PEDAGOGICAL FUNDAMENTALS OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

Ivan P. Ivanov

1. INTERCULTURAL PEDAGOGY

The intercultural education doctrine implies equal opportunities, it is a modern pedagogical doctrine that applies not only to children from minorities, but also to children from risk groups and problem children.

The study of education from the perspective of culture dates back to Emile Durkheim. More recently, Raymond Williams has developed a theory of education and culture according to which there are three levels of socialization associated with the cultural models in society in a specific way (Forquin 1996). Global socialization cultivates a dominant cultural model and dominant type of personality among members of a particular group; specialized socialization develops the individual goals and competences for a particular social or professional role; education, in turn, is treated as a combination of knowledge and dispositions determined by civilization (cultural model, ideal).

1.1. TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE RELATION BETWEEN PEDAGOGY AND CULTURE

Multicultural (pluricultural) pedagogy. A pedagogical strategy highlighting cultural relativism, the value and legitimate autonomy of every culture. This form of education takes into account the specific features of all cultures on a national territory.

Transcultural pedagogy. Another strategy, which focuses on the common cultural elements that may be identified as universal and are therefore a bridge of mutual understanding.

Intercultural pedagogy. A pedagogical strategy of contact between and mutual enrichment of cultures. It is not associated with any new discipline taught at school, but is a sytem of principles. This concept assumes that there are no two identical cultures, and this prompts interaction. It is associated with two main phenomena: interculturality and intercultural communication. Interculturality is defined as a type of discourse and type of actions between people, and invariably has concrete dimensions - psychological, historical, political, cultural and others. That is why it is more appropriate to discuss a type of interculturality rather than interculturality in general. This is a complex term, a global characteristic of contemporary society. For its part, intercultural communication is based on the pluralism of cultures, safeguarding and protection of all social

groups, of the right to identity and cooperation. Hence intercultural education may be defined as education based on the philosophy of interculturality.

1.2. PROBLEMS IN THE CONSTITUTION OF INTERCULTURAL PEDAGOGY

The numerous problems in the constitution of intercultural pedagogy may be generally classified as follows:

1. The problem of global trends and experience. This makes comparative pedagogy one of the main disciplines with which intercultural pedagogy is related.

2. The problem of the universal and the particular in cultures. This analysis is applicable at the concrete level only. The universal and the particular in cultures are also a concern of comparative pedagogy, especially in the case of immigrant children who have gone to school in their home country.

3. The problem of the content of cultures. A concern of cultural anthropology and Cultural Studies, the other two disciplines with which intercultural pedagogy is closely related. Changes in the curriculum and teaching methods are impossible without the presentation of the respective culture as a system of group values, fantasies, ideologies, symbols, norms, notions, dispositions, etc.

4. The problem of the cultural specificity of the person. This problem is solved by assuming that the human being is a "cultural animal" (Claude Levi-Strauss), a synthesis of Nature and culture - everything that is universal and spontaneous is a product of Nature, and everything that is assimilated by the cultural environment is relative and partial.

5. The problem of the interdisciplinary nature of intercultural pedagogy. The term "intercultural pedagogy" has two components: interculturality (an anthropological term) and pedagogy. In this case, there is a clash between the invariance of pedagogy and the relativism of interculturality, between disciplinary ethnocentrism and disciplinary relativism. Besides, education is not merely a transmission of culture (the anthropological view).

6. The problem of the conflict between "inter-" and "culture," since any culture has bounds and tends to be closed, it is unique and has an instinct of self-preservation. Pedagogy interferes in this conflict with its function of technological application of intercultural education in practice. This respectively means that any pedagogical decision has an inherent conflict potential.

7. The problem of the difference between "pluri- ,"trans- ," and "inter-" in regard to cultures. In many cases, intercultural pedagogy is *de facto* replaced by the more limited, easier to apply and less controversial pluricultural pedagogy.

1.3. THE ESSENCE OF INTERCULTURAL PEDAGOGY

Intercultural pedagogy redefines the relation between pedagogy and politics. Pedagogical ideals are pegged to political doctrines. Intercultural pedagogy corresponds to the new stage which the countries of the world have entered. It is associated with terms such as "segregation," "respect" and "humiliation," which have concrete meaning in the different countries. Intercultural pedagogy is the pedagogical doctrine of the practice of intercultural education.

Intercultural pedagogy has a special status - it tends to be a strategy rather than a procedure (to quote Mario Mano, *Pedagogia...* 1996).

Intercultural pedagogy, which is a system of principles, requires a change in teachers - they must proceed from the position of *omnis omnia docere* (everyone teaches everybody), since interculturality rules out ready schemes and approaches.

Intercultural pedagogy applies not only to schools, but also to all contacts of students, including those outside school - with grown-ups, institutions, etc.

Intercultural pedagogy requires other research methods - a qualitative approach, with due consideration for all forms of difference.

