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## INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION AS A PRIORITY OF MODERN EDUCATION

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## МІЖКУЛЬТУРНА ОСВІТА ЯК ПРІОРИТЕТНЕ ЗАВДАННЯ СУЧАСНОЇ ОСВІТИ

*Сучасні розвинені суспільства характеризуються зростанням культурного розмаїття, зумовленого, зокрема, припливом економічних і політичних мігрантів. У статті представлені стратегії і моделі для розв'язання проблем мультикультуралізму як на рівні політики і практики органів державної влади, реакції представників етнокультурних меншин, так і у галузі освітньої діяльності. Відзначено, що мультикультуралізм є важким завданням для приймаючої громади і все ще потребує пошуку оптимальних рішень, що задовольняють усі сторони цієї взаємодії.*

**Ключові слова:** міжкультурна освіта, мультикультурне суспільство, іммігранти, культуризація, соціальна інтеграція.

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## МЕЖДУКУЛЬТУРНОЕ ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ КАК ПРИОРИТЕТНАЯ ЗАДАЧА СОВРЕМЕННОГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ

*Характерной чертой современных развитых обществ является увеличение культурного разнообразия, обусловленного, в частности, приливом экономических и политических мигрантов. В статье представлены стратегии и модели решения проблем мультикультурализма как на уровне политики и практики соответствующих государственных органов, представителей этнокультурных меньшинств, так и в сфере образования. Акцентировано, что мультикультурализм является сложной задачей для воспринимающего общества и все еще требует поиска оптимальных решений, удовлетворяющих все аспекты такого взаимодействия.*

**Ключевые слова:** междукультурное образование, мультикультурное общество, иммигранты, культуризація, социальная интеграция.

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Culture is an attribute characterizing the man both in individual and collective aspect. Culture is created by man who is its carrier and receiver. At the same time culture is a phenomenon pertaining to more than a unit, as the man leads a social life. Thanks to the community and within the culture is transmitted through space and time. It is a way to organize collective life, but also organizes the life of an individual in the community and creates its psychological profile.

Culture is a factor that gives the identity of communities and distinguishes them from each other. Community of culture forms a system of values, formulas, ideas, creations and activities. This system determines for the national, ethnic or religious group norms, patterns of thinking, ways of perceiving and judging ourselves and others, patterns of behavior and emotional reactions, perception and assessment of past, present, ways of building own and collective future and engagement in the implementation of these visions [4, 13 – 16].

### **Cultural diversity as a feature of modern societies in the era of migration**

Today, the idea promoted that each national culture must be open to contact with other cultures, since only intercultural interactions allow for a full understanding of own culture, duties towards it and its place, enabling its development and improvement [10, 13]. Continuous and direct contact with otherness, as shown by the experience of many countries, has its advantages, but also disadvantages.

Cultural diversity is now a common phenomenon, which on one hand is sometimes historically conditioned, on the other hand is the result of the opening of borders and intensifying processes of the movement of persons and groups of the population: refugees, family reunification, economically cognitively, educationally motivated migration, etc. European countries in many cases are open societies, and consequently more and more multicultural. Their inhabitants are different ethnic groups that do not share a common language, history, traditions and customs, and also sometimes the opposite – they are distinguished by characteristics different from each other [3, 377]. Immigrants come to open societies, in the minds of the indigenous people regarded as aliens. They are aptly characterized by T. Czechowska-Switaj<sup>1</sup> who wrote: Alien is a stranger who comes today and goes tomorrow. Aliens refuses to remain chained to his «far country» nor to leave our own. He enters into our world uninvited, arbitrarily making us recipients of his initiative, transforming us into an object of action, whose subject he is. Alien is physically at your fingertips, but spiritually remains infinitely distant. He smuggles into our inner circle differences and otherness [3, 377].

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<sup>1</sup> in her description the author refers of the work of Georg Simmel – German sociologist of late nineteenth / twentieth century.

