Axiological Components in Teaching Students from the CIS States the Russian Language in Non-Philological Universities

Componentes Axiológicos en la Enseñanza de la Lengua Rusa para Estudiantes de Universidades no Filológicas de los Estados de la CIS

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ABSTRACT:
This article defines axiology and the axiological sphere, reveals the quantitative representation of students from the CIS states as exemplified by the southern region of Russia, forms cultural, historical and axiological concepts of the southern region needed for the introduction of the above mentioned students to the Russian social and cultural sphere, develops the system of teaching Russian as a foreign language, and presents textbooks aimed at these students. The survey has been conducted in the framework of an extensive educational model that is oriented towards introducing foreign students to the Russian set of values and teaching them cultural features of the region. We have chosen a range of moral and humanitarian literary works that contain historical and cultural realia, and help to form linguistic and culturological competence.

RESUMEN:
Este artículo define la axiología y la esfera axiológica, revela la representación cuantitativa de estudiantes de los estados de la CEI como ejemplos de la región meridional de Rusia, forma conceptos culturales, históricos y axiológicos de la región meridional necesarios para la introducción de los mencionados estudiantes a la Ruso y cultural, desarrolla el sistema de enseñanza del ruso como lengua extranjera, y presenta libros de texto dirigidos a estos estudiantes. La encuesta se ha realizado en el marco de un extenso modelo educativo orientado a introducir a los estudiantes extranjeros en el conjunto de valores ruso y enseñarles características culturales de la región. Hemos elegido una serie de obras literarias humanas y morales que contienen realia histórico y cultural y ayudan a formar la competencia lingüística y...
1. Introduction

In recent years, the notion “axiology” has been widely used in the scientific community. It is the study of values, their function, nature and relationships. In this case, values are referred to as “elements of moral education, the most important components of the internal human culture that are expressed in the form of individual mindset, personal properties and qualities, and determine people’s attitude towards society, nature, other people and themselves” (Astashova, 2002). Evaluativity and axiological features are understood as fundamental characteristics of the universe, beingness and society, but their unity and diversity remain understudied in the human language. Thus, the axiological nature of human consciousness (ideas, evaluation, tastes, ideals, norms) and the world of values form the so-called axiological sphere (Mariyanchik, 2011).

New directions of research are being developed in the light of axiology, particularly, in the field of language teaching. In our opinion, a special stress should be laid on the process and methods of teaching Russian as a second language from the perspective of axiology.

Axiological principles are expressed in pedagogy and are considered to be a part of humanization and humanitarization of education.

A pedagogical research is deemed time-sensitive if it identifies social changes that have modified a pedagogical impact on certain groups of students. For example, modern Russia has faced a situation when a new kind of students appeared in its territory. They are students from the CIS states (former Soviet republics) whose knowledge of the Russian culture is not sufficient for their full socialization.

These educational problems are also connected with migration and appearance of new students (residents of former Soviet republics return to Russia in search of work and for some other reasons). Their children cannot speak Russian as an international language due to the lack of direct contact with native Russians. As a result, they do not understand most cultural realia, national values, and misinterpret certain linguistic and social phenomena that is quite evident if you compare concepts, especially historically significant, from the linguistic and cultural perspective.

This group of students is constantly growing. For example, their number has increased from 15% to 40% over the past three years among the total number of foreign students, which is a...
significant change. These students make up from 5% to 25% in the inner study groups depending on the profile of education. These facts prove that the problem of teaching this category of students Russian is burning.

Therefore, these students are taught the humanities in accordance with an extensive educational model. It aims to share cultural achievements and “help them to self-identify on this cultural basis” (Kodzhaspireva & Kodzhaspirev, 2005). As a result, students become familiar with cultural and moral values, form their own system of spiritual orientations that serve as the core and base of the internal culture of any given nation and society.

Thus, this study aims to develop methods of linguistic inclusion of students from the CIS states into the Russian value-oriented socio-cultural environment.

2. Methods

This study was conducted in four universities of Krasnodar, including the Kuban State Technological University, the Kuban State Agrarian University, a branch of the St. Petersburg Institute of Foreign Economic Relations, Economics and Law in Krasnodar and a branch of the Russian Economic University named after G.V. Plekhanov in Krasnodar.

The following methods of pedagogical research were used:

1. Monitoring the controlled educational process with addition of new teaching methods.
2. Polling method according to the results of the conducted study.
3. Methods of stimulating interest and motivating students to learn through educational games, situations of moral experience based on belles-lettres, discussions of such texts, experiencing success in the study.
4. Methods of control and self-learning, which define the reasons of difficulties and mistakes, determine the effectiveness of the proposed teaching methods, the level of general cultural knowledge of these students.

