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Intercultural education and its inclusive dimension

Introduction

Interest in intercultural education is rooted in the dynamic political, economic, social and cultural changes that have taken place in Europe and the rest of the globalizing world in recent years. The migration processes that characterize the modern world, the constantly increasing mobility of people or armed conflicts contribute to the increasing diversity of societies. As I. Wojnar emphasizes, we are „first and foremost, people living on a common Earth, which the famous writer Antoine de Saint-Exupéry called Earth – the planet of people. This community is marked out by a dense network of interests and threats, complex interactions and deepening social contrasts" (Wojnar, 2016, pp. 121–122). The above processes and changes should lead to a change in the way of thinking about the model of education and the education system, because the cultural diversity of society is reflected in educational institutions, and intercultural education should not only be added to the curriculum. In education, the idea of unity in diversity should be fulfilled – creating conditions that take into account the individual needs, limitations and possibilities of children and adolescents, ensuring common education for all students and preparing individuals for life in a world whose only characteristic feature is constant change and diversity.

Challenges for education in the conditions of cultural diversity

In the globalizing world, diversity is no longer an unprecedented socio-cultural phenomenon, and the presence of representatives of different cultures in public space begins to be, or already is, something natural. In addition, an inherent feature of today, also in relation to Polish society, is the more and more frequent re-emigration, which causes that migrants are more and more often children, and thus the recipients of educational activities are not only members of the majority group

or national and ethnic minorities, but also students with experience of migration (Młynarczuk-Sokołowska, Szostak-Król, 2019, p. 280). Therefore, it becomes necessary to dynamically approach both pedagogical theory and educational practice, which do not occur in an unchanging form, but require systematic and permanent development by posing new questions and searching for answers to them. W. Okoń defined education as „all processes and influences aimed at changing people, especially children and adolescents – according to the ideals and educational goals prevailing in a given society" (Okoń, 2001, p. 87). However, the extremely complex context of today's education is captured by Z. Kwieciński in his understanding of this term, according to whom education is „the totality of influences on individuals and human groups, influences conducive to their development and the use of their opportunities, so that they become conscious and creative members of the community to the maximum extent. social, national, cultural and global, and to become capable of active self-realization, unique and lasting identity and separateness, be able to develop their own I by undertaking supra-personal tasks, by maintaining the continuity of my own I in the course of fulfilling „distant tasks"" (Kwieciński, 1995, p. 14).

J. Nikitorowicz emphasizes that contemporary education faces extremely significant challenges related to:

a) „shaping the ability to solve important contemporary problems related to living in a dynamically changing society and constructive coping with difficulties, bearing and overcoming failures;

b) shaping the skills of interpersonal contact, creating group ties, understanding oneself and others, negotiating and dialogue, shaping the attitudes of intra-group solidarity and integration with others, attitudes creating communities based on understanding and tolerance;

c) acquiring knowledge about one's own region, achieving the goals of local communities and regional ones, passing on cultural models and norms, shaping the skills of cultivating the cultural heritage of the ancestors;

d) preparation for life in cultural and ideological pluralism, realization of goals and obligations resulting from belonging to a specific community, shaping and consolidating identity while creating an attitude of openness to otherness;

e) the acquisition by individuals and groups of social and cultural capital, including cultural and social knowledge and competences, professional skills and a willingness to interact with others;

f) preparation for living in a modern, dynamic, open society, culturally pluralist, respecting the law of all individuals and groups, ethnic, national, religious and other" (Nikitorowicz, 2009, p. 195).

They will respond to the ongoing social changes: „the emergence of multicultural societies, (…) migration, the need to exchange information, changes and transformations in the value system of individuals and groups, the decay of patterns, identification dilemmas, assigning the rank of a group's cultural identity and

identity ambivalence" (Pilch, 2003, p. 934) is intercultural education. It is inextrica-bly linked with the value of diversity, which is an inseparable attribute of life, "the essence of both nature and and cultures" (Rada Europy, 2007, p. 13). In the face of the diversity of the potential of human nature, the main goal of societies today is to strive to use it by giving it the right meaning and place in the implemented policy of social development (Rada Europy, 2003, p. 28). Diversity can evoke both positive and negative emotions, create an opportunity for us to meet, which can be extremely valuable and lead to creative conclusions and solutions, or conflict – destructive and leading to regression. The perceived differences may be a source of reluctance, anxiety and a sense of threat or curiosity, delight and fascination, or something interesting, inspiring and valuable, conducive to dialogue and relationships based on mutual respect. Diversity as a value is also related to „the concept of an inclusive society and the idea of ensuring that all residents, regardless of their differences, have the opportunity to participate in social life and shape their lives on equal terms, in an atmosphere of good relations between particular groups and communities" (Rada Europy, 2007, p. 13).