1.4. TASKS OF INTERCULTURAL PEDAGOGY

Intercultural pedagogy has a number of tasks at several levels:

* Political - elimination of prejudices, of the relativization of national identity and the value of other cultures;

* Economic - along the lines of knowledge-profession-commodities-exchange;

* Social - understanding the social problems of people with a different identity;

* individual - accumulation of individual sociocultural experience for the purpose of the individual's positive integration into the world;

* Socio-psychological - toning down the dividing line between in- and out-groups. Education is associated with what Linton and Gardiner call "base personality." It uniformizes the personality. A strong "base personality" is in the interest of the in-group. It raises a solid barrier before the out-group, and this is an obstacle to communication in the contemporary world.

1.5. GUIDELINES FOR INTERCULTURAL PEDAGOGY

Intercultural pedagogy requires a positive attitude to children and familiarity with the culture of students in the teaching process, thus precluding premature assessment of children's qualities (the assessment of one and the same act might vary from one culture to another). It requires encouraging children's experience in the new environment and communication in the class as a prime objective

of the teacher, along with the formation of a children's collective (community). Maximum attention to children who are isolated or, on the contrary, very aggressive, facilitating their integration into the class. Interpretation of the school as a pluralistic environment for reciprocal enrichment.

The teacher's position is associated with discussion for the purpose of reducing confrontation, as well as with the assumption that change in socialization models is a slow and difficult process that requires change in the way of thinking about and understanding the others. It involves commitment to the problems (individual and social) of minority groups and help from teachers in their spare time, with teachers acting as transmitters of culture not only in regard to children, but also to their families.

Another main requirement is the aspiration to form working groups for group (cooperative) training on a heterogenous basis, as well as experimenting with role play in class under the approrpiate circumstances (behavioural training).

At the school level, intercultural communication is at the core of the teaching process.

In kindergartens and elementary schools, intercultural communication focuses on the teaching of language as a means of communciation, and cultivation of respect for the mother tongue as an element of a plurilingual community, as a counterpoint to the hegemony of the majority language. There is considerable experience in intercultural communication in this age margin - intercultural theatre, plurilingual tales, theatre of shadows, etc.

At the higher levels of education, the priority is on facilitation of school life and personal experience - facilitating the child's integration in the school environment in all disciplines, motivation for the study of other cultures, etc.

At the extracurricular level, inetrcultural communication is manifested in an effort to surmount ethnocentrism and stereotypes (cultural and ethnic) as a basis for conflict. Criticism of the mass media if they are perpetuating unacceptable stereotypes.

1.6. DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCULTURAL PEDAGOGY

According to Luigi Secco (*Pedagogia...* 1996), there are three stages in the evolution of intercultural pedagogy:

The first stage is identification of problems and development of a critical approach to existing practices. This entails identifying the national and ethnic differences, studying the specific problems of adults and children from the respective ethnic communities, adopting the principles of the pluralism of culture and combat of assimilationism. This is accompanied by a gradual fading out of the functions of the nation state, especially in terms of ideology and politics, and development of the processes of globalization.

The second stage is characterized by acceptance of the thesis of the equality of different

cultures and, in particular, of languages, and their integration into school practices. It involves the study of schools as a system of social, economic and other factors influencing this process. The main process that should be considered is bilingualism, as opposed to monolingualism. The school should oppose the processes of assimilation and the imposition of a hegemonistic culture.

The third stage is improvement of the theory and methods linking the different cultures.

Notably, intercultural pedagogy emerged in order to rationalize and regulate practices associated with immigration in Western Europe, which intensified after World War II. Immigration has caused a series of problems - ideological, economic, religious and others - which have had different force in different periods. Initially immigrants were assimilated unconditionally, but the rise in their number and, respectively, in unemployment brought to the fore their social problems associated foremost with language, education and skills. The number of their children, born in or brought to the new home country, grew considerably. This prompted the development of two branches of intercultural pedagogy: pedagogy for children (mass schools) and for adults (language and training courses).

Emerging as a pedagogy of integration, intercultural pedagogy has gradually evolved into a pedagogy of interaction.

This evolution involves a transition from general theoretical principles to their case-by-case application. Specific educational projects and didactic models addressing specific target groups and including, along with the school, other institutions and particular factors, were developed, thus covering not only school life but also sports, cultural life (the arts), religion, etc. In many cases, those projects did not only apply ideas, but also advanced new theories.

The next stage involves development of theories and practices involving the mass media and television, in particular, in the inetrcultural education system. Intercultural education is related to the concept of the "globalization of culture" as an answer to the domination of one culture over another. The main argument was whether theory should be based on the category of "global culture" or on the category of "global dimensions of culture"; ultimately, the latter view has gained the upper hand.

Throughout this period the main problems, which have constantly acquired new dimensions, are the following: school attendance levels among children of immigrants and minorities; equality and inequality of opportunities in education; migration and education; education and the combat of xenophobia and racism; the attitude of adults to the school.