Relations with the «other» and «aliens» take place in multidimensional reality on three levels:

- axiological – on the valuation of the Other / Stranger (whether he is good or bad, do I like him or not, if I'm equal to, or worse than him);
- praxiological – on the distance to the Other / Stranger (do I perceive his value, or identify with him, or try to assimilate him with me, to impose him my own view of reality; if I'm against him, neutral or indifferent);
- epistemological – on the knowledge of the Other / Stranger (I am aware of his identity, or maybe I have no idea about it) [5, 133 – 144].

A look at the phenomenon described from the other side – from the perspective of the alien, also discloses problems. A sense of alienation is related to negative emotions: loneliness, humiliation, which causes fear and frustration leading to aggression and revenge for experienced harm. Individuals and groups in the environment perceived as foreign and receiving it as foreign, live in constant threat and tensions stemming from undermining self-esteem, from the lack of acceptance or rejection by the local community.

When a stranger – an immigrant arrives in a new country, he goes through several phases of integration. Shmuel Eisenstadt [13, 130] puts it as follows:

- 1) adaptive integration phase, boiled down to manifest their capabilities to play a fundamental social roles in the new environment;
- 2) instrumental integration phase associated with migrant participation in economic life, which allows him to satisfy their existential needs;
- 3) identification and solidarity phase with the host community, when a migrant becomes aware of his being a part of the host community – involves the acceptance of the system of values of that community;
- 4) cultural integration phase («cultural integration»), in which – in the long term socialization – occurs internalization of norms and ways of behavior typical of the host community.

The identified phases are associated with the time factor as well as the degree of identification of the migrant with the host community. One should also be aware that the migration is not always successful. An entity or group does not always go through all the selected phases, which depends on a number of factors, both on the side of the migrant and on the host community. Culturally alien people can stay within the country for a long time or a short time, permanently or temporarily, by choice or by fate. The greater the number of such people, the greater becomes the involvement of various institutions of social control, such as a country's government, and the media in the dealing – not always in a non-confrontational way – with the situation. Paul Boski [1, 525 – 528], recalling the work of JW Berry, shows the four acculturation models of strategy at the level of policy and practice of state authorities, which have been implemented in multicultural societies:

1) Exclusion, ethnic cleansing, or elimination of the presence of minorities in the common area by the displacement, expulsion, deportation, genocide, etc.

2) Segregation – separation, ie, to define and implement separate development paths of different ethnic groups, religious minorities in a society while maintaining domination of one group, but with approval for preserving cultural heritage of minority groups.

3) Ethnic melting-pot, or the removal of diversity to journey to ethnic homogenization related to a relative openness to diversity on the assumption that immigrants as soon as possible are transformed into citizens of a new country, breaking its ties with the country of their ancestors.

4) Multiculturalism, which is promoting intensive relations between different groups while maintaining the identity of each of them. In this case the difference and diversity are affirmed, as each of the cultures is to offer others a different set of values.

The above macro-social variants intergroup relations correspond to the reactions of individuals from minority ethno-cultural groups related to the maintenance of cultural heritage and ethnic origin:

1) Marginalization – corresponds to the systemic exclusion and means dropping out beyond the area of culture, subculture entrance to the margins of society, which is mostly associated with unsuccessful acculturation.

2) Separation is baffling of individuals or groups from the influences of a new and alien environment and undertaking the organization of life within the existing ethnic group, which takes place in large metropolitan areas focusing numerous groups of immigrants in France, Germany, USA, Great Britain.

3) Assimilation means giving up the culture of origin – native, cutting ties with the country of origin of ancestors and the full expansion into the other culture.

4) Integration is a consequence of multiculturalism implemented government programs that promote and encourage the maintenance of native culture – the culture of origin – and the acquisition and construction of a new cultural identity settle [2, 165 – 205].

