**Multiculturalism
as a Challenge for Contemporary
Preschool and Elementary School
Education**

Journal of Preschool and Elementary School Education

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Reports and Reviews

Editorial

After having successfully published the first two issues of the Journal of Preschool and Elementary School Education, which have been widely read, the third issue of the first international academic periodical devoted to issues concerning preschool and elementary school education is now available. While previous issues dealt with contemporary tendencies, problems and difficulties concerning children's education in preschools and elementary schools, the topic of this issue is *Multiculturalism as a Challenge for Contemporary Preschool and Elementary School Education*. There were several reasons as to why the editorial board chose this topic. Members of the editorial board are the citizens of the European Union and its motto is "United in Diversity". The themes of the existence, recognition or preservation of different cultures or cultural identities within a unified society have become more and more popular in various fields, including education. The recently formed discipline of multicultural education, which addresses the question of social equality in social context, influences the curricula of pre-primary and primary education in many countries, as well as figuring in the university study programmes preparing preschool and elementary school teachers.

It is not easy to define the concept of multiculturalism as well as multicultural education, because it contains many approaches and perspectives, and the introduction of this journal does not provide enough space to do it. However, in the separate articles, the authors from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia attempt to reflect the topic of multiculturalism as a challenge for contemporary preschool and elementary school education when taking into account these approaches and perspectives. Therefore, this issue brings international insight onto the given topic.

Rozalina Engels-Kritidis from Sofia University, Bulgaria, presents an article entitled Language Support for Children with a Background of

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Migration in Early-years Settings in Bavaria with a Focus on Munich. The author presents the research results of the assessment of migrants' children in terms of the level of their German language prior to school entry. She claims that the active language learning support of migrants' children should begin much earlier than is currently the case.

Martin Kaleja from Ostrava University, the Czech Republic, deals with the major problem that human society has still not reached, in terms of its development, social equality. His article is mainly about the topic of social equality, and in it he defines the basic terminology, clarifies the issue in the context of the reduction of prejudices and stereotypes, and emphasizes the importance of the development of processes and mechanisms for social equality for supporting humanity in human beings.

Werona Król from the Pedagogical University of Cracow, Poland, discusses five dimensions of multicultural education established by Bank, who is widely regarded as the founder of multicultural education. The author also shares some ideas as to how these dimensions are or can be used to assist teachers in integrating multicultural content into their primary foreign language classrooms.

Multiculturalism in preschools and elementary schools as a new challenge in institutional education is the topic with which *Imre Lipcsei* from Szent Istvan University, deals. He mentions that the social and cultural environment of kindergartens and schools have undergone considerable changes during the past few decades, in the sense that these schools are attended by children with a wide range of economic, cultural and family backgrounds. This requires an acceptance of diversity (different religions, traditions, customs etc.) and this diversity requires new competences from teachers.

In her article, *Alica Petrasová* from the University of Presov, Slovak Republic, emphasises the role of cooperative teaching and learning in creating an inclusive and interactive classroom. According to the author, cooperative learning groups encourage positive social interaction among students of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. She also claims that students who are taught in this way have great potential to facilitate the

building of cross-ethnic friendships and to reduce racial stereotyping, discrimination, and prejudice.

The text written by *Iwona Samborska*, from the University of Bielsko-Biala, Poland, points to the problem of creating an identity in a culturally diverse space. She asked two important questions related to the topic: What is the importance of the everyday experience of a six-year old child in creating its identity? To what extent is a six-year old conscious of its embodied and rooted experience? The obtained answers by 94 six-year old children in an urban environment enabled the identification of three groups of experiences of children situated in the individually constructed, as well as the culturally and socially confirmed locale.

Ekaterina Sofronieva's article summarizes professionals' opinions about if and when small children should start learning a new/foreign language. Due to the indisputable benefits of early language learning, it is essential that teachers are trained who can provide this instruction. Therefore, the author writes about degree programmes in Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria, providing combined expertise both in language teaching and early year's pedagogy.

The title of the article written by *Barbara Surma* from the Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow, Poland, is From Regional to Intercultural Education in Polish Kindergartens. The author reflects on the assumptions of intercultural education in kindergartens as well as the direction of changes in regional and intercultural kindergarten education in Poland. She claims that although the phenomenon of multiculturalism and interculturalism has been slightly emphasized in the current national curriculum, it does not take into account Polish kindergartens.

The final article is about fostering tolerance in pupils. The author, *Mária Vargová* from the Catholic University in Ružomberok, Slovak Republic, asked this question and she tried to answer it in the article dealing with the application of multicultural education at schools. She characterises multicultural education as a cross-cutting theme in the state educational programme ISCED 1 – primary education. She emphasises that it is important that teachers don't have prejudices against any

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ethnic group or nationality and they should also use the appropriate methods to foster tolerance in pupils.

It is clear that the authors provide solutions in relation to the issue of multiculturalism in contemporary preschool and elementary school education from various viewpoints, they reflect and analyse the current state of affairs, present conclusions on the basis of survey results, and propose possible ways to improve the current situation. The authors have attempted to contribute solutions to various aspects of this topic and we hope their work will become the starting point in the future when dealing with the issues of multiculturalism and multicultural education within preschool and elementary school education.

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Articles

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Language Support for Children from a Migration Background in Early-Years Settings in Bavaria with a focus on Munich

Introduction

Migration is an inseparable part of the dynamically-changing world of the 21st century, a fact that explains the increasing interest of various scientific areas in issues that are related to the temporary or permanent settlement of people in countries other than their own.

With 82.2 million inhabitants, the Federal Republic of Germany has the largest population in Europe. Around 15 million people (20% of the population) are either immigrants or have at least one parent with a non-German background. More than a quarter of young people of an age relevant to education (up to 25 years) and as many as one-third of children under school age (33% of children up to the age of 6) come from migrant families (Rauschenbach, 2008).

According to the migration data about Munich, the capital of Bavaria, as of 31 July 2006 (Key Data, 2006), out of 1 313 093 inhabitants, 302 479 have a background of migration, which means 23% of the inhabitants are foreigners. In 1970 non-German nationals accounted for 13.8%; therefore, in the last 46 years their number has increased significantly. Groups numbering over 10 000 inhabitants include nationalities such as the Turks 3.4%; Croats, 1.9%; Serbs (including those from Montenegro) 1.9%; Greeks 1.7%; Italians 1.6%; Bosnians 1,3%; Poles 0.9%. 9 917 children under 6 years account for 14.4% of the total number of foreigners in Munich. Therefore, there is an evident need for finding tools for improving the

process of integration of children with a migrant background in Germany, especially bearing in mind that the numbers have increased during the last six years.

Taking into consideration the limitation of having to rely only on data from English-language sources, as well as on the author's first-hand observations during her one-month research visit in Germany, the current paper aims to present the main policies and practices in the field of language support for children with a background of migration in early-years settings in Bavaria, with particular focus on the city of Munich. In this regard, the paper seeks to accomplish the following primary objectives:

1) To present some of the main features of contemporary preschool education in Munich (Bavaria);
2) To give an idea of the number of children with a background of migration and their situation in the early-years settings in Bavaria;
3) To describe the application of the screening tools used in Munich for assessing the level of German language prior to school entry;
4) To emphasize the important role of the Intercultural Education and Language Section (part of the Department of Education and Sport of the City of Munich) in language support for children from families with a background of migration.

Some current facts and figures connected with preschool education and care in Munich

In the introduction of *The Munich Approach Booklet* (2009, p. 3), the Deputy Mayor, Christine Strobl, proudly emphasizes that Munich has been running kindergartens since 1907, which from the beginning were under the auspices of the Education Department and so have always been part of the education system; therefore, work with children aged between 3 and 6 years obviously involves not only supervision but also guidance and education. She also emphasizes equal opportunity as an overriding principle in the field of education; in other words, family back-

ground alone should not determine (and possibly hamper) a child's progress through the school system.

The "Munich approach", as presented in *The Munich Approach Booklet* (2009, p. 5), is a general pedagogic concept which is under constant development. The concept aims to provide citizens of all ages, from children to pensioners, with the appropriate educational services for a large city. The aim is to help every individual fulfil his or her potential; or, in other words, provide "tailor-made education".

There are approximately 1 180 nursery groups, kindergartens, and after-school clubs in Munich, approximately 400 of which are public (in that they belong to the City of Munich) while the rest (about 780) are private, mostly non-profit centres either with church governance or run by other welfare agencies. The large number of private kindergartens is connected with the fact that, since the early 1990s, some of the childcare services have been transferred to private operators in order to expand available places (The Munich Approach Booklet, 2009, p. 3). According to the press release of the Department for Education and Sport of the City of Munich (Presseinformation, 2011), in 2011 the number of children in public nursery groups was 3 030, while in private ones there were 7 831 children. The number of children in kindergartens is different and not proportional to the number of groups: the number of children in public kindergartens (17 095) is close to the number in private ones (19 051) because some of the centres of the latter have a smaller number of groups within them.

In Bavaria, the maximum number of children in a kindergarten group is limited to 25. This number can be reduced if the group includes children with special educational needs; according to the regulation in Bavaria, one disadvantaged child is the equivalent of 4.5 children without special needs. This means that if a group includes two children with special educational needs, the maximum number will be reduced by 9 children. Similarly, there is a ratio for children with a background of migration: one child with a background of migration is equivalent to 1.3 children of native German origin. However, if a group includes children with immigrant backgrounds, the maximum number of children does not have to change;

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instead, more staff can be assigned. Therefore, including children with special needs means a reduction in the total number of children in the group, whereas groups with a certain number of immigrant children can apply for additional staff. In Bavaria, one educator is required per maximum of 11 children in the kindergarten (BayKiBiG, 2012).

According to the official press release of the Department for Education and Sport of the City of Munich (Presseinformation, 2011), there are plans to spend 100 000 000 euros for building new nurseries before 1 August 2013, which is when the law defining a mandatory place for every child aged between 1 and 3 years who requires one will come in effect. According to Rauschenbach (2012, p. 11), this "need" is currently estimated at around 37% in the West and 51% in the East. This means that in the West another 260 000 nursery places will need to be made available between March 2011 and August 2013 if the interim goal is to be reached.

When developing an awareness of the control of education and care control in the pre-school settings in Bavaria, once again we should note that in Germany, public administration does not directly provide the majority of these services (at least in the western *Länder*) but co-operates with a variety of non-profit service agencies. Here, church and voluntary organisations play a vital role; around two-thirds of centre-based early education/care provisions across the country are run by these so-called "free providers" (*Freie Träger der Jugendhilfe)* (Oberhuemer, 2012). Therefore, educational specialists from the City of Munich, Section for Preschool Education and Care control the work of the educators, and for those in the public domain there is one controlling person who is responsible for 10 to 12 kindergartens. Eighteen people control the work in all 780 private and church kindergartens; but the aforementioned private agencies are themselves responsible for kindergartens as well, so these 18 people actually control the quality of the agencies' work.

As per the official press release of the Department for Education and Sport of the City of Munich (Presseinformation, 2011), during the 2011–2016 period, 330 000 000 euros (separate from the aforementioned 100 000 000 euros for building new nurseries before 1 August 2013) are planned for investment in the sector of nurseries, kindergartens, "hort"

(some of the places where children in the age-group 6 to 10 go after school), and children's centres. These funds are expected to create 3 516 places in nurseries; 4 525 places in kindergartens, 1 625 places in "hort" (out-of-school provision for children from entry to school up to 10 or 12 years), and 1 600 places in day centres. This means the investment per a place in a new kindergarten in a large building is around 20 000 euro; the amount for a place in a "hort" is 25 000 euro, while for a place in a nursery it is 38 000 euro.

According to Presseinformation (2011), with regard to the need for early childhood educators, the local Government has started a programme for the re-qualification of unemployed primary school teachers in order to give them the qualification, knowledge and skills to work with children of preschool age.

Children from a Migration Background in Early-Years Settings in Bavaria

More than a quarter of children in centre-based settings in the western part of Germany come from families where at least one parent was born outside Germany; over half of those children do not speak German at home (Leu & Schelle, 2009, p. 11). The OECD Background Report for Germany indicates that "children with a migration background enter kindergarten later than German children. Roughly 25% of foreign children aged between 3 and 6 years do not attend kindergarten at all; for German children (with a migration background), this figure is almost 19%" (OECD, 2006, p. 71).

Many of the day care centres in Munich have a large number of families from other countries: some of them are attended by children from up to 30 different nations. These institutions need special conditions and educational approaches, as well as close contact with children and their parents in order to cope with this situation. It requires a special approach that describes the theory of intercultural education for all Munich day care centres, based on academic understanding. The day care centres in

Munich make great efforts to improve the chances for education and to support children in a suitable way.

The large number of children with a background of migration, in combination with the PISA findings which illustrated how disadvantaged many immigrant children are within the school system, has led to a flurry of policy initiatives in this area. In a number of *Länder* it is now a requirement for children to participate in a language screening assessment prior to school entry. However, there are considerable regional variations in the types of assessment used, as well as in the kinds of focused language support measures implemented; some of them begin when the children are two years old, whereas others do not begin until the last year in kindergarten.

In the area of language and literacy, there are already many initiatives that are underway. Figures from a recent monitoring report by the Bertelsmann Foundation (Bock-Famulla & Große-Wöhrmann, 2010, as referenced by Oberhuemer, 2012) show a considerable difference in the enrolment rates of children from German-speaking and non-German-speaking families. The difference is most marked in Schleswig-Holstein, in which 91% of non-migrant children, but only 60% of migrant children, have enrolled. Similar discrepancies can be found in Bavaria (95/75%), Bremen (96/75%) and the city-state of Berlin (100/80%). If the transition to more focused approaches towards language and literacy is to take effect, there is an obvious need for a redistribution of resources and targeted funding for work with these children and their families (Leu & Schelle, 2009). However, it is important to bear in mind another point of view, expressed by Pfaff (2010), who maintains that the current focus on German is at the expense of children's ethnic mother tongues.

Beyond this, an extensive network of early childhood language co-ordinators across Bavaria was launched in 2008 with considerable government funding support. These language advisers, who undergo a targeted and evaluated course of training, work closely with early childhood centres on a regional basis. The impact of this network on the language and literacy related work of the centres has been assessed over an extended period of time by a research team at the State Institute of Early Childhood Research in Munich (Oberhuemer, 2012).

Rauschenbach (2008) presented the first national report on education, titled "Education in Germany", commissioned by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* (KMK) and the Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) and generated with the support of the German Youth Institute (DJI) in Munich. This document includes, among others, a detailed analysis of *education and migration*. It poses the question whether making kindergarten mandatory would help children from a migrant background achieve better results, but concludes that such a change would be neither justified nor appropriate, considering the relatively large number of 4- to 6-year old children from a migrant background who already attend. With more than 80% of migrant children having been to a kindergarten before school enrolment during the last two years, the call for mandatory kindergarten education is not the answer and the danger of unintended side effects is far too great. But as Rauschenbach (2008) surmises, educational and care provision should be made available for the large majority of children from a migrant background who were born in Germany, and more emphasis should be placed on supporting goal-oriented language acquisition by children aged between 2 and 4 in particular, since this is the age when children learn to speak; therefore a second language can be learned quite naturally during this time. There is a need for additional intervention beyond the currently--planned language support during the last year of kindergarten.

According to The Munich Approach Booklet (2009, p. 24), intercultural education in Munich has a tradition that goes back many decades. It is directed at all children in the childcare facilities, whether German or non-German. The main objectives are to create a basis for getting on with one another regardless of nationality, mother tongue and religion, and to teach these children tolerance and respect for other cultures and lifestyles. Children like having different kind of foods on the menu, learning about other countries and participating in different religious celebrations; in this way, they discover that life in a multicultural community is an enriching experience.

Intercultural instruction and language development are inseparable from one another. On the other hand, the development of language skills

is seen as an integral part of the child's development as a whole (The Munich Approach Booklet, p. 24).

Screening assessment of the level of German language prior to school entry

The early education debate has led to increased interest in issues of pedagogic documentation and, in recent years, a number of observation schedules and documentation approaches have been piloted (Oberhuemer, Schreyer, & Neuman, 2010, p. 177).

According to Oberhuemer (2012), in a number of *Länder* it is now a requirement for children to participate in a language screening assessment prior to school entry. There are considerable regional variations in the types of assessment that are used, as well as in the kinds of focused language support measures that are implemented. In Bavaria, since the autumn of 2005, the German language competence of 4½ year old children whose parents are both born outside Germany is assessed by kindergarten educators with the help of a specially-developed observation instrument called "SISMIK". Furthermore, since 2008, the language competence of *all* children is assessed towards the end of the penultimate year in kindergarten, again through a prescribed assessment procedure (Ulich & Mayr, 2006, as referenced by Oberhuemer, 2012). The observation instrument used for children whose first language is German is called "SELDAK". In both cases, the assessment is based on individual observation of the child during his or her daily activities. The results show the level of development of the child's vocabulary, manner of speaking, sentence construction and grammar, as well as their ability to understand requests to do something and requests in general. This assessment is performed in order to give teachers and parents an idea of children's German language development and, if required, to plan further educational work with them. For children from migrant backgrounds, the results are often low because more of these children do not speak or understand German particularly well, since they are learning German as a second

language or they grow up bilingual, as their parents do not speak the German language well or not at all. After this assessment, one and a half years before school, there is an optional 240-hour preliminary German course, free of charge for parents, aimed at developing German linguistic skills and linguistic interest in children with a migration background. On the basis of the SISMIK assessment results, such cases can be recommended for participation in the 240-hour preliminary German language course; 120 hours take place during the first half of the year in the kindergarten, during the other everyday activities of the child, in his/her own group of children. The other 120 hours are spread throughout one year (the last year before school) in kindergarten and at primary school. In kindergarten, the promotion of the development of language skills occurs during the whole day with all children, but also during special assessments based on topics which are interesting to the children. In school, children have 1½ hours (two classes of 45 minutes each) weekly. Besides intensive language instruction, the children have the chance to get to know their primary school in a playful way. Parents are responsible for bringing their child to these courses, which take place in the primary school, and accompanying him/her back to the kindergarten, but it is often the teachers who make the necessary organization to assist parents with this.

The SISMIK questionnaire (Ulich & Mayr 2003) was developed by the State Institute of Early Childhood Research (IFP) in Munich as part of the project titled "Speech development of immigrant children – targeted observation and encouragement". It concerns the verbal behaviour and interests towards speaking of immigrant children in early-years settings within the Bavarian capital. The questionnaire is specially adapted for observation of immigrant children from 3½ years old to primary school age, who have grown up in domestic environments using other languages besides German.

The questionnaire's introduction specifies that "immigrant children" refers to children whose families have come to Germany from a different cultural and speech environment. They can be holders of foreign passports, migrants (often immigrants of German origin, coming from Eastern

European countries), multinational families (for example, the mother is German while the father is English, etc.), or settlers who have acquired German citizenship.

The first few paragraphs of the introduction specifically state that the questionnaire is to be used by German-speaking educators, i.e. the main focus is on communication in the German language. Although the family language (mother tongue) is equally important for the speech development of immigrant children, in most cases it cannot be adequately evaluated by German-speaking educators. However, the SISMIK questionnaire does include several questions (mostly aimed at parents) regarding the level of speech development in the family language as a stimulus for observation of this area as well.

In order to gather the necessary information, the educator should conduct lengthy observation of the child in natural, everyday situations; in some cases, evaluation requires that specific situations be created (e.g. repeating a made-up word, retelling a story, etc.).

Supplementary data includes the birth date, family language, nationality, sex of the child; the starting date and schedule of kindergarten classes; the frequency of missed classes and reasons for them (illness, travelling abroad to parents' countries, etc.).

Most questions feature answers given as statements, where the educator must fill in the relevant information regarding frequency, level and/or specific variants of occurrence.

The questionnaire consists of 4 parts:

- Part 1: Verbal behaviour in speech-relevant situations (group discussions, role-playing games, browsing picture books, etc.).
- Part 2: Speech competence (specifics).
- Part 3: Language(s) spoken by the child's family.
- Part 4: The child's family.

Part 1 includes observations of verbal behaviour of the child in various situations, e.g. at the breakfast table, in role-playing games, as a partner for play during free time, in separate conversations in German with

the educators, in group "circle" discussions; moreover, a description of the child's behaviour in cases when he/she has trouble understanding and/or expressing something, when browsing picture books (individually or in a small group), when listening to and retelling short stories. Additionally, the questionnaire notes the child's interest in reading and writing, his/her attitude to making rhymes, making up words, as well as foreign languages.

Part 2 presents the child's German language competence in detail, expressed in the following observation areas: the understanding of tasks and prompts, dictionary and specific ways of speech, grammatical and sentence structures.

Part 3 describes the child's handling of the family language(s) while attending the kindergarten, as well as an evaluation of the child's communication skills in his/her mother tongue(s) by the parents and other adults speaking them.

Part 4 presents the living habits and language practices in the child's family, the professions and work schedule of the parents, as well as the family's relationship with the kindergarten as an institution, i.e. the level of information the child's mother and father receive regarding the kindergarten's daily activities, their visits, as well as any questions they may have in relation to their child's education.

The questionnaire ends with a section outlining the subsequent actions the educator will take regarding the child if this is deemed necessary; it contains the conclusions of his/her observation and eventual steps to be taken in the future.

The SISMIK results are used in two ways: firstly to draw up teaching plans for the children, and secondly to register the children in need of particular support for the preliminary German course.

According to the Presseinformation (2012) during the 2011/2012 school year in Munich, 429 German-language courses were held, which were attended by 3860 children with migration backgrounds; in comparison, the same source states that the courses which began in 2002/2003 with only 10 children, five years later, in 2007/2008, were attended by 339 children.

Additionally, since October 2010, there has been a programme promoting the 240-lesson German course, and kindergarten educators and primary teachers have been trained to work with children during this course. So far, 26 courses have been held and 520 people have been trained; it is expected that many more will be trained since the programme will continue until July 2013.

Support of children from families with a migration background: Intercultural Education and Language Section in the Department of Education and Sport of the City of Munich

The Intercultural Education and Language Section in the Department of Education and Sport of the City of Munich is responsible for providing support to the early childhood practitioners in the field of intercultural pedagogy and language. This unit has existed for 30 years. It began with one person, but today there are 21 people who collaborate with the staff in kindergartens, nursery groups and places where the children from 6 to 10 can stay after school.

