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Development of The Technical University Students' Civic Consciousness

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the theoretical background and techniques of the youth civic education and discloses the problems of students' civic consciousness and civic qualities formation. The aim of the article is founding out the ways of the educational work efficiency in foreign language classes in high school for the Technical University Students' civic consciousness development. It is confirmed that civic education is closely connected with the historical changes in Russia that require educating a new person able to realize the interests of the state. This makes it necessary to identify and study the content, objectives, forms and methods of Technical University Students' civic consciousness improvement. The results of the definition and specification of the notion of "civic education" are also introduced in the article.

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1. Introduction

In the current political and socio-economic conditions of Russia the significance of civic education becomes more and more relevant. Economic disintegration, differentiation of society, devaluation of spiritual values had a negative impact on public consciousness of most social and age groups of the population, particularly on youth. This is evident in the increasing apathy, selfishness, cynicism, drug addiction, unmotivated aggression, disrespectful attitude towards the state and social institutions. Anxiety symptoms of these phenomena are multidimensional and in

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the conditions of destabilization of the Russian economy carry dangerous potential of moral degradation of young people (Fakhrutdinova, 2010b).

Successful implementation of students' civic education may be achieved through a number of conditions on the state level: the development of standards, financial and ideological support. Educational standards and / or frameworks for civic and related subjects can be implemented as an interdisciplinary level and represent the disciplines adopted at a particular stage of learning (Fakhrutdinova, 2011, 69).

Purposeful activity on the formation of students' citizenship is impossible without taking into account the psychological characteristics of this group of young people. According to sociologists and psychologists, in particular Veremeeva (1980) being a student is a time of the most intensive development of intellectual and moral capacities of a person, the foundation of personality. At this time, more serious attitude to life, greater autonomy is gradually coming. The responsibility for the actions, the aspiration to establish stable relations with people in a meaningful dialogue, the active and creative solution of professional problems, sensibility of thoughts and maturity judgments appeared. This period in a person's life is characterized by the rapid development of moral sense (Veremeeva, 1980, 38). Analyzing the psychological traits of the students, Jay (2011) emphasizes the qualities that make up a very fruitful base for the educational work at the university. This is a searching and inquisitive curiosity, increased sensitivity and action, responsibility and commitment to Romanticism, directness and honesty, and high demands on themselves and others. Among the students criticism and self-criticism a strict attitude to friends and teachers are strongly developed. A desire to comprehend and critically argue everything that still does not raise any doubts, especially should be taken into account when implementing the students' civic education.

Theoretical foundations of civic education of the younger generation have been covered in the scientific works of psychologists, educators, lawyers, philosophers and sociologists of different eras. So, the basics of civics are discovered in the works of Rogova, Rabinovich & Sakharov (1991); Gajazov (1995), Hollander (2011).

Philosophical and social aspects of civic education are disclosed in the papers of Hutchinson (2011). General theoretical foundations are developed by T. Stanton (2007). Problems of students' civic consciousness and civic qualities formation are studied by Leshner (1997). The international experience of civic education was studied by Fakhrutdinova (2010a). The educational potential of a foreign language was disclosed by Yuzlikaeva (1991).

Although all those studies have obtained certain data revealing objectives, the content and methods of civic education, and they have not lost their value in some cases, it's necessary to reconsider these basics because they do not meet the new conditions. The aim of the present study is the theoretical analysis and experimental testing of the forms and methods of the Technical University Students' civic consciousness development by means of foreign language.

2. Methods

We used three indicators while examining the Technical University Students' civic consciousness level:

- 1) cognitive (purposeful perception and comprehension of the phenomena studied, associated with the knowledge of another person, including the ability to effectively deal with problems that arise between people);
- 2) the emotional and personal (including emotional responsibility, sensitivity to another person, empathy and compassion, attention to the actions of partners);
- 3) practice-effective (creative reworking during the execution of speech acts, the active application in practice reflects the ability of students to cooperate, joint activities, the adequacy of communication, organizational and communication skills, etc.).

To assess the cognitive measurement, we used the method of contextual learning. From the point of view of Bloomfield (2005) the criterion of a teacher and students in the contextual learning is a situation. Communication in such situations is a means of cognitive activity; it involves the formation and development of the ability to learn, that is formation as special skills and general education skills, as well as to regulate the conduct of personality and to induce to certain speech and non-speech action for interaction. It promotes the formation of value orientations, attitudes and beliefs of the person, serves as a means of speech processing behavior of people and their relationships.

