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**SUBJECTS OF SCHOOL PHILOLOGICAL EDUCATION AS AN
IMPORTANT FACTOR OF NATIONAL SELF-DETERMINATION**

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Abstract

Philological cycle subjects belong to worldview-building disciplines, therefore, support of the Russian language and development of literature in Russia are listed among the State's strategic objectives. Language and literature help preserve and develop cultural and linguistic diversity in the Russian Federation, promote a dialog of cultures and help different ethnicities become aware of their place in a multicultural world. The purpose of the study is to identify mechanisms operating in philological cycle subjects ("Russian language," "Literature," "Native language," "Native literature," "Russian native language" and "Russian native literature") to produce impact on building national self-determination of students. The study found out that the importance of the Russian language, as an academic subject, in the achievement of strategic objectives of school education and results of school studies is determined by its polyfunctionality. In general education establishments across the Russian Federation and in education establishments outside of the Russian Federation, the Russian language can be studied as an official, native or foreign language. Studying the native language, including the Russian language, is a priority of Russian general education policy, as language operates as a factor of national self-determination. The moral potential of philological education is embodied in the literature class that gives schoolchildren knowledge about human beings and the world. In today's socio-cultural situation, subjects of school philological education must become an important factor of national self-determination. To achieve positive results in that area, concerted efforts of the government, society, science and education are required.

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Keywords: Culture, philology, language, literature, ethnicity, self-determination.



1. Introduction

Philological education is always a topic of debate in society, because philological cycle subjects belong to worldview-building disciplines and influence formation of personalities of the younger generation. Support of the Russian language and development of literature in Russia are listed among the State's strategic objectives, which is evidenced by regulations of the past few years. For instance, the presidential decree "On national targets and strategic objectives of the development of the Russian Federation through to 2024" lists education among 12 core areas of top-priority national projects. The goals set for education in the presidential decree are hardly achievable without philological cycle subjects, or academic disciplines, such as "Russian language," "Literature," "Native language," "Native literature," "Russian native language" and "Russian native literature." Studying "a language as a semiotic system underpinning human communication, building civil, ethnic and social identity is to ensure access to literature heritage and, through that, to treasures of national and world culture and achievements of civilization; building the foundation for awareness of specific features of different cultures, and fostering respect for them," underlines the Federal State Standard of Basic General Education.

Issues related to the promotion of a productive dialog of national cultures in the Russian Federation were raised on May 19, 2015 at a joint meeting of the Council for Inter-Ethnic Relations and the Council for the Russian Language under the President of the Russian Federation. The attendees spoke about the necessity to preserve and develop the Russian language and all languages of ethnic groups in Russia, as a factor of harmonized interethnic relations, civil unity, reinforcement of state sovereignty and Russia's integrity.

2. Problem Statement

In accordance with social and economic exigencies of the government, educational standards are regularly updated and improved. For instance, the current Federal State Standard for basic and high education is aimed to ensure building of Russian civil identity of students; unity of the educational space of the Russian Federation; preservation and development of cultural diversity and linguistic heritage of the multiethnic nation of the Russian Federation; realization of the right to study native language, and of the opportunity to receive basic general education in native language; absorbing spiritual values and culture of Russia's multiethnic nation (Federal State Standard of Basic General Education).

No doubt, the fundamental role in the implementation of the designated tasks belongs to the subjects of the school philological cycle, because it is through the Russian language and literature that issues of building Russian civil identity of schoolchildren become relevant. This helps preserve and develop cultural diversity and linguistic heritage of the multiethnic nation of the Russian Federation, exercise the right to study native language, and realize the opportunity to receive basic general education in native language. Moreover, national self-determination is further promoted when students absorb spiritual values and culture of Russia's multiethnic nation based on a dialog of cultures and awareness of one's place in a multicultural world. Thus, subjects of school philological education are an important factor of national self-determination. At the same time, ways of fostering national self-determination of students through philological disciplines require a more detailed investigation.

3. Research Questions

At first, it is necessary to define the concepts of “ethnicity,” “identity” and “national self-determination.”

Ethnicity is not an invariable set of cultural features attributed to a certain ethnic group.

From the area of academic studies, the term passed to the public sphere and implicitly got stuck in public conscience. Similar to Molière’s notorious character who did not know he had been speaking prose all his life without knowing it, the Modern Man does not pause to think that he comprehends his place in society in the identity context, by implanting significant landmarks of self-determination in large and small communities. (Semenenko, 2017, p.11)

In the theory of self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2003), the importance of "social context in the effective functioning of the individual" is emphasized (Vallerand, Fortier, & Guay, 1997) and his “motivational profile” (Vansteenkiste, Sierens, Soenens, Luyckx, & Lens, 2009).

Self-determination results in “high-quality learning and conceptual understanding, as well as enhanced personal growth and adjustment” (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991, p.119). In addition, it is necessary to “support basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness” (Deci, Eghrari, Patrick, & Leone, 1994, p.120).

National self-determination is believed to be “a nation’s assertion as a historically defined community of people, and its essential features are believed to be: 1) economy; 2) interaction of all elements of culture; 3) common language.

