

MEASURING INTERCULTURAL TOLERANCE

Ahibalova T.M., Karachova D.V.

National Technical University

«Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute», Kharkiv

Foreign language learning involves engagement with the sociocultural environment as opposed to the passive assimilation of information. As a result, culture should always be included in the framework of language acquisition as cultural understanding helps make language learning successful. The most recent investigations of human brain capacity emphasize that it is no longer relevant to discuss that acquisition of two or more foreign languages contributes to the development of two or more linguistic personalities in one individual. Instead, learners can develop all those skills within the only linguistic personality, which scope depends on students' intellectual capacity.

Intercultural literacy plays a crucial role in bringing closer people who speak different languages. Culture influences how we cooperate with others. Therefore, in recent decades, tolerance has been proposed as a necessary response to the global rise in cultural and religious diversity. The three main categories of intercultural competence are intercultural awareness, intercultural sensitivity, and intercultural tolerance since learning a language is a process of acquiring symbols and coding systems (as well as a process of obtaining cultural knowledge and aptitudes). The idea that tolerance is exceptionally important is supported by the findings of a study conducted among 24 second-year students from Egypt, Turkey, Morocco, South Africa, and the United Arab Emirates. To examine their attitudes towards students of other backgrounds, which could cause misunderstandings during interactions, participants were given a list of statements to estimate their level of tolerance.

Respondents were questioned about how they reacted to lexical, grammatical, and stylistic faults as well as the behavioral shortcomings of their interlocutors related to religious or political beliefs, family traditions and customs. The majority of respondents noted the acceptability of linguistic errors in their native language made by their group mates at the level of 81,6% («Partly appropriate» – 22,5%, «Appropriate» – 48,1%, and «Strongly appropriate» – 11%). Only 18.4% of participants voted negatively («Strongly inappropriate» – 3,7%, «Inappropriate» – 6,5%, and «Partly inappropriate» – 8,2%). As opposed to language mishaps, participants treated cultural faults more strictly, classifying them as 1) "Strongly inappropriate" – 7,9%, "Inappropriate" – 21,6%, "Partly inappropriate" – 38,8% (for a total of 68,3%), and 2) "Partly appropriate" – 16,1%, "Appropriate" – 10,8%, and "Strongly appropriate" – 4,8% (for a total of 31,7%).

The findings of processing the tolerance questionnaires demonstrate that despite having a fair amount of general tolerance in their educational setting, a third of learners (31,7%) are not yet prepared to be tolerant when it comes to their cultural heritage. Having accepted language errors as a part of a standard educational process, students simultaneously have a negative attitude toward their group mates' unawareness when it comes to their national background and traditions.