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Conceptual, Linguistic and Pedagogical Aspects of Humanitarian World Picture

Alfinur A. Galiakberova¹, Norair M. Asratyan²

Zoya D. Asratyan³, Azat G. Mukhametshin⁴

Abstract

The modern world faces numerous challenges that ultimately have a worldview nature. Every person included in the global processes meets with many contradictions, the settlement of which determines the direction of different communities and the whole of mankind movement. Globalization which began and was initially conceived as a process of world economic, political, cultural integration, rapprochement of peoples, over time began to demonstrate its negative aspects: socio-cultural unification, standardization of human tastes and preferences, stereotyping of people's habits and behavior, weakening of traditional values and ties. At present globalization is opposed to a relatively new process of extending glocalization as the desire to avoid the extremes of globalization, to prevent the disappearance of regional differences, to preserve and strengthen economic independence and cultural identity. This inevitably puts a human being and the whole mankind not only in front of the need of extensive scientific, technical and technological, social and humanitarian knowledge, but also requires the development of the ability to comprehend the whole array of diverse knowledge obtained in order to efficiently, in activity-based way use them. Therefore, alongside with general ideas about the world, the important task is integration of diverse modern humanitarian knowledge into the overall humanitarian picture of the world. The article examines some key methodological issues of the formation of the humanitarian world picture, including the problems of the language worldview, and focuses on the teaching of the experimental course "Humanitarian picture of the world" in the framework of the model of practice-oriented training of Russian pedagogical staff.

Keywords: Humanitarian and natural science world pictures, Language picture of the world, Practice-oriented training of teachers, System-activity approach.

¹ Naberezhnye Chelny State Pedagogical University, Nizametdinov str., 28, Naberezhnye Chelny city, Russian Federation, 423806.

² Naberezhnye Chelny State Pedagogical University, Nizametdinov str., 28, Naberezhnye Chelny city, Russian Federation, 423806, norair.asratyan@gmail.com

³ Naberezhnye Chelny State Pedagogical University, Nizametdinov str., 28, Naberezhnye Chelny city, Russian Federation, 423806.

⁴ Naberezhnye Chelny State Pedagogical University, Nizametdinov str., 28, Naberezhnye Chelny city, Russian Federation, 423806.

Introduction

In our opinion the problem of the formation of the humanitarian world picture has three major aspects that we are going to consider: conceptual-methodological, linguistic and pedagogical ones.

The conceptual side of the problem is rooted in the difficulty of determining the specifics of humanitarian knowledge, in the dual need for its separation from both the natural science and extra-scientific knowledge. Unlike natural sciences and mathematics, the humanities always provide debatable knowledge and are a field of struggle for schools and directions. And unlike ordinary knowledge, artistic view and religious worldview, they must be logically strict and consistent.

The linguistic aspects of the humanitarian world picture originate from the fact that in the minds and activities of a human being the language fulfills a special and twofold role. It is itself the whole world, a special space, and in this capacity it influences our understanding and perception of the external reality. We can say that it is through the "prism" of the language space that we look at the outside world and evaluate various processes and phenomena in it. At the same time we use the language as a tool, as a means of communication.

We should at last realize that the formation of a picture of the world from a spontaneous process must increasingly turn into a subject of pedagogical activity. The content of the course "Humanitarian picture of the world" developed at the Naberezhnye Chelny State Pedagogical University (2014-2017) is designed to give students material to expand their horizons, to promote the formation of such a world-view in which scientific and extra-scientific pictures of the world, including religious, artistic, and other ones will be synthesized and harmonized. The methodological principles on which the discipline is based should be acquired by future teacher, and as their key meta-subject results should become an integral part of their pedagogical and research thinking.

Results and Discussions

Conceptual principles of studying the humanitarian world picture

Natural sciences and humanities co-exist in a common spiritual space and express two sides of our relationship with the world around us. The world itself is a natural and socio-cultural environment. Culture is all that is created by man in the process of the natural world revision, the ways and results of this processing, the modes of human and social existence. Standing out of nature, the world of human culture exists within it, inextricably linked with it. Culture is a spiritual and material life of people. The spiritual culture of mankind has always been diverse, but before the emergence and transformation of science into an independent part of the culture of mankind, knowledge about nature and social life manifested itself in the form of practical experience, worldly wisdom, folk healing, etc. Since the appearance of sciences, the latter have occupied a huge and growing place in the spiritual world.

