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Република Македонија

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Ss. Cyril and Methodius University  
Faculty of Pedagogy “St. Kliment Ohridski” – Skopje  
Republic of Macedonia

**VI меѓународен балкански конгрес за образование и наука:  
СОВРЕМЕНОТО ОПШТЕСТВО И ОБРАЗОВАНИЕТО**

(Охрид, 29. IX - 1. X 2011г.)  
*Зборник на трудови*

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THE MODERN SOCIETY AND EDUCATION**

(Ohrid, 29. IX - 1. X 2011.)  
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## **INTERCULTURALISM AND MULTICULTURALISM AS DIMENSIONS OF THE MODERN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

### **Abstract**

The modern world is characterized by several major trends. It is a multicultural and reducing the effects of understanding of the diversity of international and intercultural plan has enormous significance.

Interculturalism and multiculturalism is becoming reality in our society. While multiculturalism refers to the existence of multiple cultures in the same space, interculturalism emphasizes the relationship between cultures and the need for mutual interaction between individuals from different cultural backgrounds.

They in front of society and school set numerous functions and tasks. Assume the application of contemporary teaching strategies, creating a democratic, positive socio-emotional climate that encourages the development of each individual, pupil will learn to accept different from them and will learn to communicate with other people in various cultural contexts.

All this imposes the need for certain changes and innovations in initial teacher education and their further professional development in order to learn about different cultures, their interaction and development.

**Key words:** *multiculturalism, interculturalism, teachers.*

### **Modern schools and multicultural education**

Multicultural education is necessary in multicultural societies, concerning in societies in which is necessary to reconstruct the educational institutions, so that all students in the educational process regardless of whether they belong to majority or minority people, or different ethnic community, to gain knowledge, skills, habits and attitudes necessary for effective functioning in a culturally and ethnically diverse environment. Such education is not only intended for certain ethnic groups regardless of their number, but such education should enable all participants regardless of their nationality, be well informed about their country, to take care of it and become active citizens in their ethnic backgrounds.

Unlike multiculturalism, which refers to the existence of multiple cultures in one space, interculturalism refers to the relationship between cultures and the need for mutual interaction, a dynamic set of flows that characterize the interaction between individuals from different cultural backgrounds (Kostović & Đeramanov). Interculturalism implies the presence, mixing of different cultural forms, but also the opportunity to compare ideas, opinions about the differences of ethnic, religious, cognitive, sexual and any other nature. Interculturalism at the same time offers opportunities for confrontation, communication, sharing of values and mutual understanding of differences, while encouraging the development of these differences.

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<sup>1</sup> Ass. M-r Despina Sivevska, University "Goce Delcev" Stip, R. Macedonia.

Education for ethnic diversity, that takes place in the school, need to penetrate the social studies in curriculum at any grade in elementary and secondary education. The core subjects of social studies, such as history, geography, society should include lessons in ethnic diversity among us and everywhere. Indeed, flow, the course of our history cannot be presented properly without extensive treatment of immigration and ethnic diversity. Similarly on that, the course the Government must include content related to civic responsibilities, rights and freedoms of ethnic minorities and legal issues (results) for applying these values in specific situations.

### **What are effective procedures in the study of ethnic diversity?**

1. To use the comparison when describing and analyzing the traditions, events and institutions to help students to learn about similarities and differences in various ethnic groups. Knowing the characteristics and needs that all people share can cause a sense of community among individuals with different ethnic identities.
2. To communicate with students with different ethnic identities as important members of the school environment. Students prefer to learn much more than school instruction when they feel accepted and valued by their teachers and peers.
3. To provide students opportunities to gain positive interpersonal relationships with individuals of different ethnic groups. To emphasize learning through group activities in the classroom and in society in places with different populations. In homogeneous environments (societies), the teacher must bring visitors from different ethnic backgrounds in the classroom to communicate with students.
4. To achieve distance in the texts used in community centers for ethnic diversity. Through the request for cooperation with students, parents and the local community, teachers can develop a number of educational resources, resources. Oral and local history, family and imaging studies, studies of community can be helpful.
5. It seeks to extend knowledge of students of ethnic groups in history and contemporary society by reading books on history, biographies, fiction and magazines and newspapers for ethnic diversity. Teachers should have extended knowledge of ethnic diversity.

### **The role of teachers in promoting multiculturalism**

And well-meant goals in education (teaching) cannot be realized without cooperation with teachers. It is recommended that we should pay attention to multicultural education since the preparation of future teachers. Recognition and acceptance of any "difference" not only requires patience and tolerance among people (children, adolescents) from different ethnic cultures or racial characteristics but requires the ability to interact with people other than the majority of us in some sense. Even more than this should be learned and done in basic training of future teachers, and to learn the methods of cooperation with people of different ethnic origin.<sup>2</sup> Each classroom is a reflection of the cultural community, of disciplines and

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<sup>2</sup> <http://nti.btk.pte.hu/rom/index.php?main=angolul>.

perspectives that are studied, of students and teachers. The discovery of differences requires creativity, extra effort, thoroughness and courage by teachers. Multicultural classroom must use differences as a basis for growth and development. Teachers who are made aware of these differences and incorporate in the curriculum will succeed in creating a multicultural classroom that will be advanced educational goals of students.

Teachers in a multicultural classroom should be open to their students, and to know their students both inside and outside the classroom. In order to be transparent, teachers must be interested in their students, willing to try new and different things, sure of themselves in order to avoid personal concern, and to be without prejudice to students (Canning, 196) Teachers must be interested in what students are doing and understand why they do it. Such openness will create communication in the classroom that will develop in the process of learning and cultural understanding.