Paul Boski stresses that integration is an attractive option acculturation, but its implementation as a forward-looking state of Europeans becomes more and more difficult, especially when attempting to reconcile the acculturation strategy at the policies and practices of government, and at the level of the individual reactions of individuals from minority groups ethno-cultural involved in maintaining the cultural heritage of origin.

### **Education in terms of cultural diversity**

It was aptly concluded by J. Nikitorowicz that multiculturalism is a fact and interculturalism is a task [10, 14]. Indeed, in reference to recovery and

growth of repressed nationalism, fanatics, xenophobia, megalomania, disclosing aggression, discrimination, terrorism, etc., a particularly important task today is the educational achievement of humanistic values, common human values. Intercultural education should serve this.

Intercultural education is a concept and area of activity of social, cultural and educational activities aimed at mutual knowledge, understanding diversity, developing positive relationships and enrichment of cultures. An important feature of this education is the dialogue with the «others», penetration into the essence of other cultures, their symbols and patterns of behavior. This education is to serve mutual understanding, rapprochement and cooperation in various areas of life [7, 26].

Intercultural education on the one hand is the consequence of monoculturalism – regional, local confinement, on the other hand – a consequence of multiculturalism. It is the need that arises at the interface between these two phenomena. It indicates the existence of equal cultures, which are subject to transformation as a result of transmission of values and models, and any form to socialize with others from their own cultural position is an element of development [9, 54 – 55].

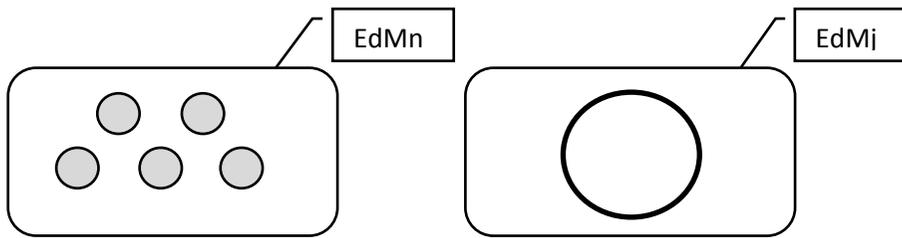
The aim of intercultural education is not to build one unified global culture, but to strengthen national, ethnic, cultural or religious identity and acceptance of the world cultural pluralism [14, 389]. Thanks to intercultural education consistent operation of the different national, ethnic and religious communities within a single state becomes possible.

Intercultural education was created in the United States before World War II. The need for such education appeared in places inhabited by people of different languages, who cultivated different traditions, professing other religions. In Europe intercultural education was begun to be spoken of much later, in the 60s and 70s, with the influx of large groups of immigrants, mainly from former British, French and Dutch colonies. Nowadays more and more societies recognize its importance and the need for training in this area.

The concepts of education in culturally diverse environments have evolved and continue to evolve. The final, optimal and satisfying to all form has not yet been developed. With reference to the aforementioned models of acculturation the literature [12, 127 – 136] reported four functioning strategies for intercultural education, carried out according to the country's social policy and the needs and aspirations of minority groups.

### **1) strategy of «separation»**

It is also referred to as the «education side by side». Educational space is set here by defense of own traditions, beliefs, and values. It is an ethnocentric strategy, which, however, can not be equated with nationalism.



**Fig. 1. The strategy of separation – education side by side**

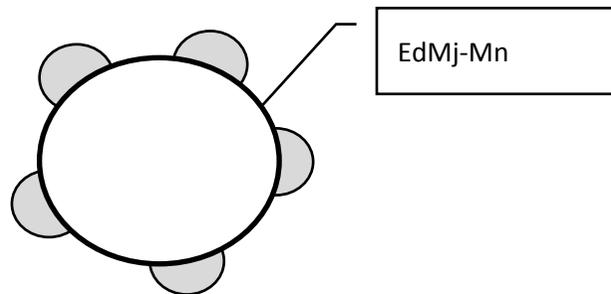
Abbreviations used:

EdMn – Education in the culture of minority groups; EdMj – Education in the culture of the majority group

Source: Own

**2) the strategy of integration of minority cultures through subordination to the dominant group**

In these terms education is to lead minority groups to adapt to the model of the majority group by gradually getting rid of their own traditions, customs, language and by adopting the culture and language of the dominant group. Such education is an instrument of cultural assimilation and uniformization. Minority groups here are somehow «absorbed» by the majority.