1.7. INTERCULTURAL AND GENERAL PEDAGOGY

Globalism was formed as a cultural-pedagogical concept on the basis of the idea of "national" pedagogy, school, education, etc. in the 18th and 19th centuries. It is associated with the political

practice of the "nation state." Analogical processes took place in all European countries. "Objective culture," "national spirit," "national way of life" became a prime concern. The main task of pedagogy was the formation of "national identity" interpreted as identity with the national spirit and way of life, rejecting liberalism and freedom of choice.

Intercultural education has clashed with the phenomenon of "excessive national civic consciousness," which is inconsistent with the spirit of the new age and will be even more so in future. Intercultural pedagogy is a negation of ethnocentrism in pedagogy, formed as a concept on the basis of the idea of "national" pedagogy, school education, etc. in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Intercultural pedagogy was initially treated as a branch of general pedagogy, a "pedagogy for foreigners and immigrants." Its main task was social integration of the different immigrant groups. The ideas that people should develop not only as a community and prepare for community life, but also along parallel lines in view of their differences, came later. Intercultural pedagogy evolved from "pedagogy for some" to "pedagogy for all." Its vocabulary does not include terms such as nation, nationality, race, assimilation and domination, but abounds in terms such as mutual enrichment, closeness, conformism, humanism... Unlike general pedagogy, inetrcultural pedagogy is based on values that are "neutral" and "free" of ideological implications. It is a concept of restructuring the society of a critical-ideological type. Intercultural pedagogy is based on the concept of the dual nature of the human being: *zoon logon echon*, an animal endowed with reason, and *zoon politicon*, a creature whose life depends on the structure of social communities. The second aspect is all too often ignored by classical pedagogy and general pedagogy as a whole. Unlike general pedagogy, intercultural pedagogy is associated with principles of instruction and education such as freedom, relativity (historical and cultural), and respect for the different ways of thinking.

2. PROBLEMS OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

2.1. THE SCHOOL AND EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

As noted above, the right to education is universal, irrevocable and equal for everyone. Hence the problem of *opportunities in education* (respectively of *inequality of opportunities*) - one of the main problems of any educational system. This problem has a very broad basis - the question of social inequality in general. It is solved in different ways in the different countries, and no society has claimed to have come up with a full and comprehensive solution to date. Attempts to reform society through the school (respectively to ensure social equality by means of equality in education) have been made ever since the 16th century. Attitudes to education have crystallized in two extreme

views: education is a means of integration and social mobility; education is a source of social differentiation and segregation. All revolutionary attempts have involved restricting the segregative and intensifying the mobility functions of education.

The post-World War II period saw a surge in liberal-democratic ideas. An age of social equality and meritocracy was proclaimed. It was assumed that social success was contingent on hard work and professional realization, that all people had an equal start but became unequal later on in life.

A system reproducing the then social structure was imposed in the 19th century: compulsory, mass, universal (unified, comprehensive), pay-free and funded by the state or other public organizations schools for the lower classes, and private, paid, specialized schools for the upper classes. Inequality was vested in the system.

Nowadays the proportion of the second type of schools is insignificant. Almost all students attend schools of the first type. Nevertheless, there is still inequality (*de facto*) - even though it is not stipulated by law (*de jure*); on the contrary, the constitutions of all contemporary countries guarantee the universal equal right to education.

The idea of a "unified school" offers a theoretical and practical solution. The "unified school" is expected to materialize the idea of social equality. This concept has five elements: (1) Pay-free and universal education for everybody at the elementary level; (2) Identical curriculum for everybody; (3) Equality of school resources - equal materials and equally trained teachers for all students; (4) Identical social and ethnic composition - the school should not segregate; (5) Equality in the effects of school - students with different social backgrounds should have the same opportunities for academic achievement.

The breach of any of those postulates leads to inequality. Today this inquality comes in the form of inequality in school resources (facilities, teachers, schools aids, timetables and curricula), in the composition of students (sociocultural level, ethnos, educational aspirations), in the results of education (competitiveness on the labour market, actual training), in the access to certain types of school. Among the specific problems are minority rights (to study the mother tongue, etc.), which should be guaranteed equally with those of the majority. The development of a universal curriculum has proven particularly difficult. Except at the level of basic reading and writing skills, it is virtually impossible to elaborate a universal curriculum giving all students equal opportunities. The curriculum will inevitably favour some students at the expense of others (in most cases, the gifted). If the curriculum is differentiated by scholastic aptitude, this will in itself entail inequality.

The credibility of "*meritocracy*" as a political thesis has been investigated in a series of studies. This thesis dates from the mid-1960s.

It has been established that actual inequality is a fact which, however, is hidden in different ways. The indicators of inequality are level of school attendance, quality of teachers, access to

prestigious schools and, especially, to higher education. There is inequality foremost in regard to the resources of the different types of schools and groups of students along racial, social and ethnic lines.