Intercultural education and inclusion in conditions of many cultures

Intercultural education plays an extremely important role in supporting the process of inclusion – social inclusion, integration, self-realization of individuals and groups, regardless of any of their characteristics, because the main task of intercultural education is to meet all kinds of inequalities causing isolation of individuals or entire groups and their inability to implement them. goals and aspirations (Pilch, 2011, p. 88).

It should also be remembered that the term of inclusion in education was initially equated with the inclusion of students with disabilities in the mainstream activities undertaken at school. However, more and more often the term inclusion understood as inclusive education, open to the needs of all students, not only people with disabilities, but also those coming from national, ethnic, religious minorities or from disadvantaged groups (Mitchell, 2012, pp. 427–441). It is this broad understanding of inclusion that has been included in the definition adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO): „Inclusive education is an ongoing process aimed at offering high-quality education for all and respect for diversity, different needs and abilities, and the expectations of students and the community, eliminating all forms of discrimination" (Mitchell, 2012, pp. 427–441). To ensure the implementation of the idea of inclusive education, it is necessary to focus on its basic assumptions (features). This education should be based on almost every child to learn, recognize and respect diversity in terms of age, gender, national origin, ethnicity, disability, etc. In addition, the education system should recognize the needs of pupils / pupils and use specific methods to meet them.

In addition, inclusive education should form part of a broader strategy to build an inclusive society and be a permanent, dynamic process (Zacharuk, 2010, p. 223).

The assumptions that constitute the essence of intercultural education are the result of noticing and recognition of the importance of phenomena of diversity and „the foundation of intercultural education is a vision of a world in which human rights are universally respected and everyone is guaranteed the opportunity to use the mechanisms of democratic participation and the benefits of the rule of law" (Brotto, 2014, p. 13). In addition, activities based on the assumptions of intercultural education are addressed to all age groups, including people of the culturally dominant community, as well as national and ethnic minorities or migrants (repatriates, refugees, immigrants, temporary workers) (Błeszyńska, 2011, pp. 40–41), giving them the opportunity to engage and actively participate in the life of the local community and the whole country. Intercultural education meets all the problems of exclusion by fostering „getting to know, understanding and accepting various cultures and the people who create them, (…) prepares for cooperation and mutual use of the achievements of people of different races, nationalities, religions, cultures" (Lewowicki, 2006, p. 17).

It should be emphasized that „the idea of intercultural education is based on the paradigm of coexistence, which assumes the possibility of one's own development as a result of internal processes, dialogue, understanding, negotiation and cooperation. It restores faith in the power of man, in his inner strength and his sensitivity to the needs of the Other. Being "in between" imposes on an individual accepting the normative functions of culture, relying on his own creative abilities, using his own mind and heart, their creative power" (Nikitorowicz, 2005, p. 26). Intercultural education should be understood as all these influences concerning cultures and their components, aimed at shaping pedagogical activities in such a way that their effect is shaping the attitudes of openness and respect of individuals and groups towards cultural diversity and fully aware of and reflective identity building and rooting in one's own cultural heritage (Sobecki, 2007, p. 27).

Intercultural education „motivates to go to the cultural frontiers, arousing cognitive and emotional needs, such as: surprise, discovery, dialogue, negotiation, exchange of values, tolerance" (Nikitorowicz, 1995, p. 126). Moreover, it not only introduces people to the perception of otherness, but also sensitizes them to it, shapes the awareness of equality, restores and strengthens the spirit of cooperation and balance in the spirit of understanding and tolerance for broadly understood otherness, and prepares for dialogue and interaction.

