

## **MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION OF FOREIGN STUDENTS IN HIGHER TECHNICAL EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN UKRAINE: CURRENT CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

**Summary:** the article researches multicultural education of foreign students in higher technical education institutions in Ukraine as an integral process of their positive socialization. The author describes the conditions of efficient education of foreign students, points out four criteria of positive multicultural education (motivation, communication, value orientation and interaction), and introduces the results of experimental research on the current state of foreign students' multicultural education in Vinnitsa national technical university (hereafter referred to as "VNTU").

**Key words are:** multicultural education, foreign students, educational conditions, criteria of positive multicultural education, Ukrainian as a foreign language, Regional studies.

**Common information and rationale:** education and efficient training of young generation are known to be the priority goal stated in official documents of UNO, UNESCO, and Council of Europe concerning pending issues in education. Personal development is mainly targeted on multicultural education aiming to avoid misunderstanding and keep friendly ties among different cultures and religions based on parity and equality.

According to the latest data there are about 40 thousand foreign students from 133 countries currently studying in Ukraine, mainly from Azerbaijan, Ecuador, India, Iran, Jordan, China, Malaysia, Moldova, Russian Federation, Syria, Turkey and Turkmenistan). Thus, Ukraine hosts ninth biggest number of foreign students in the

world. In light of this, “dialogue of cultures” among different nationalities, ethnicities, religions, and beliefs becomes an important issue of the efficient educational environment.

The majority of foreign students in Ukraine choose technical educational institutions. The choice of future profession is based on technical and engineering skills, and involves finding ways for optimization of multicultural education within learning process.

**Coverage of the latest researches, releases, and previously uninvestigated issues in this area:** Multicultural education has recently become a subject of more intensive scientific research due to the current state of social development. Ananyan, E., Boichenko, V., Vorotnyak, L., Solodka, A. conducted surveys on multicultural education [1; 2; 4; 12; 19]. The article also includes the ideas of the scientists who pointed out the importance of extracurricular activities in multicultural education. Ramsey, P. stated that educational techniques help develop students’ cognitive and creative activity [21]. Molyako, O. examined the influence of definite extracurricular activities on students’ insight of different cultures [13]. Rimarenko, Y. researched the art paradigm of intellectual culture [15]. Fitsula, M. offered to include concerts, conferences, round table discussions and other performances into multicultural education [20]. Vereshagin, Y. and Kostomarov, V. stated that art interconnects people helping exchange knowledge and share values [3].

Multicultural education of both domestic and foreign students still reveals a strong need for deeper theoretical and practical research. Latest publications contain little evidence on this issue, thus making education results less valid and less reliable.

Nowadays, multicultural education requires more intensive research focus. Therefore, possible manifestations of intolerance, demonstration of disrespect, aggression and mistrust among students from different countries are the basis of further research of this issue.

The **goal** of this article is to examine the process of multicultural education of foreign students in higher technical institutions in Ukraine.

**Presentation of basic materials and statement of feasible results:** the author of this article makes a supposition that quality multicultural education of foreign students in higher technical institutions should be based on following conditions:

- Creation of favorable multicultural learning environment during Ukrainian language and cross-cultural studies aimed on involving students of different ethnicities and religions into the “dialogue of cultures”;
- Activation of international communication;
- Formation of tolerant attitude to other cultures and religions;
- Involving foreign students into university’s outdoor activities.

The research was conducted in VNTU (n = 212 students and 15 teaching staff members).

Before launching the research, it was necessary to accomplish three assignments: 1) to define the contents of multicultural education of foreign students in technical higher education institutions; 2) to point out criteria, indicators and current state of multicultural awareness of foreign students in technical higher education institutions; 3) to create and assess educational conditions, and the model of multicultural education of foreign students in technical higher education institutions.

This research illustrates estimated positive results of multicultural education: students are expected to have integrative personal characteristics including multicultural beliefs, ideas, wants and needs, interiorize international and intercultural values. These result in formation of a definite behavioral model, activate intercultural interaction, help comprehend different culture and form tolerant attitude to its bearers. All the aspects mentioned above are key features of integral personality. Basic structural components of positive multicultural education of foreign students are intercultural literacy, communication, self-definition, cognitive interest to know more about different cultures, and intercultural interaction [9, 85].