The concept of the Intercultural Education and Language Section has grown over the past 30 years. The central interest of the Intercultural Education and Language Section is to foster tolerance, respect for other religions, life and cultural forms to all children and to create a basis for collaboration and coexistence despite differences in ancestry, language or religion. Cross-cultural day care centres, which educate, raise and take care of children, see the main point in the "pedagogy of diversity"; children from all over the world learn tolerance and become acquainted with diversity and different languages, which they see as their greatest resource, and all parents as partners in order to achieve the best educational results for their child.

The aforementioned Section provides the facilities for numerous projects covering as wide a range of intercultural aspects as possible – cuisine, art, music, cooperation with parents and, in particular, language development (The Munich Approach Booklet, 2009, p. 24). It is especially

interesting that the idea of a multicultural environment in early years settings is also contained in the little book named "Welcome to the Kindergarten" (Zintl, 2007), given to each child attending kindergarten in Munich during his/her first day. The book introduces children to the kindergarten environment by presenting one typical day in the kindergarten in coloured illustrations featuring two dolls (a boy and a girl), along with simple phrases translated into 10 languages.

The Intercultural Education and Language Section is responsible for all 400 public day care centres and kindergartens; the private and church-run ones can also use their expertise. Since 2002, there have been 50 educators who work in preschool settings and are trained to give support to their colleagues in these kindergartens and day care centres in the field of intercultural education and language. Currently there is a project that aims to increase their number, and now there are 146. The 21 collaborators from the Intercultural and Language Section support their work in kindergartens, making sure that all the staff in the different kindergartens work according to the same principles concerning intercultural education and language, and achieve the quality in this regard according to the curriculum. For the last four years these 21 specialists have been busy with the implementation of large projects that assist children to develop their language.

The first project was initiated by the Bavarian Ministry of Social Affairs. It ran from October 2008 to December 2011. In this project, colleagues from the Intercultural Education and Language Section went to the day care centres and worked with the entire team in order to improve the pedagogy concerning language and intercultural education.

In March 2011 another project was started by the German Federal Government and it is expected to continue until December 2014. In this project, staff work directly with the children in the day care centres, helping them to improve their language skills. The specialists from the Intercultural and Language Section are working closely with the staff in early years settings, who are given all the help they need from them.

Conclusions

Intercultural education in Munich has a tradition that goes back many decades and features a wealth of good practices, as well as a selection of useful policies. However, based on the data from the English-language sources of information cited herein, as well as on the author's first-hand observation, and taking into consideration that one in three children has a migrant background, it can be concluded that support must be provided earlier in order to compensate for inequalities in family and social starting conditions at the source. Active language learning support should begin much earlier than the current one and a half years before school, so that it can be applied at an age when children learn languages and speech in a natural way. In addition to the currently-planned language tests and subsequent support during the final year of kindergarten, more measures must be taken.

Another issue is the assessment of the level of speech development in the family language. Although the mother tongue is equally important for the speech development of immigrant children, the "SISMIK" observation instrument used in Munich to assess the German language competence of 4½ year-old children whose parents are both born outside Germany only covers it perfunctorily, through several questions aimed at parents. The main limitation here is that, in most cases, the family language cannot be adequately evaluated by German-speaking educators.

The Intercultural Education and Language Section in the Department of Education and Sport of the City of Munich plays a key support role, providing assistance to the early childhood practitioners in the field of intercultural pedagogy and language. With a multitude of relevant projects completed and pending, their contribution to language support of children from migrant backgrounds is steadily becoming more pronounced.

The challenges of migration in Germany will continue to increase, especially among younger children. However, in spite of all the difficulties related to migration, it is good to see many examples of active steps to improve integration which are taken in kindergarten and at school.

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Abstract:

This paper presents some policies and practices in the field of language support for children from migrant backgrounds in early-years settings in Bavaria (Germany), with a special focus on the situation in the city of Munich. The paper describes the content and the application of SISMIK screening tool used for assessing migrant children's level of German language prior to school entry, as well as the important role of the Intercultural Education and Language Section (part of the Department of Education and Sport of the City of Munich) in supporting children from families from migrant backgrounds.

Keywords: language support, migrant children, Munich, SISMIK

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Social Equality Through Multicultural Education – a Means for Reducing Prejudices and Stereotypes in the Educational Process

Introduction

The text presents the partial results of qualitative research that focused on analysis of multicultural education within the framework of education programmes in terms of the educational system in the Czech Republic. The monographic procedure was applied using an analytic-synthetic approach based on content analysis of relevant documents. The text is a theoretical platform and it presents a fundamental theoretical definition towards the solved topic. The aim of this paper is to point to the selection of available bases of multicultural education in the curriculum of pre-school, basic school, secondary school and tertiary education.

Definition of social equality

The phenomenon of social equality is referred to differently in the context of various social sciences. We can find references such as social justice, equal access, the same obligations and the same rights etc. It is not about the term as such. It is about the nature of the problem in its broader sense. The term has historical, scientific, psychological or legislative connotations. Society has always been dealing with this phenomenon. The term social justice tends to be conceptualized in legislative terms; we rely on equal rights and equal obligations in terms of the standards

adopted by society. Equal access symbolizes global behaviour, including attitudes and opinions. Social equality is placed into a socio-cultural dimension, based on morality, ethics and the philosophy of human actions. Katarína Vanková (2012) writes that in the context of social justice, it is about the relevance to one's own life, to the environment, to home, to society in general. Social equality is relevant to the culture of society; however, it does not ignore valid and recognized legal standards. It is based on the assumption that there is only one culture in the whole world, but that it has various forms. The specific form depends on the place, nation, its language, religion, etc. People should be socially equal. They should not create artificial mechanisms supporting differentiation of human groups. It only militates against social equality (for more see Rowls 1995).

Human society has still not reached the stage of social equality. It is a major problem, changing with the development of society. From the very beginning of the existence of humankind, various opinions were presented on the question of social equality. Perspectives are highly variable, e.g. religious, historical, philosophical, anthropological, etc. The religious context of social equality has its own specifications; it reflects belief or general religious attributes. The same can be said of historical and philosophical contexts. Complete social equality has never been reached by society. It is some kind of "an idea of good", "the highest idea". Processes and mechanisms for the development of social equality are desirable and necessary for society. They are related to the existence of human good, to the existence of man on earth. The emerging processes and mechanisms keep humanism in our being and support for humanity (for more see e.g. Xenofon 2006, Aristoteles 2009, Rawls 2007).

Definition of multicultural education

Multicultural education (ME) consists of several concepts. It is approached as a newly formed discipline, as a science dealing with the question of social equality in all social contexts (historical, sociological, anthropological, psychological, etc.). It is also approached as a discipline

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that has become part of curriculum documents of preschool, primary and higher secondary education. It appears in the curricula of accredited university subjects of humanities (especially at socially oriented faculties, faculties of education, faculties of arts, etc.). Jan Průcha (2006, p. 15) generally defines multicultural education as "…*an educational activity focused on teaching people of various ethnic groups, nations, racial and religious groups to live together, respect each other and cooperate. It is implemented on the basis of various programmes in schools and in out-of-school facilities, in courses for adults, in advertising campaigns, in political issues."* Multicultural education is thus an activity built on the philosophy of eliminating prejudices, stereotypes, historical and personal animosities. Its central topic is social equality; its relative concept, a contribution to harmony in human society. Educational activity in practice (*in education*) influences cognitive processes, particularly awareness, assessment and evaluation. This builds and supports tolerance, respect, reverence, the ability to accept difference.

In multicultural education we define dominant groups and target groups. They are formed spontaneously, usually on the principle of majority and minority. The target group becomes the group against which constant oppression is created; it is very often discriminated against, segregated, socially excluded, marginalized and is the victim of other negative behaviour. The dominant group is the group that creates such oppression for no real objective reasons. The dominant group behaves in this way on the basis of entirely subjective generalized judgements and believes that it is entitled to do so. In this sense we speak about oppressism (*oppression*) (ISbSA 2005). For definition of dominant and target groups we take into consideration two basic criteria:

- the criterion of majority and minority,
- the criterion of possible change from majority to minority and vice versa.

If a person with a given characteristic generally always belongs to the majority and at some point, in a certain situation, where the "majority-conceived characteristic" seems to be a minority, he/she does not become

part of a target group. The existence of this condition can be changed. He/she can leave the group and change one's minority placement to majority one. (Kaleja 2011)

An exemplary situation: *The teacher who belongs to majority society is in the classroom with pupils who belong solely to the Romani ethnic group. The minority is thus the teacher; the pupils belong to the majority. However, the teacher belongs to the dominant group. He/she has the option to leave the classroom. If he she does so, in the terms of ethnicity he/she becomes the majority, of which he/she is actually a member. The pupils cannot change their position. Therefore they are the target group.*

Oppressism manifests itself explicitly and implicitly. It is always created by dominant groups. Its forms are various and they also reach different dimensions or intensity. We are not always able to notice these manifestations of oppression early enough and adequately fight against them. The forms of oppressism are as follows:

- Ageism. This is oppression on the basis of age difference. When an older person oppresses somebody who is younger or vice versa. The reasons and manifestations may vary. In this case the target group as a consequence of life experience may have capacity in the course of life to be transformed into the dominant group. This is a matter of time.
- Able-bodism. This is oppression on the basis of bodily dispositions and disproportions. The reasons and manifestations are various. In this case it is necessary to take into account their character. With regard to the body build, the influence of various factors can make a difference. If we have in mind the physical dispositions related to the disability of a person, this cannot be changed. This condition is permanent. Thus individuals with disabilities are always the target group.
- Elitism/Classism. This is oppression based on social classes. In this case, status of one or the other group can change depending on various general and individual factors.

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- Sexism. This is oppression based on the sex, where one group oppresses the other (men vs. women, women vs. men), depending on the conditions in which those concerned are situated.
- Heterosexism. This is characterised by oppression based on sexual orientation. It is an unchangeable condition, very often interpreted by the public as a sexual disorder of deviance. However, the notion that different sexual orientation can be diagnosed has been rejected. (It was removed from the list of diseases in the International Classification of Diseases drawn up by WHO in 1990.)
- Racism. This is oppression based on race. In this case, making the change from majority to minority is not possible. With regard to ethnic pluralism, racism is a relic that should have been banished from our society long ago. Racism is, however, present and is often quite widespread.
- Nationalism. This is oppression based on the citizenship in a nation, where the nation of the majority of society subjectively believes that all the rights and obligations of the state belong exclusively to them. They believe that all general privileges of the country belong exclusively to them, and that others have a subordinate status. Nationalism as a form of an oppression is also specific in that it can occur within the target group. Such inverted nationalism arises as a result of various psychological tendencies, when the target group endogenously closes and perceives the dominant group in the same way the dominant group perceives the target one.
- Atheism. This is oppression based on religion, which is based on faith. Here the target and the dominant groups can be formed variously, depending on the location, internal and external conditions of the state (society).

These forms of oppression are fundamental problems that we encounter from the perspective of social equality. However, these problems can have different widths and heights (*horizontal and vertical dimensions*). The creation of social equality and the forming of multiculturalism in each

person is necessary. The seriousness of the situation is demonstrated by the issue of globalisation, globalisation trends, extensive Europeanism, the linking of the humanity on Earth (Horká 2000). Today we speak about human society in terms of a secular society that is losing its "spirit"; about a society whose spiritual dimension gradually emerges from mankind, and mankind thus gains new characteristics (for more see Mühlpachr-Bargel (eds.) 2010). In this way, the scope of the concept of multicultural education in our conditions can be fundamentally outlined.

Social equality in legislation

The Czech Republic is a legal democratic state established on a so-called civic principle. In the Constitution of the Czech Republic (Act No. 1/1993 Coll.), in the law of the highest legal power, it is defined that the bearer of statehood is not a nation but the people. This ensures the acceptance of the national heterogeneity of the citizens of the Czech Republic. Citizens of the Czech state may have a different nationality or even a declaration that their affiliation to a certain national group is based on a free decision and will. Nobody can be denied their rights and obligations based on the criterion of nationality. In connection with the Constitution of the Czech Republic, the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms is defined (Act No. 2/1993 Coll.). Article 24 explicitly states that: "*Belonging to a national or ethnic minority must not be to anyone's detriment.*" Moreover, the Article 25, states: "*Citizens who constitute national or ethnic minorities are guaranteed versatile development, in particular the right to develop their own culture with other members of minorities, the right to disseminate and receive information in their native language and to unite in national associations.*

The legislative framework of a social equality in the society is set up both on the national and international levels. However, it seems that in many cases there are frequent violations of these rules, or these are not clearly defined. On the other hand, the rules are often violated and in general practice we can quite often see unbalanced interpretations of social equality.

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From the perspective of an international legislative context in particular we can generally rely on following documents:

- Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (UN, 1992),
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (UN, 1966),
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (UN, 1965),
- European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Act No. 209/1992 Coll.),
- Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2009),
- Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (Council of Europe, 1995),
- The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Council of Europe, 1992),
- and others.

The Czech key legislative documents can be classified mainly as follows:
- *Constitutional Act No. 1/1993 Coll., as amended (the Constitution),*
- Constitutional Act No. 2/1993 Coll. (Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms),
- Act No. 40/2009 Coll., The Criminal Code,
- 273/2001 Coll., On the rights of persons belonging to national minorities,
- Act No. 198/2009 Coll., On the equal treatment and legal protection against discrimination and amending certain laws (Antidiscrimination Act),
- and others.

Multicultural education in curriculum

The implementation of multicultural education is highly dependent on the actual teacher, on his/her personality, knowledge (not only

educational), experience, abilities, skills, motivation, opinions and attitudes. All of the above mentioned pedagogic-psychological categories influence a teacher's educational activities style, his / her professional approach to the question of equal opportunities and social equality. If the focus on multicultural education is only formal, out of necessity, which is determined by curricula documents, intentional influence on the positive development of pupils' personality is not ensured. Dana Švingalová (2007, p. 101) states that the level of multicultural education depends on "…*the level of teacher's preparedness in the sphere of multicultural education, both of the contemporary teacher as well as students preparing for this profession."*

The concept of multicultural education in existing curricula documentation from preschool education to the view of the university curricula of humanities oriented disciplines or the disciplines of related professions is discussed below.

Preschool education

The Frame Educational Programme for Preschool Education (FEP PE) is a document containing a definition of this level of education. It defines the concept and aims of learning, the key competences, learning areas, conditions and self-evaluation, etc. The curricular system of preschool education is different from that of primary school education. The Frame Educational Programme for Preschool Education does not explicitly define the sphere of multicultural education as a cross-section theme. It is represented in a different way. The topics mingle through all five educational spheres. In more details e.g. in the educational sphere Child and the world, one of the partial educational aims is:"…*learning about other cultures…"* (FEP PE 2004, p. 26). In the expected outcomes, i.e. what should the child manage at the end of preschool education, it is stated: "…*perceive that the world has an order, that is it diverse and remarkable, infinitely colourful and diverse – both the world of nature as well as the world of people (to be fundamentally aware of the existence of other*

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nations and cultures, different countries, planet Earth, space, etc.)" (FEP PE 2004, p. 27).

According to Marxtová (2005) multicultural education in preschool (also in the preparatory class of the primary school) is a "multicultural" education that accepts cultures of all nationalities of children in the classroom. It emphasizes the importance of multicultural education for children at pre-school age. Children aged 4–7 do not have prejudices; they are not aware of other nations or ethnic groups. They are characterized by a strong ego-centrism and they believe that other people see the world through their eyes. If there are any opinions, e.g. about the colour of another child's skin, these opinions are taken from adults, and from their surroundings. Dvořáková (in Mertin, Gillernová 2003) argues that all children at this age have equal status. This is how they perceive it. The teacher should pay attention to all children and reflect their individual needs. Multicultural education, the possible integration of foreigners does not mean assimilation, nor their segregation, but rather full respect for the child's personality and the cultural and linguistic environment from which the child comes.

Primary education

The Frame Educational Programme for Primary Education (FEP PrE) is a document containing 4 parts (A, B, C, D). Part A defines the document with respect to curricular policy in the Czech Republic. Part B provides the characteristics of this level of education. Part C defines the concept and aims of learning, key competences, learning areas, cross-section themes and frame educational plan. Part D deals with the issue of education of pupils with special educational needs and also with material, hygienic and safety principles.

The aims of primary education are to help pupils create and gradually develop key competences and provide a reliable foundation of general education orientated mainly towards life situations and practical behaviour. Key competences "*represent a set of knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and values important for personal development and success in the life*

of each member of the society. Their choice and conception come out of the values generally accepted by the society and from generally shared images about which competences of an individual contribute to his/her education, happy and successful life and to strengthen functions of human society" (FEP PrE, 2007, p. 14). The key competences include: competence to learn, competence to solve problems, communicative competence, social and personal competence, civil competence and working competence. The Frame Educational Programme for Primary Education has 9 educational spheres. They relate to particular subjects (e.g. language and language communication, mathematics and its applications, etc.). We also include cross-section themes in the educational spheres. They represent current issues of the contemporary world and they become an integral and important part of primary education. They have a formative character; they create opportunities for the success of pupils and also for their mutual cooperation. They help to develop the pupil's personality (Šimoník, 2005). Belonging to the cross-section themes are: personality and social education, education of democratic citizen, education towards thinking in a European and global context, multicultural education**,** environmental education and media education. "*The thematic area of cross-section themes goes across the educational spheres and enables the linking of educational contents and subjects. This contributes to the comprehensive education of pupils and positively influences the process of formation and development of key competences"* (Šimoník, 2005, p. 28). Not all the cross-section themes may be included at all grades. During primary education, the school is obliged to offer pupils all the topics of particular cross-section themes. Their scope and the way they are to be implemented is determined by the school educational programme. The cross-section theme of multicultural education can be integrated into the content of education as an integrated part of some subject, separate subject or also as projects, seminars, courses, etc. The topics of the cross-section themes of multicultural education are:

- cultural difference (uniqueness, idiosyncrasies),
- human relations (coexistence, cooperation, integration, human solidarity),

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- ethnic origin (equality – thinking, perception, manifestation),
- multiculturalism (mutual enrichment),
- principle of social reconciliation and solidarity (responsibility, involvement, human rights).

Implementation of multicultural education in the conditions of the school educational programme is realized in 4 possible ways:

- by integration of topics of cross-section themes of multicultural education into other subjects,
- by teaching multicultural education as a separate subject of the school education programme,
- through project education,
- by combination of all three of the above mentioned methods.

Secondary education

The Frame Educational Programmes for Secondary Technical and Vocational Schools were prepared in several phases in the National Institute of Technical and Vocational Education; they were then approved by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. A separate frame educational programme was developed for each field of study, and at the same time the number of fields was reduced to approximately 275, and these were approached widely. In our paper, therefore, we focus only on grammar school education.

The Frame Educational Programme for Grammar Schools (FEP GS) from 2007 contains 4 parts (A, B, C, D). Part A defines the document with respect to curricular policy in the Czech Republic. Part B provides the characteristics of this type of higher secondary education. Part C defines the concept and aims of learning, the key competences, learning areas, cross-section themes, frame educational plan and principles of education. Part D deals with the issue of education of pupils with special educational needs, including exceptionally talented pupils. Belonging to 5 cross-section theme

of Frame Educational Programme for Grammar School is: personality and social education, education towards thinking in a European and global context, multicultural education, environmental education and media education. All the themes have a direct relationship to the educational spheres and their benefit is in the development of pupil's personality both in the area of attitudes and values, as well as in the sphere of knowledge, skills and abilities. Cross-section themes can be realized in a very similar way as in primary education.

A pupil in secondary education is in the period of adolescence. Adolescence is a sensitive period for determination one's personal identity, for its development, for conflict with one's surroundings and himself / herself. For those who failed to properly "fulfil" the previous developmental obligations in pubescence, or even in earlier periods, the fight is particularly difficult. This is the period of searching for oneself. An adolescent's identity is based on accepted moral principles and experience with their preservation. The content of the cross-section theme of multicultural education is for this ontogenetic phase of human life quite important – indeed, possibly crucial.

Undergraduate education

The undergraduate preparation of students at universities is based on the documents of accreditation of the disciplines they study. Purposefully, we focus on fields of studies oriented in the humanities, but especially on undergraduate preparation of teachers. The scope of multicultural topics or subject (*in the university environment variously defined)* is directly dependent on the studied discipline. The scope or content of this issue is not explicitly defined anywhere. The difference is possible with the same disciplines studied at different universities. The names of the subjects vary, their conception is variable. They are characterized by considerable heterogeneity (*e.g. multicultural education, multicultural upbringing, intercultural education, social and multicultural aspects of education, intercultural psychology, minorities' cultures, etc.*). Multicultural

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education in the undergraduate education of future teachers is assured. The assessment of its quality (the quality of the preparation) would certainly be worthy of national or international comparative research. The basic problem is the insufficient preparation of teachers for the realization of cross-section themes. The teachers can be introduced to the cross-section themes via further education of pedagogic staff or similarly oriented courses. They are in some cases formal, and the requested time (demand) is variable and insufficient. As a result of these characteristics, from the methodologically-didactic perspective it cannot fully satisfy the needs of teachers.

An example: An empirical investigation was undertaken (winter semester 2009, winter semester 2010) with 4 large groups of students (approx. 40–70, the total number of students was 230) of combined forms of education for the teaching profession. Those students are in most cases already working at schools and they implement multicultural education as a cross-section theme of school educational programmes at a particular school. The results show that their knowledge of the terminology of multicultural education is quite low. Very often they only guess the meaning of the term; sometimes they use these instead of different terms. It can be surmised what the effects of this education has on pupils. Some of them do not place the education of multicultural education into the context of social equality; they are not able to apply the defined topics of the curriculum in practice (school or life).

Conclusion

Multicultural education thus represents a tool to support the psycho-social development of children and pupils in the educational process. In the curricular documents we find thematic units dealing with multicultural aspects. However, it depends on the teachers' personality and approach, what way they use to implement the dispositions into the process of education in order to maximise the possible development of individuals within the target group.

Martin Kaleja

Social equality is a phenomenon related to the existence of the human good and to the existence of man on earth. People have always been dealing with social equality ever since, but they have not reached it so far. It is "an idea of good" and the "highest idea". It has its own historical, religious, philosophical, anthropological and other contexts. Continually emerging new processes and mechanisms of social equality keep humanity in our being and support humanity. Multicultural education is one of the means of supporting this thought. We meet the conception of multicultural education in the conditions of education. It plays an important role in shaping the functions of human life.

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Abstract:

The paper deals with the topic of social equality. It defines the basic terminology, clarifies the issue in the context of reducing prejudices and stereotypes. It emphasizes the importance of developing the processes and mechanisms for social equality, for fostering humanity in human beings. One of the key mechanisms is multicultural education. The author of the paper interprets it in the educational process, beginning with preschool education and ending with tertiary education.