**Fig. 2. The integration strategy**

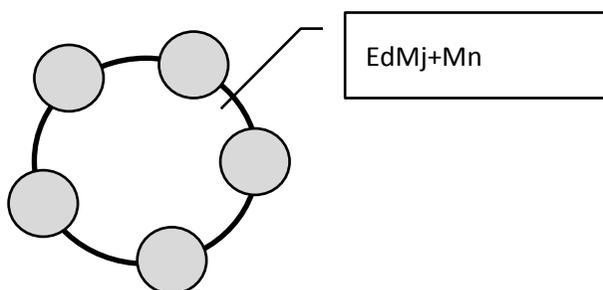
Abbreviations used: EdMj-Mn – Education in the culture of the majority group with marginalization of cultures of minority groups

Source: Own

**3) strategy of «melting pot»**

In this strategy there is a possibility of education of each group in their own culture and fusion with the dominant culture while maintaining distinct elements. Integration, in this case, has no assimilation character, but rather connection to the behavior of the «other». The concept of the melting pot

assumes that all ethnic groups have some positive side, and their culture mixed in the melting pot would result in a new and higher form of culture.



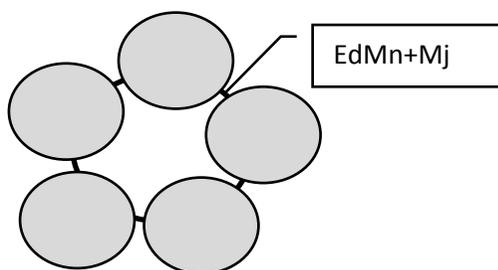
**Fig. 3. The strategy «melting pot»**

Abbreviations used: EdMj+Mn – Education in the culture of the majority group, taking into account the cultures of minority groups

Source: Own

#### **4) The strategy of equality of cultures with a tendency to give priority to the needs of minority groups**

Education is regarded here as a process of rebirth of subjectivity and identity, creating a basis for being together in the spirit of tolerance and respect. Such education prepares for life in multicultural societies, to communicate on the basis of dialogue and partnership. It presents «Other» as an interesting, friendly, supportive in the development of the individual and the group. It reduces superstition and prejudice.



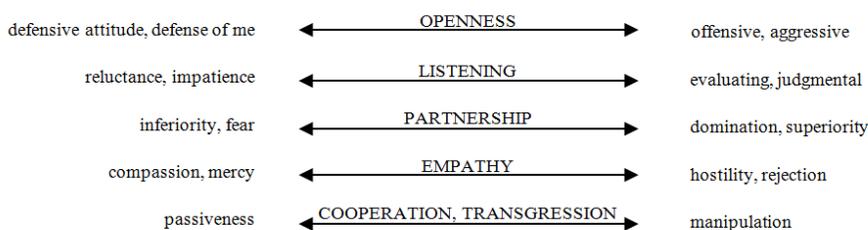
**Fig. 4. The strategy of equal treatment of cultures**

Abbreviations used: EdMn+Mj – Education in the culture of minority groups and the majority

Source: Own

These focuses on intercultural dialogue in education is aimed at shaping the attitude of «towards the Other». Key features of this attitude are shown on

the scale shown in *Fig. 5*, where at opposite ends extreme attitudes are placed, requiring negation. Desirable behaviors are situated in the middle of the scale.



