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Integrating a Linguocultural Approach in Training Future Foreign Language Specialists: Fostering Organizational Leadership in Intercultural Education

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ABSTRACT

Currently, the prospects of integrating innovative approaches into the system of training future foreign language specialists are being actualized. A special role in this process is assigned to the linguocultural concept of foreign language teaching as a component of the cognitive-linear strategy of forming foreign language competencies in the higher education environment. The purpose of the research is to analyze the potential of the linguocultural approach in foreign language teaching and to determine the best ways to implement it for training future specialists in the modern educational environment. The study is based on a critical analysis of scientific publications in the field of the linguocultural concept of foreign language teaching. The basic principles of its organic integration into the educational process in the higher education environment are determined. The study has established that the linguocultural approach stimulates the development of key competencies of future foreign language specialists, in particular, linguistic and cultural skills, as well as socio-cultural and communicative competencies. The main prerequisites for the effective integration of the proposed approach into the modern educational environment are substantiated. It has been established that new approaches to educational programs positively transform the process of mastering competencies, which forms a deep and lasting interest in language learning. The study proves that the linguocultural strategy of acquiring foreign language competence is based on the implementation of a number of professional functions. The approach makes it possible, through an innovative synergistic strategy of learning activities, to model the concept of educational activity and to integrate cognitive needs into the learning process.

Trends in the development of the globalized developed space make it important to improve the quality of foreign language competence. Modern innovative pedagogical technologies have a wide range of functions for solving most pedagogical tasks, increasing the level of motivation of students and developing their ability for ongoing professional self-improvement. In view of this, the issues of synergy of educational strategies, including in terms of combining linguistic and cultural concepts, are of particular importance.

The cultural platform is positioned as a unique basis for social progress, which requires correct linguistic actions to be transmitted. Currently, the professional competence of higher education graduates involves mastering the knowledge and skills of professional foreign language communication and functional literacy, as well as the formation of competencies in establishing professional cross-cultural contacts. In this regard, the educational concept of mastering foreign language competencies should include the formation of sustainable skills in intercultural communication competence that assimilate the maintenance of cultural identity and awareness of cultural values in the international context.

Therefore, the modern field of linguistic science determines the linguocultural approach to teaching foreign languages as a priority way of forming intercultural professional communicative competence in students. This requires special attention to determining the potential of its implementation in the process of training future specialists in the modern higher education environment.

The purpose of the research is to analyze the potential of the linguocultural approach in foreign language teaching and to determine the best ways to implement it for the training of future specialists.

Literature Review

Publications by contemporary authors (García & Otheguy, 2020; Hedman & Fisher, 2025) convincingly show that the issues of the functional relationship between the phenomena of language and culture and the practical use of their synergy form an important field of modern scientific research. The methodological basis of the linguocultural approach to teaching a foreign language in higher education is formed by the scientific achievements of House and Kádár (2024) and Lorenz et al. (2021), who study the modern functionality of cultural and linguistic stereotypes in foreign language learning.

The publications of Farah (2023), Talaván and Lertola (2022) explore the possibilities of innovative tools for teaching a foreign language based on a linguistic and cultural approach. Karhut et al. (2023) and Pikhart and Botezat (2021) analyze the newest vector of foreign language teaching methodology in the context of modernization of the educational process in the concept of integration into the global educational environment.

Following this issue, Hein et al. (2021) and Vishal et al. (2024) analyze the possibilities of incorporating innovative technological and software solutions into integrated cultural and linguistic educational programs of foreign language teaching. At the same time, Fang et al. (2022) consider educational digital platforms from the perspective of a promising pedagogical technology in the concept of the linguocultural approach to foreign language teaching.

Sato et al. (2025) consider cognitive linguistics in differentiating approaches to language learning, including systemic-structural, anthropocentric, and comparative-historical. At the same time, the linguocultural approach to teaching a foreign language is considered by the

authors as a tool for forming the subjective position of the learner, because the dynamics of language are often a consequence of the influence of culture, and vice versa.

Liang and Fung (2021) and Rapanta et al. (2021) have made a significant contribution to the development of research on optimizing the concept of teaching a foreign language in higher education based on the linguocultural concept. At the same time, without underestimating the importance of the work of scientists, it is necessary to note the need to develop practical scientific and methodological solutions in the area outlined.

