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METHODOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE FORMATION OF LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

In a modern multicultural society, the study of a foreign language cannot be limited solely to the mastery of vocabulary and grammar. Instead, it is expected that language education will contribute to the understanding of cultural norms, national identities, systems of values, and communicative behavior of representatives of other linguistic communities. The importance of such an approach is emphasized by the dynamic processes of international cooperation, academic mobility, and migration, which require individuals to be not only linguistically competent but also culturally sensitive.

In this context, the formation of intercultural communicative competence is considered a fundamental objective of foreign language teaching. A key challenge faced by language educators is the integration of both linguistic and cultural components into the educational process in a balanced and pedagogically sound way.

It has been established that the ability to engage in intercultural communication involves not only the correct use of linguistic structures but also the knowledge of social norms, cultural practices, typical behavior patterns, and communicative styles characteristic of different communities. In recent years, a methodological shift has been observed in language pedagogy: traditional grammar-translation methods have been increasingly replaced by communicative, cognitive, and culturally oriented approaches. Communicative methods are being prioritized, as they encourage the practical use of language in real-life and simulated interactions. The cognitive approach, in turn, focuses on the learner's ability to independently process, analyze, and construct knowledge through meaningful language use.

Particular attention is being paid to the cultural approach, which places intercultural competence at the center of the learning process. It has been shown that when learners are

engaged in exploring the target culture – its customs, worldview, history, and national symbols – their motivation increases, and their ability to interact with representatives of other cultures improves. The teacher's role in such a classroom is being redefined: rather than being a source of knowledge alone, the educator assumes the function of a facilitator of intercultural dialogue, a mentor who supports learners in their journey of cultural discovery and reflection.

Various methods and tools have been applied to develop intercultural competence within language courses. Authentic materials such as videos, films, literary texts, and digital content from native-speaking environments are widely used to introduce students to real cultural contexts. Interactive forms of work –discussions, debates, role-playing, and case studies – have been employed to simulate communication in intercultural settings and to develop empathy and tolerance. Project-based learning with an intercultural dimension enables learners to research cultural topics, compare different traditions, and present their findings creatively.

Thus, the integration of cultural content into foreign language education has been recognized as a necessary condition for the development of well-rounded communicative competence. It allows not only for a more effective assimilation of linguistic material but also contributes to the formation of critical thinking, empathy, respect for diversity, and openness to dialogue. The ability to communicate successfully across cultures is increasingly viewed as a key skill in the 21st century, and foreign language teaching must respond to this demand. In conclusion, it may be stated that the methodological principles of language instruction should be based on the synergy of linguistic, cognitive, and intercultural components. In this way, foreign language education will remain relevant, human-centered, and responsive to the needs of contemporary multicultural societies.

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