Differences between the academic achievement of the majority and the ethnic minorities have been found in many countries - the average achievement of the majority is higher than that of all other groups. The minorities, which start school in a state of scholastic inferiority, cannot recover from the latter in the next 12 years by the time they complete their secondary education. The school apparently cannot outweigh the family cultural background, which is immediately relevant to students' aspirations to attend prestigious schools. Teachers have an impact on academic achievement too, especially in the case of children from the underprivileged classes and ethnic groups. Good teachers have an extremely positive influence on them, but the latter's access to such teachers is very limited.

Studies of *school attendance* show that the level has risen consistently, virtually reaching 100% in all industrialized countries in the 80s. This has changed social relations among young people. Since 1982, there has been practically no rise in school attendance levels, since all potential students are already attending school.

The situation in Bulgaria was similar until recently. In the 90s, however, many children of Roma origin have not been going to school (even at the elementary level), and this has considerably reduced the school attendance level. There are no exact figures, since school dropouts occur at any time of the school year. Such cases are usually not reported by school principals, who are afraid that they might lose jobs. The Ministry of Education and Science reports tens of thousands of dropouts...

Access to higher education has been increasing at the global level. In recent decades, it has acquired mass proportions in the industrialized countries. Access to higher education has improved in Bulgaria too. Recent trends, however, suggest that it has turned into a very strong socio- and ethnic-differentiating factor. Access to higher education is contingent on the sociocultural and educational level of the parents. At the same time, universities have been increasingly off-limits to minorities.

2.1.1. VARIANTS OF THE SCHOOL AS A LIVING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT

The aggregate of actors in a particular school constitute a sort of entity with particular qualities. To understand the essence of this institution, one should consider its formal organization, role structure, ways of distribution and exercise of authority and power, system of communication, ways of regulation, individual strategies which, in turn, constitute the informal organization, etc. (Duru-Bellat 1992: 143-169).

2.1.1.1. SCHOOLS IN UPSCALE NEIGHBOURHOODS

Schools in "nice" neighbourhoods have been found to have certain specific features. The school buildings are clean, light, modern and well equipped. Both students and teachers are selected, and repeaters in the course of six years (half the education course) are less than 10%. Most of the students come from wealthy families, and by virtue of their majority control the situation in regard to the minority of children from working-class families.

The ultimate objectives of education are approved by and appeal to the majority. Utilitarianism and individualism are typical of both students and teachers. This climate does not encourage pedagogical cooperation and often leads to an absence of collective regulations. The school administration plays the role of a buffer between students, teachers and parents.

There is a great variety of and access to school activities. Teachers devote a lot of time to talking with students and analyzing their performance; they encourage them to become more actively involved in the arts and sports, and take part in student weekend trips.

Parents have a case-by-case attitude to particular school events and shortcomings, rather than a position in general. They have a very good idea of their child's life at school since they are in close contact with the latter. They have an influence on the school through the administration: board of trustees, inspectorate, local government, etc.

2.1.1.2. SCHOOLS IN GHETTOES AND INNER CITIES

Ghettoes or inner cities are a typical element of the contemporary urban landscape. They are spontaneously formed settlements populated by comparatively compact economic, cultural, ethnic communities. In the course of the huge waves of immigration in the US and the other industrialized countries, the new arrivals settled not in the countryside but in the cities - in typical group places (e.g. Chinatown) - looking for people of their own kind. The same thing happened in the course of induystrialization (working-class neighbourhoods). Schools in ghettoes and inner cities are poor and their limited resources are overstretched (many children, few schools).

Most of the children are from minorities or the lower classes, and are quite mediocre (by the end of Grade Six, more than 60% are repeaters). There is a low level of cohesion around the administration, and the school's role as a didactic community is questionable.

Teachers do not encourage the constitution of collective life. By rule, they do not live in the respective neighbourhood and do not know the children and their way of life. The teachers are less qualified and experienced. The turnover is high. The teachers and the administration have a bad reputation and are more or less considered to be openly racist.

The curricula and teaching methods do not correspond to the students' way of life. The curriculum and school standards do not command respect among students. School order is seen as a set of rituals which students often reject. There is strong rejection of the school on the part of students.

Contacts with the students' families are minimized. The family is hardly present at school, and children tend to live in an aggressive environment.

2.1.1.3. YOUTH SUBCULTURES

There are specific youth subcultures in school, groups with their own uniform, jargon, interests and attitudes. They play a very important role in the social identity of members.

By tradition, there are two subcultures:

* "Pro-school" (Hargreaves, Lassy, Bell) - dominant in the more prestigious schools, very conformist in regard to institutional values. Also known as "college" subculture (White) - children aspiring towards middle-class lifestyles, social success and strong individualism. This model is close to the official school culture, and this is conducive to a sense of greater comfort at and identification with the school.