Students who do not know enough Macedonian (majority language) teachers should pay special attention to their socialization, to encourage them to communicate through songs, games and group work, helping them through mimics learn new words.

Teachers need to address intercultural aspects, addressing special attention to the tradition, customs, culture, food and environment, the knowledge of everyday life.

Teachers need to form flexible groups according to the abilities of students in reading, writing or drawing.

Students can learn that there are different ways / modules about values, speeches and behavior standards that are tied to different cultures and learn that there are as many differences between cultural groups and among whole cultures. This student will help to break stereotypes related to the cultures.

Using this method, students learn that each has a different model of learning and realization of their "different subjectivity" can help them to understand the different closed identities and groups around them. The best way to deal with cultural conflicts is to be open and not afraid to talk about cultural differences in class regardless of the content that teaches them the teacher (Jones, 12). Open teachers will create and open classrooms, and open classrooms will create opportunities for open communication that allows you to create positive and stimulating learning environment for all.

Howard M. Miller suggests that one of the simplest ways for all teachers to incorporate multicultural ideas and content into their curriculum, is to build a library of multicultural content in the classroom. Regardless of what students can learn to use the library to learn about different cultures.

But it's not enough teachers to have only books by authors with different backgrounds. True multicultural activities must take place daily in the classroom. Gloria Boutte & Christine McCormick suggested six basic principles that teachers should use in assessment a culturally diverse classroom: 1) building multicultural programs; 2) to show respect for differences; 3) to avoid stereotypes; 4) to identify differences in children; 5) to recognize the differences within the classroom; 6) to avoid pseudomultikulturalism. To show respect for differences is important because

many teachers which do not show respect in their classroom ever will get a chance to apply any of these principles. Teachers must draw attention to their verbal and nonverbal expression when working with students who speak differently. The most important thing to remember for every classroom is the premise that each student is unique. Every student is different and beautiful in its own way, no student should feel rejected by the classroom especially if the reason for this was based on race, ethnicity or color.<sup>3</sup>

Differences in language are another problem that teachers face when working in multicultural classrooms. The teacher who tries to teach native language to students from his classroom, whether a few words, show respect for their culture and raise their self-esteem (Perez 152). Introducing the language or the culture of all students in the classroom and their introduction into the curriculum will show students that culture that they are important (Perez 153). Multicultural classroom incorporates content from different cultures every day, so that all cultures are regarded as important and vulnerable.<sup>4</sup>

The preparation of teachers should be directed toward preparation for multicultural education in the course of practically oriented projects that exceed the level of verbal expression.<sup>5</sup> It is necessary to organize special programs for professional development of teachers, which would be differently dimensioned in terms of content, duration, target group which designed and so on. Through this vocational education teachers should be introduced with multiculturalism and interculturalism, in consideration of richness of different cultures, their interaction and development. Such programs could be implemented through courses, seminars in various institutions, by visiting classes to other teachers through the teamwork of teachers in preparing lesson plans, through study visits, exchange of teachers and so on.

By using different sources of knowledge, different teaching methods, procedures, provides direct approach to different cultures. With good access students are provided in the original form to display different forms of cultural expression. Such immediate and unobtrusive way of presentation and introduction to other cultures gets a general meaning. This allows a student to better handle in terms of various life experiences, to accept and choose their own models of identification.

For that purpose firstly is necessary to make certain adjustments to the curriculum and program. The core subjects such as history, geography, society, literature should include lessons in ethnic diversity, here and everywhere. (e.g. in the case history to introduce curricula for cultural and historical traditions of the Roma).

Particular attention is needed to give to the textbooks and general curricular dimension. Socialization and inclusion is necessary to be included in teaching content, especially in the textbooks, where the values promoted in the textbooks and recommended literature, instead concentrating strictly on esthetic and literary criteria, it's necessary to dominate and analysis of the values and placed

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.edchance.org/multicultural/papers/buildingblocks.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.edchance.org/multicultural/papers/buildingblocks.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://nti.btk.pte.hu/rom/index.php?main=angolul>



multicultural respect. In this context, human rights education can start from pre-school education, through elementary to secondary and higher education.

If the primary goal of multicultural education is transformation, that happens when students will be given the opportunity to participate fairly in education, when they are informed of the existing injustices, inequalities, and when we authorized them to decide to change their society. It is unrealistic to expect teachers to directly reject the dominant directional curriculum to one that focuses on decision-making and social action.

Effective implementation of multicultural education can take time, energy and oodles of work, but through him students would see themselves in the curriculum, their voice will be heard and valued in the classroom. Students will feel like they are part of the educational process, they will learn and get high expectations which are in their direction and they will begin to believe that they belong there.

An interesting idea is to promote children's theatre as an artistic, social and educational tool for working with children from different ethnic groups (through the theatre to promote views on education, family, environment, ethnic relations, understanding the culture of their neighbours, children's rights and basic democracy) and to stimulate direct involvement of children in theatrical activities and motivating them to further artistic theatrical expression. In this sense it is animation of children's theatre performances of mixed language-ethnic composition of promoting multiculturalism.

In addition we suggest:

- Increase the number of different ethnic cultural societies;
- Increased number of conferences and symposia organized for the various cultures and their language;
- Maintenance of cultural events;
- Rich musical production;
- Increased number of plays.

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