Keywords: multicultural education, prejudice, social equality, stereotype, oppression, education.

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Dimensions of Multicultural Education and Their Implications for Primary School Foreign Language Teaching

Introduction

Proper multicultural education encompasses both theory and practice. Indeed, taking the existence of a multiethnic, multiracial and multilanguage world for granted, it is a continual process. Although there has been no agreement among the advocates of a single common definition of **multicultural education** (ME), many feel that the definition given by Banks and Banks (1993) is the most complete. It describes multicultural education as "an idea, an educational reform movement, and a process whose major goal is to change the structure of educational institutions so that male and female students, exceptional students, and students who are members of diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural groups will have an equal chance to achieve academically in school".

In the Polish reality, the phenomenon of multiculturalism is not yet particularly widespread, though it does not mean that we are excused from raising the issue. Therefore, in the following article I would like to present a general outline of the thinking of a prominent figure in the field and adapt his ideas to a primary school context, since in the case of young learners, teachers should focus more on raising their pupils' awareness that the culture in which they are growing up is not the only and the indisputable one.

Professor James A. Banks

Professor James A. Banks is a past president of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). Currently, he is the Kerry and Linda Killinger Endowed Chair in Diversity Studies and Director of the Center for Multicultural Education at the University of Washington, Seattle, where in 2005 he delivered the 29th Annual Faculty Lecture – the highest honor given to a professor at the University. His lecture entitled *Democracy, Diversity and Social Justice: Education in a Global Age* would spotlight several aspects of his decades of professional experience - research, writing and teaching (Kelly, 2005). He has been a specialist in multicultural and social studies educations and a prolific author in these two fields. Enumerating his honors, awards and works would occupy numerous pages. Therefore, the present paper introduces only some of them, selectively. Those who are interested, please refer to the University's webpage devoted to Professor Banks: http://faculty.washington.edu/jbanks/. Among other titles, the scholar is the co-editor, together with Cherry A. McGee Banks, of the landmark publication *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education*, for which they received the Book Award from the National Association of Multicultural Education (NAME) in 1997. NAME is a non-profit organization that advances and promotes equity and social justice through multicultural education.

When it comes to Professor Banks' education, he received his Bachelor's degree in elementary education and social science from Chicago State University and his Master's and Ph.D. degrees in these fields from Michigan State University. Moreover, the former elementary school teacher received six honorary Doctorates of Humane Letters from American colleges and universities. Over time, Banks has become a leading voice in the theory and practice of multicultural education, with some even calling him the father of that discipline.

Dimensions of multicultural education

Professor Banks identified **five dimensions of multicultural education**, which I would like to discuss. They encompass the field's major components, namely:

- content integration,
- the knowledge construction process,
- prejudice reduction,
- an equity pedagogy,
- and an empowering school culture and social structure (Banks, 1995; Banks, 1999).

It is worth emphasising that the categories of the typology presented above, although conceptually distinct, are interrelated and overlapping, and are not mutually exclusive. Furthermore, the classification scheme offers an approximation but does not in fact describe reality with its all complexities. The dimension typology provides a useful framework for further investigations (Banks, 1993).

Figure 1. Bank's five dimensions of multicultural educations – floral graphic representation.
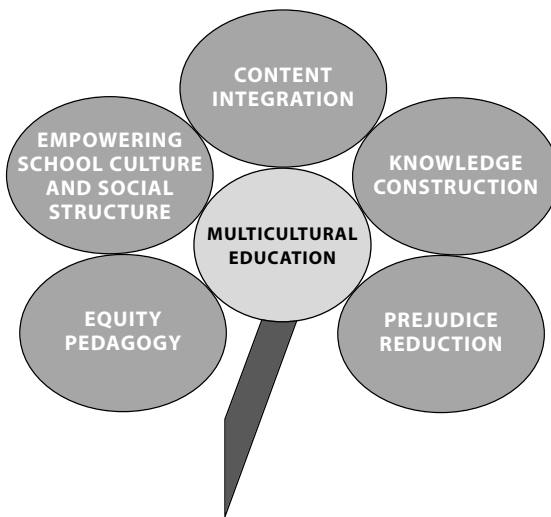
In an interview for the National Education Association (Banks and Tucker, 1998), Dr. Banks explains why he developed these dimensions. He found in his work with teachers that many thought of multicultural education as merely content integration and he did not like this ignorance. He wanted to help educators see that content integration was important, but that it was not the only dimension of multicultural education; he argued that there were at least four more.

Analogically, the first dimension is **content integration**. Banks's first initiatives concentrated on putting African American, Mexican Americans an Asian Americans in the curriculum, but generally speaking content integration deals with "the extent to which teachers use examples and content from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate key concepts, generalizations, and issues within their subject areas or disciplines" (Banks, 2013). Content integration is effective, provided that the infusion of multicultural elements into the subject area is logical and not contrived.

The second dimension is **knowledge construction**; in other words, helping students become more critical thinkers. The knowledge construction process moves to a higher level because here teachers help their pupils "understand, investigate, and determine the implicit cultural assumptions and frames of reference and perspectives of the discipline they are teaching" (Banks and Tucker, 1998).

By the third dimension – an **equity pedagogy** - Banks means that teachers should change their methods to enable students from diverse racial, ethnic and cultural groups to achieve more. Catering for the majority of students can be done through increasing teachers' repertoire of pedagogy; for instance, through the use of a wide range of strategies and teaching techniques, such as cooperative groups, simulations, role-plays, discovery. In the interview, Banks also mentions his friend from the University of London who developed the concept of the "multicultural atom", this being the atom that all children understand. Banks claims that the metaphor captures perfectly the essence of equity pedagogy, which is how to teach about issues so that pupils from a range of backgrounds can understand (Banks and Tucker, 1998). As Banks and Banks (1995) state, helping students become reflective and active citizens is the essence of

the conception of equity pedagogy. This aid should enable them not only to acquire basic multicultural skills but also to use those skills to become effective agents for social change.

What is important to highlight here is that no teacher is omniscient. The world is so diverse that no single person can know each and every existing culture, not to mention their countless varieties. The key to multicultural education is a mutual exchange of perspectives. The teacher and the student should share, becoming joint learners and constructing new knowledge. This is how Banks sees teachers reconceptualizing their role, meaning those who aim to employ not only equity pedagogy, but all of multicultural education. Banks compares traditional teaching to "filling up the bucket", providing students with readily accessible knowledge. In the case of multicultural education, we should rather talk about a pedagogy of liberation, in that teachers and students should become learners together (Banks and Tucker, 1998).

Prejudice reduction is the fourth dimension, to which teachers of all subjects should be particularly sensitive. It particularly concerns the development of students' more positive attitudes towards groups different from the one they come from (Banks and Tucker, 1998). My observation is that at the age of six or seven children are not *tabula rasa* and may come to school with an already established bias towards other ethnic or racial societies. Research has shown that by the age of three or four, construction of gender and racial identity has already begun in a child (Araujo and Strasser, 2003; Ramsey, 2008 in Ogletree and Larke, 2010). At the same time, studies indicate that lessons and teaching materials, including multicultural content, can help students develop more positive intergroup attitudes, on the condition that the content is presented in a consistent and sequential way (Banks, 2001).

Last but not least, Banks introduces the fifth dimension called an **empowering school culture and social structure**. What he means here is looking not just at individual classrooms, but at the whole school culture in order to see how to make it more equitable. At this point we ought to look at, among other things, grouping and labelling practices and disproportions in achievement (Banks and Tucker, 1988). I view this

dimensions as the idea that the school institution (meaning the staff and their practices) should set a good model for children. It is a well-known truth that "the example comes from the top" and that children learn through imitation. If we want our students to become open-minded and tolerant citizens of the world, we have to be unbiased ourselves.

Preliminary considerations

The above section presented the main ideas of each dimension introduced by Banks. Based on this knowledge, my aim is now to discern their implications for primary school foreign language teaching. Before I start drawing conclusions, I would like to come back to the interview with Banks in which he gives teachers advice on how to become more aware of various groups' cultural differences. This awareness is the key to proper multicultural education. Indeed, we could even say that teachers' multicultural awareness is a point of departure for further work with students in the classroom. Awareness is the base, but the ability to reach across cultures is a never-ending process. In order to develop this indispensable ability, Banks encourages teachers to gain as much cross-cultural experience as possible. The perfect situation would be to do this by putting themselves in different cultures, coming into direct contact with representatives of different groups. When this cannot be done, educators should at least read more multicultural literature, watch films and documentaries, and discuss and digest the issues with others (Banks and Tucker, 1998). Taking these conscious efforts for granted, we can now begin to discuss the multicultural education of primary school pupils in a foreign language classroom.

Undoubtedly, foreign language teachers are quite privileged when it comes to their initial multicultural awareness. It stems from their professional studies of a given language and the culture of the language area. Consequently, when they start teaching they are already aware of the differences between at least two linguistic cultures – their mother tongue and the foreign one. This is not so much multicultural as bicultural, one may

say. This is true, but such knowledge allows for further personal development, opening teachers' minds, fostering the understanding of the world's enormous variety and looking at cultures form several perspectives. The worst sin in multicultural education would be to look at differences through the prism of one's own and "the only appropriate" culture as the point of reference and "hidden authority". What is more, Banks underlines the fact that the linchpin of ensuring that multicultural education is not just effective, but is also an approach, is the teacher's engagement in the process of self-transformation: of reading, of engaging with the other, of understanding that the other is in us and we are the other. He suggests that educators do three things: KNOW, CARE and ACT, and remember to ensure that their students do these things as well (Banks and Tucker, 1998).

When the classroom is multicultural, the context for multicultural education seems evident and becomes natural. However, more often than not, Polish classrooms are still homogenous in this regard – despite significant migration movements. Interestingly enough, Banks would contest such statement saying that all classrooms are culturally diverse and that we need to uncover this diversity. Take different social-class, religious, ethnic, gender groups, for example. Moreover, Banks – who is himself black who experienced racial discrimination in childhood – views the homogeneity of whites as a myth. Broadly speaking, people are diverse, but we have concealed those differences. After all, there is diversity in views and perspectives even within a seemingly uniform class (Banks and Tucker, 1998).

The implications of Bank's dimensions of multicultural education for primary school foreign language teaching

Keeping in mind Bank's five dimensions of multicultural education, it is possible to enumerate some implications for foreign language primary classroom practices. Let me start from the fundamental assumption that multicultural education incorporated into an FL classroom deals with providing knowledge about the cultures (in a broad understanding of the

term) and the contributions of diverse groups. This knowledge has to be adjusted to the age level of children, obviously. If we work with older students we may focus more on facts, but in the case of young learners, overload is not desirable at all, as it may have the opposite effect and lead to discouragement. The development of positive attitudes should definitely prevail. In order to achieve these goals, multicultural education demands culturally competent and reflective teachers. Unfortunately, when educators feel they lack such skill, they may do more harm than good or their efforts may not bear fruit. Great thoughtfulness should be exercised here. Primary school children will benefit greatly from multicultural education if it is conducted with care.

Each of Banks' overlapping dimensions of multicultural education can be presented with some practical ideas to be implemented in early foreign language teaching.

When it comes to content integration, its goal is to create an awareness of different cultures. A primary school foreign language teacher would need to use dolls or puppets of different colours, multicultural photographs and videos. Nowadays many of these things are already present in/ together with English textbooks, although some (especially those for 1-3 grades) are illustrated with drawings representing fictional characters, not real lifelike images.

According to Ogletree and Larke (2010 after Banks, 2004), in knowledge construction the teacher assists students in comprehending how knowledge is produced and influenced by different cultures. Banks (2004) distinguishes four levels to approach curriculum adaptation to knowledge construction:

1) contribution approach - when the focus is on "heroes, holiday, and discrete cultural elements";

2) additive approach - when "concepts, themes, and perspectives are added to the curriculum without changing its structure";

3) transformation level – when changes are made to the curriculum so that students are able to "view concepts, issues, events, and themes from the perspective of diverse ethnic and cultural groups";

4) social action approach – when students implement what they have learned in the previous levels and "make decisions on important social issues and take action to help solve them".

When analysing the above levels, we can see it would be possible to implement them in primary foreign language teaching. The contribution level would acknowledge different heroes and holidays in different cultures. Britain's Boxing Day, America's Thanksgiving Day, or Ireland's Saint Patrick's Day, for example, are often encountered in English textbooks. Teachers could go even further introducing thematic units and organizing "trips around the world". The additive level would be reached if, for instance, a teacher was talking about housing and demonstrated pictures of unusual houses from diverse cultures. The transformation level requires greater attention, since teachers are obliged to make sure that the knowledge they are sharing is appropriate to the children's age and developmental stage. Derman-Sparks (1989 in Ogletree and Larke, 2010) and Crary (1992 in Ogletree and Larke, 2010) both believe that this can be done by responding to young learners in the context of the situation. One idea would be that teachers read or create stories having anti-bias themes. However, the stories should be based on concerns that are derived from students' own daily lives, experiences and current events, so that there is a tangible point of reference. The ultimate level of social action may be difficult to achieve in primary school, but it is still advisable that children begin to develop critical thinking skills early in their education.

Prejudice reduction, the next of Banks' dimensions, focuses on decreasing cultural biases and increasing the integrative attitudes and values in children. The job of the educators in this instance is to show their pupils that the interpretation and judgment of phenomena by standards inherent to one's own culture is actually a mental-behavioural limitation and a handicap. Ogletree and Larke (2010) conclude that the prejudice reduction dimension is particularly relevant in an early childhood setting, since youngsters may even develop "pre-prejudice", which is defined by Derman-Sparks (1989) as "beginning ideas and feeling in very young children that may develop into real prejudice through reinforcement by prevailing

societal biases". Derman-Sparks (1989) clarifies that pre-prejudice may be "misconceptions based on young children's limited experience and developmental level, or it may consist of imitations of adult behaviour". To prevent pre-prejudice from developing into real prejudice, apart from giving deliberate explanatory talks, teachers should definitely take immediate action every time they hear or observe its indication. Moreover, the classroom setting should reflect a positive attitude and multiculturally-friendly atmosphere through diversity in decorations, toys, games, albums, posters – any item where culture may be reflected.

As for equity pedagogy, the improvement of most students' achievement is often done by understanding different learning and teaching styles. Purnell, Ali, Begum, and Carter (2007 in Ogletree and Larke, 2010) believe that to build culturally responsive classrooms teachers need to be inventive. The strategies proposed by them include storytelling, drawing, moving, singing, and creative play. Just to give one example, teachers may test recipes for celebrating the heritages of different cultures.

Finally, an empowering school culture and social structure was introduced by Banks as one dimension of multicultural education as well. Banks sees the school as its own cultural structure, based on multilateral participation, interaction and trust. He also adds that in effective schools, parents initiate more contact than in non-improving environments (Banks, 2004).

Conclusions

If we follow Bulliviant's tracks (1993 in Banks and Banks, 1993) and understand **culture** in terms of a group's programme for survival and adaptation to its environment, then we should certainly recognise the need for multicultural education in every primary school. The programme, according to Bulliviant, consists of knowledge, concepts, values, beliefs and interpretations shared by group members through systems of communication. Even if our children can successfully function within the frameworks of their native culture, in this day and age such

skill is often not enough. According to Bulliviant's definition, in order to survive and adapt to a new cultural environment, it is indispensable to have appropriate knowledge of it, and experience. In the case of the lack of it, so-called open-mindedness and multicultural awareness may be useful. Being deprived of these characteristics, one feels adrift and help-less, which may even lead to a total communication failure. We do not want our students to get lost in the labyrinth of cultural diversity. We want them to become courageous and self-confident citizens of the pluralistic and interdependent world.

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Abstract:

In the context of contemporary reality, the issue of multicultural education is becoming more and more popular. Therefore, the purpose of the article is two-fold: to discuss Banks' five dimensions of multicultural education and to share some ideas on how these dimensions are or can be used to assist teachers in integrating multicultural content into their primary foreign language classrooms. Moreover, one section of the paper is devoted to the figure of Professor James. A Banks, who is widely regarded as a founder of multicultural education. Moreover, the professor's own reflections on the dimensions of interest expressed in the interview conducted by Tucker in 1998 are presented. Finally, having recognised the importance of early multicultural education, the author of the article concludes that primary foreign language teachers should not hesitate and encourages them to start preparing their students to become unbiased global citizens.

Keywords: multicultural education, foreign language teaching, primary school, dimensions of multicultural education, content integration, knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, empowering school culture and social structure

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A New Challenge in Institutional Education – Multiculturalism in Preschools and Elementary Schools

Introduction

The social and cultural environment of the school and the kindergarten has experienced significant changes over the last few decades. Aside from the institutions, all this has strongly affected teachers since children who come from different economic, cultural and family backgrounds arrive at kindergarten and school with different levels of education and other moral values. The children of immigrant workers, refugees and other immigrants keep on increasing this diversity, which requires teachers to have new competences. It is beyond doubt that multiculturalism has moved into education as well. But when did multiculturalism appear?

Multiculturalism has been in the limelight again since the second half of the 20th century, and this is largely due to the fact that new cultures, religions and conventions have emerged in increasingly heterogeneous societies, and as a result contradictions have occurred more and more strongly. The endeavour to become acquainted with other people has become a pre-requisite of tolerance and peaceful coexistence, since by reappraising "otherness" has come into focus.

When browsing the specialized literature, it is impossible to find a uniform view in relation to multiculturalism. Some people think it can be traced back to the past decades, but those grounded in reality admit that this is not a new, but rather a rediscovered and reinterpreted term, since the coexistence of peoples, and thus the coexistence of cultures and religions have occurred long before the spread of the concept.

Acceptance and inclusion in the service of multicultural education

During multicultural education, the different needs and requirements of a society with a variety of cultural backgrounds are emphasized. Due to a broadening of migration such an educational policy is required which allows the cultural particularities of minorities to be maintained during the educational process. It is important to take into account the fact that children from different social classes go to kindergarten and school. In pedagogy, we have taught for a very long time that the first place of socialization is the family. This thesis, believed to be eternal, is, however, becoming less and less true. Why do I claim this so firmly? Because parents do not always provide the basis for socialization. They lack the basic principles of etiquette, the knowledge of the rules of coexistence, tolerance and the need to get to know others. If a child does not feel that the adults around him or her observe the expected minimum standards of human contact, then it is difficult to educate him or her about this. If a parent does not greet others, the germs of etiquette might not be discovered in his or her child's behaviour either. If the child resolves conflicts by using force, or attempts to validate his or her arguments not reasonably, but in a loud manner, then the kindergarten and the school must play an ever greater role. It is in this context that children must be acclimatized to accept the fact that it is possible to live differently: there are rules and obligations. Teachers have unanimously formulated the principle that everything must be done in order to help children integrate into society later on.

For all this to be successful, inclusion and receptivity must appear in pedagogical methods. One must accept every kind of group which has useful values, even for the majority middle class children.

In education, the acceptance of diversity, different religions and traditions must increasingly be prioritized. Furthermore, we must also ensure that students understand the fact that not everybody thinks and behaves in the way to which they have become accustomed. We must make them more familiar with otherness, and we must also make them feel the claim to know other people. In order to become acquainted with other people and nations, we have to know their history, culture, religion

and the moral values associated with them. Only by doing this will we understand why and what they are doing; and even if they show their emotions and wishes differently, they do not have bad intentions, they only express themselves differently. It is important that they should accept and consider values that are different from their own to be natural.

The basic guideline of multicultural education lies in the fact that equal opportunity, equal rights to education and a ban on discrimination must also be available to every citizen, including immigrants and to children belonging to minorities as well. People belonging to ethnic minorities have the same rights as the members of the mainstream society, namely the preservation and transmission of their culture is a universal human right. In developed countries, experts have realized that conflicts must be avoided, and people must strive for peaceful coexistence instead. Therefore, they try to improve the minorities' plight in various ways; thus, for example, they make it possible for the immigrants' children to have access to education in their mother tongue, separate programmes are organized for the minorities, scholarships are established, their further education is promoted, higher education quotas are provided for them, and equal opportunity is supported even by positive discrimination as well. All this is often carried out with the help of the slogan of democracy, cultural pluralism and equality (Forray, Hegedűs, 1998).

Banks (2001) thinks it is important to decrease prejudices in multicultural education. In this respect, he describes his strategies and approaches to children's races, different ethnic groups, sexes, religions, the poor and the rich, old and young people, as well as to individuals of different abilities. A reduction in prejudices can largely be facilitated by the introduction of new pedagogic methods and a rethinking of those techniques that are already available. During the development of cooperative techniques, teachers have clearly adopted the view that the success of children in school who belong to disadvantaged minority or ethnic groups can be significantly improved through cooperative learning situations. All this improves not only the self-esteem of children who, until then, are pushed into the background, but they can also win their classmates' acknowledgement and receptivity. If children who are in the background

feel that they are necessary in the community, that their work is also use-
ful for the group, and that the other children rely on what they are doing,
then their attitude will change, too. They accept themselves for who they
are. In the kindergarten, children are already aware of whose parents are
richer, since they can see where their friends live, in what car they are given
a lift to the nursery school, and where their friends go on holiday. But they
also know who are cleverer, who can draw more nicely, and who can recite
poems by themselves at the nursery school festivity. A hierarchy is soon
formed among children which they take into school. That is why a recep-
tive milieu is needed in order to ensure that everybody can be aware of
their importance in the group.

Interaction of the individual, the community and the society

Multicultural education cannot be treated as an insulated phenom-
enon, since the values that keep alive in children the elemental standards
of social coexistence are present in all fields of life. The idea that accept-
ance, tolerance and suppression of prejudice can be developed in chil-
dren by certain momentary events is not sustainable.

After Gorski, Torgyik (2004) defined multicultural education at three
levels. According to them, multiculturalism also appears at the level of
the individual, the school community and the society which can exist in-
dependently from one another, and can be interrelated as well.

At **the individual level** of education, teachers play, naturally, the
most decisive role because they have the closest contact with the chil-
dren. Their personal exemplification is a pattern for their students; there-
fore, what they say and how they behave are important. Of course, it is
difficult to meet all the expectations, since teachers are models not only
in kindergartens and schools, but they also have to behave in the other
fields of life in such a way as to suggest positive moral values. The ques-
tion may arise as to where a teacher's private life begins. Do they have it
at all? Since in shops, in the street, on the sports ground, on the beach
and in the department store, their every manifestation – including their

clothing and reactions – can be regarded as being part of a certain mosaic of the image that is formed of them.