Assessment criteria of multicultural education level of foreign students are based on the experience of Boichenko, V., Jurinskiy, O., Karyagin, Y., Podlasy, I., Solodka, A. and other scientists included into teaching staff of VNTU [2; 5; 6; 11; 14].

Analysis of published literature, supervision, discussions with teachers and students and other research methods were used in this work.

The research made it possible to point out four criteria of positive multicultural education of foreign students (motivation, communication, value orientation and interaction), and determine indicators and levels of each criterion (high, normal and low levels) [8, 67-68].

These criteria, their indicators and levels were specified after the discussion with teaching staff of VNTU linguistics department and International institute (branch of VNTU). The staff members came to conclusion that complex implementation of the criteria, their indicators and levels helps assess the level of multicultural awareness in foreign students, evaluate their knowledge and skills, determine the ways of optimization, combine the research results and assess its efficiency.

Another step of the research was to determine each student's personal rate of multicultural awareness. Experts used the 5-point system to figure out the levels of students' multicultural awareness. The average of 2.75 or less was associated with low level of awareness; 2.76-3.85 demonstrated normal level; > 3.86 showed high level of multicultural awareness [16].

Analysis of approaches to multicultural education shows that combination of all aspects of tuition reaches optimal results in multicultural education; helps establish international ties, and involve foreign students in the "dialogue of cultures".

The article proves that combination of language study with presentation of Ukraine is especially important for multicultural education. Analysis of corresponding learning materials from language books helps teachers find relevant educational information about Ukraine to be included into language studies. Efficient language study techniques include acting dialogues between "local residents" and "foreigners", using materials from Ukraine-presentation texts in process of students' everyday communication. In this case it is important to work through practical topics based on the materials of national culture, new for students.

Ukraine-presentation educational materials are also used to study grammar topics. To do this, it is possible to introduce Ukraine-presentation materials in phraseology

semantics and speech aphorisms; to explain Ukrainian language vocabulary with domestic cultural components; to use illustrations; to refer to fiction literature [7, 505-509].

Communicative approach has been acknowledged to be a priority tool in foreign language teaching methods. Training speaking is the key element of foreign language knowledge and skills formation. In other words, phonetic, lexical and grammar means of communication are supposed to be a subject of practical use in everyday interaction with other people.

Involving students into situations of practical communications improves speaking, listening and reading skills of foreign students. Teachers organize language training with regard on motivating students to communicate, solving their own tasks and facing challenges [3, 174].

There is a consensus that studying foreign language improves students' communication skills, boosts alternative thinking and targets behavior. Thus, multicultural education comprises studying language of Ukraine, its history and culture. Multicultural element in educational subjects widens students' outlook and opens new horizons for them.

Thus, getting familiar with cultural values of Ukraine involves learning its language with the purpose of positive multicultural education of foreign students.

Focusing on multicultural education research, scientists explain the importance of students' extracurricular and outdoor activities. Ramsey, P. conducted a research on the ways of multicultural education in USA. The scientist pointed out the efficiency of educational methods aimed on development students' cognitive and creative skills. Ramsey, P. recommends using extracurricular and/or outdoor events: cooperative learning, excursions, meetings with people of different ethnical groups, discussions, role-play games and other activities directed on efficient multicultural education [21].

The forming stage of the educational research included taking definite measures aimed on multicultural education of foreign students. In light of this, it was important to keep to the following terms and conditions: 1) creating favorable multicultural educational environment in VNTU with the help of implementation of multicultural

elements into the subjects “Ukrainian language” and “Ukrainian cross-cultural studies”; 2) training foreign students’ international communication skills and forming their tolerant attitude to each other by the means of choosing appropriate learning methods and techniques including historical narrations, heuristic conversations, situational dialogues and discussions; 3) involving students into active participation in university’s cultural life such as sightseeing excursions, festivals or other events [10, 24].

The research was divided into three main stages. The last stage comprised experimental verification of the efficiency of multicultural educational conditions and methods, assessment of intermediate and final results, statistical analysis of obtained data, general conclusions and practical implementation of the results.

The final control of the forming stage outcomes implied the same methods as the primary research including supervision, questionnaire surveys (to assess students’ knowledge of Ukraine, their attitude to learning its language, culture and history), tests (based on methods developed by Vorotnyak, L., Tushkovana, O., Solodka, A., Snitsar, I.), analysis of students’ creative works (Snitsar, I.), and expert evaluation method [4; 17; 18].