In the framework of this study, we use broad understanding of the “general cultural component of education” (Fokin, 2002) suggested by Professor Fokin. In this case, students act as the subjects of culture, and their main quality is “belonging to achievements of the global and national culture” (Fokin, 2002) because an immoral person who does not follow axiological guidelines cannot indulge in engineering creativity as it will be dangerous for the society and humanity as a whole (Fokin, 2002). We believe it is important to understand the social role of education, i.e. it broadcasts culture and guarantees “the succession of this culture” (Kropotova, 2004) through any person. At the same time, we have not engaged in philosophical and sociological aspects of the phenomenon ‘culture’. We have dwelled upon the linguistic adaptation of non-native Russian speakers to the existing society.

We used the following methods of the linguistic inclusion of students from the CIS states into the Russian value-oriented socio-cultural environment:

- forming linguistic and cultural competences;
- filling their world image with lexemes connected with the values and culture of the chosen region;
- teaching various functional styles of the Russian language.

In this regard, our task was to adapt the “Russian Language and Culture of Speech” textbook written for Russian students to new requirements, and form linguistic and cultural competences of students from the CIS states by enhancing its linguocultural aspect. We based our research on the theoretical studies of Vorobyev and Sayakhova (Vorobyev, 1997; Sayakhova, 2015) and methodological surveys of Pyatigorsk researchers (Alexeeva, et al., 2006), who presented new methods of teaching the Russian language and culture of speech in a multicultural environment of the North Caucasus.

As active learning methods are growing more widespread, it helps to carry out socio-cultural work unobtrusively, and achieve optimal inclusion into the Russian value-oriented socio-cultural environment.
environment for students from the CIS states. The educational approach presented in this article corresponds with the objectives of axiological components used in teaching this kind of students the Russian language and culture of speech.

3. Results

The textbooks on the Russian language and culture of speech represent a cultural aspect of teaching as a fairly narrow notion and a rule of communication (for example, the ethical aspect of speech culture), or analyse it from the perspective of etiquette traditions prevailing in the chosen regions and social groups (Maksimov & Golubeva, 2012), or consider it to be the rules of verbal communication, i.e. the combination of rhetoric, stylistics, culture of speech, psychology, sociology, etc. (Chernyak, 2012). This viewpoint is sufficient to analyse the rules of verbal communication of non-native Russian speakers and cannot be applied to students belonging to other ethnic cultures.

The experimental training we performed has revealed a cultural stratum, which is practically unknown by students from the CIS states, and allowed us to develop special textbooks that are oriented towards this kind of students and compensate their weak knowledge of the Russian culture and values (Novikova, et al., 2016; Parinova et al., 2015).

Furthermore, we became the first to analyse the axiological significance of concepts organizing literary texts, describe a series of concepts, demonstrate their inner connection with the concepts of a single thematic field within some text, create a system of exercises that help to master linguistic and cultural notions represented in some text, and form common cultural value-oriented competences.

4. Discussion

4.1. Forming linguistic and cultural competences of students from the CIS states

We will start the discussion of the results from introducing possible ways to form linguistic and cultural competences that are understood as a kind of general cultural competences making up the general cultural content of education and including works of art which are considered to be the heritage of humankind (Khutorskaya, 2002). It can be said that linguistic and cultural competences are responsible for the culture-specific teaching of Russian as a foreign language, and serve as a method to form a system of universal axiological relations based on ethical and cultural components represented in the literature of the chosen region.

The formation of linguistic and cultural competences will be successful if students read an ethically and aesthetically pleasing text about some events in the chosen region together with their teacher. The above mentioned text should come with images, historical references and additional exercises to stimulate further ethical thinking. In the end, a teacher starts a discussion to compare the old national and new Russian cultural values, and understand the notion of cultural tolerance. This presentation of educational material is called “a motivational situation” when an exercise “is able to touch the soul of students, cause an emotional response and induce further thinking” (Klarin, 1998).

This cultural and historical material can be referred to as the background in relation to journalistic, literary and artistic works presented in the above mentioned textbooks. It aims to smoothen the contradiction between ethno-social and ethno-psychological attitudes in the chosen society, emphasise the inner unity of the national and universal culture, as well as spiritual and moral foundations of some nations.

Methods of teaching foreign students include linguistic and cultural studies, as well as the Russian country’s studies (Fedotov, 2013). The latter is understood as an identifier of national characteristics of the Russian people and realia relevant to the Russian cultural. In this
We can rightfully speak of the regional culture and use the notion of ‘linguistic and cultural studies’ (in other words, local history, the linguistic and cultural studies of Kuban).

