
**UNIVERSITY “ST. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI”
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
BITOLA**

**Third International Conference
EDUCATION ACROSS BORDERS**

**EDUCATION AND RESEARCH
ACROSS TIME AND SPACE**

(1100th Death Anniversary of St. Clement of Ohrid)



**6-7 October 2016
BITOLA**

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Faculty of Education



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Education and Research across Time and Space
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6-7 October 2016
Bitola

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A Word on the Slavic Patterned Teachings

Grozdana Gojkov, Serbian Academy of Education in Belgrade

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PURPOSE AND BENEFIT OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN MACEDONIAN SOCIETY

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Abstract:

In this paper I will briefly outline the objectives and the positive benefits of intercultural education in the educational system of the country. Starting from the basic commitment to multiculturalism and the current multicultural education to the contemporary need for interaction, and therefore the actualization and realization of a new situation, a new movement - interculturalism and intercultural education. Today more than ever, we are faced daily with global issues, the world is increasingly felt need expressed mutual communication, which forces us to be more open and willing acceptance of other cultures. That intercultural education is one which should contribute to personal growth and success in every sense of the word, building figures that are complete with all the necessary knowledge, skills to face the challenges. Intercultural education is an approach to teaching that is based on democratic values that promote cultural pluralism in culturally diversified societies. The intercultural dimension of education is particularly important in multicultural societies, such as Macedonian society in which coexistence of people of different cultures have deep historical roots. Indeed, education should be what will be directed to the development of intercultural skills, values and attitudes of all participants in the educational process, enabling thus finding the optimal ratio between cultural diversity and social cohesion.

Key words: Culture, multiculturalism, intercultural education, interaction

Introduction

Firstly, before I start explaining the aims and the benefits of intercultural education in the Macedonian society, I would like to differentiate the key terminology used in this paper. It concerns a very important educational process that isn't carried out easily, but it is full of limitations and problems.

In order to be able to understand what the intercultural education really is, we will start by the basic term of culture. Many authors of sociology or culture sociology textbooks have mentioned Creber-Culhom who have confirmed the existence of 257 different definitions of culture, which points out to the fact that there are many definitions of culture in sociological and the anthropological literature. The term comes from the Latin term "cultis" which means cultivation. The culture in its essence is a social phenomenon and represents a system of values, procedures and behaviour standards. It is a term that represents the society or the group in its own characteristic framework, or i.e. the individual integration and materialisation of the values and the knowledge in the society. Thomas S. Eliot defined the term culture as a way of life for group of people that live on a certain territory. The type of clothes, the habits and traditions for marriage, family life, for working and creating, for the religious traditions, the free time etc. The treatment of the importance of culture always leads us thinking about the relations and the interactions among cultures. The cultural differences that we note among people enable us to become aware for the existence of a culture, or that it cannot be understood as a singular term, but only as a plural.

We are aware that the modern world is characterised with variety and multiculturalism, but the decreased perception of the variability effects on an international and intercultural part is of a great importance. The world has become global and the peoples are in an increased economic, scientific, cultural and politic interdependence. Most of the countries around the world are culturally heterogeneous. This variety implies a series of questions that can be the subject of an argument.

The multiculturalism was determined by Fowers & Richardson in 1996 as a socio-intellectual movement that understands the variety as a basic characteristic and principle and seeks equality among all cultural groups. The aim of this movement is to increase the dignity, the rights and the acknowledgement of the different groups. This is a liberal and idealistic movement that expands the idea for an individual uniqueness of the cultural groups.

There are many definitions of the term multiculturalism: from broader, one-sided to national or international. The broad determinations are based on the fact that the multiculturalism includes many characteristics related to the identity: race, religion, sex, language, physical appearance, socio-economic status, geographic site, nationality, way of life etc.

Multiculturalism dismisses the concept of assimilation – a full integration of the peoples in society, an identification to the dominant culture and institutions. It dismisses the idea of cultural equity and cultural separatism on one hand, but on the other hand represents the multiculturalism as a simple and passive description of social variety. It only tells us that a certain society is diverse in every sense: national, ethnic, religious and social. It doesn't explain the relations among people who live beside each other in a society.