During education, one must pay attention to both direct and indirect influences. In many cases, when children are being disciplined or praised, the other children also get something from the teacher's "*message*". What teachers allow while children are playing and expressing their opinions, or during participation in competitions, is a signal concerning their attitude to children belonging to different social groups. Similarly, it is important to know how teachers will be able to stay grounded in reality while making their decision, and to what extent they give freedom to their students. How their teachers can handle conflicts is a matter that is also crucial for children. Do they take on key issues from a social point of view, too? How do they handle the problems in connection with Gypsy children? Many teachers do not know what to do if Gypsy children do not go to school, or if they do not behave with their friends or teachers in a suitable way. I think no special treatment is needed, since it is not good for anybody if teachers apply a different standard. This is exactly a form of discrimination that has negative consequences for everybody. Of course, teachers must become familiar with the habits and traditions of Gypsies, and these must be respected, but they have to formulate the same ethical requirements for everybody in the group. When we talk about **the community**, we think of all the persons that can be found in kindergartens and schools: like children, the kindergarten teacher, the teacher and people helping the educators with their work, the other people working in the institution who are in touch with one another as well. It is not irrelevant how participants in education or other individuals who are indirectly in contact with children can handle their prejudices with regard to people, and children who belong to different social, ethnic, minority, cultural, religious and age groups. Children react sensitively to all kinds of manifestations targeted at them; moreover, they can even decode nonverbal communication quite well, too**.** For this reason, it is important that in the institution, everybody must be receptive, tolerant and understanding. **The social level** of multicultural education determines the two previous levels, too. When handling social problems, it may be

a step forward if the kindergarten and the school do not point out a certain ethnicity from the possible identities of the individual or the group, and with this, they should not give absolute priority to it, either. The formation of a more complex identity must be enhanced, so multiculturalism highlights that approach according to which diversity is a normal thing. Of course, it does not mean that we consider cultural difference to be non-existent, but it is just one variant from several possible identities. We must ensure that people realize that it is natural that every society is fairly complex, and can be divided in many ways. Consequently, people can simultaneously be attached to several kinds of social dimensions by their sense of identity as well.

When a certain ethnic minority presents itself to the others, it reflects the naturalness and beauty of cultural diversity. In this respect, it makes no sense to talk about minority and mainstream society, but instead we should acknowledge the complexity of our society and culture (Forray 2003).

Multicultural Education Against Prejudice and Rejection

In a multicultural society, people belonging to different minorities, ethnic groups and races rub up against one another in several fields. In public places, they cannot avoid one another. It is true that sometimes people belonging to the majority endeavour to isolate themselves. Because of their prejudices, they reject common programmes with "*other people*", and if possible, they visit such places where they can be together with people of similar social status. According to Aronson (1978), children with different family backgrounds must very early on in their education be accustomed to cooperation in school. Cooperation can reduce rejection and aggression not only in schools, but also in society. For this purpose, he elaborated the mosaic method which he began to employ more than thirty years ago. In a town in Texas, it was thought that it was enough to reduce and later on cease prejudice and rejection if mixed classes were set up at a school where Afro-American, white and Spanish children were

together. However, instead of the expected positive result, exactly the opposite happened. According to Aronson, the continuous competition only increased prejudices and aggression among children; therefore, he formed such groups within a class in which every child had their own task and role, and they could be successful only if they worked together. They listened to, helped and assessed one another; moreover, the other children's performance was important for themselves. Rejection and aggression can be pushed into the background if young people of different abilities, family backgrounds and origins are obliged to cooperate with one another within the classrooms if they acquire syllabus material in small groups. The method has produced positive results: aggression has significantly decreased in those classes in which the teachers are educating children using this technique. Aronson believes the mosaic method is not a 'magic bullet', but it is just one of the elements of the fight against rejection. Besides all this, the family background, the milieu and what the media is transmitting are very important. He reassures those teachers who want to test this method that it is very simple: they only have to follow ten steps.

1) Divide students into 5- or 6-person jigsaw groups. The groups should be diverse in terms of gender, ethnicity, race, and ability.
2) Appoint one student from each group as the leader. Initially, this person should be the most mature student in the group.
3) Divide the day's lesson into 5-6 segments. For example, if you want history students to learn about Eleanor Roosevelt, you might divide a short biography of her into stand-alone segments on: (1) Her childhood, (2) Her family life with Franklin and their children, (3) Her life after Franklin contracted polio, (4) Her work in the White House as First Lady, and (5) Her life and work after Franklin's death.
4) Assign each student to learn one segment, making sure students have direct access only to their own segment.
5) Give students time to read over their segment at least twice and become familiar with it. There is no need for them to memorize it.

6) Form temporary "expert groups" by having one student from each jigsaw group join other students assigned to the same segment. Give students in these expert groups time to discuss the main points of their segment and to rehearse the presentations they will make to their jigsaw group.

7) Bring the students back into their jigsaw groups.

8) Ask each student to present her or his segment to the group. Encourage others in the group to ask questions for clarification.

9) Float from group to group, observing the process. If any group is having trouble (e.g. a member is dominating or disruptive), intervene in the appropriate manner. Eventually, it's best for the group leader to handle this task. Leaders can be trained by whispering an instruction on how to intervene, until the leader gets the hang of it.

10) At the end of the session, give a quiz on the material so that students quickly come to realize that these sessions are not just fun and games but really matter (Aronson 1978).

The essence of the method lies in the fact that everybody receives a certain slice of the curriculum on a particular day, and by questioning one another about their lessons, they put together the whole curriculum**.** They need one another's help in order to complete the whole image. In this situation, they do not want to point out the other students' weaknesses. On the contrary, they need to know the other students' good qualities, since they have to harmonize their activity. Stereotypes have begun to fade. Children have become more friendly and more empathetic, and they can understand one another much better because while they were solving problems, it was important for them to pay attention to one another.

Multicultural – Intercultural Education

The two concepts are often alternately used, occasionally in a ways that are synonymous with each other. That is why in the specialist literature, several experts have already tried to resolve this situation: "*From the*

concepts of multiculturalism/interculturalism, nowadays the concept of interculturalism is only used by the European specialized literature when it comes to dynamics, namely the interaction between cultures, education and socialization. Consequently, it comes to intercultural education and educational policy rather than multiculturalism. However, the concept of multiculturalism is used to characterize the given situation of the society, namely to express the fact that a lot of kinds of cultures live together in society" (Forrai 2003, p. 22). In Hungary in the middle of the 2000s, it was possible to elaborate special and cross-programmes. Multicultural-intercultural education also came to the fore, and on this occasion the programme which related to higher education was elaborated by a team.

The subject has the following objectives:

– during training, we must enable students to become familiar with the origins and phenomena of social tension, and how to handle these problems.
– we must prepare students to relieve mutual aversion and mistrust which can be traced back to belonging to different ethnic, religious and social groups, and how to improve mutual understanding and solidarity.
– we must make our students realize that in Hungarian public education the largest domestic minority are the Gypsies, and to make the relationship between the Gypsies and the mainstream society more harmonious is a common interest. Therefore, they have to broaden their knowledge about the Gypsies' history, traditions and habits which they are supposed to build into their educational work during the integrated education of non-Roma and Gypsy children.

I think the third objective is not only relevant to Hungarian public education. In the neighbouring countries, a significant number of Gypsy children are also involved in public education, which increasingly raises the issue of elaborating and refining the methodology of integrated education.

The content of the subject of Multicultural-Intercultural Education can be summarized as the result of the project in the following ways:

– Cultural diversity in European states; the historical roots of national, religious and cultural heterogeneity: migration, conquest, migrant ethnic groups, refugees and the groups of settled employees, etc.
– Standpoints, disputes in connection with the concept of multiculturalism and interculturalism, the social and educational policy of the coexistence between ethnic groups of different cultural traditions.
– The attitude of mainstream society's members to minority groups of different cultural traditions: their receptivity and proclivity to exclude. The phenomenon of prejudices, their possible causes and consequences. The perpetuation of aggression and conflicts between "*foreigners*" and the members of mainstream society, the increase of social defencelessness and segregation at the settlement level.
– The receptive and cooperative attitude, the conditions of communication between cultures. The resources and manners of familiarization with different traditions. Library, museum and multimedia resources.
– Pedagogic procedures in the service of intercultural education. The continuous familiarization with laws.
– On the basis of historical and ethnographic works, films as well as exhibitions, inquiry about the history, spiritual and material culture, traditions of Gypsies, their social groups and about the creation of Gypsy artists.
– Personal inquiry about some traits of the culture, language, traditions and family education in a Gypsy family.
– The study of non-Roma and Gypsy children's integrated education in a selected kindergarten and school. The efficient methods of integrated education. Conflicts, the possibilities and methods of conflict management.

Multiculturalism as a Challenge for Contemporary Preschool and Elementary School Education

The subject is also associated with an external professional internship. This activity had to be performed in institutions dealing with Gypsy children (for example, Family Support Centres, the Welfare Department of the Mayor's Office), or it was possible for students to carry out their internship by visiting Gypsy families (HEFOP 2007).

By testing the programme, we can safely say that even if it did not fully achieve its goals, it still lived up to our expectations. Of course, the desired attitude did not take shape in every student; that is, there were several students who did not fulfil the objectives, but there were some other students who managed to become close to Gypsy culture. According to them, they succeeded in learning a lot of interesting things which they had not previously understood, but that they now knew why and what the Gypsy people were doing. In addition to becoming familiar with their culture, other students became emotionally closer to Gypsy children. Their prejudices soon disappeared, and their affection created feelings of pleasure, since by experiencing love and goodwill, the children's attitudes significantly changed. Unil then, the stubborn, undisciplined and arrogant children endeavoured to get closer to their teachers. The appreciation and care which the children had not experienced until then were important for them.

Conclusion

Many people believe that if in pedagogy more and more discoveries are revealed, they must be followed slavishly. Of course, there are novelties, which are induced by social, political and economic changes, and they cannot be ignored**.** However, it may increase the efficiency of our work if from the specialist literature we only give credence to valuable and well-argued writings based on proven foreign and domestic experiences. It is important that the practicing teachers should have confidence in themselves, the results of their work and in all the methods which they have refined for many years. It is important for us to know the specialist literature, but having consulted our professionally reliable colleagues'

opinion, we have to interpret the facts described filtered through our own experiences. Sometimes we can reject some of the ideas, but the useful ones must be incorporated into our work.

It is this way that we must act with the diverse multicultural literature as well. Let us compare our experiences to those in regions where several nationalities have lived together for centuries. In Hungary there are quite a few such settlements whose inhabitants certainly know more about multiculturalism than the specialists who can only write about it. But we cannot say that we have nothing to do in this respect. Those reflexes supposedly proven long ago do not always work, and the world around us is constantly changing. It is therefore important to collect information from abroad on successful attempts at multiculturization, and we should try to adapt these successful approaches as well. In spite of the fact that there are also a number of unresolved issues abroad (let us think of the Belgians, the Spaniards and the French, etc.) let us be receptive. Let us combine the best methods from other countries to the values of our confined region, let us compare them to our socially recognized colleagues' experiences, and by gradually observing their effects let us try to introduce them to our work.

During multicultural education, it is a basic task that should enable students to develop competences by which they may get to know and cooperate with multicultural groups of different traditions, which sometimes follow other values as well. It is important that we should make it possible for children to communicate with other groups which may help them accept cultural differences and otherness, and behave in tolerant ways. Multicultural education may prevent certain groups from becoming marginalized, and as a result of this, occasional violent conflicts could be avoided, as well. In school, it is necessary to make it unambiguous for everyone (no matter which group they may belong to) that the relationship between the minority and mainstream society must be harmonized, since mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence must be regarded as a natural claim of society.

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Note: The titles of the above-mentioned works have been translated from Hun-
garian into English by the translator of this essay.

Abstract:

The social and cultural environment of kindergartens and schools has ex-
perienced considerable changes during the past few decades. This greatly af-
fected teachers as well, since children with a wide range of economic, cultural
and family backgrounds bring with them contrasting moral values to preschools
or elementary schools. Children of migrant workers, refugees, immigrants lead to
increased diversity which requires new competences from teachers. The notion
of incorporating multiculturalism in today's schools is beyond question. Therefore
education policy should significantly prioritize the inclusion of cultural varieties:
different religions, diverse traditions and customs.

Keywords: multiculturalism, inclusion, receptivity, tolerance, identity, tra-
dition, integration

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Teaching with a Multicultural Perspective

Introduction

The right to an education is one of the universal human rights, embedded in numerous international legal norms and provisions. It is not merely a formal principle granting an unspecified possibility to be educated applicable to everyone without any limitation. The term encompasses a very particular idea, which explains the meaning of a full effectuation of the right to education, while also creating an obligation for countries, which, by signing the relevant international treaties and conventions, have decided to respect and promote this right.

In 1948, with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which grants the right to education in Article 26, the content of the above mentioned term began to be really formed, and inevitably included the context of quality, non-discrimination and inclusion. Pursuant to the Declaration: "*Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups*"[1].

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[1] Article 26 (2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). Content of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was later directly reflected in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), as well as in other international treaties on the protection of human rights. International conventions on human rights protection represent binding legal norms from the point of view of international law. Their legal standing in relation to Slovak national laws is, inter alia, expressed in Article 7 (5) of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic.

It is gratifying that the government highlights the need for an improvement in the quality of citizens' lives in the area of increasing their level of education. In order for positive changes to take place in our society, it is necessary to increase the quality of education for all – regardless of their nationality or social background. We cannot move on without:

– starting to provide conditions supporting coeducation and reintegration;
– collective-focused education that better contributes to the development of individuals, with regard to content and process, and respecting their individual differences;
– considering the fact that, when preparing school activities for students, it is not only the subject matter but also the actual way of knowledge mediation that plays an equal role in the development of mental functions in individuals and their relationship to reality;
– creating the kind of teaching environment which enhances individual thinking and assists in the formation of personal philosophy/perception of the world, as well as mutual discussion, exchange of opinions and beliefs.

What is multicultural education?

Multicultural education, however, is a term that has been used in different ways to define different kinds of educational strategies and approaches. The most frequently used approach is characterized by the addition of ethnic heroes and holidays into the curriculum. The mainstream curriculum remains unchanged in terms of its basic structure and goals. The problem with this approach is that students do not obtain a global view of the role of ethnic and cultural groups. It tends to trivialize those concepts and issues related to the victimization and oppression of ethnic groups and their struggles against racism and for power. It can reinforce stereotypes and misconceptions.

Banks (1997, p. 3-31) has divided teacher's approaches to facing multiculturality into five differing categories, which can, of course, also overlap in a single teacher's actions:

1. Teaching the exceptional and culturally different.
2. The human relations approach.
3. Single-group studies.
4. The multicultural education approach.
5. Education that is multicultural and socially reconstructive.

The first approach argues that there is a corpus of knowledge that everyone should learn, and deviations from that content should be only temporary. In order for exceptions to be able to reach the common core, a lot of attention is paid to instructional procedures, in addition to making use of the student's learning styles.

The basic belief in the second approach is that a major purpose of the school is to help students learn to live harmoniously in a world that is becoming smaller. The human relations approach helps to foster positive feelings among all students, encourages group identity among students of various cultures, and tries to reduce stereotypes, prejudices, and biases. The approach of teaching the exceptional and the culturally different usually emphasizes the need to help students to acquire cognitive skills and knowledge in the traditional curriculum, while the human relations approach concentrates on attitudes and feelings people have about themselves and others, and aims at a more comprehensive curriculum change.

The single-group studies approach usually concentrates on an aspect or a group that has been neglected in society, and aims at raising the status of and respect for that group. This approach involves introducing new elements into the traditional curriculum, making significant changes in what is normally taught, and providing a detailed study on specific groups and a critical examination of their deprivation.

According to Banks (1997), the multicultural education approach advocates a total school reform to make schools reflect cultural diversity.

It aims to give equal attention to a variety of cultural groups, whether they are represented at school or not. The curriculum includes perspective, experience, and contributions from people of colour, people on low incomes, women, and people with special needs. Its goal is to show the whole spectrum of life in order to reduce prejudices towards and discrimination of oppressed groups, and to support equal opportunities for all.

Education that is multicultural and socially reconstructive extends the previous approach in that special attention is paid to students' social awareness, and particularly to analytical and critical thinking and social skills in shaping their circumstances and the society around them – and their destiny. That is why democracy must be practiced at school, and Banks (1997) emphasizes that in order to understand democracy students must live in it. Students should have the opportunity to make decisions on important issues and problems, and to take action to solve them, in order to later reform society towards greater equity.

A challenge facing multicultural education is terminology. There are several terms that are congruous and incongruous to multiculturalism. They include: cross-cultural, cultural awareness, cultural diversity, cultural pluralism, cultural sensitivity, diversity, globalization, intercultural, transcultural, international, pluralism, multiethnic and the list goes on. To confuse the issue further, multiculturalism is used in a variety of contexts. Multiculturalism can be an idea, concept, educational reform movement or a process for institution change. For the purposes of this paper, multiculturalism is defined as an educational reform movement that is designed to infuse nontraditional perspectives for student development.

Changing the paradigm of teaching and learning

It seems that, in both specialist and public discussion, the idea prevails that the quality of student education is predominantly connected to the material conditions that are provided. On the basis of a genuine reflection of the needs and goals regarding all students, it is necessary to consider a systemic transformation of educational institutions. The degree

to which goals are attained implies achieving quality, and these are clearly defined in the form of curricular documents approved by the State Education Programme (2008), which are considered to be generally valid norms for all students of a given age and level of education. In my opinion, the search for possibilities to enforce justness in education also lies in consistent planning, and the designing of the education process from both the content and process viewpoints.

The task of present-day education is to get schools into motion and to achieve that they must systematically, and on their own initiative, increase the quality of their work. The way in which the school proclaims its mission and essential philosophy, its idea of long-tem development and the determination of goals in accordance with its mission is a suggestion of quality in itself. The increase in quality is predominantly in the hands of teachers; it arises from their pedagogic cognition, behaviour and actions, from their "personality". An environment saturated with information requires a school leadership who are responsible for their own decisions, and that their immediate subordinates possess a developed level of analytical thinking and relevant competence. This is what makes them able to evaluate appropriately alternative possibilities and viewpoints, as well as convincingly argued opinions which are directed towards searching for particular activities and techniques in order to develop all students efficiently (Petrasová, 2011).

In the old paradigm of teaching, the teacher's knowledge is transferred to passive learners. The absolute, necessary, and sufficient requirement for teachers in this context is a complete mastery of the content. The classic classroom is the teacher lecturing and students listening. The students are silent, passive, and in competition with each other. The new paradigm of teaching is based on the theory and research that have clear applications to instruction. In the new paradigm of teaching, knowledge is actively constructed, discovered, transformed, and extended by students. The teacher's efforts are aimed at developing students' competencies and talents; education is a personal transaction among students and between teacher and students as they work together (Johnson, Johnson, Holubec, 1998).

Table 1. Comparisons of old and new paradigms of teaching

Factor	Old paradigm of teaching	New paradigm of teaching
Knowledge	Transferred from teacher to students	Jointly constructed by students and teacher
Students	Passive vessel to be filled by teacher's knowledge	Active constructor, discoverer, transformer of own knowledge
Teacher purpose	Classify and sort students	Develop students' competencies and talents
Relationships	Impersonal relationships among students and between teacher and students	Personal transactions among students and between teacher and students
Context	Competitive/individualistic	Cooperative learning in classroom and cooperative teams among teachers
Assumption	Any expert can teach	Teaching is complex and requires considerable training

Thus, it is also socio-cultural mediation which has a significant impact on a child's education. If a child's learning at school depends on interactions originating in the area of his development, it is vital to pay significant attention to those interactions invoked by the teacher, or, possibly, other students. The student, under the teacher's leadership, gains new knowledge on concepts and the relations between them; he forms his own attitudes towards the subject matter. If it stands to reason that to form the content is the student's tasks, it should then be possible to teach him to do so in as an efficient way as possible.

The traditional school posts the results that are expected in education in front of the student; it, however, rarely focuses on the process that leads to such results. Nevertheless, the student needs, for his future life, to learn how to think, process information and how to study. The teacher should apply such methods and techniques which show the student how to study, take responsibility for his own studying, and how to, later on, study without the teacher's direct assistance. For the student, it is important to constantly realise whether and how he understands new information and how it relates to what he already knows. He must return to

what he is not sure about and try to understand with the assistance of the teacher, or other students. If he is not guided to deal with what he does not understand, it will inevitably prevent him from the comprehension of certain information.

Learning is an act of change; it gives rise to something different to the previous state. One of the goals of education is to ensure that students learn to verbally express the ideas and information they have come across, as students remember best what is most clear to them when using their own semantic framework, i.e. when they express it in their own words. Comprehension is permanent providing that information is put in a meaningful contextual framework, created by the active transformation of comprehension into one's own vocabulary.

Another important factor is that when students exchange ideas, they expand their vocabulary and various schemes of understanding are presented. In this way, students realise that the thought scheme they have formed need not be final, and that the opinions of others can also be included in one's reasoning. They learn to tolerate differences and are able to argue.

The role of cooperative teaching and learning in creating an inclusive and interactive classroom

Cooperative teaching is a concept of education which makes it possible to include students in joined-up thinking, common formation of thought and shared cognitive activity. Cooperation means team work on a common product, a shared project, a common task. The student's individual variability that is present in the solving of tasks allows for several viewpoints on the same problem, which opens the need for dialogue, argumentation, and reasoning. This type of education contributes to an increase of such characteristic qualities in students as the ability to cooperate, a sense of solidarity, a sense of tolerance, etc. It suppresses an excessive application of competitiveness in education and an emphasis on rivalry at the expense of cooperation.

Cooperative education is one of the means applied in the creation of an environment that is suitable for thinking. Vygotsky (1978) explains that intellectual development is the product of internal as well as external (i.e. social) processes. He points out that a higher level of thinking develops from relationships, i.e. dialogue between people. He highlights that individuals form and discuss ideas together; therefore, the thoughts that come into existence in this way exceed the efforts of an individual. People together, as well as individually, express various viewpoints, their agreement or disagreement, they point out differences, they look for solutions and consider various alternatives.

Constructivists who favor Vygotsky's theory suggest that social interaction is important for learning because higher mental functions such as reasoning, comprehension, and critical thinking originate in social interactions and are then internalized by individuals. Children can accomplish mental tasks with social support before they can do them alone. Thus cooperative learning provides the social support and scaffolding that students need in order to make progress in their learning (Woolfolk, 2001, p. 44).