We associate the notion of linguistic and cultural competences with peculiarities of mindset and spiritual values of the language under study. Indeed, literary and journalistic texts not only reveal a significant historical period in the life of a particular region, but they can also “detect and characterise socio-cultural concepts and value-oriented positions that become evident in texts” (Rybalchenko, 2016). Communicative, objective and educational competences play a key role in studying a foreign language, and develop together with linguistic and cultural competences (Lukina, 2000).

We analyse the methods of forming linguistic and cultural competences in connection with the Cossack literature dated to the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century. The package (Parinova, et al., 2015) can be divided into the following sections: “Traditional songs of Kuban”, “The Cossack prose” and “The Cossack poetry”. Region-specific texts contain the following cultural and historical information: the relocation of Cossacks to Kuban, the original culture of Cossacks and the activities of educators in Kuban. As you can see, this information requires special socio-cultural, linguistic and cultural comments that play a key role in forming linguistic and cultural competences. For example, an educational text dedicated to the famous educator, poet and playwright of Kuban Kukharenko is accompanied by information about the historical role of the Zaporozhian Sich and the Black Sea troops during the Russian-Turkish wars and the reign of Catherine II, as well as data about historians, scientists, poets and writers of that time. This information is vital for the formation of the cultural and historical background knowledge of students.

This socio-cultural and ethno-cultural information would have been one-sided without the analysis of the Adygei writers, the Decembrists writers exiled to Kuban, the creative works of Griboyedov, Pushkin, Lermontov who visited Kuban and the Caucasus, and reflected the life and mindset of South Russia of the 19th century. In order to make this knowledge complete, students are offered post-textual exercises where they should reproduce the information they acquired with the help of visual materials (paintings, pencil sketches of those years). This type of exercises helps students to build evaluative monologue statements.

The success of this educational process depends on the availability and affordability of materials, and the succession of their presentation. We use pre-textual, in-textual and post-textual exercises that present information on the basis of historical, cultural and communicative continuity.

Pre-textual exercises initially activate historical and cultural components and provide questions on the understanding of linguistic and cultural data that help to remove preliminary conceptual difficulties associated with the history of Kuban and the North Caucasus. In-textual exercises motivate students to actively perceive the text.

Post-textual exercises further develop the understanding of historical facts used in literary texts, which later became popular and vernacular: chew the fat, chap hands, nickel-and-dime (Parinova, et al., 2015). While doing post-textual exercises, students should not repeat the text, but rather perform analytical operations: comparison, proving, drawing conclusion. These analytical operations aim to adopt and “appropriate” knowledge that makes it possible to talk about the formation of linguistic and cultural competences.

Another method of forming linguistic and cultural competences is associated with the use of such visual materials as illustrations coming with a CD attached to the textbook, which is an important condition of the formation of the above mentioned competences. As we know, the perception and memorisation of information is much better when visual materials are used. It not only gives students an idea about historical realia, but also makes it possible to consolidate the materials on regional and country’s studies. Since these exercises are related to solidifying new vocabulary, they precede the tasks set forth above. Their goal is to demonstrate formed linguistic and cultural knowledge and its representation in speech, which is also the
Thus, students acquire the historical and cultural traditions of Kuban, its ethnic and social culture, i.e. those data that are known by average representatives of a particular society. Students learn what values form the axiological sphere of Kuban residents (Rybalchenko, 2016).

4.2. Vocabulary of world image connected with cultural values of the chosen region

An unfamiliar way of life combined with a new language creates two major obstacles: psychological and linguistic. The first obstacle is more formidable since misunderstanding often gives rise to rejection. Therefore, it is important to preserve the historical, spiritual and moral context in teaching Russian as a foreign language. Foreign students learn more about the Russian mindset through the comprehension of the linguistic world image containing information about the surrounding reality that is expressed with the help of the Russian language (Rybalchenko & Fedotova, 2016).

As a result, students are motivated to study the culture, history and way of life of the chosen region. Texts examined by students serve as socio-cultural phenomena because their interpretation helps to characterise the attitude and morals of the region inhabitants. Life situations aesthetically presented in literary and artistic works become significant (connotative for the new linguistic environment) and form the historical and cultural understanding of the life in Russia.

This result is obtained through the analysis of linguistic and sociolinguistic concepts we understand as the cultural heritage of any given nation that are verbalised in works of art as mentally significant and “special ethnocultural” (Rybalchenko & Fedotova, 2016) and characterise the national world image, to which a writer belongs. These concepts also depend on the social consciousness of the social group where an individual author is a member and the historical period when a literary work was created.

Based on the notion of concepts, we can say that lexical items presented in literary and artistic texts have not only the direct meaning, but also conceptual and copyright ones that are socially, culturally and historically conditioned. In this connection, there is an opportunity to consider the pragmatics of any given text, the author’s view of the world, reflecting his opinion on the real life.