To assess the emotional and personal indicator we used training discussions. During the discussion, students learn to discuss vital issues, to convince arguments, to defend their point of view and refute the opinion of the opponent, and to draw conclusions, clarify facts and summarize incoming information. The development of civil beliefs is carried out through familiarization with the cultural values of the country of the studied language, with advances in various fields of science and technology of the country, through the emotional and personal assessment of the educational material.

To assess the practical-action component successfully role playing and business games are used helping students to communicate in the target language. Participation in these games allows developing civil beliefs, a sense of tact towards the partner in communication, polite and friendly ability to bring it to the desired results of negotiation or conflict resolution. Through business and role-playing games memory, attention, thinking, learning is improved, i.e. purposeful perception and comprehension of the phenomena occurs while being studied, their creative reworking during the execution of speech acts accomplishes from the conscious mastery of action to automated implementation (Fakhrutdinova, 2012, 135).

The level of development of civic consciousness was defined as an integrative indicator by all methods and is defined as follows: the low level: from 1 to 6 points; the middle level: from 7 to 12 points; the high level: from 13 to 15 points.

The study involved more than 502 students of the first, second, third, fourth year of study. To prove the hypotheses of the study we used the methods of mathematical statistics, t-Student test.

3. Results

Using programs to build students' citizenship should be based on the age characteristics, related to the students' experience in variety of forms: educational, recreational, organization of functioning of the educational environment of the institution. Methods of obtaining knowledge and the development of intellectual skills in the formation of active citizenship are classified as methods of thinking - critical, analytical, reflective and strategic (Gajazov, 1995, 157).

Taking into account the students' specific nature, we determined the specificity of students' civic education by means of a foreign language, which includes the differentiated approach, interest to a foreign language in specific form of studies (discussion on problem questions, press conferences, a teleconference, dialogue around).

We defined three levels of students' civic consciousness formation: high, average, low allowing to define the field of influence on the civic consciousness by means of foreign language learning activities.

High level is characterized by steady and positive experience of the civil behavior, the responsible relation to observance of laws, labor and public duties.

For the average level the steady positive behavior, regulation and self-control existence is shown though the active civic stand is not always peculiar.

Low level of formation of civic consciousness of students is characterized by weak manifestation of the positive, unstable experience of civil behavior.

Among the diagnosed qualities we number: public consciousness of the personality, performance of a civic duty, understanding of the rights and duties, civic position.

These levels and criteria were used by us during stating and forming stages of pedagogical experiment by comparison of levels of students of experimental and control groups before and after the experiment.

In the course of the stating experiment high level of civic consciousness development demonstrated 23,7% of the experimental group students and 26,2% of control group students, the average level - 36,1% and 38,7%, the low level - 40,2% and 35,1% approximately/

Summing up the results of a stating stage of experiment, we noted that there is no uniform and complete, effective system of students' civic consciousness formation by means of a foreign language. The main indicator of civic consciousness development is transition from the low level to the average, and from the average to the high level.

At forming experiment teaching and educational process in control group was carried out according to the traditional program with the use of classical means and methods of education.

After carrying out work on civic education in experimental group it became clear that level of formation of civic consciousness of students became much higher: the conscious system of civil requirements of students to each other was created, knowledge of the civil rights, duties, guarantees was systematized and consolidated. All this allows drawing a conclusion that forms and the methods used by us in classroom educational work, shows positive results.

The obtained data testify that during work there was an essential shift of accents in understanding by the students of essence of civic consciousness. Reliability of statistical data it was checked by t-Student test.

4. Conclusions

The essence of civil education includes today the civic consciousness formation as integrative quality of the personality. We defined the civil education as a process of the pedagogical conditions creation providing development of the personality, capable to realize created in the society norm and ideals according to public values, own interests and a civic position. Forms and methods of the educational work efficiency increasing in classroom and extra-curricular work while studying a foreign language at a higher education institution are revealed and experimentally checked. During the experimental work forms of civic consciousness formation - testing, dialogue around, role-playing games, press conferences, debates are approved.

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