* Anti-school (Hargreaves, Lassy, Bell) - this subculture borders on criminal behaviour and often takes the form of vandalism and violence against the school, teachers and "model students." Also called "boys from the outskirts" (White) - based on local communities, working-class values and loyalty to peer groups. This model is very distant from the official school culture and this leads to stronger identification with the family rather than the school. Members are strongly attracted to the values of criminal subculture, since the latter are seen as a form of protection against middle-class values and preserve member's personal dignity. This subculture is also inspired by trendy role models in the media, which glorify the rebel and outcast. There is another very strong factor too - the popular opinion that euqates "anti-" with "macho."

Those two subcultures are to be found everywhere, but by rule the "pro-culture" dominates in schools in upscale neighbourhoods, and the "anti-culture," in schools in the inner cities and ghettoes.

2.1.2. CHILDREN FROM THE DOMINANT AND UNDERPRIVILEGED ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

2.1.2.1. CHILDREN FROM THE DOMINANT ETHNOS

These children are in their natural cultural environment, speak their native language and have

values similar to those of the teachers (the official school culture).

Parents from the majority have a clearer, calmer and, on the whole, more beneficial for children attitude to the school. They are confident of their children's achievement. That is why they tend to trust their children. Cooperation with the school is regarded as normal and natural.

2.1.2.2. CHILDREN FROM THE UNDERPRIVILEGED ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

The under-achievement of children from the underprivileged ethnic communities is obvious and overall, whereas children from the majority have differentiated interests. The former differ from the latter in terms of vocabulary (one-half or one-third of the latter's word stock), manners, values, culture in general (for every 20 students from the majority with access to higher education, there is just one student from the minorities).

Parents from the underprivileged ethnic communities regard their children's school life as inevitably full of traps. A sense of helplessness, mediocrity and doom prevails. These parents feel incapable of interfering in school affairs and do not have the necessary self-confidence to deal with the school. They regard the latter with mistrust and enbarrassment. In an economic crisis, there is a prevalent sense of pessimism in the family, the family has a negative attitude to the school and is not regarded as a factor for social progress.

Children from minorities are in conflict with the whole school, and are isolated by the other children. For them the school becomes a territory of the others - "the alien" ("ghiaours," "gadjo") and has two sides: for Bulgarians, the school is a centre of socialization, and for the minorities, a sphere that threatens their identity. Children learn the Bulgarian language (of the school) and their mother tongue as a language of emotions and identification.

Children from minorities come under two influences: of Bulgarian society - via the school, the mass media, division of labour; of their own group - values of group minority identity; love of and for the parents; mother tongue and history; typical values.

Children from minorities have two main attitudes to the cultural pressure from the majority: reticence and openness.

Reticence takes the form of defensive reactions, a desire to take refuge in group cultural identity. This attitude is encouraged by the life of the minority group: way of life, speech, dress, expression of emotions, gestures, facial expressions, music, dance, etc. All this plays the role of a barrier to the adoption of the new culture. In addition, there is the disparaging attitude of the majority caused by the bad image of minorities, and statements such as "a school with many students from the minorities is not a good school." Real discrimination against the mother tongue, its token study and use at home only, are just as important.

Openness means a desire to change one's cultural identity and organization, and to find new

forms of identification. The reasons are that the individual is capable of making a compromise between the devalued minority identity as seen by society (Gypsy = thief, dirty, common...) and the desired identity, which leads to the position "I might be Gypsy, but I'm not like the other Gypsies..." This change of one presumable image by another does not necessarily entail internal conflict.

There are two main reasons for the difficult identification of children from minorities:

1. Cultural integration: these children do not know any other model of adult behaviour except the minority one. A pedagogical project targeting children from the minorities should be a joint effort (children and adults from another enviornment) in order to introduce those alternative models.

2. It is not easy to interiorize values, ideas and situations. The school is "alien" territory, and the teacher is "alien" too. Children from minorities have many anxieties. All children fear school (low marks, violence, etc.), but those from minorities do so more than those from the majority.

School dropouts among children from the underprivileged ethnic communities are regarded as a sort of *self-choice*.

Two models of self-choice are typical in Bulgaria.

The first one is typical of the Roma and younger children, who tend to be irrational, to follow their instincts and feelings. These children are resigned to their fate in advance. They unconsciously expect that they and their kind will fail and be expelled from school. Those expectations come from their environment - in the family and of the ethnos as a whole. Besides, the state of constant anxiety and frustration in the clash with official school culture produce a negative attitude to the school and teachers. The media and popular culture, which assert certain trendy cultural models, play a huge role in this respect.

The second model is typical of ethnic Turkish children and teenagers, after Grade Eight (in high school). Performance at school is a matter of conscious choice. These children realize that their failures are constant and hardly depend on their efforts. They seek other forms of succcessful self-realization, which depend on their gender, cultural environment, age, educational and training opportunities, possible achievements after school, etc. The choice depends on the value system (mainly the duty) of the respective ethnos, political party, religion, organization, morality, etc.