A concept is interesting from the methodological perspective because it acts as a mental formation, a unit of collective knowledge, historical and cultural reality when a phenomenon is marked by ethnocultural characteristics, separated by a sufficiently large time period and, in addition, is related to spiritual values.

Every society has a special linguistic culture that is reflected in concepts and associated with ethno-social and ethno-psychological features of mental outlook. Moreover, the inner structure of this culture will also be conceptually different depending on classes and social groups that reflect the type of activity, beliefs, geographical features, etc. Thus, we pay much attention to the historical and cultural stratum associated with the Cossacks as a specific social group reflected in the Cossack literature.

Social and cultural concepts demonstrate the mental world of Cossacks, and allow us to trace a meaningful subject of communication, the formation of words and combination of the Russian and Ukrainian words, which is an interesting phenomenon. These concepts enable students learning in Kuban to form not only historically and culturally conditioned perception of reality, but also understanding of the origins of the Kuban dialect presented in the speech of the locals.

The concepts were analysed on the basis of the Cossack fairy tales and songs, the Kuban literary works of the 18th century, including works written by Holovaty, Kukharenko, etc. While considering the Cossack way of life, we have highlighted the following concepts: “a Cossack”, “a
“horse”, “a war”, “the Christianity” and “trade” (Parinova et al., 2015). The lexical content of these concepts includes not only vernacular words and Ukrainisms, but also historicisms (a tamed horse, to jog, to pull a horse, a market place, gorilka, a small fellow, a Zaporozhian Cossack, a batka, a boy, etc.) (Parinova et al., 2015), which requires a special historical and linguistic comment in pre-textual exercises.

The greatest lexical complexity presents the concept of the “Christianity” that can be expressed by both separate lexemes and collocations: Lord, a sin, to sin, an atheist, a frock, a cassock, to repent; the Holy Spirit with us; to atone; to become a great sinner; Pray to God (Parinova et al., 2015). This concept is inextricably linked with the concepts of “war” and “trade”, and gives an opportunity to present the Russian people not only as a medium of the Christian humility, but also as people who follow moral commandments in their everyday life.

The concept of “war” is presented in the Cossack literature, and it is also originally reflected in the works of the Adygei writers of the 19th century (Sultan Khan Giray, Sultan Kazi Giray, Sultan Adil Giray), in the works devoted to the Caucasian war written by Griboyedov, Pushkin, Lermontov, and the Decembrist authors exiled to Kuban, including Odoevsky, Bestuzhev-Marlinsky, Katenin, etc.

The above mentioned concepts are presented for educational purposes in their lexical, historical and socio-cultural expressions, as well as through the visual perception of historical and cultural realia: a video sequence on the CD showcases paintings of famous artists, Pushkin’s and Lermontov’s sketches demonstrating the individual authors’ attitude towards the events in the Caucasus.

4.3. Mastering various functional styles of the Russian language

We consider the knowledge of various functional styles of the Russian language as a marker of acquiring a new culture by non-native Russian speakers. We have introduced a special educational unit to implement the chosen course of research. In the past, this unit was formed by an exercise, sentence, text (Mazunova, 2001) and other materially expressed realia, but we have chosen ideal facts that manifest themselves on the linguistic, cultural and social levels of native speakers, i.e. psychological, social and cultural formations that are built in the process of mastering cultural components and axiological realia of any given language.

This unit can be characterised as linguistic and cultural. It appears in any given style and genre, but it is most manifested in the literary style. We have noticed that students from the CIS states find it difficult to interpret the meaning of the words that form Russian sayings and phraseological units (Rus-Suniga & Klechkovskaya, 2013). We have decided to solve this problem and chosen the most frequent phraseological units, analysed their lexical content from the perspective of history, culture and society, and developed tasks that aim to explain the etymology of archaisms within the above mentioned phraseological units.

5. Conclusion

This survey and its approbation in educational process have resulted in developing innovative textbooks on the Russian language and culture of speech, cultural studies and local history that are oriented towards students from the CIS states who are currently studying in Kuban. The application of an extensive educational model has helped us to highlight linguistic and cultural educational units, develop a set of special exercises based on the analysis of the chosen concepts that are contained in texts, and have historical and axiological significance. We have also described culture-specific ways of forming linguistic and cultural competences.

The research is a part of a larger project for including information about belles-lettres, the Russian language and culture of speech into textbooks for students from the CIS states. In the nearest future we will print textbooks on the literature (the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century) and culture of Kuban and the North Caucasus. At the same time
we believe it is promising to further study the axiological sphere of the locals in order to describe the mindset of Kuban Cossacks, our contemporaries, their mental outlook and set of values in changing conditions.

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