At the beginning of the forming experiment, the students from experimental (EG) and control groups (CG) were obviously similar in current levels of multicultural education ( $P \leq 0.05$ ). At the final stage of the forming experiment all the EG multicultural education indicators tended to improve. There was an increase in number of students with high level of multicultural awareness; the number of students with low awareness was reported to decrease due to positive impact of chosen educational methods and techniques on quality indicators. Thus, analysis of the forming experiment’s results demonstrated the efficiency of multicultural education program for foreign students.

The experiment results prove the validity of the author’s assumptions on possibility to form students’ multicultural awareness by the means of implementation of educational tools throughout learning process, and on its efficiency in comparison with traditional learning methods.

Quality analysis of the outcomes of the experimental research shows that realization of educational terms and conditions raises students' multicultural awareness to a new level. Statistical analysis of the experimental research data determines the positive changes in levels of students' multicultural education after implementation of the methods described above. Comparative analysis of the research data demonstrates the efficiency of educational terms and conditions for multicultural awareness of foreign students and quality multicultural education. Combination of educational terms and conditions improve quantity and quality indicators of EG students' personal features.

**Conclusions and perspectives of further research:** General results have shown a considerably low level of Ukrainian cross-cultural awareness in foreign students. Most of them have scarce information about geography, history, economy and culture in Ukraine; their language skills are insufficient for active communication with native speakers preventing them from learning more about Ukraine's cultural life.

But, most of foreign students eventually show keen interest in getting familiar with new cultural surrounding. Ukrainian language and cross-cultural studies help foreign students acquire more knowledge about the country of their current residence and study, and interact with new culture. Primary survey determined insufficient degree of multicultural awareness in foreign students, especially in terms of cognition, communication and interaction.

This research has big practical importance. It suggests including the contents, forms and methods of foreign students' multicultural education into VNMU educational plan. The authors have introduced a special technique determining the levels of foreign students' multicultural awareness, and developed educational materials. When using these materials VNMU teachers will be able to exercise control over multicultural awareness levels and optimize education process. This approach helped teachers create educational materials with the purpose of their usage in VNTU educational practice to improve multicultural interaction among students.

This research doesn't cover all the aspects of multicultural education of foreign students in higher technical education institutions. Psychological features of foreign students' multicultural awareness, development of multicultural awareness assessment

techniques in frames of extracurricular activity, development of multicultural awareness evaluation methods, examination of factors influencing multicultural education of foreign students might turn out to be perspective directions of further investigations in this area.

The research results can be used throughout learning process in modern higher educational institutions aiming on multicultural education of foreign students. The materials might be helpful for teaching the subjects “Ukrainian language” and “Regional studies”.

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### **Зозуля І. Є. Полікультурне виховання іноземних студентів у ВТНЗ України: проблеми та досягнення**

**Анотація.** У статті розглянуто полікультурне виховання іноземних студентів ВТНЗ як організований і цілеспрямований процес соціалізації іноземних студентів в Україні. Визначено педагогічні умови, за яких полікультурне виховання іноземних студентів буде успішним. Виокремлено критерії полікультурної вихованості іноземних студентів, а саме: мотиваційний, когнітивний, комунікативний, емоційно-ціннісний та діяльнісний. Представлено результати експериментального дослідження щодо стану полікультурної вихованості іноземних студентів Вінницького національного технічного університету.

**Ключові слова:** полікультурне виховання, іноземні студенти, педагогічні умови, критерії полікультурної вихованості, українська мова як іноземна, країнознавство.

**Зозуля І. Е. Поликультурное воспитание иностранных студентов в высших технических учебных вузах в Украине: проблемы и достижения**

**Аннотация.** В статье рассмотрено поликультурное воспитание иностранных студентов ВТУЗ как организованный и целенаправленный процесс социализации иностранных студентов в Украине. Определены педагогические условия, при которых поликультурное воспитание иностранных студентов будет успешным. Выделены критерии поликультурной воспитанности иностранных студентов, а именно: мотивационный, когнитивный, коммуникативный, эмоционально-ценностный и деятельностный. Представлены результаты экспериментального исследования о состоянии поликультурной воспитанности иностранных студентов Винницкого национального технического университета.

**Ключевые слова:** поликультурное воспитание, иностранные студенты, педагогические условия, критерии поликультурной воспитанности, украинский язык как иностранный, страноведение.