation of educational programmes in the field of pre-school education; general cultural (personal-individual) – the upbringing of pre-service teachers of special education, spiritual, moral and value orientations, empathy, tolerance, developed communication skills, implementation of intercultural communication, knowledge of foreign languages for communication and interaction with colleagues from other countries, participation in grant projects, conducting seminars, exchange of experience, internships, cooperation and partnership.

In the study, it is important to reveal the relationship between general and special, professional competences of would-be educators of preschool education institutions, which will help to carry out professional activities within a multicultural environment, to take into account the ethnic and socio-economic features of the Ukraine's regions. We agree with the position of V. Liapunova that in the process of profession-oriented training aimed at preschool educators, it is necessary to form multifunctional, interdisciplinary and multidimensional competencies which will allow them to solve a wide variety of problems and tasks both in everyday reality and in future professional activities (Liapunova, 2016: 102).

The development of intercultural communication skills in pre-service educators requires the ability to communicate, to get engaged in communicative speech interaction, to achieve mutual understanding, to possess a speech tact, and to avoid intercultural misunderstandings. For successful implementation of these attitudes, they need language and socio-cultural knowledge which includes the peculiarities of

national culture, communication skills and practical skills of communicating with representatives of different ethnic groups, which are based on the ability to use various models and types of behaviour, to navigate in any communication situations, to effectively use the means of verbal and non-verbal communication for effective interaction within a multicultural society.

We should note that the knowledge of the language enables the communicator to adapt his/her behaviour to the behaviour of the communication partner, which has a positive effect on intercultural communication, contributes to the achievement of mutual understanding and forms personal qualities, such as: openness, tolerance and toleration. However, the practice of intercultural interaction proves that people cannot always reach mutual understanding in the process of communication. This happens not only because of fundamental disagreements, incompatibility of interests, views, but also because of differences in the norms of behaviour in their cultures, national traditions and customs, which negatively affects the adequate perception of information, generates mutual hostility (Kostenko, 2018).

An important component of language competence is language literacy which includes observing the rules of oral and written communication: correct emphasis, intonation, structure of sentences, coherent statements, and vice versa, illiterately constructed statements, errors in pronunciation can create the impression of the interlocutor's low culture in the recipient's mind, question his/her professionalism and competence.

Thus, the specified types of knowledge contribute to the achievement of mutual understanding in the process of communication; form communicants' ability to understand each other, to objectively perceive and take into account individual psychological features, character traits, temperament, psychological state, emotions, feelings, experiences, motives and intentions and, thereby, to make intercultural communication effective and successful.

The scientists (L. Honcharenko, A. Zubko, V. Kuzmenko) consider multicultural competence as the ability of an individual to live and act in a multicultural society (Honcherenko, 2009).

According to O. Bereziuk, multicultural competence is the participants' objective perception of the communicative and speech process of their individual psychological characteristics, character traits, psychological states, emotions, experiences, motives and intentions (Bereziuk, 2013).

According to L. Cherednychenko, "multicultural competence" is an integrated professional and personal entity, an effective component of profession-oriented training aimed at the teacher's readiness to effectively carry out professional activities within a multinational environment (Cherednychenko, 2013).

In the initiated study, we understand the phenomenon "multicultural competence of a pre-school teacher" as a complex characteristic that includes general and professional (subject-centred) competencies, personal qualities and communication skills necessary for intercultural interaction with representatives of other cultural groups.

In order to find out the development state of pre-service pre-school teachers' multicultural competence, who major in the specialty 012 "Pre-school education" at the State institution "Southern Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky", an experimental study was conducted; there were determined the criteria, indicators and development levels of the Master-course students' multicultural competence. We should mention that the educational and professional programme (for the specialty 012) "Pre-school education. Practical psychology in pre-school education institutions" provides for the study of the educational discipline "Fundamentals of scientific communication in a foreign language". It is gratifying that admission to the second master's level requires that applicants should pass a joint entrance examination in a foreign language in the form of an external independent assessment, which has a positive effect on its study by students. 68 people were involved in the experiment. In the process of surveying, we were interested in the students' understanding of the essence of the concept "multicultural competence", their awareness of the need for its development in the process of studying at higher education institutions, satisfaction with the development level of the students' multicultural competence. The results of the survey are presented in **fig. 1**.