Importantly, in a multiethnic country, the process of ethnic identification at individual level can involve deep emotions, because amidst nationalistic policy national self-determination is linked to identity based on forced inclusion in the community of which a person is not a subject or does not to be a subject.

Building schoolchildren’s awareness largely takes place in the process of philological education. Consequently, the subject of this study is identification of the mechanisms operating in philological cycle subjects (“Russian language,” “Literature,” “Native language,” “Native literature,” “Russian native language” and “Russian native literature”) to produce impact on the emergence of national self-determination of students.

4. Purpose of the Study

In connection with the adoption of the Federal Law “On Amendment of Articles 11 and 14 of the Federal Law ‘On Education in the Russian Federation’” (No. 317-FZ, August 3, 2018), which defines forms of using the official language and native languages for teaching and learning, it is established that federal state educational standards of general education ensure the opportunity of receiving education in native languages (from amongst languages of peoples of Russia), of studying official languages of Russian republics, native languages from amongst languages of peoples of Russia, including the Russian language as a native language. The purpose of this article is to study the issues of building national self-

determination of students in the process of learning new academic subjects — “Russian native language” and “Russian native literature,” alongside conventional subjects — “Russian language,” “Literature,” “Native language,” “Native literature.”

5. Research Methods

In the course of the study, a few methods were used (observation, polling, studying students’ productions) to analyze the legislative and regulatory framework of the Russian Federation that regulates the opportunities of receiving education in native languages from amongst languages of peoples of the Russian Federation, studying official languages of republics of the Russian Federation, native languages from amongst languages of peoples of the Russian Federation, including the Russian language as a native language; issues were identified and ways of their resolution were outlined so far as building national self-determination of students in the course of studying the Russian language and literature, native language and native literature, Russian native language and Russian native literature is concerned.

6. Findings

Academician Likhachev (2018) adequately defined the importance of philology in human society: “The wider the range of eras, the range of national cultures that are included in the scope of education, the more necessary philology is. It brings together humanity and various human cultures not by erasing differences in cultures but by comprehending those differences” (p. 32).

Philology is unthinkable without language. Language is a complex phenomenon and is the subject of study in a number of sciences or humanities that investigate certain aspects of it. In that respect, it is impossible to arrive at a single definition of language and common understanding of its functions in the life of society.

The human being cannot exist outside of culture: Humans tend to establish their ethnic identity when they make a choice between their native or another culture. The worldview of an ethnic group that emerged from the common past is reflected in language; “language learning is determined by social, cultural, political and economic contexts” (Matveeva, 2016, p.42). Language is not only a means of communication, but, and more importantly, it is a means of transmission of culture and unique identity. Language, national spirit and national world constitute the intellectual power of an ethnic group. In that respect, every language is self-sufficient, unique and valuable.

In today’s world, alongside functioning of national languages, a need emerges for most people to learn the English language, as a language of science, education and business. Moreover, there other areas of active influence of the English language, and those are movies, television, music, pop culture, advertising; they are linked to massive American influence in Europe (Bolton & Meierkord, 2013). In the Russian Federation, the issue is as poignant as elsewhere, and many countries worldwide are concerned with the fact that the English language, being a native language for 500 million people, has also become a language of communication for over 1.5 billion Earth inhabitants. Fearing the influence of the English language on native cultures, the international community is becoming increasingly vociferous on behalf of native languages (Awedyk, 2009), on behalf of the national linguistic environment (Johansson, 2002).

Globalization makes it impossible to oppose the pressure from the English discourse today. Therefore, preservation of native languages, the Russian language and its promotion is a matter of the country's national security. All the more so that a number of foreign scholars are commenting on the outstanding role of the Russian language in Russian culture, because it "not only promotes communication but also has some special inherent value, as it unites the nation and determines national culture and identity" (Eismann, 2000, p.64).

Significance of the Russian language, as an academic subject, in the achievement of strategic objectives of school education and results of learning is determined by the very essence of language, which performs a multifunctional role in society. "In the system of school education in general and in philological education in particular, the academic subject 'Russian language' plays a leading role, because the level of native language proficiency determines, to a large extent, development of an individual as a whole, success in development of intellectual and creative abilities of schoolchildren, their abstract thinking, memory and imagination" (Aleksandrova, Dobrotina, Gosteva, Uskova, & Vasilevykh, 2018, p.1062).

The Russian language becomes an integral part of all the other educational areas, as it performs a meta-subject function, because teaching at general education establishments of the Russian Federation is primarily performed in the Russian language. The Russian language is the most important means of communication and expression. At general education establishments of the Russian Federation and at educational establishments outside of the Russian Federation, the Russian language can be studied as an official, native and foreign language.

