Interethnic conflicts: prevention and reduction by means of intercultural development

Conflictos interétnicos: prevención y reducción a través del desarrollo intercultural

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1. Introduction

Every year at the Southern Federal University, 2000 foreign students come to study from more than 50 countries of the world. In view of such multiculturalism, the issues of the application of correctness and tact, attentiveness in Interethnic, interpersonal communication, both verbal and non-verbal, are important. The researchers found that many contradictions arise from territorial claims. There are about 2 thousand ethnic groups and tribes on our planet. They live in 180 countries. Globally, the consequences of differences in moral values, expressed in ethnic conflicts can be seen in many countries. In recent years conflicts arose, among others, in Yugoslavia, Angola, Somalia, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Syria, Yemen, Central African Republic and Iraq. The same reasons lie behind the protracted conflict in eastern Ukraine, the confrontation of Saudi Arabia and Iran, as well as the recent terrorist attacks in Berlin and Istanbul. Interethnic conflicts as a form of communication and interaction between nations in these instances, which are far from being isolated occurrences, confirm the relevance of the research topic.

The theme of interethnic conflicts is widely studied in various fields of scientific knowledge: philosophical, sociological, cultural, conflictology, psychological and pedagogical, political (Constitution of Russia, Ed. 2018-2019; Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007; Charter of the United Nations, 1945a, 1945b) and others.

Consequently, this can be seen as a contradiction: there is a large elaboration of the research topic in determining the causes of conflicts, diagnosing their manifestations, monitoring, statistical and social studies, but still we get daily information on the regularity of conflicts and tensions in the Interethnic environment of various countries.

Based on the contradictions outlined above, the scientific problem of the research is determined: Regulation, prevention and reduction of Interethnic conflicts among young people, which needs to be addressed not only in our country, but also abroad. Therefore, the purpose of the study is: the creation of a system for the prevention and reduction of Interethnic conflicts of modern youth in a higher educational institution on the example of the discipline: "Technologies of project activity".

It is worth noting the factors that prevent Interethnic conflicts: regular and systematic events and projects organized by social institutions on topics that enlighten the cultural heritage and traditions of the people, as well as political awareness in order to develop ethno-political orientation; self-education and interest in the study of world art and culture, the analysis of works of art; emotional perception of elements of folk art culture.

In a wide range of modern educational technologies, a significant role is played by technology project activities. The latter are one of the active forms of prevention of degradation of spiritual, moral norms and cultural values of modern youth.

The hypothesis of the study. Based on the positive experience in the use and application of design techniques, we can assume that the methodological system and the activation of the project activity of students in high school, during training sessions on themes of folk art of neighboring regions, will increase the level of ethnic culture and personal cultural identity. Thus, forming the mentality of today’s youth and the prevention of interethnic conflicts.
2. Literature review


2.1. Examples in contemporary art and culture

There are many examples in contemporary art and culture, where the signs of spiritual degradation of a person are clearly shown: perversions, anti-humanism, provocation. A striking example of the demonstration of these categories is the creative projects of postmodern artists Gunther von Hagens (Savchenko, 2015) and Damien Hirst (1991). The first creates sculptures from the corpses of people, showing them playing cards or depicting other scenes from the everyday existence of living people. The second creates installations from the corpses of animals. The moral side of these works was clearly not important for the authors. The main thing – entertainment and economic gain. Mockery of life, feelings of other cruelty became the objective manifestations of modern culture.

Scandalous works of art carrying a protest character and defaming the name of statesmen can be found in any era: Japanese engraver Kitagawa Utamaro (1803-1804), Russian artist, who until 2013 was also a teacher at Krasnodar State University of Culture and Arts, Lusine Dzhanayan ("White ring", 2012). In addition, elements that reflect the main artistic image, and sometimes the artistic techniques can be immoral or unethical (Vlaskin, 2015; Midtbøen, 2016).

Some artists, both in Russia and abroad express themselves in the work of non-standard way: like selling their waste products on the auction ("Artist's shit" by Piero Manzoni, Milan, 1961), create a picture with various parts of the body: tongue, breasts, etc., and sometimes excrements of animals (Snow, 1985; Skorenko, 2009).

You can also note the diverse political, social or religious performances, allegedly directed by the authors to the expression and approval of the freedom of choice of a person, for example, the performance of the artist Oleg Kulik "Mad Dog, or Last Taboo, Guarded by a Lonely Cerberus". Another example of such a performance was held in Marat Gelman Gallery in Moscow on November 23, 1994: destruction of religious icons with an ax, etc. (Kravtsova, 2014).