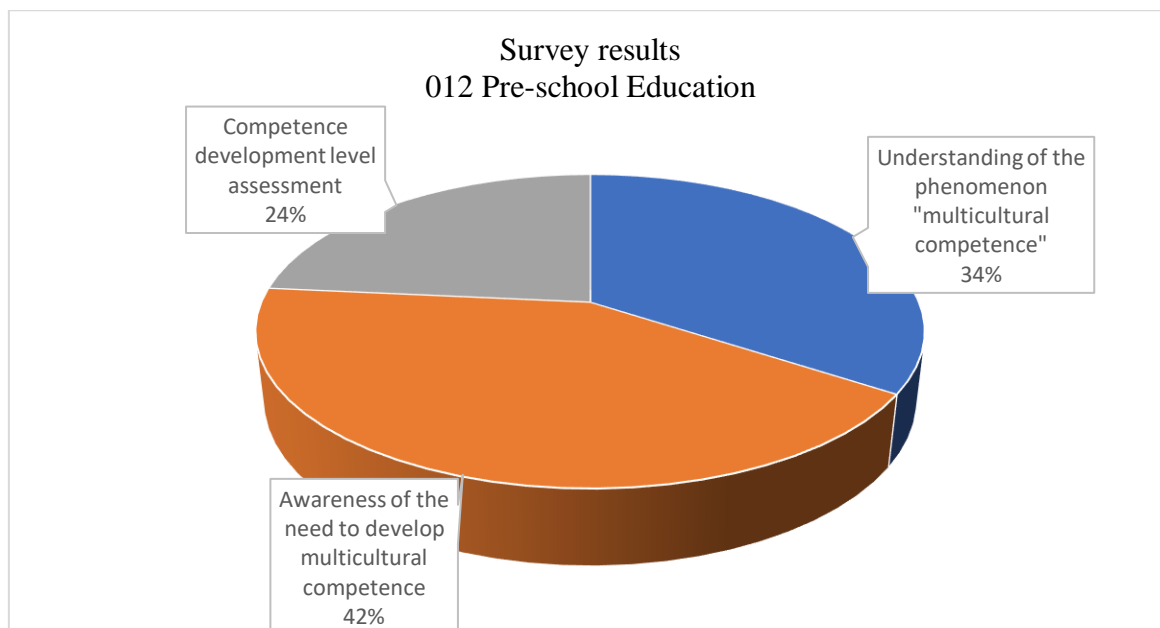


Figure 1. Survey results

As it is shown in **Figure 1**, only 34% of students gave comprehensive answers regarding the understanding of the essence of the "multicultural competence" phenomenon. The majority of students (66%) do not fully understand the essence of this phenomenon, equating it with professional competence, knowledge of the culture of their people, their customs and traditions. 42% of students indicated the need for the development of multicultural competence in the process of studying at higher education institutions. These answers were common: "multicultural competence contributes to the ability to interact with representatives of national minorities", "having a good command of a foreign language, you can study in European countries, exchange experience, establish new contacts", "multicultural competence contributes to the professional activity of an educator, to the development of children's tolerant relationships", etc. As for the satisfaction with the development level of multicultural competence, only 24% of the respondents noted a high level of its development; 46.8% of the students indicated a sufficient level of its development; 29.2% indicated a low level of its development.

Conclusions. The development of would-be pre-school educators' multicultural competence under conditions of European integration is a complex process that involves educating a tolerant personality capable of learning and creating culture through constructive relationships, which requires a high level of communicative

culture, the implementation of intercultural communication, developed communication skills which are the basis for professional competence of the pre-service pre-school teacher. The prospects of our further research are seen in the study and elaboration of selective training academic courses that will contribute to the expansion of the students' worldview on the problem related to multicultural competence.

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多元文化能力作为职前学前教育工作者专业能力的组成部分

本文对职前学前教育工作者多元文化能力发展的相关问题进行了理论分析；概述了科学家对“多元文化能力”现象的定义方法；揭示了多元文化能力的本质，即在多元文化社会条件下开展职前教育工作者专业活动的理论和实践准备；对 012 学前教育专业的申请者进行了一项调查，以确定多元文化能力形成的状态；确定了在多元文化教育背景下进行进一步科学研究的一些方法。

关键词：才能；能力；专业能力；多元文化能力；针对职前教育工作者的专业培训。