2.2. SOCIOCULTURAL PROFILE OF THE SCHOOL

2.2.1. THE SCHOOL AS A SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

The school is a specific type of social environment for students. It is a dynamic unity of the objective and personal environments, which constantly interact with students and teachers in the course of education. The school is seen as a system of organized and unorganized conditions

surrounding students and teachers, and those conditions, as a specific form of the social life of students and teachers. These conditions include the micro-environment; territorial-demographic factors; ethnic make-up of the school population; administrative and public-political organizations; cultural and spiritual environment (cinemas, theatres, libraries, sports facilities; traditions, opinions and others); living conditions with a bearing on the school (boarding houses, health care, etc.); information, transport and other communications or a system of external communications at the school.

The school is a realm of "symbolic violence" - the culture of the dominant class and ethnos is imposed in the form of acculturation. The school legitimates this culture and imposes it on everybody. The "sociocultural handicap" phenomenon applies to children who are disadvantaged *a priori*. Unlike physical handicaps, sociocultural handicaps are not as obvious. They are always relative in regard to some point of reference.

Another problem stems from the dominant culture, which is usually but not necessarily the culture of the middle class (it could be proletarian, working-class, "popular"), and thus places one category of people or another at a disadvantage. The school should be based on mass culture in order to reduce the proportion of the potentially disadvanatged. This will limit the problems of both the individual and the school as an institution.

2.2.2. TWO SCHOOL CULTURES

According to **Basil Bernstein**, language is a means of communication in definite environments. Each group has a distinct vocabulary and style. Language is a specific code that is emblematic of the environment in which it is used. Its state may serve as an indicator of the quality of the respective social system. Language is actually one form of socialization. In the course of language acquisition, children also acquire a definite sensitivity, instruments of cognition and values, they interiorize social structures. Children learn social roles in the course of communication. i.e. through language (Bernstein 1990).

Bernstein studies children from different social groups over their years at school. He uses verbal and non-verbal tests of intellectual development. In time, performance in the non-verbal tests remains relatively constant, whereas that in the verbal tests starts changing, with a gap emerging between chidlren from the upper and the other classes. In other worlds, sociocultural differences translate into linguistic difference (Duru-Bellat 1992).

Bernstein concludes that there are two main language codes at school (Bernstein 1990).

The first one is "formal," "cultivated" language used by separate children, shaded, highlighting personal originality, the language of the educated middle and upper ("bourgeois"), dominant classes and ethnic groups. This language is semantically richer, more comprehensive and

variative. It abides strictly by the laws of logic, it is less expressive and uses less non-verbal means. This language strongly stimulates preliminary intellectual activity and requires better planning of the discourse, more purely rhetorical devices, etc. It postulates effort and rationality, focuses on the efficiency and contribution of the school and of knowledge to personal success, as well as on personal achievements; it is associated with the domination of the "Self" as quintessential of individualism. This language has a strong impact on academic achievement, since it is very close to the cultural specificity of the school.

The second is "public," "vernacular," "limited" language available to all - the vocabulary is poor and descriptive, condensed and impersonal, abounding in non-verbal devices. It is limited and basic. This language has only the basic word stock needed to get on in life. The phrases are short and often incomplete, and subordinate clauses are rare. This language is typical of the less educated classes and mainly of the working class and minorities (the underprivileged classes and ethnic communities). In this case, the school definitely plays an insignificant role, the future is predestined and rules out social prosperity, and "us" dominates as quintessential of collectivism. This language ought to be a product of social structures, it ought to be the language of all society, but develops slower because it remains a language of the lower classes - *langue populaire*.

Both language codes are found at school. The important thing is that the "formal" language is privileged *a priori*. This is the language of the school, of knowledge, of the professions and trades. It also defines the laws of socialization at school. This is the language of teachers and, in some cases (minorities, uneducated people), might pose a formidable obstacle to communication. The presence of the two codes at school also defines the main dividing line and zone of conflict between teachers and students. The language of teaching and education should ensure the provision of information, understanding, uniform assessment of the actions of both parties (Bernstein 1990).

Bernstein's thesis was strongly criticized by **William Labov** in the 60s. Working with underprivileged children, exponents of the secondary culture, fosters in teachers a sense of sociocultural inferiority and, hence, a need of compensatory pedagogical influences. To quote Labov, Bernstein's theory sounds racist in many respects. For his part, Bernstein proceeded to reject the politization of his theory, refuting a series of points, especially those claiming that the secondary code was poorer and less efficient than its rival (Hudson 1995).

The main thesis is that of the relation between language and social structure. Bernstein regards this relation as essential: the language of a given group derives from its way of life. In this case, the secondary code is based on restriction, deficit, inferiority.

