

THE CREATIVE POTENTIAL OF DIDACTIC MATERIALS OF COUNTRY STUDIES IN TEACHING STUDENTS FRENCH

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It is well known that when one learns a language and culture created and expressed in this language simultaneously, the language becomes one's own, is appropriated, is internalized. (2, p.19). The process of language learning gets truly productive, creative, inspired by the interest in foreign culture.

There are many current studies showing that it is necessary to integrate language learning and cultural environment of native speakers. *Intercultural competence* (M. Byram) is an essential condition for successful language acquisition while developing special intellectual abilities involved, including creative abilities. As far back as in the 80s of the previous century Geneviève Zarate claimed that the difference that may sometimes exist between the studied and the native culture of the learner deserved the teacher's attention. (7, 87). For those teaching country studies all over the world, many questions still remain unanswered. (6, p.7)

It is essential to transmit foreign readers knowledge of the world, which is not their own. (5, p.77). Alongside with this, didactic means of intercultural competence development being updated dynamically enough still need to be further developed as well as to be selected from the existing methods and technologies.

The design of didactic instruments aimed at intercultural competence development is defined by the features of open education. Any foreign language learning is a factor and condition of foreign culture. The field of new didactic instruments innovative construction has increased considerably with the advent of IT opportunities and accessible information space. The content basis is made of materials, traditionally used in class, including texts. (1, p.32).

Within the framework of intercultural competence development authentic texts, as media representing culture, are coming into focus. Due to the Internet and mass media there is a space of unlimited access to these sources. A plethora of newspapers, magazines, TV channels, blogs offer numerous articles and special collections having access to forums and chat-rooms, which is useful in the learning

process. (8). There is a wide range of documents that can be used in class in lessons of French. To integrate them into the learning process, preliminary professional didactic work is required: they have to be selected, objectives formulated, methods of application chosen, etc.

Having studied some methodological recommendations of French professionals posted on educational sites (4), we have come to the conclusion that in terms of didactics, these are the reasons that motivate us to use authentic materials:

- The absence, in some cases, of textbooks, approved by the official curriculum in an educational institution (depending on the age, the level of learners and the institution profile);
- The need to solve problems that arise in connection with the textbook used previously (dissatisfaction with the topics, tasks, outdated content, etc);
- The need to contextualize education, in order to add regional flavor to French;
- The motivation to use and develop the multimedia approach, i.e. variety of supplementary materials and topics, the boost of communicative value, openness to the world;
- The desire to please the people you communicate with and yourself;
- The opportunity to prove your competences and be creative in your professional duty fulfillment.
- Alongside with this, one should know how to define the relevance of a chosen authentic document on the scale of didactic means.

The system of didactic principles of authentic texts integration has been developed and tested by the author in the process of teaching French to students of the Ural Federal University (3, p.6).

We have come to the conclusion that by solving the problems of combining linguistic training and intercultural competence of students we form the space for innovative search and creative solutions, giving new opportunities to succeed in learning a foreign language as a means of intercultural dialogue.

We have conducted focused research aimed at studying the experience, didactic approaches and pedagogical practices of French professionals in foreign language teaching. (Geneviève Z., Magali Lemeunier-Quéré, Mehanna Gharaa, Porcher Louis).

In our own pedagogical context of teaching French to students of the Ural Federal University we have developed and tested methodology of working with authentic information sources.

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