The main goal of intercultural education is to go beyond just the passive coexistence of cultures, becoming the basic task of institutions and organizations, consisting in getting to know, deepening understanding, respect, dialogue and cooperation between different cultural groups. So this education is based on goals that focus mainly on shaping:

a) the ability to perceive diversity as well as adopt an attitude of openness and understanding for others;
b) awareness of the equal rights of all cultures;
c) conflict and problem solving competences, as well as counteracting prejudices and stereotypes;
d) mutual exchange of experiences of students and parents;
e) attitudes drawing attention to the need to constantly go beyond the limits of one's own culture, not to be confined only to the sphere of one's own values;
f) attitudes of tolerance, dialogue and exchange of values (Nikitorowicz, 2001, s.101).

Detailed goals of intercultural education P.P. Grzybowski covers three areas. In terms of attitudes, the goals of the above education are:
a) „considering society as a complex of coexisting and intersecting groups and in-dividuals reaching the limits of their distinctiveness and dissimilarity;
b) awakening tolerance and self-control in reactions to difference, respecting it in all respects – despite the surprise; awakening sensitivity to other cultures and their integral values and patterns enriching the general culture;
c) getting rid of the feeling of cultural superiority, nationalisms and ethnicities, prejudices and stereotypes, tendencies towards exoticism and xenophilia;
d) opposing all forms of xenophobia, discrimination, racism, hostility, etc. towards Other \ Strangers;
e) empathy; openness to the world; a commitment to peace, equality, fraternity and solidarity in all settings; to stand up for a just world without exploitation, oppression and hunger" (Grzybowski, 2007, s. 40–41).

In the field of skills, the objectives of intercultural education are:
a) „noticing, distinguishing and understanding cultural differences as well as one's own dignity and value in contacts with Other \ Strangers; self-acceptance de-spite (in spite of) the perceived differences; perceiving otherness as enriching
b) and stimulating, interesting and absorbing, not threatening and hostile; no-ticing, getting to know and understanding Other \ Strangers as unavoidable neighbors;
c) leaving the center of one's own culture, enriching oneself internally by break-ing down barriers and borders; consciously going to the borderlands and cul-tural contacts as part of intercultural communication;
d) recognizing the manifestations of inequality, injustice, discrimination, margin-alization, racism, stereotypes and prejudices against Other \ Strangers;
e) seeking understanding in various spheres by engaging in interaction, dialogue, negotiation and exchange of values with Other \ Strangers;
f) fostering and strengthening mutual relations between different communities – especially between the majority groups and cultural or ethnic minorities;

g) activating mechanisms to help address diversity problems related to prejudices, negative attitudes and stereotypes; peaceful coexistence despite differences, conflicting interests and the resulting tensions and conflicts" (Grzybowski, 2007, s. 40–41).

In turn, in the sphere of awareness, the goals of intercultural education are:
a) „objective equality and equality for all cultures;
b) own identity, value, distinctiveness, independence; own cultural roots, traditions and customs;
c) group, family, ethnic, local, cultural, regional, national, transnational, global bond;
d) ecology (in the context of the natural environment and society)" (Grzybowski, 2007, s. 40–41).

Realization of the idea of inclusive education, enabling effective work with people with an experience of migration and a culturally diverse group, it is one the most important challenges facing education in Poland and other European countries (Młynarczuk-Sokołowska, Katarzyna Szostak-Król, 2019, p. 281). People with experience of migration who start learning in Polish educational institutions often need multidimensional support and the effectiveness of the inclusion process is closely related to this, to what extent the student's direct and indirect environment presents openness, flexibility and readiness to change and to meet their individual needs. Persons with migration experience are often students with special educational needs, for whom it is necessary, inter alia, individualization of the education process. In the light of Polish law, every child, regardless of its legal status, residing in the territory of the Republic of Poland, should be able to exercise the right to education through education, upbringing and care (Młynarczuk-Sokołowska, Katarzyna Szostak-Król, 2019, p. 283). The guarantee of participation in the education of migrant children is provided for in Art. 70 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. In addition, Ustawa z dnia 14 grudnia 2016 r. – Prawo oświatowe, specifies that "the school should provide each student with the conditions necessary for his development, prepare him to fulfill family and civic obligations based on the principles of solidarity, democracy, tolerance, justice and freedom" (Ustawa z dnia 14 grudnia 2016 r. – Prawo oświatowe, Dz.U. 2017 poz. 59). Prawo oświatowe i Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 23 sierpnia 2017 roku w sprawie kształcenia osób niebędących obywatelami polskimi oraz osób będących obywatelami polskimi, które pobierały naukę w szkołach funkcjonujących w systemach oświaty innych państw they determine the free education of foreigners and activities aimed at implementing the idea of inclusion (Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej, 2017, Dz.U. 2017 poz. 1655).