The term interculturalism denotes the dynamic and interactive relations among cultures. In other words In other words, the multiculturalism describes the situation in a society as diverse, and at the same time implies the interaction among the cultures that can be noted from the term itself. This term can be understood as a dynamic process of the flow of information among people from different cultures in a society. In order to gain the epithet "a dynamic process", this terms denotes mutual respect and understanding that couldn't be achieved without a constructive dialogue.

Naturally, the term multiculturalism appears as a sign of interculturalism and refers to the cultural content of the population on a certain territory or i.e. the mutual life of the people who belong to different cultures. The actualization and the popularization of multiculturalism prepares the basis for the actualization and popularization of the term interculturalism. Because of this, it is interpreted as a supposition and a condition for acting over interculturalism. Hereinafter, the multiculturalism is a descriptively analytic and historically sociological category that has a statistic and quantity dimension expressed in the existence of the various cultures on a certain territory. The term interculturalism is defined as the relation between the subjects from different cultures that resulted in the appearance of the terms of intercultural communication, intercultural intercourse and intercultural dialogue. The term of interculturalism itself is described and experienced as a process that strives for qualitative changes in the social relations in a multicultural environment.

What represents the multicultural and what the intercultural education?

The fact that a large number of ethnic communities live in our country and are characterized with different cultural model, different religion and language implies the question concerning the characteristics of the Macedonian society in that sense, or i.e. concerning the characteristics of multiculturalism and interculturalism and their specifications.

The segregation in the educational system has been more or less openly supported with the aim to escape the conflicts among the members of different ethnic groups. However,

the result of this separation were the deepened differences and the enclosure in a private terrain.

Having in mind the characteristics of the Macedonian society, the currently implied question is what kind of education is needed or how should the educational institutions be reconstructed, so that the members of the educational process could gain knowledge, skills and views needed for the efficient functioning in a culturally and an ethnically different environment, regardless of their belonging to the majority or the ethnic community.

If we keep in mind the multiethnic and multicultural content of the Macedonian society, the multicultural education should enable the possibility of obtaining knowledge of the ethno-cultural and historic legacy of your own as well as of other communities.

The multicultural education is the only thing that can offer surpassing of the unknown as a precondition for the nursing and the existence of the ethnic conflicts. Learning about the ethno-cultural and the historic legacy of the ethnic communities during the educational process can contribute to fulfill the need for an identity of the members from the major ethnic community. This aim can be achieved only by ascribing the appropriate meaning of the culture of other ethnic communities, and by offering the requested respect of the members of the ethnic community toward themselves and their ethnic community. The multicultural approach in education can help obtain the need for safety by obtaining more quality communication among the members of the ethnic community. It is expected that the communication decreases the negative feelings toward the members of the other ethnic communities and to discover the ethnic stereotypes. This will not only help to perceive the specific characteristics of different cultures, but it also opens the possibility to note the mutual characteristics of the cultural traditions. This will fulfill the need for an identity and safety, and it will also fulfill the need for unity. Dr. James A. Banks specifies 5 positive dimensions of the multicultural education:

1. **The integration of content** is done by representing the different cultures, communities, religions and other social groups through the changes in the teaching curriculum. This means that the teachers who teach different subjects can find ways to incorporate different cultural elements in their subjects. These possibilities are present in some subjects. For example the language teachers, the art teachers and the teachers of other social subjects can find a range of possibilities for the representation of different cultures, compared to a teacher of physics where the only possibility would probably be the representation of some famous physicist from another ethnic community.
2. **The process of constructing the knowledge** prepares the students to become more critical of the way the knowledge is represented. For example, the scientific racism or the Eurocentric view of the "discovery" of America. This chiefly means that the students with the help of the teachers are prepared to research the different cultural perspectives, and with that to understand the different cultures. In this way, by the construction of the knowledge, the children will understand better what the scientists wanted to say with the phrase "Western civilization", which hides many presuppositions and values. They read and think critically.
3. **The decrease of the prejudices** – it describes lessons and activities which the teachers teach and conduct so that they accept the positive picture of ethnic communities and to approve the intergroup relations. This is mostly because of the fact that the prejudices are easily transmitted from adults to children, and the role of the teacher is to be sensitive to the reality that prejudices exist.
4. **The pedagogy of equity** refers to the modification of the teaching style of teachers and their approach toward the study and the academic achievements of all students regardless of their membership. The teachers help in students' personal achievements,

if they change their style of knowledge transfer. For example, for the Math teacher it is not very important to represent a significant mathematician from another culture, as it is important for that teacher to adapt the style and the teaching techniques by understanding that a member of certain ethnic community can learn the multiplication table better when in a group. This means that by increasing the pedagogy repertoire, the teacher increases the range of the group of students.