In science, it is customary to distinguish the system of knowledge about nature – the natural science, which is the subject of natural scientific knowledge, and the system of knowledge about the significant values of existence of individuals, groups, states and the whole mankind – the humanities. It has always been believed that the main feature of natural scientific culture is determined by the fact that knowledge of nature is characterized by a high degree of objectivity, reliability, truth, which is manifested in the strictness of definitions and concepts, the accuracy and unambiguity of the meanings of the arguments expressed, in the necessary and universal character of conclusions. And the specific character of social and human sciences is determined, in our opinion, by the fact, that the process of investigation itself and its results are largely influenced by the personal and social position of the investigator. An important role is played by the values of the researcher, the national cultural environment, the character of the epoch and its adopted

ideals of beauty, perfection, kindness, freedom, etc. At the same time, if humanitarian knowledge differs only in these features, if the humanities do not strive for universality, objectivity, rigorous evidence, then their arguments and conclusions will not fundamentally differ from common opinions. Hence, it follows that humanitarian knowledge contains an immanent contradiction between an author's subjectivity and their desire for objectivity; between multiple points of view and the need to develop a universal one; between struggle of scientific schools and the desire to obtain a consistent conclusion, etc. (Asratyan, 2016).

Social and human sciences comprise the cumulative volume of knowledge in the fields of philosophy, pedagogy, psychology, history, religious studies, sociology, ethics, jurisprudence, aesthetics, economics, management, linguistics, political science, literary criticism, art history, etc. There are many studies that seek to explain the difference between natural sciences and humanities. In particular, one of the arguments belongs to M.M. Bakhtin, who sees the principle of distinguishing these sciences in the text: "The humanities are sciences of a man in his specifics, and not of a mute thing and a natural phenomenon. A person in his human specificity always expresses himself (speaks), that is, creates a text (at least potential). Where a person is studied outside a text and independently of it, it is no longer humanities (human anatomy and physiology, etc.)" (Bakhtin, 1979).

The key issue determining the nature and the character of socio-humanitarian scientific knowledge is its subject and method. The subject is the entire cultural and historical space in which a human being interacts with society and nature, changing both the external and his inner world. Every humanitarian science is exploring its aspect of this interaction. Since cognition is an integral part of human culture, it can be said that the humanitarian process is not only a person's perception of himself, but ultimately self-perception of culture.

Of course, each humanitarian science has its own methods, but it is common for them to represent a complicated interweaving of value and cognitive approaches. Any non-scientific knowledge (religious, artistic, everyday) is colored by a value approach. Humanitarian knowledge, if it claims a scientific status, certainly must strive for universality, transcendence, i.e., move from subjectivity to objectivity, from relativity to absoluteness, from multiplicity of points of view to unity.

The duality of humanities consists in the fact that they do not simply comprehend the world in the light of values (i.e. they impose the value criteria on the knowledge that is obtained by the natural sciences), but also study by rational methods the nature and the phenomenon of values, and thereby represent reflection of values.

The state of modern scientific humanitarism is characterized by an unusually increased degree of pluralism and controversy. In our society even at the time when there was a monopoly of state ideology, based on the single doctrine, there were a lot of outstanding scientific figures and interesting investigations. In modern conditions the freedom of thought leads to new searches, each independently thinking scientist and teacher of higher education makes conclusions about certain aspects of social and human sciences. Studies, discussions and publications give rise to a fundamentally new landscape of humanitarian knowledge, where everyone has the right to defend their scientific principles.