The inclusion and educational progress of people with experience of migration are largely conditioned by the opportunities that are created by them as the

most important institution of the education system, which is school (Młynarczuk-
-Sokołowska, Katarzyna Szostak-Król, 2019, pp. 283–284). As emphasized by the
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the
school has a duty to "develop students' potential by imparting knowledge, as well
as shaping competences, attitudes and values enabling them to fully participate in
the life of society" (UNESCO, 2007, p. 12). This is evidenced by the goal set for the
Polish school in the area of student's social development, which was considered
to be „shaping a civic attitude, an attitude of respect for the traditions and culture
of one's own nation, as well as an attitude of respect for other cultures and tradi-
tions and the prevention of any discrimination" (Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji
Narodowej, 2012, p. 75). It is the school that is „the place where the easiest and
most effective way to introduce changes that will contribute to the improvement of
mutual relations between people of different nationalities (…) The school is a place
of multilateral dialogue, its life consists of the mutual relations of the teaching staff
and students (…) parents and guardians. Thus, the school itself is an important
field of interaction between these actors, and due to its everyday nature of work, it
can be the easiest place for the development of intercultural dialogue" (Konieczna-
-Sałamatin, 2008, p. 61).

One of the most serious challenges and, at the same time, barriers to education
faced by culturally different people, and also often by returnees, is the unfamiliarity
or poor knowledge of the official language of a given country. Thus, shaping com-
munication competences in terms of communication in Polish, it is one of the most
important factors determining active participation in school education (Młynarczuk-
-Sokołowska, Szostak-Król, 2019, p. 283). The second type of barrier that makes
it difficult for children with a migration experience to find the new school reality
are often contradictions resulting from their values, accepted cultural norms and
a complex cultural identity (Młynarczuk-Sokołowska, Szostak-Król, 2019, p. 284).
Another challenge for educational work in conditions of cultural diversity, which
is unpredictable and for which there is no ready, universal curriculum and meth-
odological model indicating a specific way of acting and solving difficulties in all
situations that arise at the intersection of cultures, is the need for teachers to have
attitudes of openness and respect and at the same time extensive knowledge and
intercultural competences (Młynarczuk-Sokołowska, Szostak-Król, 2019, p. 284).
These conditions make it possible to open up to the richness of diversity and arouse
the cognitive curiosity of students by shaping the attitude of tolerance, respect,
introducing and explaining the meaning of norms and principles, both own and
foreign, and counteracting the formation of stereotypes, prejudices and intolerance.
An extremely important factor in the effective inclusion and education of children
with migration experience, which cannot be ignored, is the appropriate preparation
of the teaching staff and the need to acquire intercultural competences by people
involved in educational practice. However, the complexity of this area is a platform
for separate considerations.

Summary

One of the priorities of modern education is to solve the issue of preparing people with experience of migration for full participation in the life of school and the whole society. Intercultural education sets special challenges and educational tasks in the form of responsible upbringing and introducing the individual to love, respect, dialogue and tolerance, presenting and explaining the meaning of norms, rules and the values of different cultures should constitute the foundation of education and contemporary multicultural society. Therefore, the implementation of the idea of intercultural education fits perfectly into the direction of modern educational policy to counteract social exclusion, violence, intolerance and marginalization. The experiences in the field of intercultural education so far show that attitudes perceiving people and groups with experience of migration in the educational space as a potential and an opportunity for everyone, not a burden, are extremely important.

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Abstract

The article presents an extremely important in the face of dynamic processes and changes in the modern world: increasing mobility of people, migration processes, armed conflicts, as well as the policies of many countries, the idea of intercultural education, its assumptions, goals and directions of activities that it sets for educational practice. The text also shows the role of intercultural education in supporting inclusion processes, giving the opportunity to work effectively with migrants and a culturally diverse group, which is a challenge facing education in European countries, including Poland.

Key words: education, intercultural education, inclusion, inclusive education, diversity, migration, multiculturalism, interculturalism, school.

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