Living in an environment filled with such "creative" examples of art, people begin to gradually lose their spirituality, respect, love, compassion and humanism.


It was the great sociologist Sorokin (1992), who wrote: "contemporary art is predominantly a museum of social and cultural pathology...". From these works of great scientists, we can see how mass art has a negative and immoral influence on contemporary society.

We agree with researcher Chizhevich (2017, p. 2), which examining the issue of Interethnic conflicts in the youth environment indicates: "there is a need to search for new ways to form a tolerant consciousness, in which modern art plays a huge role, such as music, cinema, painting, etc., as they have enormous prestige and influence on young people".

2.2. Ways to resolve Interethnic conflicts


Despite the fact that in any society conflicts are inevitable, the percentage of their reduction for the above reasons is possible through the formation of the mentality and culture of communication. In earlier works, the stages of the formation of the mentality of students of artistic directions of universities have already been noted: intercultural self-determination, – identification, – interaction. Chumarrina et al., (2017).

It is in the study of traditional culture and interaction with other peoples that a change occurs in the individual and, subsequently, in public consciousness, the transformation of the stereotype of the behavior of communication with a person of a different race. In the process of communicative and interactive activities with a certain ethnic group, not only knowledge of its traditional culture is formed, but also a different style of communication with this people. There is an understanding of their culture, customs.

Researchers at Ezzati and Erdal (2018, p. 379), deciding whether to agree to all or residents "have to agree on some things" in post-terror Norway, offer one of the best solutions: "A combination of consensus and challenging – facilitating approaches can counteract polarization".

Studying the psychological issues of desegregation policy in the educational environment, scientists of Thijs and Verkuyten (2013, p. 85) investigated the factors affecting the Interethnic relations of students: "The important factors are the presence of multicultural education of inclusive schools, student-teacher relations, peers and norms and networks, but also the role of relationships outside the school context with parents and peers".

One of the important factors can also be identified from the study by Tkachenko (2017, p. 6). "The problem of forming a positive culture of international communication is a priority in the system of measures to ensure national and civilization security of international relations".
We should mention positive experience of Smith (2016, p. 86) from The University of Auckland New Zealand, who conducted research in educational institutions, where most migrants were from the Pacific region. Through the visual arts (fine art), she revealed the way in which European teachers communicate with students of the Pacific region.

It is worth pointing out, that the study by Myuller et al., (2016) provides data: "50% believe that solving problems of international relations depends on the behavior of sound national policy and tolerance propaganda (38%). More than half of the respondents (58%) believe that the proximity of different nationalities among young people certainly gives positive results, 53% would like to learn more about the customs, traditions and history of the peoples whose representatives live and study with them”.

Moscow University teacher Tkachenko (2017, p. 3) suggests using the dialogue of cultures in the formation of Interethnic communication. “Only the dialogue of cultures contributes to the formation of national self-preservation and the effective development of traditional cultures”. The theme of forming a national culture through Interethnic communication can be traced in other studies. So, scientists Marlowe et al., (2016) from New Zealand conducted an experiment in which they showed the importance of transnational relations by means of media platforms for communication between migrants and their children.

Researchers in the psychology of conflict in the student environment Belousova and Sharapa (2015, p. 4) suggest their resolution and prevention by means of forming “optimal tolerance among the subjects of Interethnic interaction, in our case among students, reflecting the level of culture of Interethnic communication, which is a means of achieving Interethnic harmony, an indicator of people’s maturity, their willingness to cooperate. The organization of general cultural events in which representatives of other nationalities will take part serves as a very effective method. Time spent together will help rally them and reduce contradictions between social groups of different ethnic origin”.

As a researcher, Brubaker (2012) considers identity, not only as a problem of social and political action, designed to shed light on the “processable, interactive development of the type of collective self-understanding, solidarity or “grouphood” that makes collective action possible”. We also believe the system of Interethnic interactions is an accomplice of cultural and ethnic identity.