Now the most important problem is that research pluralism should not lead to methodological friability and blurriness. It is especially important for the educational process, where dialogues, sharp and interested discussions should be based on the high quality of teaching and serious preparation of students. Such a level of academic work can be provided by urgency, originality and relevance of approaches in the study and interpretation of educational topics, by the use of new empiric material, which to some extent should be obtained by students themselves. It is obvious that today students can no longer be considered only as objects of educational and teaching impact. Their own scientific activity under the guidance of a teacher

should be included in the educational process, should enter the content of training. Pedagogical experiments in the classroom, in which students are participants, should also become an element of methodological novelty.

The educational process at a modern university requires not only profound professional training from the teacher, but also the formation of a modern world-view among students, the basis of which is developed by humanities, including pedagogy, psychology, philosophy. Modern Russian humanities are free from the old forms of extreme ideologization, and nowadays teachers of social disciplines are searching for methodological principles that combine methodological harmony and meaningful pluralism. Thus, we form a discourse, the space of which is structured by the language, and we create a linguistic picture of the world.

Linguistic aspects of humanitarian world picture

The picture of the world in general and the humanitarian world picture in particular, is linguistically mediated, as it is formed on the basis of the language. As W. Humboldt figuratively put it, "every language forms around the people to whom it belongs, a circle from which a person is able to emerge only insofar as he immediately enters into the circle of another language" (Humboldt, 1984).

One of the first who mentioned such concepts as the "picture of the world" and the "language picture of the world" was a German philologist Leo Weisgerber who noted that "the vocabulary of a particular language on the whole also includes along side with a set of linguistic signs a complex of conceptual means of thought, which the language community has; and as each native speaker studies this dictionary, all members of the language community acquire these thinking tools; in this sense it can be said that the capacity of a native language is determined by the fact that it contains in its concepts a certain picture of the world and shares it with all the members of the language community." (Radchenko, 1997, p.56).

According to Z.D. Popova and I.A. Sternin's point of view, the linguistic picture of the world is "the whole set of the representations of the people about the reality at a certain stage of the development of the people, which is fixed in terms of language; the concept of reality reflected in the meanings of linguistic signs – the linguistic division of the world, the linguistic sorting of objects and phenomena, the information about the world, reflected in systemic meanings of words" (Popova & Sternin, 2010).

Language determines the logic of thinking and the set of those concepts that a person uses. This approach is based on ideas of conceptual and linguistic categories (Esperson, Meshchaninov, Blokh, Stepanenko, etc.), which in different languages are transmitted by different language means (lexical, grammatical). Thus, for example, the conceptual category of time exists practically in all languages, while the grammatical category of the genus, being quite vivid in Russian, is not very clearly represented in English and is completely absent. For instance, in the Tatar language, a Yakut's image of snow, with a huge number of definitions of this concept in the Yakut language, differs significantly from the one of a Russian-speaking person, where snow is expressed by one word and, accordingly, correlates with one concept. As it was truly admitted by L. Weisgerber "in the language of a concrete community there live and act spiritual content and treasure of knowledge, which are rightfully called the world picture of a particular language" (Radchenko, 1997, p.250).

The language wealth, according to Dmitry Likhachev's point of view, is determined not only by the wealth of its vocabulary and grammatical features but also 'by the richness of its conceptual world, its conceptual sphere, which is reflected in the language of the nation and its people (Likhachev, 1993).

The notion of the world picture is closely connected with the notions of concept and sphere of concepts. M.Ya. Bloch defines the picture of the world "as a metaphorically designated reflection of the world by consciousness ... as a set of concepts ... and spheres of concepts" (Bloch, 2010).

In every language there are universal concepts, such as "time", "space", "man", "life", "death", "meaning of life", etc. In addition to universal concepts, each nation has its own, inherent only to its people, its culture and language concepts that reflect certain representations of a particular people, such as "will" for the Russians, "order" for the Germans, and so on.

In imaginative literature the real world "is reflected through the individual author's perception of it, and thus is conceptualized" (Asratyan, 2015). Reflecting their own, individual, picture of the world, artists represent not only their own ideas about the world around them, but also those ideas that are characteristic of their culture, their people. And in this case we are dealing not simply with "an individual author's concept but with the linguo-cultural concept of the whole nation" (Asratyan, 2017), which represents the "collective unconscious" of the people, concentrating in itself its language picture of the world.