Labov's studies show that the dialect of students from the ghetto is a social marker of social and cultural conflict, a basis of their under-achievement at school in life in general. Yet recorded in a "natural" environment, outside school, in informal conversation, their speech is as rich and shaded as the "official" language. In other words, people from the ghetto are capable of communicating just

as effectively as the others, and of applying patterns of thinking and feeling that are not qualitatively different from those used by speakers of standard English.

The differences between the two school cultures are most significant in **written language**. Academic achievement has many and all kinds of dimensions, but it is invariably dependent on two essential skills: speaking and reading, on the one hand, and writing, on the other - respectively on the culture of speaking and reading, and writing. These are different things and play a different role in a person's general educational level. They may be considered as markers of sociocultural inferiority to a different extent. These issues have been studied extensively by Bernard Lahire (De Queiroz 1995).

Writing is not a simple technique only. It has been associated with knowledge and power ever since its appearance in ancient times. Writing does not only record and preserve the world - it is also a vision of the world, an instrument of objectivating the writer's practice and attitudes.

Practically all school drills, even those that are purely "oral," are meant to help students learn the rules of written language: this is an artifical language that does not function in the same form in normal human relations. School language is *de facto* an oral form of written language.

Lahire studied two student groups on the outskirts of Lyon, where the majority were children from working-class or immigrant families. His observations in class and the huge written and oral corpus from exams showed that the children had an orally-practical notion of the world and neither could nor wanted or had the opportunity to go beyond it. Work at school (reading, reproduction of grammatical rules, retelling) requires autonomization of the language, consistent interest in and clear awareness of the importance of language on the part of each child.

In Bulgaria, Mihail Videnov has conducted similar studies. Videnov likewise registers two language codes, used respectively during classes and during the breaks; the first is associated with Bulgarian, and the second with student slang and ethnic language. Students from minorities are constantly forced to switch from one code to another (Videnov 1998).

Videnov notes that all bilinguals speak Bulgarian with an accent, with phonetic markers. These markers in the Bulgarian of citizens whose ethnic origin is other than Bulgarian have not been studied (Videnov 1998). The present state of the Bulgarian language in certain ethnic groups is alarming, and this necessitates urgent measures. Priority is assigned foremost to the appropriate teaching methods at school.

According to Videnov, unlike certain other ethnic communities - Jews, Armenians, Vlachs, etc. - Turks and Roma have had problems in learning Bulgarian in recent years. For a long time before that, there were conditions for natural bilingualism due to their life among Bulgarians. A number of religious and many other reasons have posed an obstacle to their assimilation: intermarriage with Bulgarians is rare in the Turkish and Roma communities. The Roma have been bilingual for centuries, and this created all prerequisites for cohabitation.

As a result of migration in the past few decades, many parts of Eastern Bulgaria have been partly or wholly de-Bulgarized, which has led to a loss of an environment for the adoption and automation of Bulgarian-language reflexes, i.e. children are inheriting only the ethnic reflexes of their family, which in principle does not use Bulgarian (Videnov 1998).

Mihail Videnov and Hristo Kyuchoukov identify two main distinctive features of the ethnic dialect interference and the Bulgarian language of the Roma - the emergence of a makeshift language which is learned to some extent by Roma children. When there is no Bulgarian-language environment to eliminate deviations (the markers of the other language), this leads to *creolization*. Bulgarian communities see creolization as a very strong marker, which corresponds to the popular negative stereotypes, especially of the Roma. *Pidgin* Bulgarian - use of several dozen basic Bulgarian words adjusted to the grammar opf the respective ethnic dialect and with a distorted pronunciation - is even a more extreme variant. The only way this ethnic stratum could learn Bulgarian is if they are taught Bulgarian by the methods of foreign language teaching (Hristo Kyuchoukov).

2.2.3. ADOPTION OF SCHOOL CULTURE

To be successful, students must adopt school culture. School culture is a projection of far broader cultural spheres - culture of the nation, of the dominant social groups, of the local sphere... Some elements of this culture are universal for all schools and the overwhelming majority of students who have enrolled at school in the course of several years. Others are specific to every year (class), and change with the new arrivals.

School culture is not necessarily close to the culture of children. For instance, in a study on the problems of children of immigrants in France - Arabs, Africans, Latin Americans and others - Vasquez singles out a series of indicators of their difficult adaptation at school: they are frequently late; they take longer to join in and complete the activities defined by the teacher; they often fail their classmates in teamwork since they are slow, inert, etc. These children's criteria of speed prove to be different from the French ones, so they cannot understand why they are always last in everything. They blame the latter on discrimination, but the reasons are actually different: conflict of cultures.