Researchers Vorobyova, Poleschuk (2015, pp. 304–305) include among some of the fundamental principles of Interethnic communication the following: the obligatory connection of educational activities with the practice of Interethnic communication, education of a humanistic attitude towards people of any nationality; systematic and integrated approach to solving the problem of tolerant Interethnic communication; coordination of all forces affecting the nature of Interethnic communication. Using their institute as an example, scientists showed the structure of the formation of Interethnic tolerance and Interethnic communication. The authors of the study propose to introduce into the educational process of the Yurginsky Technological Institute disciplines of the general cultural cycle focused on the study of the characteristics of various peoples. One of them is ethnopsychology which includes not only training, but also “practical contacts between representatives of different ethnic groups, at the interstate and regional levels, where ethnic differences are significant,” that is, an interdisciplinary approach is. "The department of extracurricular activities of the institute holds an annual festival of national cultures. The main purpose of the event is: to improve and support students’ tolerance”. Participation of students in the annual open competition of scientific works "Dialogue of Cultures”.

“A successful resolution of the conflict after getting independence is seeking to provide a process in which all people are satisfied and that adheres to a positive world. ... People need and deserve useful, relevant conflict resolution processes; society depends on them in maintaining order and promoting a healthy standard of conduct” (Gang, 2014, p. 135).

In a scientific article, lawyer and teacher Splavskaya (2015, p. 42) offers methods and techniques for the prevention of Interethnic conflicts. Namely, she allocates types of prevention: general and specific. The latter “includes remedial and rehabilitation measures, involves the use of a variety of social and legal assistance to young people, protecting them from xenophobia, extremism, harassment, aggression, cruelty, violence and the negative impact of the anti-social environment”. She goes on to suggest organizing a set of events – projects involving student youth as volunteers. Indicates “the need to use modern innovative technologies aimed at the implementation of social projects aimed at preventing extremism”. We fully agree with this proposal.

2.3. Project technologies in an educational institution as a method for resolving and preventing interethnic conflicts.

Design technologies in education are based on the project method, which was founded by American philosophers, educator John Dewey and educator William Heard Kilpatrick. The successors of the ideas were scientists-pedagogues Shulgin, Krupenia, Ignatiev, Shatsky (creating the concept of interaction between the environment and school) (Nedurmagomedov and Nesgovorova, 2013). It is known, that the purpose of learning by means of project technologies is the acquisition of knowledge based on labor. The content of the curriculum was based on socially useful matters. In 1929 complex project programs were developed. Subjects were replaced by practical projects. However, the design method was banned in the USSR since 1931 and has been begun to be applied again in modern Russia only for about 10-15 years.

We consider project activity as a joint educational, cognitive, creative or play activity of students and teachers, containing a common goal, agreed methods, ways of activity aimed at achieving a common result.

Scientist-teacher Marutyun (2013, p. 70) offered using her positive experience in the prevention of Interethnic conflicts in the educational environment, using the SFU Internet Club site, as a project technology in the Southern Federal University. The project "SFU Unites" has been working since 2011, it includes methods developed by specialists, teachers, conflictologists and monitoring methods developed by sociologists. The project is focused on “reducing the level of Interethnic tensions and preventive measures in Interethnic conflicts among Rostov oblast (RO) students”.

The tasks are focused on the analysis and diagnostics of the situation and conditions that form the value and tolerant attitude of young people of different diasporas in a socio-cultural environment, “creating sustainable channels of communication both in a multicultural environment” and between different social institutions – civil society and authorities (Marutyun, 2013).

The project implementation methods were aimed at extracurricular activities with students:

Conducting by the students of the direction of conflictology trainings in a number of secondary general and secondary special educational institutions of the RO;

Organization and holding of the festival of cultures "SFU UNITES";
The concepts of morality and ethics take place. The stage includes the content as practical work each student to address the

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Stage of analysis and understanding of the significance of intercultural development. It defines a detailed analysis of

social institutions and self-education.

Consider these stages in more detail (taking into account the activities and types of works):

factor (indicated in Figure 1), which passes regularly and repeatedly (during the period of each event), affects a certain stage

the culture of our heritage”; and types of work: report, creative work in the material, participation in the exhibition. Each

Factors are activated through a phased study of the general theme of the project activity “Art and Culture – Eternal

Values”. Namely: the information stage; the stage of analysis and understanding of the significance of intercultural
development; stage of ethnoculture formation; cultural identity.

The general theme is divided into several events: “Moral and morality in works of art”, “My culture”, “Modern art as part of
the culture of our heritage”; and types of work: report, creative work in the material, participation in the exhibition. Each
factor (indicated in Figure 1), which passes regularly and repeatedly (during the period of each event), affects a certain stage
in the implementation of the project. The principled approach is gradual and gradual, the methodology is humanistic.