Within the framework of each culture there are also precedent texts. They are texts that are known to any native speaker and make up their spiritual foundation, such as the Bible for Christians, the Koran for Muslims, the books of the founders of the teachings for their followers, etc. These texts form the "collective unconscious" of the language picture of the world of individuals and their peoples. More precisely, the humanitarian, language picture of the world of each person is a combination of ideas, rhythms, allusions to precedent texts of great thinkers, writers, poets who belong to both their national culture and become classics of the world's philosophical, scientific, religious and artistic thought.

From what has been said, we can conclude that the role of the language picture of the world is dual. On the one hand, it forms all other pictures of the world (humanitarian, natural, religious, etc.), and on the other hand, it itself develops under their influence.

The conceptual and lingvocultural aspects of the world picture should be embodied in educational activities, and especially in the training of future teachers.

Pedagogical aspects of studying the humanitarian world picture

In the course of reforming secondary and higher education in the Russian Federation, there is created a model of practice-oriented training of Russian pedagogical staff within bachelor's programs for training primary school teachers (psychological and pedagogical education). Within the framework of this model it is supposed to teach a number of new disciplines, including the experimental course "Humanitarian picture of the world". The course is designed to help students as future teachers not only receive knowledge in accordance with the content of this subject but also develop in themselves and later on in their pupils meta-subject results. The article shows that in the course of training students should develop knowledge about the peculiarities of the humanitarian world picture, distinguishing it from the natural science one. They are to cultivate the ability to plan successive actions, to predict the results of their work, to analyze the outcome of their activities, to make adjustments if necessary. And they should be able to teach their students these skills in the future.

The content of the discipline should give students material to expand their horizons, to promote the formation of such a world-view in which scientific and extra-scientific pictures of the world, including religious, artistic, and other ones will be synthesized and harmonized. The main goal of the course is that the methodological principles on which it is based should not only be acquired by future teachers, but also should become an integral part of their pedagogical and research thinking as their key meta-subject results.

The Naberezhnye Chelny State Pedagogical University was chosen as a pilot site for teaching the discipline "Humanitarian World Picture". There were composed groups that study within the framework of the training branch "Psychological and Pedagogical Education" in accordance with the content and structure of the Moscow City Psychological and Pedagogical University working program on the basis of the system-

activity approach. The concept of teaching organically fitted into the model of the practice-oriented training of Russian pedagogical staff within bachelor's programs for training primary school teachers (psychological and pedagogical education) on the basis of the network interaction of educational organizations implementing higher education programs and primary general education ones (Guruzhapov & Margolis, 2014).

The course "Humanitarian World Picture" is intended to help students as future teachers not only receive knowledge in accordance with the content of this discipline, but also develop in themselves and later on in their pupils meta-subject results. "Students meta-subject results include universal educational activities they have mastered (cognitive, regulative and communicative), which ensure acquisition of the key competences that make up the core of the ability to learn, as well as mastering of inter-subject concepts" (Rubtzov, Margolis & Guruzhapov, 2010).

The development of research training activities, including skills in working with information (obtaining it from various sources, analyzing, systematizing, etc.) is most facilitated by studying the basic topics of the course: the notion of a "cultural-historical type" in philosophy and psychology; civilization approach in the sciences of man and society; "the world picture" as an essential characteristic of the cultural-historical type within the framework of civilization approach.

As a result of studying the specifics of qualitative research methods, of revealing general and special features while demarcating sciences on nature and man, of analyzing the nomothetic and idiographic methods in the history of science students develops the ability to clearly define the areas of the known and the unknown, which they'll be able to cultivate in their future pupils.

The course is conceptually based on ensuring that the learning activity of students is consistent with their age characteristics and individual abilities. The basic system-activity principle is that the learning process is viewed not as a simple transfer and assimilation of knowledge, but as a joint activity, where students themselves are the subjects of their activity and receive not a 'ready-made' knowledge but extract it themselves and with the assistance of a teacher. In this process, students are not consumers of knowledge, they learn to be aware of the content and forms of their learning activity, efficiently participate in their improvement and application.