5. **The encouragement of the school culture** describes a situation in which are researched the school culture and the organization of the teaching staff, with the aim of reconstructing the institutional practices and to create a better approach for its students. This dimension speaks more of equity in a broader sense, the unreasonable and the unconscious racism, for example when choosing a class president, a student that belongs to multiculturalism is always over voted regardless of student's ambitions and desires to become a president. This discouragement is an example of negative culture and negative practice.

Banks ascribes an equal importance to all of the five dimensions.

In our Macedonian society, this educational practice can be hard to realize.

The intercultural education is a process that requests to know ourselves and our culture, so that we are capable of understanding other cultures. In this sense, the intercultural education is a big challenge which means that the hard process for a constructive dialogue with other cultures is a way of learning about ourselves, the good and bad sides of the beliefs, and with that to open the door to others by presupposing a larger benefit.

The intercultural education and upbringing is a kind of education that accepts, esteems and supports the variety and the diversity, or the diversity in all areas of the human life. This kind of education makes the students more sensitive to the idea that the people have naturally developed a different type of life, habits, traditions, values and view on the world. At the same time, they understand that these variety makes us richer and because of that, it should be celebrated. This concept strives for the promotion of equity in the power to oppose injustice and discrimination.

The intercultural education according to Uele²⁸³ strives for the promotion and the development of: (1) better understanding of the culture in the modern society, (2) the ability to communicate with people that belong to different cultures, (3) flexible attitude toward the cultural variety of a society, (4) larger readiness of the people to include themselves in a social interaction with people from different cultural origins, as well as the recognition of the basic human characteristics that are mutual to all people.

The multicultural education means that through learning of other cultures, it aims to enable the acceptance or at least the tolerance toward the other cultures²⁸⁴. On the other hand, **the intercultural education** aims to surpass the passive coexistence and to create a developed and sustainable way for a mutual life in a multicultural society. It is done by creating understanding, mutual respect among the groups from different cultures, and at the same time by providing a mutual possibilities for fight against discrimination²⁸⁵.

The intercultural education is an approach toward a study based on democratic values which affirm the cultural pluralism in the culturally diverse societies in a dependable world.

The difference between both terms is in the active and the passive treatment of the culture diversity. The one concept only promoted, while the other creates possibilities for an

²⁸³Ouellet, F. (1991) L'Education interculturelle – essays sur conteu de la formation des maitres. Paris: Editions L'Hartmattan – Превземено од: Mrse S., Petrovic D. Gosovic R. Jerotojevic M, (2007) Interkulturalno Obrazovanje i Razumevanje. Beograd: Grupa Most. Str. 5.

²⁸⁴Mrse S., Petrovic D. Gosovic R. Jerotojevic M, (2007) Interkulturalno Obrazovanje i Razumevanje. Beograd: Grupa Most. Str. 5.

²⁸⁵Исто

active interaction through increasing the awareness for the real needs and benefits of interculturalism. The intercultural education presupposes that there are skills and knowledge among the people, which motivate curiosity for learning about other cultures, and with that the readiness for a mutual respect is also being motivated.

Intercultural competence. From the definition of an intercultural education, it can be concluded that for a good intercultural education you need to have an intercultural competences which are defined as: and ability to recognize and use the cultural differences as a learning resource (Berthoin – Atal and Friedman, 2003). The key elements of an intercultural competence are: (1) being aware of yourself as a complex creature, (2) being aware of the influence of culture over our way of thinking and behaving, (3) an ability to engage others and ourselves in a research of the suppositions that influence our behavior, (4) an openness to test the different views, ways of thinking and solving the problems²⁸⁶.

