

COMPARATIVE APPROACH AS A METHOD OF FORMING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN HISTORICAL EDUCATION

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Abstract: The article examines the theoretical and methodological foundations of the comparative approach in historical education and its potential in shaping the intercultural competence of high school students. The urgency of the transition from an ethnocentric model of teaching history to a polycentric one based on the principles of dialogue between cultures, respect for the other, and an analytical understanding of historical processes is emphasized.

Keywords: historical education, comparative approach, intercultural competence, tolerance, cultural diversity.

Introduction

Modern education is undergoing a period of profound transformations due to the processes of globalization, digitalization and cultural mobility. In these conditions, the formation of students' intercultural competence is of particular importance as a key component of their social maturity and readiness for dialogue with representatives of other cultures. A special role in this process belongs to historical education, which has a high potential both in the field of value education and in the development of critical thinking. One of the effective methodological approaches contributing to the formation of intercultural competence is the comparative approach.

Literature review and methodology

The issues of the formation of intercultural competence in the context of general education are widely represented both in pedagogical science. The theoretical foundation is based on the works of J.A. Banks, who emphasizes the importance of diversity of points of view in the educational process and the need to recognize cultural differences in order to educate a global citizen. In his concept of multicultural education, intercultural competence is interpreted as the ability to interact effectively in conditions of cultural diversity. The comparative approach is highlighted in the works of P.K.Kubow and P.F.Fossum, as well as J.Schriewer, which analyzes the advantages of comparative education for improving the quality of education and expanding pedagogical horizons. Despite the active development of both directions, the scientific literature has not yet sufficiently explored the relationship between the comparative approach and the tasks of forming intercultural competence specifically within the framework of school historical education. This determines the novelty and relevance of the present study.

The research is based on an interdisciplinary approach that combines the theoretical and methodological principles of comparative pedagogy, philosophy of education and intercultural pedagogy. Research methods include: scientific literature analysis, comparative analysis, content analysis, synthesis, deduction and induction.

Results and discussion

The comparative approach in pedagogy is based on the idea of a systematic comparison of educational phenomena, practices and values in order to identify both universal and specific characteristics. Its origins go back to the philosophical tradition of comparing cultures and civilizations, which was developed in the works of I.Herder, J.A.Condorcet, and later in the philosophy of history of Hegel, where the idea of historical progress was viewed through the prism of comparative analysis of peoples and cultures [1]. In pedagogical science, comparative studies were formed as an independent field in the second half of the 19th century. The founders of comparative education are considered to be M.A.Sadler, I.Kreibich and N.Hans, who considered the goals and forms of education in the context of national traditions, but at the same time emphasized the importance of transnational analysis [2]. In modern pedagogy, the comparative approach has become an integral part of the study of educational reforms, learning models and cultural foundations of education in the context of globalization.

In the field of historical education, the comparative approach involves a comparative consideration of events, processes and historical narratives, which contributes to the formation of students' ability to interpret the past in multiple ways. In this context, history is considered not as a set of isolated facts, but as a dialogue of cultures in which each tradition has the right to recognition and understanding [4]. The comparative approach is also closely related to the principles of intercultural education. It implies respect for the diversity of cultural forms, rejection of ethnocentrism and the desire for an objective assessment of historical and socio-cultural phenomena. As J.A.Banks emphasizes, “an intercultural perspective in education is possible only when students gain access to different points of view and learn to compare them in the context of historical and social development” [5].

In general, the theoretical foundations of the comparative approach are based on:

- ✓ philosophical ideas of the multiplicity of historical paths of development,
- ✓ methodology of comparative analysis of cultures and educational systems,
- ✓ principles of intercultural education and recognition of diversity.

According to the UNESCO definition, intercultural competence includes awareness, respect and effective interaction with representatives of different cultures based on empathy, tolerance and openness [6]. In school practice, this is reflected in the ability of students to understand and respect the historical path of other peoples, their cultural values and customs, without losing touch with their own national identity.

History is one of the few school subjects in which the systematic formation of such competence is possible. However, in traditional pedagogy, ethnocentric attitudes often prevail, in which world history is taught as a periphery in relation to the national one, which hinders the development of students' sense of belonging to the global cultural space [7, 163].

The comparative approach in historical education has a number of significant advantages, which are as follows:

1. The comparison of various historical events, interpretations and cultural interpretations

allows students not only to assimilate factual material, but also to form skills of analysis, comparison, generalization.

2. The comparative approach promotes the development of meta-cognitive skills: students begin to ask questions about the causes of differences in interpretation of the past, learn to recognize ideological constructions and bias in the presentation of material [3].

3. One of the key results of the comparative approach is the formation of intercultural empathy. Students, getting acquainted with various historical and cultural traditions, learn to perceive the “other” not as a stranger, but as a bearer of a different but equal experience. This contributes to overcoming ethnocentric attitudes and the formation of tolerance [8].

4. Comparative analysis allows us to go beyond the nationally oriented model of teaching history and consider the past as a multi-layered, polycentric structure. This approach forms a more flexible and balanced view of human development among schoolchildren, in which no culture is considered as the “center” or “measure of all things” [4].

5. Comparative study of historical processes (for example, colonialism, migration, industrialization) helps students to understand the interrelation of modern global challenges with the historical context. This contributes to the development of their sense of belonging to the world community and responsibility for its future, that is, the formation of the foundations of global citizenship [5].

6. The comparative approach can be implemented in various forms, from discussions and debates to project activities and analysis of historical sources. It is adaptable to any level of students’ education and allows the integration of various educational resources — texts, visual materials, multimedia, which makes the learning process more flexible and modern [9, 55].

Conclusion

It can be seen from the above that the comparative approach as a method of forming intercultural competence in historical education has such advantages as:

1. Development of critical and analytical thinking.
2. Forming a respectful attitude towards other cultures.
3. Expanding the boundaries of historical consciousness.
4. Flexibility and versatility of pedagogical practice in history.

The comparative approach in historical education is an effective tool for the formation of intercultural competence, contributing to the education of citizens capable of dialogue, cooperation and respect for cultural diversity [10, 59]. In the context of the modernization of educational systems and the growth of global challenges, this approach is becoming particularly relevant, and its methodological and methodological development should become a priority of modern pedagogical science.

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