Slavin (2000, p. 256) refers to Vygotsky's theories when he speaks about constructivist theories of learning: *"Modern constructivist thought draws most heavily on Vygotsky's theories, which have been used to support classroom instructional methods that emphasize cooperative learning, project-based learning, and discovery. Four key principles derived from Vygotsky's ideas have played an important role. Two of them are very important for cooperative learning. First is his emphasis on the social nature of learning. Children learn, he proposed, through joint interactions with adults and more capable peers. On cooperative projects children are exposed to their peers' thinking process; this method not only makes the learning outcome available to all students, but also makes other students' thinking processes available to all. Vygotsky noted that successful problem solvers talk themselves through difficult problems. In cooperative groups, children can hear this inner speech out loud and can learn how successful problem solvers are thinking through their approaches. The second key concept is the idea that children learn best the concepts that are in their zone of proximal development. When*

children are working together, each child is likely to have a peer performing on a given task at a slightly higher cognitive level, exactly within the child's zone of proximal development."

One of the most innovative widely prescribed strategies to manage and build upon the strength of the increasing diversity found in classrooms is the use of cooperative learning techniques. Cooperative learning involves small teams of students of varying academic achievement levels employing a variety of learning activities that promote academic success for each team member. Research on the effects of cooperative learning has consistently found that the use of such methods improves academic achievement as well as intergroup relations (Kasíková, 2009).

According to Johnson, Johnson, Holubec (1998), cooperative efforts have three major positive results**:**

1. Greater efforts to achieve, including all students attaining greater achievements, long-term retention, intrinsic motivation, more time spent on tasks, development of higher-order reasoning and critical thinking.
2. More positive relationships among students, including an "esprit-de-corps", caring and committed relationships, personal and academic social support, valuing of diversity, and cohesion.
3. Greater psychological health, "general psychological adjustment, ego-strength, social development, social competencies, self-esteem, self-identity, and ability to cope with adversity and stress".

In many cases, cooperative learning provides students with an opportunity to be grouped not only heterogeneously by academic performance, but also by race, gender, and language proficiency. When using cooperative learning methods, students are asked to work in heterogeneous groups to solve problems and complete tasks. The intent of cooperative work groups is to enhance the academic achievement of students by providing them with increased opportunity for discussion, for learning from each other, and for encouraging each other to excel.

Cooperation is working together to accomplish shared goals. Within cooperative situations, individuals seek outcomes that are beneficial to themselves and beneficial to all other group members. Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning.

The terms "group learning" and "cooperative learning" are often used as if they mean the same thing. In fact, group work means several students working together, and working together doesn't necessarily involve cooperation. "*Cooperative learning is an arrangement in which students work in mixed ability groups and are rewarded on the basis of the success of the group*" (Woolfolk, 2001, p. 340).

Siltala (2010) discusses five criteria that define true cooperative learning groups:

1. Positive interdependence (students must fully participate and exert all their efforts within their group; each group member has a task/role/responsibility, and therefore must believe that they are responsible for their learning and that of their group).
2. Face-to-Face Promotive Interaction (each member promotes each other's success; students explain to one another what they have or are learning and assist one another with understanding and completion of assignments).
3. Individual and Group Accountability (each student must demonstrate that they have mastered the content being studied; each student is accountable for their learning and work, which therefore eliminates social loafing").
4. Social Skills (social skills that must be taught in order for successful cooperative learning to occur; skills include effective communication, interpersonal and group skills: leadership, decision-making, trust-building, communication and conflict-management).
5. Group Processing (every so often groups must assess their effectiveness and decide how it can be improved).

The theory of cooperative learning has identified three types of groups: formal, informal, and base groups:

– The length of formal cooperative learning groups range from one class period to several weeks. The teacher can structure any academic assignment or course requirement for formal cooperative learning. Formal cooperative learning groups ensure that students are actively involved in the intellectual work of organizing material, explaining it, summarizing it, and integrating it into existing conceptual structures. They are at the heart of using cooperative learning (Johnson, Johnson, Holubec, 1998).

– Informal cooperative learning groups are ad-hoc groups that may last from a few minutes to a whole class period. The teacher uses them during direct teaching (lectures, demonstrations) to focus student attention on the material to be learned, establish a mood that is conducive to learning, help to set expectations about the material, what the lesson will cover, ensure that students are cognitively processing the material being taught, and provide closure to an instructional session.

– Cooperative base groups are "long-term" (lasting for at least a year) heterogeneous groups with stable membership whose primary purpose is for members to give each other support, help, encouragement, and assistance that each needs to progress academically. Base groups provide students with long-term, committed relationships (Johnson, Johnson, Holubec, 1998).

Key elements of cooperative learning include: recognition of the value of learning, shared governance, group accountability, and student-generated construction of knowledge. All these elements permit a more open and even discussion of issues from a variety of perspectives and cultures rather than a learning setting that is dominated by the course teacher who may represent only one cultural perspective, and often that of the dominant culture in society.

Conclusion

Teachers are expected to constantly improve their performance, as it is they who are responsible for presenting education with innovation. The efforts to implement foreign approaches, however, showed that pedagogues find it difficult to give up familiar conceptions. It takes considerable time for them to accept that the importance of forming higher thinking processes does not lie in the constant "snowballing" of information about the world around us but in transforming the relationship of an individual towards reality. It is only in school where information is considered a value in itself; in everyday life, facts are useful and meaningful because they help us to understand and perceive the world around us and, in this way, they prepare us for life in society.

One of the main outcomes that school education achieves is that students become individuals who are able to contribute to the solution of problems in society and create values. Therefore, society should, through the means of school as a social institution, reinforce the level of this responsibility. School must not pretend to be a "lame duck", creating the illusion of pursuing reform. On the contrary, it should accept the proposed challenges and, in a sensitive way, contribute to changes associated with school reform. This contribution focuses on the possibilities of fulfilling the request of Multicultural Education (State Educational Programme, 2008): "... *in order for education activities to be aimed at the functioning of school and school education as fair systems where everybody has an equal chance to develop their potential.*"

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Abstract:

One of the most innovative and widely prescribed strategies to manage and build upon the strength of the increasing diversity found in the classroom is the use of cooperative learning techniques. Because cooperative learning groups encourage positive social interaction among students of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, they have great potential to facilitate the building of cross-ethnic friendships and to reduce racial stereotyping, discrimination, and prejudice. When students work cooperatively, they have the opportunity to judge each other on each other's merits rather than stereotypes.

Keywords: multicultural education, cooperative teaching and learning, constructivist theories of learning

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Child's Identity
from the Perspective of Cultural Diversity

Introductory notes

Building subjectivity in a culturally diverse space is not possible when referring to roots. It is necessary to search for new ways to build your own self. A nomadic entity constructs its identity against a background of change, transformation and metamorphosis. The key element of building subjectivity should be a dialogue, and conducting it at the moment requires a re-definition of who is a man in a situation when the old definitions do not work. At present, anything that is human is being reconstructed in the context of the global economy, technological revolution, emergence of multicultural societies and a new social and cultural reality (R. Braidotti, 2009, p. 10). The continuous interaction of man with both culture and nature takes place through the means of a universal technology. This requires posing new questions about both the environment of life and the spiritual sphere that gives meaning to life.

The mechanisms for constructing an identity in the modern world

According to the idea of transculturalism, a new concept of identity develops (W. Welsch, 1998, p. 203), which is carried out not on the basis of national components, but the integrating features of different cultural backgrounds. The mechanisms that determine the identity process take

place according to the cultural rules of exchange. Transculturalism is combined with the generation of a new variety. Transcultural identities include a cosmopolitan aspect, but also a local affiliation (W. Welsch, 1998, p. 217–221). The dynamism of the world in which a child lives, initiates changes in the sources, aspects and factors of identity (I. Samborska, 2007, p. 120).

Cultural identity is determined by the knowledge and experience of a particular time-space. Knowledge is the mental tracks that lie in a man – they are the most important, obvious and continuous. Experiences form the identity knowledge: who am I, how am I, among whom and what am I, for what meaning area am I, what connects me with others? This knowledge and experience make up a mental locum. It is also indicated by other cultural tracks, such as: mental continuity, linearity (A. Kunce, 2004, p. 81). It shows itself at the level of cognitive functioning, because we think in sequences and we look for relations of cause and effect. Continuity and linearity are also visible through the course of our lives – we come from somewhere and we go somewhere. Due to the continuity of events, everything is cognitively and emotionally familiar; this provides a sense of security. In addition, the mental world demands systemic thinking, seeing things in a systemic way. In such a world, boundaries, opposition, similarities and differences are visible. This, in turn, leads to a clear distinction between what is mine or that which belongs to others. In this perspective, the described mental locum is a kind of mental archive, which consists of the entire historical, geographical, social, linguistic, economic, aesthetic, moral and religious experience. Memory plays a huge role here, which focuses on what is permanent (what is the constant point of reference). Therefore, the identity experience refers to the permanent elements of nation, language, customs, laws and religion, as well as of those related to biology and relating to the continuity of generations. The determinants that significantly shape the character of community ties are the ties of blood, racial affinity, belonging to a particular territory.

These identity experiences, seen as a centre that integrates units in terms of certain groups, are a defining feature for a strong identity. This identity is based on strong foundations; it is internally consistent and

stable. It appears as a historical and social function of an entity. The boundaries of such an identity are derived from an idea (from the laws of nature, religion, reasoning). Strong identities provide people with a sense of security and independence. For identities seen in this way, a kind of counterweight is an identity that is disclosed from the postmodern perspective - an identity that is open to change, giving the freedom of choosing one's own "I" (I. Samborska, 2006, p. 88–91). This kind of identity, defined as "weak", is mobile, variable and incoherent. Its existence is temporary and ambivalent. The experiences defining a weak identity are completely different in terms of form and content. They are rooted in the dynamics of globalization and media fascination (I. Samborska, 2007, p. 120–121).

Today's child experiences a series of ambivalent feelings related, on one hand, to the need to place themselves and their experiences, as well as things, events and other people, in some spaces; on the other hand, to those related to the dominant metaphors that fill their life: incident, dispersion, dislocation, individuality, creation (A. Kunce, 2004, p. 79). The above considerations show that the experience and knowledge that define an identity, need a mental territory for their placement. Thoughts are the tracks of location. They are arranged in a manner defining points that constitute the frame of reference – the context. In this way a child develops the mechanisms to deal with an excess of experience and chaotic events. Location means encirclement, seizure, and rooting.

Meanwhile, the modern world offers a child multiple and distributed spaces. The basic parameters of culture - time and space – are a subject to constant changes. The dynamics, variability and dialogue of the modern world mean that it becomes problematic even to describe reality. It is necessary to apply the concepts and categories that highlight its transgressive, transformative, uncertain and indefinite character. No assignment to territory (non-territoriality, lack of common place), mediation of relationships, blurring of national and cultural boundaries are the phenomena that characterize the modern world. In their background, an identity is seen as a nomadic variable marked with slight traces. Attempts to describe it require new concepts such as "dynamic rooting," "variable territory" (B. Kita, 2003, p. 115–116). New concepts refer to describing the

condition of an identity; they focus on relations. There are liquid identities, appearing in a variety of contexts and situations created by new media (the viewer's identity, the identity of the web user, the "nomad" identity in the virtual world, the identity of the interactive art performer). Significant features of the new identity include: instability, lack of specificity, and blurring.

Identity, from the postmodern perspective, is seen as a "transit" identity – constantly searching, changing, determined by a non-place. It is defined by the idea of nomadic becoming. It is a way to work out a balance between what is local and global, and what belongs to the past and the present. In this context, the process of experiencing is important rather than becoming attached to a certain point of time. This new way of thinking about who we are requires pointing to the process of becoming, rather than to the result of this process. In this new approach, the entity continues to be rooted even when it is on the move (R. Braidotti, 2009, p. 22). This is a nomadic, culturally diverse, postmodern entity, the formation of which takes place at the intersection varieties of class, race, ethnicity and age. Nomadic changes indicate a creative type of becoming; they refer to a performative metaphor, which allows for the sources of interaction of experience and knowledge.

The foundations for thinking about the location of an identity were initiated by the research on non-Euclidean geometry with the current philosophy inspired by the Husserl and Heidegger phenomenology and temporal practices in the western philosophy and science (E. Kosowska, 2004, p. 67–68). Postmodernism (as opposed to modernism), which focuses on individuality, treats identity as an epistemological category. In fact, reflections on identity become reflections on the nature of relations. In the process of forming such a vision of identity, some changes were made in terms of abstraction-substance and relation-event. It is assumed that a new quality is formed in terms of these relations. A third quality becomes the existence of a new generation and begins to create a new level of an intellectual culture (E. Kosowska, 2004, p. 70–71). It is a condition of achieving the mental materializing of the relation. The construction "between" is seen as a real place and a carrier of interpersonal

action. For identity, this is a variation of "between," the major role is played by time rather than space.

When perceiving ourselves and the world, we are used to defining everything in the context of time and space. Referring these dimensions to identity, we should ask where identity exists? In the context of time, identity is seen in the transformation of an event into an event. In terms of space, however, locating the identity is a problem. This problem concerns the identity of space itself. Space, as with everything else, changes in time; therefore, the space where identity exists becomes impossible to define. It is a paradox that is a result of an epistemological turn – a Derrida deconstruction. An identity not rooted in location loses the right of existence against the intentionality (E. Kosowska, 2004, p. 72–74).

Problems of identity location – cognitive and research perspectives

The world that a child experiences shows signs of simultaneous constant, long-term and temporary events. A child, when participating in social and cultural events, acquires experience that collates and dismantles his or her identity. Personal experience indicates the rhythm of the location and dislocation of identity. Describing identity constructed in such a way requires the use of appropriate terms. It is necessary to switch from modern to postmodern language. It will then be possible to use metaphors that are offered by a post-modern discourse, which is attractive from the point of view of the "location" of identity. These include, for example, metaphors such as: rhizome, chaos, movement, eradication, moment, deference, variability, indefiniteness (A. Kunce, 2004, p. 79). These concepts allow us to see identity memory in a different way. They are suitable for tracking the ordinary and everyday experience of identity. They can be noticed at the first level of unit narration, the level that reveals a variable rhythm of experiencing.

Narration, as in telling somebody about something, is both a kind of communication between people and a product of this communication.

It is a specific form of cognitive representation of reality – therefore it is a way of understanding the reality (J. Trzebiński, 2002). Narrative structuring of individual experience gives an insight into a way of organizing the experiences and therefore into the order of the world experienced by the child. It is also a chance of understanding how the author experiences himself in the world. In this sense, the narrative structuring of individual experience helps to co-create the identity.

Identity experiences are situated within individually constructed and culturally confirmed *locum*. Their interesting context emerges from the use of such categories as: movement, excess, spread, and gathering (A. Kunce, 2004, p. 87–93). The world of identity is characterized by points because what we experience is in motion. Against this background, identity can be related to the state and effect and the process or moment. In addition, identity breaks down into details; the movement of identity is undertaken by the abundance of the things that compose it. There is a process of collecting for oneself of the fragments of contexts, random and torn events. In their own way, they collect for themselves that which is culturally given, specified in culture, harnessed into the identity knowledge system, as well as what it is not specified, which form and meaning is not realized, and what rarely belongs to the common schema of knowledge. Distributed identity is a state of a lack of consolidation; it takes place in the context of chaos, incident, parts of events and fragments.

The result is a thickening of semiotic space and, eventually, experiencing the situation of an excess. Over-saturation of the field of experience relating to the present, experience over-saturated with things, meanings and possibilities, forces the child to a huge effort of elimination. Experience of the excess should be linked to new ways of experiencing the time. Postmodernism is seen as the place where culture emphasizes the routine and monotonous aspect of change. This means that experience marked with change is no longer special. It has been moved into the background of consciousness, which is forced to develop new categories, allowing us to recognize this new experience in terms of discourse. This new experience determines a new form of categoriza-

tion that is indicated by modern consciousness. It focuses not on the very motion of changes in time, but on the diversity coexisting "here" and "now," pushing the present into a multi-dimensional space. This diversity, experienced as potential excess, requires making choices and experiencing a feeling of resignation.

The child has to deal with an excess of things that are only theoretically available, as only their quantity and diversity creates the need to choose and forces us to exclude the other potentially available options. The importance of this phenomenon is enhanced by the development of technology resulting in changes in the living environment, which determines the field of experience.

Giving this situation a discursive form requires the development of a new categorization, the source of which is the art of the individual evaluation of things. The consequence of this is the ability to build our own space of meanings and the time dimension that conditions it. The modern child's space of life becomes a place where different orders of existence and forms of presentation (e.g. forms of media) meet. This includes various fragments of reality, where realism is combined with fantasy. They become a source of subjective experience, which, from the perspective of the pedagogy, raises the need to know how to support children learning these realities. And dealing with balancing the attachment to what is known and what is new.

Methodological assumptions of own study

It seems that in order to know the processes of identity formation, we need to attempt to get an insight into the child's world of experiences. How do children perceive everyday life, how do they gain knowledge about society, about the world in which they live, how do they perceive themselves (including relationships with others), how do they express emotions in direct and indirect contact? The creation of identity takes place through realizing their own actions and their causes, describing, understanding and explaining their behaviour.

This interdisciplinary approach that is presented above, allows for the engagement in the complexity of present and life situations. The philosophy of nomadism offers the use of abstract concepts for practical social and private activities. Against this background, we can ask basic questions:

- What is the importance of the everyday experience of a six-year old child in creating its identity?
- To what extent is a six-year-old conscious of its embodied and rooted experience?

Understanding, in this regard, will be obtained by exploring the conditions of structure transformation and the content of a dynamic living space, which is important because of the creation of the conditions of achieving the objectives of education. Educational practice must be preceded by knowing the child's life world, and so it is necessary to find access to meaningful structures of this world, to separate them, and to examine them. Being in the world (real and created) is a sign and source of internalized structures and schemas of perceiving individual elements of the world, understanding them and the criteria for their evaluation. Dealing with the multidimension of life space, with its symbolic and material elements that the child constantly interacts with in its daily life, is the basis of experience, on the basis of which the mental structures regulating behaviour, the needs and attitudes towards themselves and the world are shaped. In a child's knowledge we can see mainly marginal events, cases that are an important clue to identity.

In this way, the child's practical knowledge acquired and internalized through experience is revealed. It turns out that it shapes the child's actions at the same time. In fact, it is searching for new "places" where a child plays, learns, rests, realizes the needs of belonging and self-presentation in the process of developing their own identity. These new places can become an area of education which is understood as supporting a child in its development.

Questions on how children perceive themselves and the world in which they live, how they evaluate their own participation in the processes

of creation and what are the processes of shaping their identity in this context, are significant educational challenges (J. Nikitorowicz, 2005). They are part of the relationship between globalization and education, in the interdisciplinary space and dimension, and therefore are also global. Somehow in the centre of these considerations, there is a problem of creating the child's identity.

Identification criteria of children experiences

The research conducted by me focuses on exploring and verifying the material and symbolic components of time and space, in which the child lives. They compose the structure and content of the experienced and lived spaces of life in both real and created dimensions. Ongoing mediations within them are determined by the subject's disposition. This disposition is the result of individual experiences of interacting with elements of reality that the child lives in and experiences "here" and "now" with his own history. The area of social interaction becomes extended over time. To initial relations on the mother-child dyad, other forms of interaction are added: symbolic, those of a language nature, those that are internalized and integrated into the consciousness, and the symbolic sensory interactions that shape the foundations for the development of identity and imagination (K. Illeris, 2009, p. 139).

In the area of child's life there are suitable stimulators and stabilizers. In the case of a small child, this space is referred to as "home" (the immediate environment, both physical and social). Research in this area aims to answer the question of what is reality from the point of view of children, and how it is created by a child: *where* important objects are located in this reality, in what spaces children's patterns of orientation and functioning in the world are anchored.

94 six-year old children from an urban environment took part in the study. Analysis of the children's statements made it possible to distinguish three groups of categories of experience as a source of knowledge on identity. These experiences were situated in a culturally and socially

confirmed "locum." Distinguishing three groups of categories of experience was dictated by children's preferences. This was the result of structuring their experiences in a private living space. In this space, children placed objects (persons and things) and events that were important for some reason. At the same time, they revealed their preferred and recognized values. Thus, the child's experiences in a personal space were the models of certain values. Their disclosure was treated as a reflection of the intentional actions that resulted from specific motives (S. Epstein, 1990, p. 25).

The basis for differentiating between categories of children's experiences in personal space were preferred and recognized values. This distinction refers to the phenomenological tradition and is consistent with separating these types of values into: the vital values associated with enjoyment and utilitarian values that are closely related to them, the cultural values that include cognitive, aesthetic and custom values, and moral values (R. Ingarden, 1966, p. 85).

The following groups of experiences were distinguished:

I. Personal experiences - experiences stemming from the conditions of life, related to perceiving the world, perceiving oneself in the world, experiencing pleasure;
II. Social and cultural experiences - experiences stemming from social relations (kinship relations, belonging and relationship, emotional closeness; possessing relation; rooting relation);
III. Social and cultural experiences - experiences stemming from social actions (actions based on cooperation, competition and fight motives; resulting from established conventions)

The obtained results indicate that in the process of becoming, and that is determining its identity by a six-year old child, what the child experiences when participating in cultural and social events is significantly important.

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Abstract:

The text points to the problem of creating an identity in a culturally diverse space. Reference is made to the mechanisms of creating identity from the postmodern perspective and to the problem of location and dislocation of identity. At present, the identity of a child is determined by the idea of a nomadic becoming. Against this background, there are new cognitive and research perspectives. In the studies undertaken, the questions asked concerned the importance of everyday experiences in creating an identity, and the extent to which a six-year-old is aware of his embodied and rooted experience. The obtained results enabled the identification of three groups of experiences of children situated in the individually constructed, as well as the culturally and socially confirmed, locale.

Keywords: identity, experience, child, life space, location of identity

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Multiculturalism: The Challenge of Matching Language Learning to Early Childhood Education

Introduction

Recently, there has been increasing interest in early foreign language learning (ELL) and very early foreign language acquisition (VELL), with particular reference to the need to employ the most appropriate and effective methods with children of different age-groups. However, the increasing demand of early language education has led to a greater demand for qualified professionals at the nursery and pre-school level. One of the challenges facing education and training providers is to devise and offer effective education programmes which contain instruction in language, methodology and early childhood pedagogy.

In Bulgaria, "St. Kliment Ohridski", the University of Sofia, followed by a few other universities in the country, have offered degree programmes which aim to combine successfully expertise in language teaching and early years pedagogy. These programmes are popular and match language teaching to early childhood education.

Background

"European policy for multilingualism is built on the values described in the documents of the EU and is applied through a set of principles within the framework of the Bologna Process for over 10 years now. They are the basis of a "smart" growth strategy in "Europe 2020" (Shopov, & Sofronieva, 2011, p. 362).