**Fig. 5. The scales illustrating characteristics of attitude «towards the other»**

Source: [3]

The above four strategies of intercultural education existed or exist in many countries and have been the subject of numerous multi-disciplinary and multi-faceted analysis. In recent years, the most promoted is the view of the need to turn to the models that depart from segregation, assimilation or passive adaptation measures, and pay attention to the issue of diversity on the principle of «being together» and not «being next to each other»; models enabling the transition from multicultural to the intercultural, from the «Response» to the difference in conditions for multiculturalism to «interaction» between members of different cultural groups [6]. Education, in this sense, is a factor in the development of multifaceted identity of the individual, emphasizes the need to prepare for life in terms of the difference, according to the law of every person «to be different». Man who participates in the process of intercultural education should gain the ability to construct attitudes based on empathy and understanding relationship with the «Other», whoever he was and whatever physical, emotional, ideological distance would be between them. The awareness that for various reasons we can be someone perceived as «Other» and the ability to empathize with the situation of stigmatized person for his otherness, is the first impulse to understand – and from understanding to the agreement the road is short [5, 142 – 143].

The ideal towards which intercultural education tends to in its assumptions is multicultural society implementing the process of cooperation and collaboration in partnership, taking action leveling tensions and conflicts, as well as supporting and equalizing opportunities and chances of diverse communities. In such society we have to deal with facing social backgrounds of various programs, but operating on the basis of timeless and transnational values, abiding equality and remaining in constant dialogue [10].

### **Intercultural education as lifelong education**

Alina Szczurek-Boruta draws attention to the fact that «intercultural education goes beyond the traditional distinction between initial and further education. Proper dimension and meaning of this kind of education is a trans-cultural process of mutual learning and a lifelong experience both cognitive and practical of every human being, as a person and member of society, enabling learners to acquire a tool of understanding, to have impact on the environment, participate and collaborate with others on all levels of human activity» [15, 152]. Lifelong approach to education, according to J. Nikitorowicz, should be considered as a leading educational strategy, taking into account the variability, dynamism and unpredictability of multicultural societies. Lifelong education, assuming learning throughout life, allows to shape and modify human behavior with the following demands:

a. Be yourself – learn to be yourself (know about you, have a sense of the value of own identity, develop management skills in self-development, self-realization and identity management);

b. To experience of others – as a result of the interaction to learn to live together, acquire skills in harmonious coexistence and interaction, enriching each other, own diversity (noticing others, learning, collaborating, try to understand and communicate);

c. to know about themselves and others – to learn, to know about each other and be able to control negative emotions (to acquire the ability to understand cultural diversity and observe the principles of mutual relations and cultural contact);

d. work together – to learn, to work to preserve peace and creating conditions for a life of peace (to acquire the ability to effectively function in an environment of cultural inhomogeneity) [11, 72 – 74].

The idea of intercultural education seen in the whole life context is not easy to implement. However, it is the direction that the modern world sets [8].

### **Need for further action**

Management of multiculturalism in ways that were previously used, was not always ended successfully. It was noted that the multicultural practice, including diverse educational activities, favorably affect the preservation of the identity of newcomers, allowed to protect them against assimilation, supported in overcoming difficulties in adaptation, decreased the culture shock, but not activated the mechanisms of integration, not implemented to raise awareness and compliance with the rules of life in a democratic society, did not turn newcomers into citizens. Expected mechanisms which create a multicultural society were not created, and significant problems of cultural, economic, legal, psychological, moral, were revealed [10, 15].

Many years of experience of different countries has shown that intercultural education is not an easy task. It requires constant reorganization, the

creation of new solutions, both systemic and individual. Failures in this case cannot be put off, they should only be a stimulus for further innovative actions.

Cultural diversity of European societies, due to political, economic or demographic reasons will deepen and this trend, at least for the time being, cannot be reversed. It is necessary to make efforts to meet the challenge of multiculturalism, and education is an area, which in this context should not be overlooked. Developing effective solutions in this area is a precondition for the friendly and conflict-free coexistence between minority and majority – if not in close, then in the longer term.

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