Consider these stages in more detail (taking into account the activities and types of works):

Information stage. Having received certain subjects to choose from, students' subgroup defines scientific apparatus of the
research problem. Its rationale. Here there is a broadening of outlook, worldview, the general concepts of the studied
culture, knowledge of the cultural values. Through observation, factors are clearly manifested here: projects organized by
social institutions and self-education.

1 event: familiarization with the artwork, identification of the problem of morality and ethics in the image: Repin,
Supper.

2 event: there is a definition of the theme of the idea, material, and artistic image, revealing the features and
traditions of the represented culture.

3 event: taking part in the exhibition, the student gets acquainted with the objects of art and culture of various ethnic
groups, presenting his own artistic work as well. At the stage of preparation of the representatives of the groups get
acquainted with the list of exhibits, discussion platforms and space, to accommodate them, the publication of posters,
leaflets.

Stage of analysis and understanding of the significance of intercultural development. It defines a detailed analysis of
information about the traditional culture of the studied ethnos, art, customs, and the collection of material. The first attitude,
intercultural self-determination, self-development manifests itself, the concept of the morality of different cultures is
determined. The factors of Self-education and Psychological interact with this stage.

1 event: analysis and collection of information about the work of art, conditions, circumstances, causes, historical
events, the prerequisites for its writing and emotional perception.

2 event: includes the analysis and development of the sketch in color, cardboard, dimensions for performing creative
work, features and nuances of technological work in the material.

3 event: developing the concept of the exhibition, the concept of placing exhibits, there is an interest in the design of
the exhibition, initiative, a positive perception of creative activity.

Stage of formation of ethnoculture in the individual consciousness of the individual. Conscious perception and comparison of
the concepts of morality and ethics takes place. The stage includes the content as practical work each student to address the
design problems of social practices. Surveys, testing, and preparing for larger-scale events: organizing exhibitions, workshops, conferences, actions, quizzes, contests, games, shows and other events and festivities involving communication and interaction of ethnic groups.

At this stage, students experience a change in stereotypical subconscious behavior and develop a positive, tolerant attitude in the intercultural space. All three factors influence the formation here.

1 event: understanding and positive attitude to the topic and the problem of morality and ethics occurs as a result of communication, preparation of the report and analysis of the artistic work.

2 event: the relation to the studied culture at the level of the subconscious is fixed by using of decorative symbolism, ornamentation (knowledge of semantics is necessary) and the language of art in the works. In the works of the students from “Social work” and “Philosophy” it is offered to use collage, photography, the use of textures and textures of different materials, elements of monotypes.

3 event: the discussion of the principal layout of the exhibition facilities, the distribution of tasks for its organization, understanding of its purpose, the desire to be heard at the level of a multi-ethnic society is included in the communication of students in the system of intercultural interaction.

Stage 4 of the formation of cultural identity is characterized by the willingness of openness and the desire of the student for intercultural communication in a socio-cultural environment. At this stage, students of art produce creative works (as part of solving the project theme) in an ethnic style, are psychologically ready for intercultural communication and interaction in the process of participation in the exhibition. In all areas of the students at this stage there is a certain position, attitude to study culture, tolerant perception of negative phenomena among ethnic groups, and a willingness to help in a difficult situation, with the coordination of the project manager.

1 event: presenting of the report during the conference, forming personal position on the problem, the study’s topics; the opinions and comments of the group are taken into account.

2 event: finishing creative work in the material, fixed scientific understanding represents the culture. Knowing her through the material (ceramics, painting on wood, embroidery and others), there is a rapprochement with the ethnic group at the level of art, emotional attitude, tolerant perception.

3 event: positioning work on the platform according to the plan of organization of the exhibition, the students learn to communicate, perpetuate tolerance towards representatives of other ethnic groups in the system of intercultural communication.

As can be seen from the above, each of the three events alternately goes through the whole cycle of stages.

The testing method focuses on diagnostics and the type of ethnic identity.

Scientists Soldatova (specialist in the psychology of Interethnic relations) and Ryzhova (Ph.D. in sociology, expert on ethnic and civic identity in the context of Interethnic tolerance) developed a method for determining the emotional attitude of people to ethnic groups (1997). As well as such manifestations as tolerance, intolerance, etc.


In the assignment, students need to agree or disagree (I agree. Rather, I agree. I partially agree, I partially disagree, Rather disagree, I Disagree) with the popular sayings of various people suggested to them. The authors of the test offer 30 statements.