The EU language education policy emphasizes the need to start teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age (Barcelona European Council, 2002). The European strategy for multilingualism emphasizes the importance of teaching a wide range of languages from an early age and lifelong language education (2008). Maalouf's report to the European Commission states that "for the people of Europe, old and young alike, intensive and in-depth knowledge of a language and all the culture that it transmits is a major factor of fulfilment." (Maalouf, 2008, p. 9). The strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (2009) lists language skills as being among the key skills to focus on.

As a result of the raised interest in and the current needs for early language education and awareness, the European Commission issued a Policy Handbook, entitled "Language learning at pre-primary school level: making it efficient and sustainable" in 2011. This Operational Handbook reflects the work of a group of national experts from twenty-eight countries who have exchanged experience and knowledge, examples of good practice and academic evidence and provided guidelines and recommendations on:

a) "early teaching of a second/foreign language to children"
b) "early teaching of the language of instruction and of a second language to children with a minority or migrant background" (p. 5).

The authors of the Handbook employ the term *pre-primary school level* to denote "any kind of settings (nursery, kindergarten, etc.) where learning takes place before primary school" (p. 4).

The concept of *foreign language* used in the Barcelona conclusions (2002) is "understood in a broader sense", corresponding to *the target language* defined by the authors and quoted in full below along with some other definitions of relevance to ELL (pp. 5–6):

'Early Language Learning (ELL) at pre-primary level' means the systematic raising of awareness or exposure to more than one language taking place in an early childhood education and care setting in a pre-primary school context.

'First language/mother tongue' means any language first acquired by a child.

'Language of instruction' means the dominant language formally used in the pre-primary school setting.

'Second language' means the language of instruction for children with minority backgrounds, if it is different from their first language/mother tongue. It means the language of instruction in the case of children with migrant backgrounds. In multilingual countries, it means that the language of instruction is different from the children's first language/mother tongue.

'Foreign language' means any language used in the pre-primary school context other than the first language/mother tongue, the language of instruction or the second language.

'Target language' means any language other than the first language/mother tongue used in the pre-primary school.

The benefits of early language learning

There have been numerous debates regarding *if* and *when* small children should start learning a new/foreign language. Indeed, these debates have been going on for a very long time. The opinions of different people vary with regard to what is the most appropriate age between two polar beliefs: one view is that young children should not be exposed to a foreign language, and the other is that it is best for children to be exposed to a foreign language from as early as possible.

As a result of the dynamics of the new century and the globalisation of Europe, more and more people have come to realise that young children need to learn new languages and to be "open" to new language experiences. The Council of Europe has also emphasised the importance of early language teaching, and these changes and needs have been felt in most European countries.

Recent research in neuroscience also provides evidence in support of ELL and it provides indications as to the optimum age. Its findings have

been widely disseminated. Daloiso (2007, pp.12–13) summarises them when he clarifies the term "early": "The latest research in the neurosciences afford us a much more precise definition of the term, beginning with the recognition that there are *critical periods* and *sensitive periods* in LA (Aglioti and Fabbro 2006), and that they are determined by specific neuro-developmental phenomena (myelin formation, a decrease in metabolic activity, and a decrease in synaptic genesis)." The two critical periods when a child can acquire a foreign language and achieve competence in this language that is equal to their competence in their mother tongue are between 0–3 years of age and between 4–8 years of age. Excellent acquisition is possible within the two periods, but during the second one a greater degree of energy will be required "to activate the cerebral regions wherein languages are represented." The third period is described by the author as a sensitive period which lasts from 8 to 22 years of age and is a period in which individuals can still develop a good linguistic competence "but it becomes extremely difficult for this competence to equal that of the mother tongue. A more or less strong foreign accent, in fact, penetrates – the morphological-syntactic competence can still be well developed, although it requires more work – while there are no particular difficulties in the lexical acquisition of open class words."

"Early childhood is the best period for becoming bilingual, because the brain is highly flexible and children are very interested in learning language. Children can learn two or more languages if they have enough input and they have enough motivation and enjoyment. Speaking two languages brings several social and cognitive advantages" (Pirchio, Passiatore, Tomassini, & Taeschner, 2012, p. 10).

The authors of the Policy Handbook also recognize the existence of *a critical period* of developing one's mother tongue and the relevance of this theory for learning another language which differs from the mother tongue. "Younger children who are exposed to languages have a greater ability to develop a feeling for the rhythm, the phonology and the intonation of the language. Their potential to grasp the language structure later is also greatly enhanced" (p. 10). According to the authors, some of the benefits of ELL are:

– increasing children's capacities of empathy by opening children's minds to other languages and cultures,
– enhancing communication competences and interaction with others,
– increasing children's ability to concentrate and their self-confidence,
– raising awareness of diversity and cultural variety and fostering understanding and respect,
– shaping children's overall progress.

Challenges to early language learning

Early foreign language education should aim to develop language skills, on the one hand, but on the other it is also necessary to place language learning into a more general framework that adds to the overall development of the children. Early childhood educators suggest a more complete approach to ELL, which includes activities such as singing, dancing, role-play, modelling, application, crafts and so on, in order to motivate children and give them opportunities to express and develop their potential. The general aim is to inspire children and instil a love for the new language as a means of an intra- and inter-cultural communication. Lack of anxiety and a pleasant environment is viewed as being essential, along with repetition of structures in meaningful situations which will lead to the consolidation of learned material and knowledge. Learning poems and songs, playing games and other activities are integrated in most language classes. There has been increasing interest in the role of games and play when it comes to children's development within a new intercultural environment.

A pleasant and playful environment is undoubtedly of primary importance in early language education, but at the same time the goal to be achieved in these classes is successful language acquisition. Singing different songs and playing various games, as pleasant as they may be for children, are not sufficient for achieving this goal. On the other hand, time allocated to learning languages in a pre-school and school environment

is far from sufficient. Activities like drawing, painting, using computers and other new technologies in the language classes can be useful if interaction does not take place in the mother tongue, but which is rarely the case. "There are many techniques on offer that can be applied and integrated into language classes, but in most instances there is lack of a consistent and holistic language methodological framework to bind all of them together" (Sofronieva, 2012b, p. 213). The authors of the Handbook also argue that language education at pre-primary level should be structured, and more empirical evidence is needed on children's results, especially when new approaches are introduced. Serious research and sound scientific validation of data should lie in the theory and practice of ELL.

Existing models of good practice that are presented in the Handbook range from approaches that aim to raise children's language awareness to exposure to bilingual approaches and full immersion programmes like, for instance, *CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning)* and *language tandems*. Some examples of such good practice are:

- – Let's play in English (Awareness raising — *Italy),*
- – Multicultural teaching (Language tandems — *Poland*),
- – Inglegoiz (CLIL — *Spain*),
- – Children's heart (CLIL — *Belgium*, *French Community*),
- – The scientific approach (CLIL — *Belgium*, *French Community*),
- – Mathematics (activity in the target language) (CLIL — *Belgium, French Community*).

However, the principal objective of language awareness raising or exposure approaches is to help children prepare to learn a new language rather than aiming to exploit the full capacities of children at this age to acquire languages. On the other hand, CLIL for pre-school children are usually adapted approaches because CLIL is mainly applied at higher levels of education, i.e. primary and secondary schools. This approach aims at using a foreign language as a medium in teaching non-language contents, e.g. mathematics. Language tandems as an example of bilingual exposure can be tandems of staff using different languages with children in their

everyday classroom activities. They follow the principle "one person-one language". But such tandems are not easy to apply in either pre-primary or other school settings for a number of reasons. Employing two specialists for the same classes is, on the one hand, costly, and on the other hand, it would involve finding yet a greater number of qualified professionals in the field, a task hard enough to fulfil in general in many countries without having to apply an instruction by two teachers in "tandem". This brings us to another significant challenge in ELL, namely, the qualifications and skills of staff required for implementing an effective ELL.

As the authors of the Handbook debate, the level of qualification re-quirements of staff who are involved in pre-primary education varies sig-nificantly in different countries. Some countries require a degree level of education, whereas others simply require vocational training and there are countries that have no specific requirements in relation to staff. The recent growing interest in ELL is creating new demands for qualified pro-fessionals in the field.

Ideally, such professionals should have fluency in the foreign lan-guage and a solid knowledge of the processes involved in language ac-quisition, and in particular early language acquisition. They need to have a thorough understanding of children's developmental processes and of current language teaching methods, approaches, principles and tech-niques.

However, practice shows that to find a sufficient pool of early lan-guage education experts is still a demanding and not easily attainable goal. "In some cases ELL is practised by staff with good pedagogic skills but low language proficiency; in others it is practised by language teach-ers lacking an appropriate pedagogical background. In both cases, only a few may be aware of how young children's cognitive processes develop, particularly in the case of second/foreign language acquisition. Both ped-agogical and language skills are essential if ELL is to be effective" (Hand-book, p. 18).

Respectively, the language education and training programmes should include modules in linguistics, early childhood education, method-ology and didactics. Education and training programmes should be

designed to develop ELL staff language competence, early childhood ped-
agogy skills and intercultural competence. "The development of staff skills
in ELL should be regarded as a long-term investment, so that the skills ac-
quired remain relevant and consistent with the ELL objectives, with con-
tinuing emphasis on upgrading skills and making language awareness
a priority. This long-term commitment will serve to retain the motivation
of both staff and children and ensure the quality and efficiency of ELL"
(Handbook, p. 21).

**Early language teaching degree programmes offered at Sofia
University**

"St. Kliment Ohridski" University of Sofia (SU) is the oldest and largest
University in Bulgaria, and a centre for scholarly work and research. The
University has sixteen faculties spread in different areas of the capital
which offer a wide variety of degree programmes to the young people in
the country.

The Faculty of Primary and Pre-school Education is one of the
youngest faculties at the university, but it nonetheless has a long tradi-
tion. At present, there are six departments, namely, the Departments of
Pre-school Education, Primary School Education, Special Education, Art
Education, Social Education and Social Work and Music. Ten BA degree
programmes and more than twenty MA programmes are offered within
the Faculty.

Pre-school Education and Foreign Language Teaching (1997), Pri-
mary School Education and Foreign Language Teaching (1997) and Ped-
agogy of Mass and Artistic Communication (2007) are three relatively new
BA degree programmes which train professionals in the field of pre-
school and primary school education and early foreign language teach-
ing. In order to enrol on these programmes, students must pass university
admission exams in English, German, French, Italian, Spanish or Russian
respectively, or alternatively they compete for admittance by their scores
in the national school exams in the respective language. On a broader

scale, students are trained to become qualified professionals in the field of pre-school and primary school education on the one hand, and specialized foreign language teachers on the other hand. These new programmes have been designed to satisfy the growing demand for language teachers, and specialists in the field of education at this level in Bulgaria. Although the academic records show that the majority of the students enrol on the programmes with the English language, the Faculty, in order to encourage language diversity, puts time and effort into supporting the other language programmes as well. Graduates have a wide range of job opportunities within the private or state schools, educational and cultural institutions, social, administrative and managerial structures, etc. They can work as teachers, language teachers, advisors and experts in their respective fields of expertise. The related MA programmes provide further training and expertise.

Early language teaching programmes offered at post graduate level at Sofia University

There are two types of language teacher retraining programmes offered at Sofia University at the postgraduate level. One is offered at the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology and is designed for teachers who would like to gain extra qualifications in teaching foreign languages at all levels of schooling. The other one is the early language teacher retraining programme, offered at the Faculty of Primary School and Preschool Education. The applicants are predominantly teachers from nurseries, pre-schools, primary schools and institutions. The objective of this programme, which lasts one year, is to retrain these teachers so that they are able to teach foreign languages along with the other subjects they teach in their educational institutions. It provides opportunities to graduates who work as teachers in nurseries and primary schools and who have sufficient language knowledge to receive "a qualified language teacher" status (for this level of schooling) on successful completion. The learning modules are spread throughout the whole year of studies, and

are mainly delivered at weekends so that the training is in accordance with the teachers' working commitments. All teachers are highly motivated and many of them commute extensively from all over Bulgaria to attend the weekend classes at Sofia University.

These programmes are part of the general policy of lifelong learning and language teacher training in Bulgaria. They are steps taken towards satisfying the demand for teachers in the country. They are also an attempt to offer different and better programmmes to teachers, thus propagating and implementing the current policies of lifelong learning at the national level.

Good practice in applying existing models of ELL at University level

Having the necessary skills and qualifications is essential for pre-primary staff in order to ensure the most favourable ELL. Early language teachers and educators should also be supplied with effective language models which they can successfully implement in their work with the children. And it is a responsibility of the educational and training institutions to offer such good models which are sound and based on ample empirical evidence.

Sofia University, in collaboration with Sapienza University of Rome, have taken steps towards the introduction of such a model in Bulgaria, an example of good practice in early language acquisition. The Narrative Format model, developed by Prof. Traute Taeschner (Taeschner, 2005) was introduced as an instructional tool for initial teacher education at the Faculty of Primary and Pre-school Education in 2009. It is an effective and innovative psycholinguistic model of teaching languages to children that has been applied successfully in many nurseries and school classrooms, as well as in the home environment in different countries all over the world. Some of the characteristics of the model, which are in accordance with the guidelines for effective ELL, stated in the Handbook are: the focus of education is not on the new language itself, but rather the new

language is used as a tool for communication in that new environment; language acquisition is spontaneous and effortless, it happens in meaningful, emotionally charged contexts which mirror children's everyday experiences and playful situations; an engaging environment for both children and teachers is provided by a series of narrative stories and all the specific strategies and techniques for "acting" these stories out and sharing experiences of numerous adventures, pleasure, trouble, challenges and joy in the new language. The model is rooted in the principle of good communication and empathy in language education. It fosters teachers and children's capacities of empathy, and enhances their communicative competence and interaction with others. Provided that relevant training in the model is received, teachers who are fluent and teachers who are not experts or fluent in foreign languages can work equally successfully on it with children (Taeschner, 2005). It is also appropriate for practice in a home environment (e.g. Pirchio, Passiatore, Tomassini, & Taeschner, 2012). The model can be and has been successfully applied to children from minority or migrant backgrounds (e.g. Daveri, 2011), as well as with children with learning difficulties. Two studies evaluated its implementation for the linguistic treatment of children with Down Syndrome in a rehabilitative clinical setting (Lerna, Massagli, Galluzzi, & Russo, 2002; Lerna, Massagli, Russo, Taeschner, & Galluzzi, 2006); and another study verified its effectiveness for fostering first language development of a school aged child with cognitive delay in a "natural", and integrated classroom context (Pirchio, & Taeschner, 2011). There are numerous research findings which validate the Narrative Format model's usefulness and effectiveness among children and teachers (e.g. Taeschner, 2005; Taeschner, & Pirchio, 2009; Pirchio, Passiatore, & Taeschner, 2011; Daveri, 2011; etc.). For more information on the model see the official website <http://www.hocus -lotus.edu> and the book "The Magic Teacher" (Taeschner, 2005).

At Sofia University, the Narrative Format model was incorporated into the general linguistics course of the regular BA students of Preschool Education and Foreign Language Teaching and Pedagogy of Mass and Art Communication. Additionally, weekly hours of practice on the model were allocated for the task at university partner nurseries, thus

binding theory and practice of the model with students and children. As a result of the students' positive evaluation of the Narrative Format model at the end of the first academic year, and their willingness to continue their study and practice on it, it has been integrated into their linguistics curriculum and practice for a second successive year. In the years which followed, it has been integrated into the university module of early foreign language teaching methods. Recent research conducted in Bulgaria (e.g. Sofronieva, 2012a & 2012c) confirmed the effectiveness of the model as an instructional tool at university level.

Conclusion

Sofia University shares the Policy Handbook authors' view that the education and training of staff in ELL should be viewed as a long-term investment. It strives to offer education and training programmes which develop, on the one hand, the language and intercultural competence of future early foreign language teachers, and on the other hand, their pedagogy skills. It recognizes the challenge of matching language learning to early childhood education and takes appropriate and efficient steps towards resolving the long-lasting dilemma: who should we turn to without having to compromise in early language education – language teachers with an insufficient pedagogic background of early childhood education, or specialists in early childhood education with insufficient language knowledge and low language proficiency? Furthermore, the University experts are applying an innovative and effective model of good practice of ELL, incorporating it successfully into the language and methodology modules of students and in their ongoing practice with children from nurseries and kindergartens, thus allowing both students and children to experience the joy of language learning and ensuring that it is beneficial at both levels of the educational system.

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Abstract:

The increasing demand for early language education creates a greater demand for qualified professionals at the nursery and pre-school level. One of the challenges facing education and training providers is to devise and offer effective

education programmes. These programmes should incorporate instruction in language, methodology and early childhood pedagogy.

"St. Kliment Ohridski" University of Sofia, followed by a few other universities in Bulgaria, have offered degree programmes which provide combined expertise both in language teaching and early years pedagogy.

Keywords: multilingualism, early language education, language education programmes and training, the Narrative Format model of early language acquisition

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From Regional to Intercultural Education in Polish Kindergartens

Introduction

Multiculturalism in Poland has become a reality and, as a social phenomenon, it requires taking the appropriate educational actions which aim to support the processes of rooting people in the native culture, helping them surpass their direct experience and notice others with their history and differences, making them aware of the peculiarity of distinctness, and shaping a sense of common heritage. These objectives are fulfilled through the means of regional and intercultural education, starting as early as in kindergarten. Within the last decades, education has undergone certain important changes which have been recorded in the national curricula. These curricula determine the direction of changes in the practical work of teachers and children in kindergartens.

By analyzing the curricula, as well as selected kindergarten education programmes, one may conclude that intercultural education is rooted in regional education. The objective of this article is to indicate what theoretical and practical changes have taken place in Poland within the last few years in order to introduce kindergarten children into the world of culture, as well as to evaluate those changes from the point of view of a practising teacher on the basis of the comparison between the records in the national kindergarten curricula and in selected programmes.

The assumptions of intercultural education in kindergartens

Intercultural education can be understood as "all the mutual influences and interactions between units and groups, institutions, organizations, associations and relations that facilitate such development of a human being during which the person becomes a fully aware and creative member of a family, local, regional, religious, national, continental, cultural and global or earthly community, who is able to actively fulfil his or her own, unique and constantly created, identity" (Nikitorowicz, 2007, p. 45).

A human being living in a multicultural society is able to make contact with the representatives of other groups. The objective of intercultural education is to shape such attitudes that will make it possible for a person to make contact and to communicate with others in order to learn about them and understand them without the need to dominate them or yielding to prejudice and fear. The coexistence of different social and cultural groups should be based on tolerance, integration and acceptance of a man as a person, but also on respect for their nationality and tradition. Tolerance may be achieved through intercultural dialogue, the objective of which is to protect people against globalization, homogenization, but also against ethnocentrism and ethnonationalism (Nikitorowicz, 2005, p. 30).

K. Kamińska (2007, p. 79) points to two ways of intercultural education consisting in the transfer of knowledge (from knowing to understanding the new culture) and maintaining relations between human beings in which, apart from the knowledge of certain aspects of cultural distinctness, the ability to communicate is an important factor.

A well-shaped picture of themselves and their group, as well as being rooted in their culture, helps people to notice the Others and their distinctness, but also certain similarities and relationships. Shaping one's own identity is important because "a man cannot create the image of himself, the concept of himself, or identify with someone, if he has not found any group of reference, i.e. people important for him or his cultural heritage" (Kamińska, 2007, p. 79).

According to J. Nikitorowicz, the idea of intercultural education should shape the awareness of human solidarity through:

- "knowing and understanding oneself, one's own culture, world, roots and homeland;
- overcoming the tendency to close oneself within the area of one's own values and cultural sphere in order to be open to and to understand others, respect their differences and treat them as a development factor;
- encouraging to notice and learn about the Other, shaping the sensitivity and the ability to cooperate with others, as well as protecting people against a simplified and deformed image of the Other;
- encouraging the exchange of experiences within the scope of the fulfilment of educational programmes as well as social and institutional activity" (Nikitorowicz, 2007, p. 48).

Since intercultural education is related to the concept of culture, it is important for a human being to be aware of the existence of equal cultures that are developing as a result of the transfer of values.

Within the scope of intercultural education, the following tendencies should be promoted:

- acculturation related to the concept of mutual borrowings of a voluntary nature,
- integration, the promotion of tolerance and mutual respect through constant dialogue, while respecting and maintaining native values,
- democracy, the promotion of humanism, freedom and responsibility (Nikitorowicz, 2009, p. 180 and 188).

Multiculturalism challenges modern education as a means of preparing a human being for living in the cultural and worldview diversity without resorting to violence against others, dominating others or giving up one's cultural identity in the name of misinterpreted tolerance. An important element of such an education is acquiring the ability to understand oneself and others, to negotiate, talk and cooperate with others

despite the cultural differences. In kindergarten education, this is fulfilled within the scope of educational areas aimed at shaping children's social skills, their ability to communicate with adults and children, proper behaviour during play and task situations, as well as family, civil and patriotic education.

At the stage of kindergarten education, cultural distinctness should be presented as a novelty. Novelty does not mean strangeness, which may make a child anxious, but it should make the child interested in what is different. J. Kamińska points out that the child's first contact with cultural distinctness should be based on objects – "cultural artefacts" – and only later on the contact with adults. She emphasizes that novelty stimulates the child's cognitive curiosity, so it encourages the young learner to be active, to introduce a new element into fun. What is important is the fact that objects, certain cultural products, do not weaken a child's sense of security. That is why we should start from establishing the relationship between the child and the object, as a result of which the child's interest shall lead to knowledge and understanding.

The first contact with cultural distinctness may be related to the presence of a child whose origins are different in the kindergarten group. In this case, the teacher's role is to support the adaptation and integration processes within the whole group.

An important element that makes one culture different from other cultures is language which, in direct communication, may make the child afraid of accepting and understanding cultural distinctness (Kamińska, 2005, p. 22–23). In kindergarten education, apart from learning speech (broadening the vocabulary, understanding and proper usage of speech) and acquiring the ability to communicate in the native language (the mother tongue), children are increasingly often given the opportunity to learn foreign languages. The oldest children attend obligatory English classes, which also facilitates their school education. There are specialized kindergartens in which a selected foreign language is obligatory. Kindergarten children's speech is in the process of developing, so their contact with another language is an important element not only of intercultural education, but also of the modern approach to education in general.

