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**METHODOLOGICAL BASES OF MULTICULTURAL
EDUCATIONAL PROCESS IN CONDITIONS OF
INFORMATIZATION**

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Abstract

The urgency of the problem under consideration depends on the meta-disciplinary structure of understanding of the university education essence and mechanisms in the modern multicultural world in the era of informatization. The traditional understanding of the multicultural character of university education allows us to consider the possibilities not only of general methodological approaches to the formation of personality, but also to develop mechanisms of interaction based on the ethnic and cultural traditions. The phenomena of Russian sociocultural life at the beginning of the 21st century (globalization processes, technical progress, digital education, cultural development and large-scale migration processes) are regarded by the author as the situation and the essential mechanisms of modern university education. The purpose of the article is to determine the methodological, theoretical and practical features of the educational processes at the university in the digital age. The leading approach to the study of the problems of multicultural educational process at a university in the era of cultural informatization is the cultural one, which makes it possible to identify the ways and mechanisms of culturally oriented university education. Using the method of structural analysis, comparison and classification of a number of surveys of 70 students from different courses and educational institutions, relationships, factors of committed participation, mechanisms of university education motivation in the digital age were identified; the most interesting forms of digitalization of the university educational process in central Russia, being in demand among students and teachers, were considered.

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1. Introduction

Being a social institution of the State, the education implements not only institutional functions, but also some essential, universal, long-held historical. University education develops historically unevenly in different eras and civilizations (Ellis & Bond, 2016). The importance of education on a present coil of progressive development of civilization is recognized by a wide circle of specialists and researches.

There are a number of factors, that are determining:

The particular part of the electronic digital stage of the society and economic development, erasing barriers and differences,

The university, realizing the idea of the unity of Science, Culture and Research as a process of finding the truth and understanding of Human's role in the process,

The idea of graduation of universities on the "capital" and "regional" has become visible lately.

2. Problem Statement

The current situation needs the understanding of the essence and role of university education in society, the determination of interaction of education and society, education and culture, the interaction of these institutions on a person for the most complete opening up and self-realization (Christensen, 2016). The evident tendency of increase in the number of universities in our country, the striving of Russian education for meeting the world standards raises a question of the preservation of the university phenomenon as the mechanism of cultural preservation and historical experience through educational content, its "standard", on the one hand, and of the preservation of the traditional foundation of the society, identity of the people and their cultural - historical uniqueness, on the other hand (Aldoshina, 2015).

"Since the Middle Ages, universities have had a special place in the European education system. Unlike different traditional schools and academies, only university degrees were recognized by all the Catholic world of that time, and a person, who received a degree like that, could teach and work in any European country. For a long time every university was considered to be an integral part of the general "Universitas" system. Today the uniting idea of the "university" and a single university model don't exist. The researchers identify several modern modifications of the university. "One of them - is the so-called old universities (ancient university), like Oxford and Cambridge, which correspond to the widespread ideas of a classical university, the keeper of medieval traditions". Another model is the so-called "Red Brick Universities". They are generated by the technological revolution of the 1960s and focused on innovative development. The third model is "new universities", "universities after 1992" (post-1992 university). They arose in a wave of the information boom of the 1990s (Yendovitsky & Djakova, 2016, p.5).

University education periodically discusses the question of its functionality (Aldoshina, 2014; Boguslavsky & Neborsky, 2015; Zakharov & Lyakhovich, 1993). "Education implements its functions such as personality-forming, culture-forming and professional in a specific socio-cultural situation. By the mid-60s. of the 20th century the advanced countries had had a good understanding of the fact that

scientific and technical progress was not capable of solving the most topical problems of society and individual, since there was a deep contradiction between them. For example, the colossal development of the productive forces does not ensure the minimum essential level of well-being of the majority of the population; the ecological crisis, which creates a real threat of total destruction of the habitat and of the man as a species has been globalized; cruelty in relation to the vegetable and animal kingdom turns a person into a soulless cruel creature, science and art are an oppressive picture. Mass culture bears the imprint of violence, hedonization, stratification and “barbarization” (Zakharov & Lyakhovich, 1993; Dudnik & Frolova, 2016; History of the University in Europe, 1992). The “barbarization” of culture presented itself most vividly at the turn of the centuries: rolling back into the past and simplifying traditions (especially moral norms); introduction to culture a different logic of life, it’s its mythologization; the desire of the public elite to suppress (conquer, subjugate) the lower strata of society; frank propaganda of violence, cruelty, the cult of physical force. Teens and young people were the most susceptible to negative influences because of the lack of formation of ideological positions. They were influenced by the “market”, low-trial samples of mass culture, criminal structures, destructive sects. Without having internal support, young people lost external support (families, youth public organizations, healthy informal associations), because Russian society had been in a state of confusion for a long time: the old socialist ideas were completely denied, the Western models did not work because of the peculiarities of the Russian mentality. The values had not been acquired.