Starting with the sentence “I am a person who ...” you need to start testing.

prefers the lifestyle of his people, but with great interest applied to other nations
considers that Interethnic marriages destroy people
often feels superior to people of other nationalities.
considers that the rights of a nation are always higher than human rights
considers that in everyday communication nationality does not matter
prefers lifestyle of his people only
does not usually hide his nationality
considers that true friendship can only be between people of the same nationality.
often feels ashamed of people of their nationality.
considers that any means are good for protecting the interests of one's people.

And other

4. Results
In the process of observation during the events, indicators were identified for all three groups of participants. (See Table 1. Indicators of the level of formation of personal cultural identity)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>High level (%)</th>
<th>Average level (%)</th>
<th>Low level (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forming of ethnological culture</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-education and interest in the study of world art culture, the analysis of works of art;</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional perception of elements of folk art culture</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formation of sustainable basic cultural values</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a result of a test survey of 30 questions, 60 questionnaires were analyzed. Using the scale of scientists Soldatova and Ryzhova (1997), revealed the following results: 60 students willingly answered 30 questions. Following the calculations, according to the processing of answers on a 6-point scale, 37 (61.67%) students belong to the group of positive ethnic identity – “Normal”.

10 (16.67%) students in the group "Ethnic indifference"
7 (11.66%) students in the group "Ethno-egoism"
6 (10%) students to the group "Ethno-nihilism".

No students could be placed in the groups "Ethno-fanatism", "Ethno-isolationism".

5. Discussion
Analyzing the obtained results, it should be noted that the measures taken to revitalize the project activity on the theme "Art and Culture – Eternal Values" according to the methodological system proposed by us have a positive effect on the formation of the cultural identity of students: 70% of them have formed ethnological culture (according to observations); 61.67% – belong to positive ethnic identity (according to the results of a test – survey).

Almost all students showed interest in creative work on the given themes and made good presentations. During the exhibition, tensions in communication were not noticed. However, some students had anxiety in the preparation and placement of exhibits. This excitement has the specifics of a professional nature, and does not apply to Interethnic conflict.

The positive results of the formation of ethnic identity among students at the university are confirmed by the absence of aggression and tension in relations between representatives of different ethnic groups. In addition, this fact is an integral part of social and psychological condition for the development of successful cultural identity of the person in intercultural communication (by means of project activities). Therefore, the positive experience of using project technologies contributes to the prevention and reduction of Interethnic conflicts among young people.

6. Conclusions
In our study, it has been suggested, that the creation of methodical system and use of design activity of students in high school, during the training of classroom sessions on the themes of folk art of neighboring regions, will increase the level of ethnic culture and cultural identity of the person, it will lead to the prevention and reduction of Interethnic conflicts.

The literary review also showed the main directions of resolving and preventing Interethnic conflicts: a humanistic approach to education, political awareness, the use of educational technologies as project ones, which activates cohesion, collectivism,
and creative cognitive activity in intercultural interaction. Besides the fundamental method is the dialogue cultures combination consensus-contestant system (in case of selection of certain rules of behavior in cross-cultural communication).

Methodical system that we developed is based on the gradual formation of personal cultural identity in the project activities on the theme "Art and culture – the eternal values" (information, analysis, and the significance of intercultural development, the formation ethno-culture, cultural identity). All stages of the formation of cultural identity of an individual interact with three factors that influence the reduction of conflicts:

- events and projects organized by social institutions,
- self-education and interest in the study of world art culture.
- psychological factor. Emotional perception.

Based on the criteria developed by us for assessing the formation of cultural identity, we came to the conclusion that 63% of students and more are marked by:

- the formation of ethnotypical culture;
- self-education and interest in the study of world art culture, the analysis of works of art;
- emotional perception of elements of folk art culture;
- the formation of sustainable basic cultural values;

An essential condition for the implementation of the system proposed by us is the diagnosis of the type of ethnic identity. The monitoring conducted on this issue in the process of project activities showed a positive result. That speaks of a conscious and tolerant attitude towards other ethnic groups. The form of the test: survey.

The main research methods: rapid survey, comparative analysis, observation, test survey.

Thus, the methodological system of the formation of cultural identity in the context of the revitalization of project activities (using the example of the discipline “Technologies of Project Activities”) contributes to the prevention and reduction of Interehtnic conflicts, and also effectively influences the formation of mentality.

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