Method

In the course of the research, the following methods were used:

- analytical and synthetic method – for the purpose of critical review of modern industry publications and scientific achievements in the field of integration of the linguistic and cultural approach to foreign language teaching;
- pedagogical observation – for the purpose of effective analysis of the latest trends in the acquisition of foreign language competencies in the higher education environment and further adjustment of the results of the implementation of the linguocultural concept;
- survey – to study the existing pedagogical experience in the context of the integration of the approach under study to teaching a foreign language;
- modeling and forecasting – for effective analysis of the prospective results of the implementation of the concept under study in English language teaching;
- generalization – for the purpose of forming scientific and theoretical conclusions of the study and summarizing the results of the pedagogical experiment.

A comprehensive analysis of scientific articles and professional publications published in various scientific sources was conducted. The primary sources were selected from influential journals indexed in well-known databases (Scopus, Web of Science). The priority was given to papers published between 2019 and 2024. The keywords used for the search were “linguocultural approach, foreign language competence, higher education environment, culture, cognitive linguistics, linguocultural competence”. The criteria for inclusion and exclusion of publications were the spatial and temporal indicators and the level of information reliability.

Results

The linguocultural approach involves the synergy of the mutual influence of culture and language, which is particularly important in the context of large-scale integration and globalization. The process of acquiring foreign language competencies requires taking into account the peculiarities, customs, and behavioral reactions inherent in a particular culture, which makes it possible to understand the phenomenon of language as a means of interpreting certain encoded experiences with semantic and figurative components (Dudka, 2021).

In general, the linguocultural approach to foreign language teaching should include elements of such theoretical and methodological concepts as cognitive-linear methodology, intercultural communication theory, and educational modeling theory. The methodological material of the linguocultural approach should, at the same time, meet the main recommendations:

- 1) the linguocultural material should form an accurate and correct understanding of another culture, and have relevant significant values;

- 2) the material should form an understanding of the critical concepts of linguocultural studies, in particular, cultural heritage and cultural dialogue, cultural diversity, etc;
- 3) the material should correspond to the intellectual level of students (Prasad & Lory, 2020).

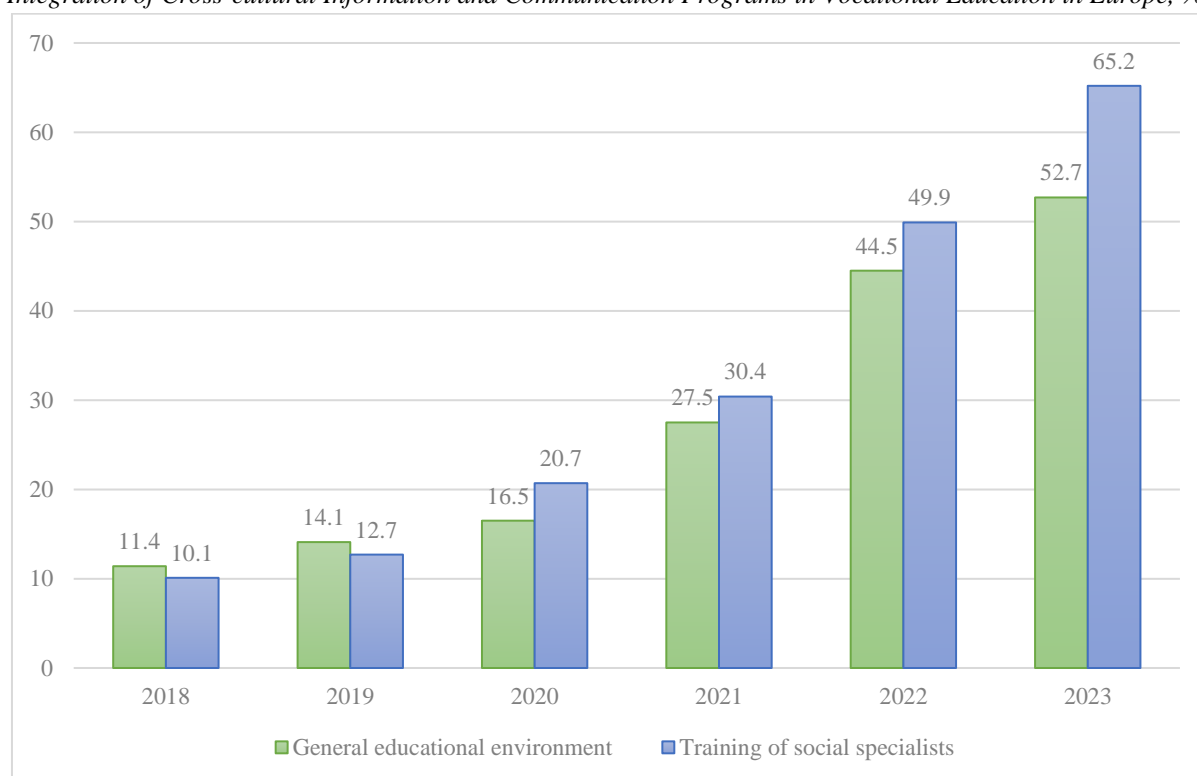
The development of specific forms and tools for integrating the linguocultural approach should take into account the need for contextual learning, familiarization with folk and literary heritage, the use of authentic materials, as well as situational technologies of project-based learning and modern information systems to effectively address socio-cultural and linguocultural challenges in the learning process. At the same time, mobile learning tools, online platforms, and the potential of virtual tours are gaining particular importance.