3. Research Questions

These circumstances put pressure on a person, make him understand the past, think of the future, create the ground for addressing the fundamental, deep problems of human existence, the problems that are essentially philosophical: “What is the purpose of a person? What is beauty? And others” (Aldoshina, 2015; Hofstede, 1991; Pelikan, 1992, Hart, 2006).

“The most significant contradictions of the theoretical understanding of the phenomenon of multiculturalism and the ethnocultural educational context (general and professional) are, in our opinion, the following:

1. Any modifications of the educational space lead to the reorientation of the axiosphere (of a teacher and a student): from the restriction of freedom of choice to the restriction of personal space, personal development or its dynamics.

2. The confrontation of the anti-values of mass culture (hedonism, barbarization, sexism) and ethnocultural values, which has been customary in recent decades, reverses and blurs the conceptual space and the problems of educational initiatives and traditions (of the rural areas, enclaves), reorients their meanings and development vectors.

3. Owing to the growth of the migration processes, there has been a change of the multicultural patterns of social life and education. “Right” pro-fascist tendencies emerge, the values of “open Europe” are actively discussed, and outdated approaches (“melting pot”, “mosaics”, "assimilation" are traditionally prevailed in multicultural education.

4. Multi-polarity of inter-State relations (instead of the traditionally dominant dual polarity of the world) gives rise to regional multiculturalism (for example, Latin American, Arabic, or East Asian). This

polycentricity of the world loses its cultural, confessional, historical identity, ceases to act as a characteristic and the basis of the ethnic identity of a person (Aldoshina, 2015).

4. Purpose of the Study

The breadth and depth of crisis phenomena in the field of education, their inconsistency, quality of influence on all the spheres of human life and professional training and activities make it necessary to analyse the concepts of education, its deep foundations and processes of interaction with culture, the place and role of traditional national culture in the development of an individual and a specialist. The purpose of the article is to determine the methodological, theoretical and practical features of the educational process at the university in the era of digitalization.

5. Research Methods

The leading approach to the study of the problem of multicultural educational process at the university in the era of informatization is the cultural one, which makes it possible to identify the ways and mechanisms of culture-oriented university education. The education functions and implements its social roles in a specific socio-cultural situation, that determines social and pedagogical tasks, the nature, mechanisms and technologies of pedagogical activity. The assertions of possible design through the educational institutions of the future are untenable. But the determination of its prospects, dependencies on the state of society, the argumentation of the ways of development are possible by coordinating the degree of sociocultural development of society (taking into account ethnic, religious, geographical, climatic, linguistic, etc.) and the level of development of educational practice.

Russian university education developed in the context of a European one, but the first university was opened rather late (Carr, 2000; Villa & Poblete, 2007; Universities value to economy increases – UUK-report, 2018; UNESCO Word Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue, 2009). The works of E.P. Belozertsev, M.V. Boguslavsky, O.V. Dolzhenko, N.S. Ladizhets, N.Kh. Rozova, V.A. Slastenin and others are devoted to understanding of the role of modern university education in our country. Some of them rightly assert that in the present difficult situation the university, the ideology of the university could be a boost to growth not only for culture in general, but also for our sociality. Regarding the university as “domain of culture”, the fact of culture, the author emphasizes the initially existing, but forgotten function of the university education that preserves and transforms culture. It’s uncommonly topical in modern Russia (Aldoshina, 2015).

In the science of our country, the issue of the essence and mission of university education is traditionally raised during the periods of intensive educational reform. Boguslavsky and Neborsky (2016) pick out the most significant modern trends in the modification of education in the system of Russian higher education: 1) virtualization, openness of the subjects of modern higher education, their delocalization (going beyond one particular region, country, continent); 2) digitalization (digitization) of higher education as a product of electronic education of a new format and digital educational content, immersion of the educational community in the virtual environment; 3) gamification of the process of education and personal development as the most modern and long-term teaching methods; 4) the

transformation of modern universities into a kind of “social service station” that responds to the needs of society quickly and efficiently; 5) the formation of the phenomenon, which is marked as "pop education" by analogy with the phenomenon of "pop science", which has similar social functions; 6) the cooperation and network approaches in university education, that allow it to develop in line with the convergent development of the economic, political and cultural spheres of society; 7) the opposition of traditional higher education and teaching professional competences in corporate education; 8) the transformation of social and professional roles, in the first place, of managers and teachers of higher educational institutions; 9) the return of research activities to the sphere of universities, the creation in the Russian university infrastructure the forms of the connection of education, science, business and production that were successfully tested in the West.