In education, our country has dedicated a special attention to the strategy for an integrated education. The literal meaning of term "integrated" is connecting the different cultures based on positive moral concepts. In order to integrate the cultures they need to know, respect and understand each other. In 2009 under the leadership of OBSE and the High Commissar for human rights Knut Vollebaek was created the Strategy of an integrated education in our country. Its aim was to find a way to integrate the educational system of all the communities that live in Macedonian society. The strategy was a result of the need for a segregation process of the school system, which led to difficulties for better understanding among the younger generation. The official document is named as: Steps toward an integrated education in the Educational system of Macedonian society. It contains four leading statutes: (1) promotion of the integration through mutual activities, (2) learning a language, (3) teaching curriculum and textbooks, (4) qualification of the teachers, leading the schools in the context of decentralization. Since the start of the introduction of the strategy as part of the educational system in the Macedonian society, it faced difficulties. Until the end of 2013, it was worked upon almost all of the thematic contents of the strategy, but it was worked less on the teaching curriculum and the textbooks, especially those that are related to the past, and those that produce most of the stereotypes – history. The focus was on the learning of the language of other communities, but that process also suffered many difficulties during its realization. The major problem is seen in that the Albanians don't accept that concept, because the strategy imposes learning the language of majority since the beginning of the educational process of the communities from the minority, and it is also the reason why our language is considered only as a facultative language for the Macedonian majority. In addition, the strategy was felt as an imposed process, and not as something that derives from the need for a multicultural society as the Macedonian, or as something that strengthens the intercultural character of our country.

The four components of the Strategy are based on the three principles of UNESCO for an Intercultural education²⁸⁷:

(1) The intercultural education respects the cultural identity of the one that studies it, through the rule for a culturally suitable and responsible education for all.

(2) The intercultural education obtains each student with the knowledge of the culture, the behaviour and the skills needed for a complete and active participation in society.

(3) The intercultural education provides each student with the knowledge of the culture, the behaviour and the skills which enable them to contribute to the respect, the

²⁸⁶ Mrse S., Petrovic D. Gosovic R. Jerotojevic M, (2007) Interkulturalno Obrazovanje i Razumevanje. Beograd: Grupa Most. Str. 5.

²⁸⁷ UNESCO (2006), Guidelines on Intercultural Education. Str. 32

understanding and the solidarity among individuals, ethnic, social, cultural and religious groups and nations.

The benefits and the aims from an intercultural education

It is a fact that with the help of science and technology, we are more aware of a world as a global village, also that Europe becomes more open and that we are not able to be competitive on the labour market by ourselves. All of that makes us use the mobility of knowledge and the skills in the global framework not only for a personal advancement, but also for a personal success and better position in society. This is the meaning of education nowadays. On one hand it helps the personal development, and on the other hand it helps us satisfy the basic human need for belonging to a certain group.

As the world faces global problems, strengthens the need for a mutual communication, which makes us be more open toward the acceptance of other cultures with the aim of achieving the cognitive and emotional needs. In this way, we not only contribute to the personal development and personal success, but we also reach the aim of creating ourselves as persons in the full meaning of the word. A person that is complete, filled with knowledge and skills, and ready to face challenges. Those persons that understood the integration strengthens their wisdom, their advancement, knowledge, skills and emotions. Its aim is not only to find a good and a well-paid job, but to develop a successful human being in a full sense of the word. This is actually the goal of education. Furthermore, the idea of an integrated education is not only to find a way of creating a smart person, but also how to create a good person. It is not enough to give people only knowledge, but it is necessary to help them convert that knowledge in real wisdom. The integrated education doesn't differentiate between the school and the society, the studying and life, nor the knowledge and the good nature. The benefits, which are as hard to realize as the aims, are the following:

1. To increase productivity, because in the modern world exists a range of resources that help realize one same task and with that is promoted the cognitive and the moral development of all people;
2. It increases the skills for a creative solving of problems, by looking them from various perspectives and seeking a solution;
3. It increases the positive interpersonal relations by achieving the common aims for respect, value and dedication toward equity between the intellectual and the educational institutions;
4. It decreases the stereotypes and the prejudices through a direct contact and interaction between the different individuals;
5. It restores the social vitality through enriching it with different cultures and it motivates the development in its broader sense and with a sophisticated view of the world;
6. It strengthens and nourishes the following values in a society: peace, tolerance, non-violence, mutual respect etc.
7. It makes us aware of being complex beings that know how much influence the culture has over our behavior toward others.
8. It eases the access toward the mutual resources and possibilities,
9. It increases the mobility, and with that our understanding of the world and also it increases the ability to come across new knowledge and skills, a new job. It increases competence.
10. It gives us the possibility to reach the needed information more easily, and to easily filter what we need and what we don't need from that information. In that way, instead of losing time and become nervous during the search for the needed information, we use the one in our reach because of our understanding and our acceptance of other cultures,

11. It increases creativity, innovation and with that the equilibrium of a society. There isn't a blockage in an economic, social, cultural and political context.