Various innovative methods of the linguocultural concept can significantly increase the effectiveness of the way the material is presented. The most advanced among them are as follows:

- audiovisual method, which involves the formation of the concept of perception of new material in audio format and through the use of visual non-verbal visualization;
- audio-linguistic method aimed at mastering the phraseological and grammatical structures of a foreign language through their multiple repetition in the format of educational speech;
- case method, which involves project-based learning based on the accumulation and organization of targeted educational and practical experience;
- linguistic and sociocultural methodology focused on the content and communicative essence of language formation, which makes it possible to choose and use language forms correctly in accordance with the situation and to form stable language competencies in listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation, familiarization with the national and cultural characteristics of the country, skills of optimal choice of linguistic form of expression;
- a problem-based research method that stimulates the development of analytical and critical thinking and creativity, increases the motivation of students;
- didactic games based on the conditional reproduction of real practical activities for linguistic processing of fragments of dialogic speech in a cross-cultural context.

Within the framework of linguocultural strategies of teaching a foreign language in higher education, partnership, group and teamwork are considered effective methods that contribute to the formation of sustainable social and communication skills and knowledge. Their functionality includes the methodology of inner and outer circles, zigzag reading, exchange of opinions, as well as brainstorming and paired interviews.

In addition, the digital optimization of the educational environment creates effective prerequisites for attracting the potential of innovative interactive methods of foreign language teaching in linguocultural programs (Prasad & Lory, 2020). In particular, the resources “Expert Groups”, “Project”, “Reflexive Circle”, “Interview” contribute to the effective development of foreign language competencies. The role of digital learning content in this context is constantly growing (Figure 1).

Figure 1*Integration of Cross-cultural Information and Communication Programs in Vocational Education in Europe, %*

Source: Compiled by the authors based on (Eurostat, 2023)

The most effective interactive pedagogical technologies in the context of forming synergistic interaction of cross-cultural and linguistic competence are case methods, moderation, brainstorming, Babylon, World Café and a number of others (Nieto, 2017).

The “Babylon” method makes it possible to model situational cross-cultural communication and to use the potential of non-verbal communication. The integration of the method into the educational process involves a certain stage and contributes to the formation of students’ cognitive interest in other cultures, the development of their communication competencies. At the same time, the essence of the World Café method is seen in the accumulation of non-standard ideas and cross-cultural solutions, which allows generating aspects of the experience of intercultural interaction and forms the prerequisites for a multilevel dialogue (Rueger et al., 2023).

The study of language units in the context of specific speech situations is crucial for the effective integration of the linguocultural approach in the acquisition of foreign language competencies. For this purpose, it is expedient to use innovative digital technology resources that provide an opportunity to immerse oneself in an intercultural environment and allow modeling speech situations (Forbes et al., 2021). At the same time, online platforms make it possible to organize real-time communication with native speakers.