Studying the official language at Russian schools to the fullest extent and at proper level plays an important role in creating the common educational space. The Russian Federation is a multiethnic country that has territories in its administrative and territorial division that were singled out by ethnicity (22 national republics, 4 autonomous districts and one autonomous region). Consequently, studying native languages, including the Russian language, is a topical issue of Russian general education policy, as it is a factor of national self-determination. Studying the Russian native language and native languages of peoples of Russia is regulated by Federal Law No. 317-FZ, as well as subject concepts and curriculum guidelines. "For multiethnic Russia, the problem of support and development of linguistic and cultural diversity is not only a matter of preserving the ethnocultural identity of the peoples composing Russian society, but also one of the main prerequisites and factors of interethnic accord and reinforcement of the country's statehood" (Borgoyakov, 2017, p.22). Any civilized multiethnic society must keep up the cultural level of its citizens and foster their creative urge both in natural sciences and in humanities. Without fiction that influences the upbringing of today's schoolchildren, it is impossible to form a multifaceted personality who is capable to carry out humanitarian activities and to develop social and economic potential of society (Belyaeva, Berdysheva, Kritarova, & Shamchikova, 2018).

Philological education demands that the moral potential of literature classes be reinforced, as they educate schoolchildren about humans and the world. Therefore, in order to develop morally correct benchmarks in national self-determination of students, it is necessary to lay a special emphasis on the contents of literature education, namely to focus on those books that show friendship and collaboration of people of different ethnic identities. Those are, first of all, the works by Leo Tolstoy *The Prisoner of the*

Caucasus and Hadji Murad, which carry a humanistic message and show that values of kindness, justice, humanity can be stronger than ethnic antagonisms and local conflicts.

Literature of peoples of Russia and of the former USSR can also produce a powerful moral impact on a reading adolescent. For instance, when studying books about the Great Patriotic War, a literature class could be a good place to stage a mock dialog between war books by Russian classic writers of the 20th century and, for instance, the short novels of the Kyrgyz writer Chinghiz Aitmatov *Mother Earth* and *Cranes Fly Early*. No doubt works of contemporary Russian authors can also have a formative impact on young readers, if those works artistically recreate the world of the peoples that inhabited the Soviet Union in the 20th century. Such are books of Fazil Iskander that became classics long ago, and of young author Guzel Yakhina who penned the novel *Zuleikha Opens Her Eyes* (Belyaeva, 2017) awarded with prestigious literature prizes in the Russian Federation.

One urgent organizational challenge of contemporary education in any multiethnic country is to stay in a direct dialog with all territorial units of the country at all educational levels, in order to discuss matters of teaching native literature in a close connection with studies of literature of other ethnic groups inhabiting the country, and in the Russian Federation, it is a dialog of national literatures and Russian literature. Teachers and the methodological community need to realize the benefits of philological education based on the dialogistic approach. In today's sociocultural situation, it is necessary to search for and try out in practice effective ways of teaching literature of the country's main ethnic group in a foreign-language and foreign-culture environment, in view of the fact that the dialogical nature of Russian literature and "Russian culture has determined and continues to determine its value for all humanity" (Darensky, 2017, p.44). Such a dialog can only become productive if it is held in an interactive mode and where all parties involved in it are equal and tolerant.

Today, there is a long-overdue need to acquaint native Russian-language school students more actively with works reflecting the Russian cultural code and with books of authors of other ethnic groups living in the Russian Federation. For that process to be based on a productive dialog of literatures and cultures, it needs to have a high-quality conceptual and methodological support.

In that respect, the Federal State Educational Standard of Basic General Education was amended to include new academic subjects: "Native literature" and "Russian native literature." Those subjects target students who consider the Russian language their native language but go to school in regions that tend to select curricula where teaching is performed in a native (other than Russian) language, or curricula where native language studies are present as a significant component. Specifics of those subjects is determined by the desire to present those works of Russian writers that reflect both traditional Russian culture and Russia's ethnic diversity, the ways of life and customs of various ethnicities inhabiting the country, contacts between Russians and members of other ethnic groups living in Russia, the role of Russian population in the exploration of new lands and its civilizational mission, contacts between Eastern Orthodox Christianity and other religious denominations. However, so far, practice of studying those subjects at Russian schools has not shown any significant results. Investigation of that process and those results is a challenge for the near future.

7. Conclusion

In today's sociocultural situation, subjects of school philological education must become an important factor of national self-determination. To achieve positive results in that area, concerted efforts of the government, society, science and education are necessary. Today, dynamic evolution is seen in academic disciplines that, substantially, can be in sync with the philosophy involved in teaching languages and literature in a multiethnic country: ethnic psychology, ethnic pedagogics, ethnolinguistics. Those disciplines help study the individual as an ethnic image at a cross-disciplinary level, to enrich and enlarge the picture of personality perception in different cultures and historical periods.

Amidst general IT penetration and globalization, studying specifics of perception of fiction by readers of different national cultures gives an opportunity to show the importance of reading Russian literature and other literatures in people's life on a larger scale and more objectively. Therefore, in today's multiethnic Russia, it is essential to master the values and meanings of the Russian language and Russian literature and native languages and literatures that embody national ideals and visions of the world, and to study educational practices of multilingual countries. At the same time, when organizing the process of teaching the Russian language and Russian literature and native languages and literatures, it is necessary to take into account national, cultural and linguistic specifics of schoolchildren.

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