The non-traditional typologies of modern universities in Russia that are offered by the ideologists of modern higher educational reform are interesting. These typologies reflect the personal point of view of the authors, but they give additional information for the analysis of university education. Peskov (Kuzminov & Peskov, 2017), director of the Young Professionals Department of the Agency for Strategic Initiatives, highlights in general three models of the university (teaching, research and business). He subdivides the existing universities (in our author’s abbreviation the article’s ideas are from the journal) as follows: Analogue of a traditional luggage room that is actual in analogue economies and has the most important function of serving and retaining youth; Applied University, as a service tool for the rapid growth of young economies; cultural monopolists - universities living on the old successes of traditional university education and its attractiveness; gatherers of talented youth, attractive by their traditional brands (Kuzminov & Peskov, 2017).

In an unstable society, the main task facing the higher education is “preserving the spirit of creativity and seeking the truth, ... as a community of people who united in an attempt to jointly seek and teach the truth ...” (Yendovitsky & Djakova, 2016, p.117). Transmission of culture involves the activity of a person in the assimilation of cultural values, the appropriation of its norms, the correlation of these norms with the existing social environment, the possibilities of educational institutions. A number of scientists believe that the educational process is possible only in a narrow space, where there are common cultural traditions and social ties, where each participant in the interaction is determined by the others and values it. From this point of view, the role of the cultural background of university education is increasing. The model built on humanistic values that determine the intellectual profile of the university seems to be significant for modern Russia; these values guarantee its standard function, regarding the mechanisms of self-development and self-improvement of the creative potential of an individual as the main mechanism of education (Knyazeva, 2019); this model is focused on the formation of the basis of spiritual, ethnic and intellectual identity of the individual.

According to Bell (1999), the education in the information society should be not only a means of assimilation of the universally recognized knowledge, but also a way of information exchange of an individual with other people, an exchange that takes place in every act of his life and throughout his life, which involves not only assimilation, but also transfer, return, generation of information in response to the received one (p.560). The professional environment of a modern specialist is characterized, first of all, by the increasing rate of various changes and large amounts of various information, which he is forced to

operate, besides, according to the latest prediction studies, by 2020 the amount of information will double every two years (Dudnik & Frolova, 2016). The change in the type of society and economic structure leads to the change in the functional vision of the university.

In modern pedagogy there is a large amount of research on the problem of digitalization of the educational space, substantiation of digital pedagogy. The authors of the famous “Digital Education Environment Manifesto”, who state that “there is a fundamental shift and a deviation from the conditions under which our current educational systems were developed and a new educational environment is being formed” (Manifest o cifrovoi obrazovatelnoi srede, 2018, p.23), admit that the transformations concern the foundations of educational technologies, environmental characteristics and interaction mechanisms. The allocated principles of digitalization of the educational space confirm this idea. The proclaimed principle of “New organization of educational content” is implemented in the rules “from indivisible courses to microformats”, “from passive listening to active action”, “from white spots to knowledge map”, “from common textbooks to personalized trajectories”. Under detailed analysis of the extended positions, we understand that these definitions do not transform traditional theories of educational content, but change the ways of its organization at a specific educational level, declaring a change of the mechanisms for its implementation (domestic didactics has indicated it for more than 40 years). A similar result is obtained by analyzing other principles put forward: motivation in digital educational environments (“from predestination to free choice”, “from joint listening to collaborative projects”, “from repetition to creativity”, “from formal exams to instantaneous feedback ”, " from a single grading system - to a multidimensional"); new architecture of education (“from chaos to interaction architecture”, “from control to choice”, “from autonomy to technological ecosystem and ecosystem”; new pedagogy (“from monopoly to media space”, “from pedagogy-philosophy and pedagogy art to digital pedagogy”, “electronic textbook & digital educational environment”) (Manifest o cifrovoi obrazovatelnoi srede, 2018, p.41).

6. Findings

One of the examples of the implementation of the advanced principles of the organization of the educational process at the university is the “Inter university Student Olympiad online”, that was developed by us and introduced into the educational process of the Department of Theory and History of Social Pedagogy and Social Work Orel State University named after I.S. Turgenev (Knyazeva, 2016). Despite the differences in the name that changes every academic year, for example, “Who, if not us?”, “From profession to skill” and others, this form of work with students is already traditional. The participants of the described educational technology of interactive interaction are students of various educational organizations of the Russian Federation: Novosibirsk, Smolensk, Orenburg, Kazan, St. Petersburg, Tver, Vyborg, Orel.