The direction of change in the regional an intercultural kindergarten education

The objective of the reforms introduced into Polish education is the modernization of the education process, which results from sudden changes in the field of society and culture, politics or economics, as well as from the need to prepare young people for living in changed circumstances. A. Gajdzica (2006, p. 265–266) notices that the reform should not only be focused on the present, and on adjusting curricula to the current problems, but it should also take into account the future, including forecasting social changes a young person shall face in his or her adult life. At the moment, the leading problem is society's multiculturalism which, until now, in certain regions of Poland, has not played an important role and therefore has not been a challenge for practising teachers. This is confirmed by the research carried out by K. Kamińska (2007, p. 282, 294) between 2002–2005 among kindergarten teachers who, despite possessing a friendly attitude towards multiculturalism, admitted that they knew nothing (34% of the total) or little on this issue (56% of the total). Furthermore, the research showed that the teachers were unprepared to carry out intercultural classes in kindergarten. However, it should be noted that certain elements of regional education did occur in kindergarten educational programmes, although the awareness of the need to shape children's cultural identity and to open them to cultural distinctness was and still is low among those teachers who have no everyday contact with multiculturalism. Therefore, we want to show the current direction of the development of the regional and intercultural kindergarten education, as well as the changes that may be noticed in the programmes that are commonly available for the teachers.

On the basis of the above mentioned theoretical assumptions of regional and intercultural education, and taking into account the books on this issue, one may distinguish the different stages that shape a child's cultural identity. The first stage includes learning about oneself, looking for an answer to the question: who am I? At this stage the child is given a series of exercises that help them to shape their own image, including

experiencing oneself, learning about one's own appearance, one's strong points, interests and acquired abilities. This reinforces the child's self-confidence, and shapes their sense of respect and dignity. An important element of this stage is learning non-verbal and verbal communication, describing one's feelings, desires and needs, as well as understanding oneself and others. The construction of the child's identity continues in kindergarten, through contact with a larger social group, in the process of socialization. The child may experience their competence in a group, notice their own appearance, features and personality traits, as well as notice all the differences and similarities. Being in a group of peers, the child gradually acquires an awareness of belonging to various social groups (Surma, 2010, p. 28). Another stage of intercultural education is learning about one's family and giving meaning to the family values and culture. The child creates their identity within the context of intergenerational relationships. Learning about their own region, the child becomes open to noticing another culture and experiencing the cultural differences in the local society.

The stages of regional and intercultural education described by J. Nikitorowicz correspond, to a certain degree, with the objectives and contents included in kindergarten education programmes based on the national curriculum of 1999. That curriculum was divided into four areas:

1. Knowing and understanding oneself and the world.
2. Acquiring skills through action.
3. Finding one's place in a group of peers, in the community.
4. Building a system of values.

Within these areas, a kindergarten teacher could accomplish the assumptions of intercultural education by making the children learn about themselves through different actions against the context of a group of peers and family, as well as the closest geographical, environmental, social and cultural settings. Moreover, the child was introduced into the system of values, principles, norms and social rules in order to acquire the ability to live in a group of people. An example of a programme based

on the national curriculum of 1999 is "ABC… The Kindergarten Education Program of 21st Century", in which regional education was carried out within the area of social and moral aspects, science, culture and aesthetic, technology, as well as speech and thought (Łada-Grodzicka, 2010). Special attention should be paid to the programme's contents that are related to the social and moral education.

However, in the programme's theoretical assumptions we will not find any reference to the need for regional or intercultural education in the context of multiculturalism, although the contents include certain allusions to it. The authors focused on learning about the nearest setting, region and homeland, including the national symbols. As for the issues concerning the Earth as a planet, the authors address these to the oldest children, referring to their interest in prehistory, the universe and aspects of environmental protection. Furthermore, the authors introduce topics related to learning about the customs of other people, understanding the differences between people of all over the world (the colour of skin, customs, culture, folklore and the languages people speak), and noticing similarities between the inhabitants of the world. However, one may have the impression that these issues are presented in a theoretical (abstract) manner. What is missing here is the reference to the child's direct experience with another culture or customs, and the opportunity to meet a peer of different origin in the kindergarten group. Also, there are no explicit references to the theoretical assumptions of regional and intercultural education and to the need of introducing the child into the world of multiculturalism. The research carried out by J. Kamińska reflects this situation in practice. The teachers, using the programmes certified by the Polish Ministry of Education (MEN), were not aware of the fact that they fulfilled the objectives and contents that were strictly related to the regional and intercultural education.

The programme in question was focused on creating the child's identity against the context of the family and the group of peers, as well as knowing the nearest setting, region, and homeland, but there were no references to Europe, except for one, which may result from Poland's political situation at the end of the 20th century. When Poland joined the

European Union, not only the political, but also the social and cultural situations changed. At the moment, children have more and more opportunities to experience directly another culture and language. Due to the presence of peers of foreign origin in kindergartens, children integrate with them in a natural way, accepting cultural distinctness as something new and interesting. They are no longer surprised at the fact that there are people who speak a different language, look different, wear different clothes and play in a different way. The presence of foreign peers makes children curious and willing to learn rather than afraid of what is unknown. However, these changes require a different approach from teachers to education. The new reform of the education system, along with the new national curriculum of kindergarten education, which has been in force since 2008, should be of help in this regard.

What changes, therefore, have been introduced into the new national curriculum within the scope of regional and intercultural education? First of all, in the curriculum that is now obligatory, ten objectives of kindergarten education were formulated. These objectives are detailed in fifteen educational areas. These objectives are related to a child's multi-faceted progress, including the child's intellectual, social, moral, physical, health, and psychological development. Among these ten objectives there are two that indicate the fulfilment of the assumptions of regional and intercultural education. The first of these refers to this type of education in an implicit manner, as it is focused on building the child's knowledge of the world of society, science and technology, and on developing the ability to express the child's thoughts in a way that is understandable to others. The other objective is focused on regional education in a more explicit manner, as it refers to shaping children's social sense of belonging (to the family, to the group of peers and to the national community) and a patriotic attitude. That objective corresponds to the last educational area in which family, civil and patriotic education is carried out.

Comparing the national kindergarten curricula of 1999 and 2008, one may conclude that the new curriculum takes into account the need of adjusting the educational process to the process of the child's development and preparation for living in society. The objectives and skills of

the kindergarten graduate were specified clearly in this area. Therefore, in their work, kindergarten teachers must take into account regional education focused on reinforcing the child's relations with the family and encouraging the child's interest in the region and hometown, as well as intercultural education that begins from shaping the sense of national identity. Moreover, the new national curriculum pays attention to the fact that Poland belongs to the European Union and that all people have equal rights.

The changes introduced in the national curriculum are reflected in kindergarten education programmes. The programme entitled "Before I Become a Student" is an example of such a kindergarten programme (Tokarska, Kopała, 2009). The authors pay attention to the children's need to gain "experience related to the knowledge of their family's history, of their hometown and then of the whole Poland: Polish legends, traditions, customs and the beauty of the landscape" (Tokarska, Kopała, 2009, p. 133). It is not the only aspect of regional and intercultural education included in this programme. The authors pay special attention to knowing the native language and reinforcing family relations that exert a significant influence on the development of the child's personality and the creation of his or her identity. Among family members the child comes to understand different social roles, becomes acquainted with values, and learns how to be independent and responsible. Kindergarten reinforces those bonds by creating a native culture, teaching family and national traditions, celebrating festivals, and teaching the meaning of symbols related to native culture.

In their theoretical assumptions, the authors of the "Before I Become a Student" programme include regional education, which is understood as teaching about the country's natural, social and cultural reality. They believe that the purpose of regional education is to develop the child's natural sensitivity, to help to shape the attachment to the child's own family, and to acquaint the child with the region's history and traditions through direct contact with the products of local culture and art.

A new direction, which is clearly emphasized in the national curriculum and in the programme in question, is building of national identity,

as well as shaping the attitudes and patterns of behaviour related to national symbols, such as Poland's emblem, national anthem and flag. While the objectives of the old programmes included knowing and understanding the symbols, the new programmes focus on shaping the children's attitudes.

Another change includes the fact that the new programmes focus on making children aware of the fact that "we are not alone in the world and that among us there are people of different nationalities, cultures and religions" (Tokarska, Kopała, 2009, p. 133). Noticing cultural differences should help to build peaceful relations and attitudes facilitating partnership, tolerance and dialogue. The programme's contents also include information about the European Union and European countries, the purpose of which is to make children aware of Poland' role and significance in Europe, and to reinforce their sense of belonging to the European community. A kindergarten graduate must know that he or she is a Pole and that their homeland is Poland – a country that belongs to the European Union.

The changes in kindergarten education clearly oscillate between civil and patriotic education and the phenomenon of multiculturalism, which, based on democratic values, is to result in the mutual understanding and coexistence of people who are different in terms of social origin, political views, religion, language, sex, skin colour or race. The authors emphasize that modern kindergarten education takes into account the children's multiculturalism and that the teacher's role is to introduce the children to the meaning of different cultural or religious symbols. Special attention is paid to patriotic education, which is related to the shaping of a sense of responsibility – first for the hometown, region, and the country, and then for the whole world. This results from discovering that all the Earth's resources are the common good of the inhabitants of a region, country, Europe and the world.

Not only is regional education related to knowing the homeland as a natural environment, but it also serves as an introduction to the world of culture, customs, traditions, norms, manners, history, literature and music.

Multiculturalism as a Challenge for Contemporary Preschool and Elementary School Education

Conclusion

Because of society's multiculturalism, education must solve problems related to people's cultural identity, communication, dialogue, subjectivity, tolerance, acceptance, esteem, respect, dignity and coexistence. In Polish kindergartens, regional education has always been present, but it did not take into account the phenomenon of multiculturalism and interculturalism, which, in the latest changes to the national curriculum, has been slightly emphasized.

J. Nikitorowicz (2009, p. 15 and 117) points out that "culture, being a differentiating factor, also becomes the base for unifying agreement". That is why, educational activity should be focused on "experiencing and understanding the reality, making social changes, and attempting to understand oneself and others".

The essence of regional and intercultural education is to make the person who is involved in the issues important for the setting, not only through the acceptance of values and rules, but also through transforming them in accordance with common ideals (Muszyńska, 2005, p. 115). The knowledge of rules and regulations, as well as an awareness of one's own cultural values, may not only be the starting point for coexistence and cooperation of units in solving everyday problems, but also in transforming and improving the existing reality. Education helps to shape such attitudes that correspond to the person's own culture, but without separation, assimilation or marginalization. Paying attention to raising the value of one's own culture, religion and language, is to protect the young person against globalization. However, at a time of pluralism and democracy, teaching tolerance and dialogue is also necessary.

The national kindergarten curriculum of December 2008 details the objectives of a child who has completed kindergarten, areas of knowledge and skills falling within the scope of regional and intercultural education. In particular, these changes refer to family, civil and patriotic education, which takes into account the need to create a cultural identity based on studying and discovering native values, language, religion and traditions. Kindergarten children are curious of the world and new things.

It is a good stage of a person's life for shaping such attitudes towards the Other that are devoid of prejudice, stereotypes and the willingness to dominate others. However, will these changes be actually noticed by practising teachers and will they be appropriately introduced in all Polish kindergartens?

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Abstract:

Multiculturalism as a social phenomenon requires from education to solve some issues concerning cultural identity shaping, education into dialogue which supports subjectivity, tolerance, acceptance, dignity and recognition. Culture is to help a child to understand himself, to create his own identity, as well as to be able to participate in the creation of modern civilization and to become orien-tated in the surrounding reality. Fast technological changes as well as easy ac-cess to information make it possible to penetrate and to get knowledge about different cultures. The goal of education is to shape in a child the abilities to in-terpret reality, to see cultural similarities and differences and to be able to make good evaluation.

In order to understand multiculturalism and to educate into peaceful coex-istence of different cultures, one first needs to help a child to get to know and to appreciate his own culture. It can be done by introducing a child to regional ed-ucation. Striking roots into one's own culture, without tendency to be closed in only one culture, can be of help in understanding other people and in overcom-ing the stereotypes concerning the fear of accepting cultural differences. The next step towards multicultural dialogue is intercultural education. Drawing at-tention to the need of studying foreign languages by kindergarten children al-lows initiating intercultural dialogue. Regional and intercultural education in kindergarten open children to the world and satisfy their cognitive interests.

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Applying Multicultural Education at School, or How to Lead Pupils to Tolerance

Introduction

Multiculture is a part of today's life. Pupils in their school environment meet other pupils who come from different ethnic groups or nations. Their classmates might be Hungarian, Roma, Czech, but also French or Korean. Multicultural education should prepare pupils for the possibility that in the future they might coexist with members of other nations, with people of other cultures, habits or religions.

In this article we primarily deal with multicultural education itself, then with a pedagogue who teaches multicultural education, and also with a pupil who is a part of the educational process. We will then focus on the acceptance of chosen nationalities by future pedagogues, and we will present the appropriate methods which should be used during the educational process which is aimed towards multicultural education.

Multicultural education

"*Multicultural education is included in the curriculum with respect to the cultural environment where people of different ethnic, national, religious or cultural origins were coexisting for centuries. Traditional cultural diversity is currently still deepening through trends which are often commonly referred to as globalisation. One of these trends, which significantly enhances the*

diversity of cultures in Slovakia, is the migration of members of remote and which are today unknown cultures and subcultures" (ISCED 1 – primary education, 2008, p. 22).

Multicultural education in our school system is very important in order to prepare pupils for the fact that not all people are the same. Part of multicultural education is not only to know other nations and their cultures, but also to be interested in one's own culture, history, heritage of their ancestors. Another part of Multicultural education is also an area of coexistence in the past and in the present.

The subject of multicultural education is cultural diversity. Multicultural education doesn't deal with any differences or similarities in the human world and it doesn't cultivate tolerance to any difference or promote cooperation with different people. Multicultural education primarily deals with different cultures (Mistrík and col., 2008).

Pupils come into contact with the differences of others depending on the area (region) of Slovakia where they live; whether grow up in a town or in a village, how are they raised by their close relatives, and also the wider social environment.

According to M. Mistrík et al. (2008), the main reasons for the promotion of multicultural education in schools are:

– the necessity to contribute to the peaceful coexistence of the majority and the so called older minority, as well as the willingness to support peaceful integration of the so-called newer minority into society;
– globalisation of economy, politics and media;
– variability and volatility of current European society in which cultural contacts are still altering;
– the decades of ideological, geographical and political reticence of Slovakian society;
– the inevitability of redefining the cultural identity of Slovakia, Slovaks, Hungarians, Roma, Ruthenians and the other inhabitants of the Slovak Republic in the new geopolitical situation;
– the latent racism that persists in a large part of the Slovak society;

– pedagogues who didn't have the opportunity to obtain enough skills to solve problems arising from relationships of cultures;

– even in pedagogues, we can still observe stereotypical perceptions of other cultures and a prejudiced way of evaluating pupils.

During a cross-cutting theme (multicultural education), which is a part of the educational process, pupils learn how to live with other cultures.

The coexistence of many cultures is sometimes very difficult. To understand, and to put yourself into someone else's shoes is not easy. Multicultural education helps a pupil since childhood to perceive differences and accept other people.

The role of the pedagogue in multicultural education

In multicultural education, pupils become acquainted with knowledge they already possess from primary education. A teacher at the first grade of elementary school knows his/her pupils, and teaches them the majority of subjects (or all subjects) in their class. An experienced teacher is able to estimate what knowledge pupils possess in the area of multicultural education. Gradually, he/she discovers the extent of their knowledge and broadens his/her pupils' knowledge horizon.

The area of skills and attitudes of a pedagogue in relation to multiculture:

– to be able to communicate and live with members of other socio--cultural groups, to be aware of one's rights, but at the same time respect the rights of others (positive assertivity);

– he/she should be able to show his/her own identity (who I am),

– know his/her own cultural background (where I come from);

– by his/her actions influence the value system which will have an influence on children's behaviour, by teaching them how prejudices and stereotypes influence the relationship between the

majority and minority, and also with foreigners (Dúbravcová, in Šoltésová, eds. 2006).

A pedagogue of multicultural education should be a model of behaviour for his/her pupils; he/she should accept each child regardless of nationality or religion; he/she should adopt a human approach towards children, adolescents, and also adults; he/she should have natural authority in a classroom with pupils and also in communication with parents; he/she should know the history and culture of Slovakia; he/she should be mature when choosing the appropriate methods in the application of multicultural education in primary education; he/she should be creative and spontaneous; it is also important for him/her to be open to new approaches and to respond to them, and last but not least he/she should be self-critical and aware of his/her deficiencies, prejudices and eliminate them.

The pupil in multicultural education

A child raised in a multicultural society is primarily led to social awareness and corresponding behaviour. To develop these skills, the following factors are important:

– alignment (expression of warm-heartedness, empathy, support);
– paying attention (this relates to ordinary things, such as looking at a child, listening to what he/she wants to say; accompanying him/her in his/her activities);
– acceptance (acceptance and respect for a child for who he/she is);
– understanding a child's needs (a small child depends on his/her parents to satisfy his/her needs, on his/her sensitivity to what he/she needs, how his/her needs can be satisfied);
– leaving space and defining limits (do not limit children, but at the same time insist on the following rules, as far as is necessary, etc.) (Bednářová – Šmardová, 2007).

During the educational process, pupils become acquainted not only with the culture of another nation or ethic group, but also their language, the location of the original country, its food, children's interests, etc. Pupils obtain basic cultural literacy at home and in pre-primary education. Primary education, by the means of an educational process with the assistance of a teacher, provides pupils with the opportunity to enhance their current knowledge base.

Nationalities living in Slovakia

Slovakia is a small country, but at the same time, it is rich in different ethnic groups and nationalities. After 1989, Slovakia became a refuge for many migrant families. Slovakia is not only the final destination for refugees, it is also a rather transitory territory. Apart from nationalities which live in Slovakia only temporarily, there are also nationalities which have already lived in this territory for several decades. Since the separation of the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic, there have been three censuses in Slovakia, the third of which took place two years ago (see Table 1). After last census (2011) we can see that the biggest minority living in Slovakia is the Hungarian nationality, the second is the Roma nationality and the third is the Ruthenian nationality.

Different minority groups live in many parts of Slovakia. Therefore in schools, we have several minorities represented to a greater or lesser extent among the pupils.

The perception and acceptance of diversity of pupils' cultural groups also depends on the perception and acceptance of minorities by teachers.

We investigated the acceptance of minorities by primary education teachers. To conduct this research, we used a questionnaire devised by J. Průcha (2011); this was called Questionnaire to identify factors which shape attitudes towards foreigners and other groups, developed by P. Saka and K. Saková (2004). In this original questionnaire, the objects of investigation are foreigners, Jews and Roma.

**Table 1. Population of the Slovak Republic
according to different national groups in 2011, 2001, 1991
(Censuses of population and housing, 2012)**

Resident population (according to permanent residence)	Slovak Republic					
	2011		2001		1991	
	abs.	%	abs.	%	abs.	%
together	5 397 036	100	5 379 455	100	5 274 335	100
Nationality						
Slovak	4 352 775	80,7	4 614 854	85,8	4 519 328	85,7
Hungarian	458 467	8,5	520 528	9,7	567 296	10,8
Roma	105 738	2	89 920	1,7	75 802	1,4
Ruthenian	33 482	0,6	24 201	0,4	17 197	0,3
Czech	30 367	0,6	44 620	0,8	52 884	1
Ukrainian	7 430	0,1	10 814	0,2	13 281	0,3
German	4 690	0,1	5 405	0,1	5 414	0,1
Moravian	3 286	0,1	2 348	0	6 037	0,1
Polish	3 084	0,1	2 602	0	2 659	0,1
Russian	1 997	0	1 590	0	1 389	0
Bulgarian	1 051	0	1 179	0	1 400	0
Croatian	1 022	0	890	0	x	x
Serbian	698	0	434	0	x	x
Jewish	631	0	218	0	134	0
other	9 825	0,2	5 350	0,1	2 732	0,1
undetected	382 493	7	54 502	1	8 782	0,2

X – wasn't evaluated

We adjusted this questionnaire to minorities living in the Slovak Republic. Students of Pre-school and Elementary Pedagogy, internal and external, had to answer how individual factors (listed below) influence their attitudes towards Hungarians, Roma, Czechs, Ruthenians, Ukrainians, Russians, Germans, and Poles. They expressed the intensity of influence by using a five-point rating scale, in which 1 = doesn't influence at all, 5 = definitely influences.

Table 2. Acceptance of differences of minorities

minority	difference of culture	difference of value situations
Hungarians	2,1	2,02
Roma	3,15	3,31
Czechs	1,46	1,71
Ruthenians	1,71	1,7
Ukrainians	1,72	1,74
Russians	1,7	1,78
Germans	1,8	1,76
Poles	1,61	1,7

Table 2 shows that future teachers perceive that the Czech (1,46 %) and Polish (1,61 %) nationalities as being the closest minorities in terms of culture. The Roma (3,15 %) and Hungarian (2,1 %) minorities are perceived as being the most different (see Graph 1).

Graph 1. Acceptance of differences of minorities, difference of culture
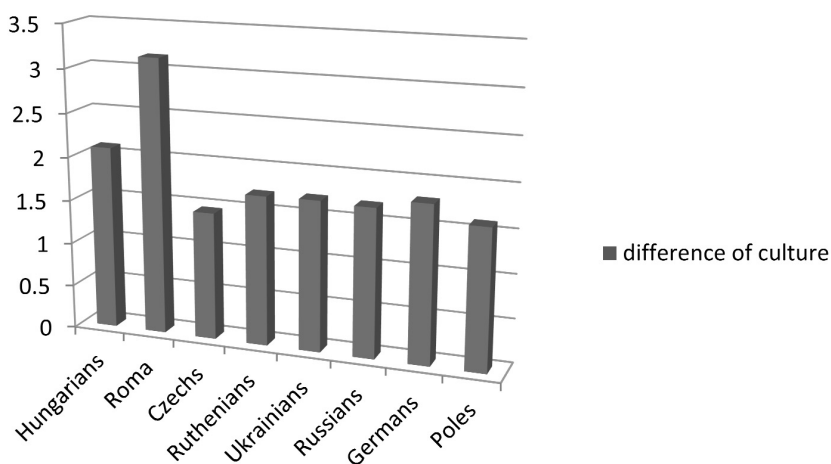
In terms of the differences in value situations, future teachers accept the smallest difference in Ruthenians (1,7 %) and Poles (1,7 %), and the

biggest difference in value situations they see in Roma (3,31 %) and Hungarians (2,02 %) (see Graph 2).