12. It nourishes peace, tolerance and understanding, and with that the ability to prosper in science, technology and all of the other spheres of life. Instead of concentrating on the destruction of the achieved, it gives us the possibility to use the achievements for greater success on a personal, professional and social level.

13. It contributes to the economic development and prosperity of a society. By strengthening the sensitivity of other cultures, we expand the range of possibilities and advantages that can be used in the free economics.

Conclusion

The contribution of the international organizations in the field of intercultural education are enormous, but the institutions from the central and the local authorities should create policies and programs with the aim of enabling a positive interaction among the students from different ethnic groups. However, the question whether we can talk about the aims and the benefits of the intercultural education in our educational system remains open. Actually, I can sadly confirm that it is realized with difficulty, it is more worked on and analysed theoretically, while its practical realization that also faces difficulties is neglected as any other reform in the educational system. Although the final aim is positive and clear, and it would be productive and progressive for our multi-ethnic, multicultural and multi-confessional society, and that aim is the creation of a complete successful and good person, who is socially active and who not only understands culturalism, but it also accepts it and lives it in its full sense. The strengthening of the intercultural awareness, the decrease of the prejudices and all of the forms of discrimination, as well as the development of the social skills are the ways through which the intercultural education will help the citizens of the Macedonian society to become aware and conscious of our belonging. What are the real barriers and **difficulties** that interculturalism faces in the Macedonian society and what is needed for the complete revival of interculturalism will be the subject of the analyses in another paper.

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DIDACTIC STRATEGIES FOR APPLICATION OF INTERCULTURALISM IN WORKING WITH PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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1. Interculturalism as part of the educational work

The intercultural emerges as a phenomenon requires multilateral treatment. In the pedagogic process as a segment, the intercultural plays an exceptional role. Through the intercultural in the pedagogic process establishment of ties, relationships, relations and interactions among different cultures and cultural achievements is facilitated. To enable the intercultural to function in the pedagogic process as a complex multifunctional and multifactor segment, it is necessary to regulate it in curricular terms. Accordingly, the intercultural should be determined and interpreted in the curricula of adequate level of education. Curricular regulation assumes bilateral treatment of the intercultural as an integral part of the contents of part of the curricula (from the aspect of interpretation of the essence of the intercultural notion), and an intercultural connection and merging of all syllabus contents elements considered as a whole.

2. Opportunities for integration of interculturalism

The curricula for preschool teachers' education also ought to comprise the intercultural from several aspects. One of them is the connection of the intercultural with the cooperation of school with the broader community. Namely, this type of cooperation should facilitate the intercultural, which basically will mean creating conditions for instigation of ties, relationships, relations and interactions among different subjects.

Contemporary preschool institution has the willingness, ability and need to communicate with part of community through direct self-evaluation of its own values, structures, relations and action strategies. In fact, it is the part of community which has a mutual impact on the preschool institution on a certain basis. The most productive way of bringing effects of those impacts about is the *dialogue* between preschool institution and its surroundings. Since each real dialogue happens in the mutual adaptation as a result of an interaction, such relationship is expected both by the preschool institution and society.

3. Types and Ways of Cooperation

The cooperation of the preschool institution with community is realised at several levels: Cooperation with parents of children; Cooperation with institutions involved in organisation, development and evaluation of educational system on local and state level; Cooperation with expert institutions; Cooperation with institutions, organisations, associations, societies, forms of various labour activities - symbolically or explicitly contingent upon curricular contents.

Every level implies adequate reasons, ways and forms of cooperation and co-action. The following elaboration points out significant elements of the cooperation levels given above.

a) Cooperation with parents of children

This type of cooperation facilitates an approach to the intercultural and its acceptance as a possibility for providing contact ability with different types of families and family