In teaching the course "Humanitarian World Picture," the system-activity approach is used to increase students' interest in the subject as a whole and in each problem under study, to boost their educational motivation, and to form their own world-view. The traditional method of teaching increasingly remains in the past and is replaced by the inclusion of students into the process of active self-acquisition of knowledge. They receive assignments and general instructions on certain topics, so that they would be able with the help of a teacher to collect the necessary training material themselves. This material is used in classroom activities not only and not so much for revision and consolidation, but mainly for reflexive actions. The material becomes the subject of the teacher's dialogue with the students. In the process of discussion, students develop deep understanding of the topic under study. The identification of different points of view in the scientific literature helps students to be included into the process of interpretation and thereby into understanding the problems studied.

In the course of studying the discipline "Humanitarian World Picture" students should develop the ability to set objectives and goals, plan successive actions, forecast results, analyze the outcome of activities, make adjustments and define new objectives and goals based on the results of the work. In the future they should be able to teach their pupils these skills. This process should be facilitated by the study of all the themes of the discipline, but the most important ones are "Pedagogy from the Point of View of Preserving and Transferring Cultural Heritage", "The Problem of Cultural Borrowings within the Framework of the Russian Education System Reform", "The Humanitarian World Picture and the Problem of the Revival of Russia".

While studying the topic "Humanitarian World Picture within the Framework of All World Pictures," the origins and modern "composition" of the world picture are revealed. The systemic approach is treated as the methodological basis of the humanitarian world picture. Students learn themselves and acquire the ability to teach their pupils the skills of semantic reading. They learn to distinguish the main idea, the main facts and to establish their logical sequence. They also develop skills of self-observation, self-control, self-assessment in the process of communicative activity.

The content of the discipline "Humanitarian World Picture" is certain to provide students with rich educational material for expanding their mental outlooks and growing culture. Therefore, students should master a set of general cultural competences, which include: socio-cultural, pragmatic, communicative, informational, philosophical, motivational, regulatory, general scientific (Koldina, Vaganova, & Trutanova, 2017). At the same time, future teachers should develop value orientations that make up the essence of students' professional and humanistic convictions: treatment of their pedagogical activity as a vocation; pedagogical humanism; empathy towards students; dialogue and cooperation in teaching and communication.

However, the main goal of teaching the discipline "Humanitarian World Picture" at a pedagogical university is determined by the fact that future teachers should acquire methodological principles on which the course is based, and these principles as key meta-subject results should become an integral part of their pedagogical and research thinking.

Conclusion

The lively and argumentative nature of the educational process itself should help a future specialist to develop such necessary qualities as the ability to conduct debates, to politely but firmly defend one's convictions, to listen attentively to the opinions of others, and, if necessary, to take the point of view of opponents. A teacher should persistently remind students that the humanitarian world picture is never frozen, and its comprehension is always a living and creative process. If in the study of natural and mathematical sciences the value attitude of a researcher to laws and formulas can be considered the most senseless, then in the study of philosophy the most senseless and even impossible is mechanical memorizing of a certain amount of knowledge. But the worst in social and humanitarian cognition is imposing of certain doctrines by political methods. One might call it the apotheosis of meaninglessness.

And here we undoubtedly come across the deepest contradiction and the greatest paradox of the entire humanitarian consciousness. We seek knowledge and ideas that would be final and absolute, i.e. they would not be revised by someone's will, and would not depend on changing circumstances. But at the same time we understand that we shouldn't expect from humanities indisputable, ready and final knowledge like a geometric theorem or a chemical formula.

Argumentative and eternally searching nature of humanitarian knowledge means for each person the necessity to weigh up and evaluate different approaches, to draw their own conclusions and defend them. It can be said that each of us and the whole society is constantly painting and redrawing the humanitarian world picture. We are forced to become full participants in the dispute, in which there are always several positions on the same issue. We are obliged to compare, weigh up, doubt, critically treat some arguments, be more sympathetic towards others, if possible to develop our own ideas, critically treat them later on, and even revise them, if necessary.

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