The above innovative approaches form an effective learning environment of a new format, within which it is necessary to take into account the advantages and potential disadvantages of implementing certain pedagogical solutions (Table 1).

Table 1

Advantages and Disadvantages of Integrating Innovative Pedagogical Technologies into the Concept of Linguocultural Approach

Advantages	Disadvantages
Free choice of the proposed cultural roles	Replacing real communication with online communication slows down the development of socialization skills
Developing adaptability, dynamism, and the ability to make quick, responsible decisions and choices	The probability of disruption of the educational process and a decrease in academic performance
Improvement of memory and psychological state	There may be manifestations of dominance of certain participants in the educational process
Motivation to study	Possible loss of control over the learning process by the teacher
Development of logical and critical thinking	Disruption of the balance of the educational process in the direction of digital learning
Formation of emotional intelligence	Unequal participation in tasks, risks of increased competition

In order to analyze in-depth the aspects of forming linguocultural competence, a pedagogical experiment was conducted in this study. During the academic year 2023–2024, 38 foreign language teachers were surveyed on the effectiveness of using the linguocultural approach in higher education. The results show the following trends: 87% of respondents are convinced of the effectiveness of the linguocultural approach, 74% regularly use its elements in their practice, while 62% of respondents need better methodological support in this context. 67% of teachers support the possibility of integrating elements of the linguocultural approach into every practical class.

The most common suggestions of the surveyed foreign language teachers for optimizing the process of acquiring foreign language competencies in the modern higher education environment through the linguocultural approach include involving native speakers and authentic sources, conducting seminars, verbals and master classes, developing integrated courses to improve socio-cultural competence.

Discussion

The issue of developing intercultural communication skills in the process of forming foreign language competence in higher education is being studied by a number of modern scholars. For example, Sun et al. (2021) and Humboldt (2006) adapt the experience of forming cross-cultural competencies in future specialists in the process of foreign language training, analyzing the potential of digital technologies in this context. Kramsch et al. (1996) form a basic toolkit for the development of cross-cultural communication and international relations.

The issue of the synergy of cross-cultural and linguistic competencies is of interest to Vishal et al. (2024), García and Otheguy (2020) and Rueger et al. (2023). Scientists analyze the processes of development of pedagogical theory and practice in the context of the linguocultural approach and summarize the essence of integration tasks.

Some scholars, in particular Talaván and Lertola (2022), Nieto (2017), and Kitao (1991), analyze the target pedagogical tools and develop a system for assessing intercultural foreign language communication skills. The researchers argue that the effectiveness of implementing the linguocultural approach is determined by its combination with other aspects of language learning and the use of primary sources and authentic samples.

Some researchers (Forbes et al., 2021; McCaw, 2021) emphasize the potential difficulties of innovative development of the modern educational environment. The process requires the formation of a secondary language personality in students and the transformation of thinking in

the context of the inseparability of the phenomena of culture and language. Prasad and Lory (2020) prioritize the communicative cognitive approach in terms of the linguocultural concept since it allows teaching typical models of language behavior, providing a socio-cultural context for the educational process, choosing the necessary lexical material, and gradually forming a new, improved worldview.

According to most modern scholars, the formation of linguocultural competence involves taking into account ethical and cross-cultural norms of communication, which makes it possible to develop stable skills of adequately formulating one's own thoughts. It is also important to master conversational clichés. Success in acquiring linguocultural competencies is determined by the formation of an inseparable link between cultural development and speech situations.

Conclusion

The innovative development of foreign language educational programs positively transforms the process of language acquisition, which forms a deep and lasting interest in language learning. The concept of acquiring foreign language competencies should include the formation of sustainable intercultural competence skills that assimilate the maintenance of cultural identity and awareness of cultural values in an international context. The linguocultural approach makes it possible to model the essence of educational activity through various forms of learning activities, to integrate cognitive needs into the educational process.

The method of pedagogical observation demonstrated the potential of the linguocultural approach to teaching a foreign language, contributed to the expansion of vocabulary, and improved students' cross-cultural competencies. Prospects for further studies are seen in the targeted sectoral development of algorithms for the practical implementation of the linguocultural concept in foreign language teaching.

Declarations

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