This form of the Olympiad is provided with the webinar.fm platform, which provides a wide range of possibilities for organizing and holding online seminars, trainings, presentations, conferences or meetings in real time. The main technical facilities are: audio and video broadcasting with simultaneous inclusion of up to 10 speakers; using text chat; desktop broadcast on MS Windows and Mac OS X; demonstration of materials in PowerPoint, PDF, ODP, PNG, as well as playback of MP4, FLV, YouTube

video; the ability to record webinar on the platform server with its automatic conversion into .mp4 format.; A wide range of tools for management of the webinar participants (Jourdan & Papp, 2014).

The competitive program includes: a social video “My profession is my future”, demonstrates the importance of the chosen profession for each member of the team, and it is sent to the e-mail of the Olympiad. On the day before the start of the Olympiad, videos are posted in the worldwide system of integrated computer networks and a vote is taken on the audience choice award among the teams participants. At the end of the competition, professional jury gives points in the standings. The “Social Orientation” competition is aimed at developing teamwork skills, identifying theoretical knowledge in the discipline “Social work” in the field of theory and history of social work, as well as domestic law. Tasks of the “Professional Route” reveal the presence of practical problems solving skills, the ability to defend one's professional point of view and to argue the professional position, show the degree of responsibility for the chosen professional route.

The educational technology of interactive interaction “Interuniversity student Olympiad in on-line mode” is aimed at extending theoretical knowledge, algorithmizing the skills of their operational application, and unlocking of the creativity of each team member. The goal is to form professional legal competence of bachelors of social work at the university, as well as close cooperation of the university with potential employers - representatives of social, educational institutions and Home Affairs bodies.

The use of the interactive educational technology, developed and introduced by us, enables students to have a direct dialogue with peers as future colleagues, and teachers to see the level of training of students (Clark, 2008) from different regions of Russia, to learn something new, to share their own experiences. In addition, it is of great interest among students. Firstly, it's online form of holding, that is non-traditional for the university educational process, but it's usual in the form of communication. Secondly, this technology is distinguished for originality of tasks and thirdly, for high level of its organization and control. Mobility, interactivity, number and geography of the teams participants distinguish this event, which can be held in any audience with a laptop, a wide screen, or just a laptop (Root Kustritz, 2014). No less important is the economic factor, because just this interactive form allows the student Olympiads to be held at the lowest material costs, which increase students' professional competence, strengthen inter-university professional interaction, and stimulate team building skills.

Finishing the description of the experience of using interactive educational technologies by us, we can note that thanks to them, almost all the students are involved in the process of learning, they have the opportunity to evaluate and compare what they know and understand (Garner & Alley, 2013). Joint activities in any of the above mentioned technologies mean that each of the participants makes a special contribution, there is an exchange of knowledge, ideas, ways of activity and that directly affects the process of formation of professional legal competence of bachelors of social work. It is significant that it occurs in the atmosphere of goodwill and mutual support and allows not only to receive new knowledge, but also develops cognitive activity, transforms it into higher forms of cooperation and collaboration, allows to develop communicative skills, to compare and evaluate different points of view, develop joint solutions (Troeshestova, 2018).

7. Conclusion

I would like to note that these changes do not affect the essential foundations of the university. The electronic-digital environment becomes apparent in a situation of tremendous increase in the volume of information and characterizes the means of processing, receiving, broadcasting educational content, without modifying it qualitatively, therefore, the historical transformation of university education does not occur in this situation, the university remains the domain of Science and Culture, a kind of absolute centre of their preservation and transmission to future generations.

The need to transfer modern universities to a qualitatively new level of functioning is carried out on the basis of the following principles of higher education: universalization of higher education, its regionalization, implementation of an adaptive management strategy in the system of regional markets of scientific and educational programs, development of integrative social and cultural functions. In the situation of modern organizational restructuring of our professional education, we expect programme documents that determine the prospects and vision of the mission of university education in Russia. Undoubtedly, Russian universities are seen not only as absolute centres for research and vocational education, but they are also transformed into some kind of drivers in regional development. It is necessary to create a social-legal bases for the transformation of universities into real centres of science, education, production and culture and the creation of conditions for the development of universities as centres of basic research that take into account regional specifics and ethnic and cultural characteristics.

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