**Graph 2. Acceptance of differences of minorities,
difference of value situations**
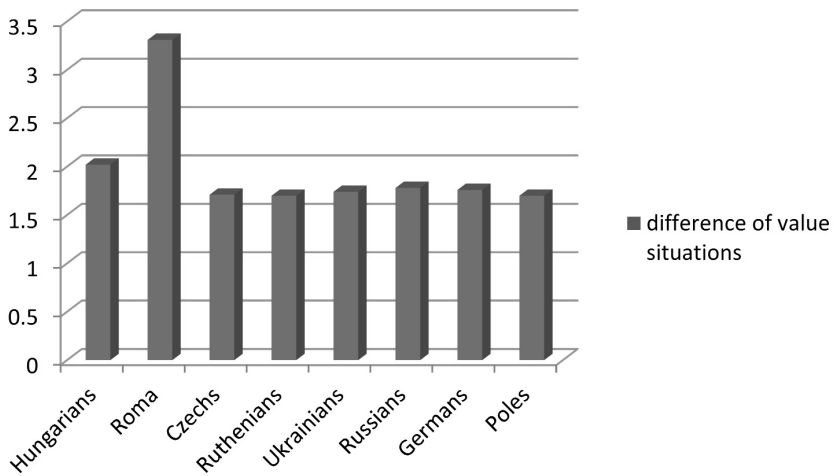
The results show us that future pedagogues, who will teach multicultural education, sympathise more with Slavonic nationalities than non-Slavonic ones. Similarity of culture, language and understanding of some of the chosen cultural elements can have an influence on the level of acceptance of the chosen nationalities.

Methods which lead to tolerance in an educational process

A teacher in primary education alters his or her methods during the educational process in such way that they will engage pupils during multicultural education.

The following are especially suitable: activating, creative methods, which motivate children to be active in a group through games, staging,

celebrations, festivals; through dance, teaching of a foreign language; methods which relax and manage cognitive activity; which enhance an exploring and creative attitude; that enable creative expression, teach how to plan activities and estimate the consequences of all activities; form a sense of one's own individuality and difference; develop skills which enhance the creative potential of individuals; inform about basic social knowledge; shape the skills of active participation on all group activities (Karbowniczek and col., 2011).

Pupils, during the educational process which employs didactic games and also empirical, cooperative teaching, and during dramatisation, gained a greater understanding of other cultures, other habits and were more willing to accept others. To understand other people's actions is not so easy. Discussion helps, and also short clips from other cultures, objects that are characteristic of a given culture, clothes, food, ways of communicating, etc.

Applying the methods of multicultural education can be incorporated into any of the main subjects, or it can run through the whole educational process. Another option is to have an independent subject which will consist of the worked-out themes, e.g. we provide an introduction to one of the topics:

Topic: <u>Know yourself, know your friend.</u>

Focus: Development of elementary knowledge about people living in Slovakia and in Poland.

Basic starting point: folk traditions – habits, music and crafts in Slovakia and in Poland.

Determination of the problem: What legends are told in Slovakia and Poland.

Description of the problem: With regard to the fact that we live in Slovakia, children should know the habits and traditions of Slovakia and Poland, to acquire elementary knowledge, and at the same time we should foster in them tolerance and acceptance of different cultures, and we should prevent formation of racial prejudices.

General objectives:
– Being able to recognize basic cultural differences.

–   Improve psycho-motoric competencies of children.
–   Develop positive pro-social empathy of children.

During our joint work in multicultural education (adjusted according to Kožuchová, 2011) we should see to it that children:
–   agree on defining the rules for work in groups, in pairs, and at the same time they respect these rules;
–   learn natural tolerance and also responsibility for fulfilling tasks;
–   are able (when needed) to ask for help, either from another child, or the pedagogue, or some other adult in the nursery school;
–   are willing to help their friends or children from another classroom according to their abilities;
–   communicate, and this communication takes place in a pleasant atmosphere;
–   are able to present the results of their work and at the same time are able to accept an evaluation from others.

Conclusions

Multicultural education is inevitable at our schools. Pupils during the educational process, together with their teacher, discover common and different features of the minority and majority parts of society. They use all available resources. It is advisable to deal with the language of a given minority, and to learn several expressions, e.g. songs. In multicultural education it is also good when pupils use all their senses when learning.

The research that we conducted was focused on future teachers of primary education. We investigated their acceptance of the differences of minorities. We consider it important to identify the attitudes of teachers (or future teachers) because the teacher is a person who influences pupils not only during the educational process but also beyond it. A teacher of multicultural education should not have prejudices.

When teaching multicultural education, he/she should present topics without prejudice and use adequately chosen methods.

Each teacher undertakes an individual approach during primary education within the framework of developing the cultural literacy of the other nation.

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Abstract:

Multicultural education is a cross-cutting theme in the state educational programme ISCED 1 – primary education. In primary education, multicultural education can be taught as a separate subject or it can be included in other ongoing subjects. When applying multicultural education it is also important that the teacher doesn't have prejudices against any ethnic group or nationality. He/she should also use appropriate methods that lead to pupils becoming more tolerant.

Keywords: Multicultural Education, Tolerance, Coexistence, Primary Education, Methodics.

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REPORTS
& REVIEWS

Jana Burgerová
University of Presov, Slovak Republic

Project for improving the quality of education at the Faculty of Education of the University of Presov by means of electronic support

Abstract: At the Faculty of Education in Presov, there is a long tradition (since 2005) in teaching by using the Moodle virtual study environment. Today, we are participating in an EU funded project, which is designed to futher increase the quality of electronic education.

The Faculty of Education at the University of Presov (PF PU) is a pioneer in the field of an e-learning alternative to traditional education, offering since 2005 accredited study in an external form through the e-learning method. From the beginning, we understood that the form of e-learning distance study as a new innovation of traditional study by using Internet technologies. We believe information and communication technologies bring many benefits, which improve and support education. The educational process is in the abovementioned case mediated, supervised, distributed and evaluated by means of computers, hypermedia education materials and sophisticated programming systems. We had and still have questions, such as whether the form of e-learning is relevant and whether the negatives (e.g. no personal contact, etc.) do not outnumber the positive aspects. Our output analyses have to stem predominantly from pedagogy and psychology; these are projected into the whole process of education – and this is what we are trying to achieve during the actual process of implementing this programme.

Despite initial problems, e-learning has become stable throughout the years and achieved its solid position (with the support of the ESF project

"*Distance learning in the context of long-life education*") in each of the interested parties. This alternative, however, brings both positives and negatives. The advantage of the PF PU is the ability to specify and identify them.

In this phase, we can definitely state we have been successful and that e-learning has become the favourite format in the field of study support (e.g. Adamkovičová, M., 2010). Students show their long-term interest in this type of education: there have been no significant problems in this version of education in terms of students' activity and motivation (although the truth is that the most suitable format for them is a combined form of the study – blended learning). The quality of particular courses at the PF PU varies. However, in an academic environment (and not only in an academic environment), it is natural – there are teachers who are enthusiastic about e-learning. They prepare interesting and challenging courses. On the other hand, there were others who did prepare the essentials and then stopped…They, however, cannot be blamed – at the faculty, there was no motivation and evaluation system for course creators. At present, we are preparing a system - prepared courses meeting publication criteria will be recorded as publication outcomes with their standard publication registration.

The University of Presov is one of the most successful universities in terms of acquired European Union European Structural Funds projects. The operation programmes Science and Research are the platforms our faculty is particulalry experienced and successful in.

In Slovakia as well as in most of post-communist countries (but not only in those), questions about the quality of education are very real. In the present conditions, it is impossible for a faculty or a university to ignore quality. There exists a competitive environment: the charts of rating agencies, public interest, public opinion, finances for the faculty and many other factors influence us and which we – as a part of the process of education - experienced all the time. It is very easy to agree with Liessmann (2012), who has doubts about the PISE charts and other factors; however, his views have little bearing at present. Whether we want to or not, we have to compete…

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It is therefore natural that the orientation towards the improvement of the quality of education at education institutions is becoming a condition for quality processes at universities. Strategic documents produced in the university focus on the conditions needed for quality improvement and set the framework for the delimitation of approaches towards quality. In terms of education and the social welfare of students, universities declare the following (and other) primary aims:

- – Focus on the improvement and evaluation of quality.
- – Education activity of a university should be done in a way that will enable the university to maintain its university status.
- – Establish proper conditions for study with the accent on innovations.
- – In the context of long-life learning, map the needs of the labour market and in cooperation with the external environment offer study programmes for the extension of education or its improvement.

The project "***Improvement of the quality of education at the University of Presov in Presov***" which PF PU was successful in applying for, is a project which has higher added value from the point of view of the quality of activities realised at the PU. A 2-year-project began in January 2012 with a budget of 570 976 EUR. Due to the fact that it has the most extensive experience with e-learning, PF PU was chosen as the only faculty from the PU. The aim of the project is the proposal and verification of the system of direct quality measurement and the proposal for measures to improve the quality of university education in the study programme *1.1.5 Pre-school and Elementary Pedagogy*; the proposal and verification of the environment for the system of education and virtual classroom management and the creation of a methodological and didactic concept of the creation of e-learning courses. The target group are full-time and part-time students in the selected study programme.

We expect e-learning quality improvement to be based on several activities:

1. The establishment of infrastructure for the implementation of e-learning support of education as a tool for university education quality improvement, and as a tool for data acquisition for the system of direct university education quality measurement.
2. The creation of pilot education combined programmes.
3. A proposal for a system of direct university education quality measurement. This system shall include the following levels of evaluation (in accordance with the Kirkpatrick model):

– Reaction: How do students react on the education process? Questionnaire for students which covers the content and its form, education methods, lecturer, support from the lecturer, organisation, as well as the study group.

– Teaching process: How much knowledge did the students acquire? – Measurement of the knowledge acquired by means of electronic tests, focused on education aims at the beginning and after the teaching process.

– Behaviour: How did the students change their behaviour? – A change in a student's behaviour influenced by innovative education, observation of the student's work, the recording of individual steps in problem solving, questionnaire focused on the evaluation of the difficulties concerning problem solving.

– Outcomes: What was the effect of the education for the faculty? What effect does education bring for a graduate and for the practise?

Our task is to focus on quality and why we need to change the tradition; why we need to innovate; why we need to look for the acquisition of the largest amount of clients; what do we have and whether our effort brings social and financial benefits. At PF PU, we expect the abovementioned activities will bring an improvement in the quality of the services offered.

Aneta Kamińska
Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow, Poland

A report on the research of Teacher Education in Central and Eastern Europe

In 2012 the Jesuit University of Ignatianum in Cracow, under of the guidance of Prof. dr hab. Jolanta Karbowniczek, joined the international research project **Teacher Education in Central and Eastern Europe,** of which the main partner was the University of Debrecen in Hungary. The partners of that project were also the *University in Opole*, the *University of Matej Bela*, the *Catholic University in Ruzomberok* in Slovakia, *University of Hradec Kralove* and *Palacky University in Olomouc* in the Czech Republic. There were also some participants from Bulgaria and Romania. The project was funded by a Wyszechrad Grant. There were many members from our university: dr Anna Królikowska, dr Beata Topij-Stepińska, dr Marzena Chrost, dr Anna Błasiak, mgr Monika Grodecka, dr Barbara Surma, dr Ewa Dybowska, dr Marta Prucnal, dr Katarzyna Szewczuk, dr Krystyna Zabawa, dr Irena Pulak, dr Aneta Kamińska and mgr Elżbieta Miterka. Dr Aneta Kamińska was the language coordinator of the project. The head of the project, from the University of Debrecen, was Prof. dr hab. Gabriella Pusztai, and the main coordinator was dr Agnes Engler.

The aim of the research was both theoretical and empirical. The researchers wanted to compare many aspects connected to teachers' education and work in different countries, and to use the data in their practice in the future. They worked together to analyse and produce some final conclusions on this subject. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used. Many participants used qualitative research methods. They examined the policy documents and some other data of research that had been already undertaken. Some of the members used quantitative methods as diagnostic methods, especially questionnaires to

the students of Jesuit University Ignatianum in Cracow. The studies were divided into eight thematic areas:

1. Aspects of educational policy relating to teacher education.
2. Aspects of educational policy relating to a teacher's *Continuing Professional Development*.
3. Self-selection and recruitment of teacher education students/teaching profession.
4. Teacher education students living on campus – nurturing talents, leisure activities, networks and professional pro-socialization.
5. The future professional plans of teacher education students – professional and private.
6. The social construction of the image of the teacher in wider society and its effects on *Teacher Education* students and teachers.
7. Curricula, extracurricular activities and values in teacher education.
8. Preparation of teachers for special education.

The project began in September 2012. Firstly, the researchers had time to collect the data of their thematic areas and then they prepared short papers that were translated into English and were discussed with their international partners at the International Conference in Debrecen, at the Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Science that was organized by the University of Debrecen in June 2013. The participants of the conferences from the Jesuit University were Prof. dr hab. Jolanta Karbowniczek, dr Anna Królikowska, dr Irena Pulak and dr Aneta Kamińska. The researchers have prepared full papers of their studies that will be published in a Volume of *Teacher Education in Central and Eastern Europe* in January 2014. There will also be a website of *Teacher Education in Central and Eastern Europe* (TECERN) research, which will be available for students, academic teachers and other people interested in that data.

The cooperation was successful and the Polish researchers are going to share other projects with their Hungarian partner and other participants in the future. The project has served as stimuli to extend our research of teacher education, work and the social view.

Lucia Gažiová (reviewer)
Catholic University of Ružomberok, Slovak Republic

Review of the publication: Ludmila Krajcirikova, "Travail socio-éducatif et de formation avec l'ethnie Rom"

The author, Ludmila Krajcirikova, deals with the issue of Roma. Her latest book focused on social-instructional and educational work with the Roma ethnic group. She sees the Roma as a people without their own state and any common land. "As they lived in communities they did not belong to for hundreds of years, their history is at the same time the history of mutual relationships between themselves and towards other citizens of state units, where they lived" (p. 9).

She further writes: "If coexistence is generally understood as way of life of different populations or groups, which can have a different nationality, ethnicity, culture, religion, values or life style, whereas the basic picture of their common life is the origination and existence of common interaction and social relationships, the only adequate way of ordering the relationships between Roma and non-Roma is offered by the model of multiculturalism. The education of Roma should therefore be directed towards the complex improvement of the multicultural coexistence of various cultures. Slovakia cannot avoid crucial changes in approaching the Roma topic and it has to follow the assumption that education can offer the most help when it comes to eliminating problems which arise between different cultures and minorities" (p. 9).

The author has chosen a very current theme. It is necessary to adjust the process of education to the Roma mentality, the optimal form of psychological and social maturity, use adequate psycho-didactical procedures and care for the specific way of life of the Roma community.

The first chapter surveys the theoretical analysis of the ethnic group. This chapter is about the historical moving of Roma in the recent history of Slovakia. Moreover, the author briefly describes Roma as a majority as well as the rest of society's relationship with Roma. In response to this topic, the author mentions the issues of unemployment, poverty, the socially disadvantaged environment within the Roma community, as well as the professional possibilities for Roma.

The second chapter is about the Roma family in Slovakia. The following partial themes are included in this chapter: partner relationships and parentage in Roma families, the life cycle of Roma family, the influence of family education on the school success of pupils, the influence of little impulses from the family environment, governmental regulations and the activities of non-governmental organizations.

In the third chapter the author refers to the current state of education and instruction of Roma children – the time for appeals. The chapter is oriented towards legislative and other themes: the most important areas of the violation of rights during the education of the Roma population, the problem of using Roma language in education, the mentality of the Roma ethnic group, and the illegitimate re-categorization of children to specialized schools for the mentally handicapped.

The issue of instruction and education is analyzed in the fourth chapter. The chapter deals with the following sub-themes: the education of Roma children, the methods for educating Roma pupils, the specifics of Christian education of Roma children, the contribution of Roma culture to the rest of society, Roma children in pre-school institutions, dance as intervention within the pre-school education of Roma children, preparation classes and their meaning for Roma children, the physical process of Roma pupils, looking at education in Roma families, the Roma family and pre-school preparation of Roma children, the Roma family and the teacher of Roma children, and a Roma teacher assistant as a mediator between the Roma family and the school.

The previous theme continues in the theme of the Roma child at school, especially in the philosophy of education of Roma, teacher and the school environment of Roma, the educational process, the value of

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education for Roma, peer groups, the relationship of Roma with school and school attendance, the truancy of Roma pupils, and positive evaluation – recognition.

The final chapter concludes with the issue of the personality of the teacher as a motivational aspect of education. The author mentions new approaches in the education of Roma pupils, the zero class, and the teaching assistant.

All of the chapters are logically connected and create a uniform structure within the publication. Despite plenty of publications dealing with Roma issue, the publication *Travail socio-éducatif et de formation avec l'ethnie Rom* is a necessary contribution and contains valuable information about social-instructional and educational work with the Roma ethnic group. This topic is still very current and has still not been concluded because of a new problem which has occurred.

In this publication, several scientific and professional books are referred to and several progressive ideas are presented.

"During education and the instruction of pupils coming from a socially disadvantaged environment it is adequate to use new, alternative forms of teaching resulting from their values (if it concerns Roma children) and traditions. Beginners as well as experienced teachers with practical knowledge should leave out old traditional forms of teaching and concentrate their work on the pupil's personality, and they should not forget to instruct, build a class community" (p. 121).

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Review of the publication: Bibiana Hlebová et al. "Rómovia v literatúre pre deti a mládež na Slovensku" [Romanies in Literature for Children and Youth in Slovakia]

The cultural and social changes and professional-artistic activities of the Romanies in Slovakia after 1989 inspired Bibiana Hlebová and the other co-authors Susan Stanislavová, Radoslav Rusňák and Eva Dolinská to compile the monograph called *Romanies in Literature for Children and Youth in Slovakia* **(2011)**, where they present results of their literary-historical research of Romany literature for children and young people in Slovakia, and the literary-theoretical interpretation of specific self-identification and the identification of the Romanies in various literary genres, which are addressed mainly to children and young readers.

The author B. Hlebová considers that Romanies literature to be an equivalent part of Slovak literature for children and young people, and that it could also positively influence the current system of school literary education, which she has already documented in previous books: in the monograph titled *Romany Literature in the Multicultural and Emotional Education of Elementary School Pupils* **(2009),** where she focused on the actual issues of developing intercultural communication, communication competencies and the emotional intelligence of students at the first stage of primary school through the genres of Romany literature; in the university educational text *Romany identity (romipen) in Romany fairy-tales (paramisa)* **(2010),** in which, on the one hand, she identified a typical and specific symbol of Romany identity in a selected Romany fairy tale from

the Romany authors (D. Banga), J. Berky-Ľuborecký, E. Lacková), and, on the other hand, she pointed out the possibility of their being used in the multicultural and emotional education of students through eighteen strategies of creative and humanistic teaching of Frank E. Williams; in the compiled **Lexicon of the Authors of Romany Literature for Children and Youth (2011)**, in which she presented the portraits of Romany and non-Romany writers for children and young people in Slovakia, who in their work processed Romany topics in the Slovak or Slovak-Romany languages (part of the lexicon are also the authors of world literature).

The culmination of the author's efforts is a new collective mono-graph under the name **Romanies in Literature for Children and Youth in Slovakia (2011)**, in which the aim of the team of authors was to refer concisely to the position and artistic image of Romanies in the literature for children and young people in Slovakia, and in the context of the orig-inal and the translation of literary creations of Romany authors, as well as in the occurrence of Romany figures in the genres of Slovak literature for children and young people from non-Romany authors.

In the first chapter, titled *Romanies in Slovak literature for children and youth in literary historical overview*, the author B. Hlebová, after explaining the source of the literary-scientific terms and the historical-develop-mental context, presents an overview of intentional and non-intentional creation of identified Romany and non-Romany authors in the Slovak lit-erature for children and young people (published in the Slovak or Slo-vak-Romany languages), as well as the translations of the creations of Romany and non-Romany authors from the foreign literature that have been published in Slovakia. The author presents the results of the literary--historical research of Romany literature in Slovakia as the historical mile-stone in the development of Slovak literature for children and young people by O. Sliacky (1997), in three developmental periods, within which he says that in the first period (from the 1930s to 1950s) Romany litera-ture in Slovakia did not exist, in the second period (from the 1960s until 1989) Romany literature began to take shape, in the third period (from 1989 to the present) there was a boom in Roma literature for children and young people.

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Multiculturalism as a Challenge for Contemporary Preschool and Elementary School Education

In the second chapter, titled *Romany in genres of Slovak literature for children and youth,* the authors R. Rusňák, Z. Stanislavová, E. Dolinská present the position and artistic image in the selected genres of Slovak literature for children and young people from Romany and non-romany authors. In the subsection, *Before you say Romany literature…* R. Rusňák presents the perception of the problems of Romany and Romany literature based on an extra-literary context, while he points to the differentness and also the universality of Romany literature formation on the cultural platforms of the Romany ethnic group from the perspective of the rest of Slovakian society. In the subsection, *Mental image of Romanies in the Slovak creation for children and youth,* Z. Stanislavová tries to reconstruct the mental image of the Romanies and the model of their co-existence with Non-romanies in the two genres, and in a legend and social prose. The author further analyzes the literary "picture" of Romanies in the prose of three Romany authors (E. Lacková, L. Tavali, Ľ. Divi), in the creation in which she situated different variations of literary introspection of this ethnic group. In the subsection *Musical motives in Daniela Hivešova-Šilanova's fairy tales* E. Dolinská focuses on the observation of music motives in the fairy tales for children, *the Boy with a seagull,* and *Susan´s butterflies and bird Koráločka*, the interpretation of which is situated parallel to the author's collection of poetry *Bell little man*. The author perceives music and singing not only as an integral part of the philosophy of life and the existence of the Romanies, but also as a logical part of creating fairly tales from the life of the Romany community in the creations of the Slovak writer D. Hivešova-Šilanova.

In the contributions of the reviewed monograph, **Romanies in Literature for Children and Youth in Slovakia (2011),** we emphasize the new and actual mediation of literary-historical and literary-theoretical perspectives to the participation of Romanies in the Slovak literature for children and young people. We believe, however, that the authors of the monograph at the same time create a space also for teachers for the creative use of the educational genres of Romany literature in the multicultural and emotional education of students in elementary school, which is a necessity for the development of cognition and cognitive intelligence, as

well as the development of feelings, emotions and the emotional intelligence of students. Romany literary texts can provide a means to better self-knowledge and self-feeling, through which students can improve their cognition and feeling the otherness of the other.

Reviewed publication:
Bibiana Hlebová et al.
"Rómovia v literatúre pre deti a mládež na Slovensku" [Romanies in Literature for Children and Youth in Slovakia]
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