

POLYCULTURAL, MULTICULTURAL AND INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCES: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BASED ON WORLD EXPERIENCE

Svitlana I. Medynska, PhD student at the Department of Innovative Technologies in Pedagogy, Psychology and Social Work, Alfred Nobel University (Dnipro).

E-mail: medynska@duan.edu.ua

ORCID: 0000-0003-0138-7246

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The article covers the issue of differentiation of polycultural, multicultural and intercultural competences in the context of effective interaction of representatives of different cultures at different levels of both daily and professional activities, which is becoming increasingly important in the light of accelerated globalization.

The findings of the studies of domestic and foreign researchers on the definition of such terms as “polyculturalism”, “multiculturalism” and “interculturalism” are analyzed, since they are fundamental to the respective competences in regard to understanding their differences and similarities. The focus is on the underlying concepts associated with these competences, the diversity of approaches to their definition, and the geographical differentiation in the use of these terms. It is found out that although all these concepts relate to culture, there are some differences in approaches to understanding the interaction between cultures within these concepts. Whereas polyculturalism focuses on the dynamism of cultural development in interaction, multiculturalism emphasizes differences between cultures in a static state to improve interaction between representatives of different cultures, and interculturalism is aimed at interaction and dialogue between cultures.

It is proved that the respective competences based on these concepts, despite the differences, are aimed at effective communication in intercultural situations, which requires the formation of a certain skill set, being based on such common characteristics as intercultural interaction, communication and tolerance.

It is also found out that there are certain features of the use of these terms in English-language scientific journals. In particular, in combination with the term “competence”, foreign researchers from the United States, Western and Northern Europe and Asia commonly use the terms “multicultural” and “intercultural”, while researchers from the post-Soviet countries prefer the terms “polycultural” and “intercultural” in this regard.

It is concluded that given such lexical diversity and the findings of the studies, the terms “polyculturalism”, “multiculturalism” and “interculturalism” can be used as synonymous in a certain context of scientific discourse in researching communication processes within the multicultural environment. Such an approach can be crucial in identifying the underlying concepts and key components of the students’ competence necessary for operating in conditions of cultural diversity since it implies taking advantage of the relevant intellectual contribution of the world academic community if applied critically.

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