3. ESSENCE OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

3.1. PRIME OBJECTIVES

The Council of Europe formulates the premises of intercultural education in four points: (1)

The European countries have become multicultural; (2) The specificity of every culture is worthy of respect; (3) Multiculturalism is an opportunity for cultural wealth; (4) Building a community is possible only if there is mutual acquaintance (integration and specific communication) of all cultures, while preserving the specificty of each one. The main objectives of school education are based on these premises. Intercultural education has set out to develop or attain the following:

1. Opening up of the school to the problems of life, the world, the people (in their interdependence).

2. Adequate assessment of the different cultures - values, way of life and behaviour, etc., irrespective of whether they are or are not represented at the particular local level. Presentation of the variation and differences in cultures as reciprocal enrichment.

3. Attainment of social, political, economic and educational justice.

4. Presentation of the values and relations that make people unique. Development of the cognitive, motivational and behavioural basis for personal ego -, socio- , ethno-centric security.

5. Acceptance of and respect for cultural differences. Transformation of the images and notions typical of the different cultures - a basis for relations and behaviour.

6. Transformation of authoritative relations and achievement of equality for those who are oppressed because of their culture, view of the world and behaviour.

7. Better acquaintance with the cultures, social classes, order, school discipline, educational objectives, etc., which are the common property of all people.

8. Development of communication between individuals, groups, societies, for the purpose of making this communication more positive and beneficial to all (Tabouret-Keller 1994).

9. Instruction in an intercultural spirit - rather than domination of one culture over another - mutual exchange of values, rejection of nationalism, ethnocentrism, separatism. Understanding and respect for the unique ethnic and cultural heritage.

10. Acquisition of knowledge, attitudes, skills for cooperation, empathy and solidarity - a capacity to accept and understand the Other, building a more human world (Baptiste 1995).

3.2. MAIN TASKS

The main tasks of intercultural education are:

1. Improvement of the effectiveness of the school network for the purpose of covering children of migrants and minorities.

2. Maintenance and enhancement of basic social skills (mainly language) - knowledge of the written and spoken language. Publication of school newspapers about the different cultures; about the other countries; correspondence with foreign and non-foreign children; theatre; focus on the language on the part of teachers - verbal and written expression, regardless of the particular subject.

3. Blunting the edge of social conflicts on school territory. Improvement of sociability - acceptance of the others as a result of self-knowledge and self-acceptance; reaching harmony with oneself and with the others; higher tolerance at school and in the neighbourhood. This could be done in various ways: musical groups, theatre, tales (alien cultures). Music is particularly important, since modern rock music blends many cultures (Afro-American, Islamic, Asian Pacific, etc.).

4. Studies on school policies - the purpose is to study the experience of the other countries in Europe with similar problems (minorities distributed unevenly across the country). Educational projects are adjusted to regional specificities, and special need-assessment scales should be created for the purpose.

5. Improvement of the quality of instruction at multiethnic schools. Intellectual and emotional integration with the middle class and the main ethnos. Overcoming the complex of "bad reputation" ("marginalization complex") of schools. Cultivating a sense of belonging to the middle class and of value.

6. Preparation of teachers, teaching materials, motivation, demonstration and training in effective educational practices. Main subjects: social identity; professional dimensions; introduction to the alien culture; family upbringing practices in the other ethnic communities; role and place of the educational administration.

7. Identification, assessment and analysis of the academic achievement of children with a different ethnic background, and definition of the specific local problems or vice versa, of the specific features of children from the particular ethnic communities as a factor for success of any ethnos. Foreign cultures are one form of differentiated treatment of the individual deficiencies of students (academic, behavioural, social and ethnic). The minorities are regarded as small groups of students with deficiencies, who need constant support from the others and specific help to cope with their individual problems.

3.3. CONTENT OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

There is no essential difference between intercultural education and education in human rights. This principle is vested in the Helsinki Document (1992) of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which stipulates that the participating States "[w]ill consider developing programmes to create the conditions for promoting non-discrimination and cross-cultural understanding which will focus on human rights education" [Chapter VI (34)]. Introduction of human rights education is discussed in a series of documents which recommend or regulate curricula, organization of groups, strategies, etc.

3.4. VALUES OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

Intercultural education has several compulsory ethical values (aspects):

1. Peace and rejection of war - brotherhood among peoples.

2. Rejection of political demagoguery, fascism, racism, nationalism.

3. Equality and rejection of inequality - recognition of the equal rights of all people on Earth.

4. Empathy - development of human sensitivity, understanding the others, compassion for and empathy with the feelings of the others.

5. Solidarity - contribution to the building of a more humane society.

6. Respect - non-violence against human nature, concern and respect for the culture of "the others," respectively of immigrants, with special attention to their ethno-linguistic problems.

7. Strategy of communication in the spirit of tolerance, ruling out segregation.

3.5. AREAS OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

There are several areas of intercultural education:

Linguistic. The main problem is that of bi- and plurilingualism, especially in the case of children of school age. As well as the national language and the opportunity for international integration (foreign language teaching).

Artistic. Appreciation of foreign arts based on different aesthetic criteria (African, Asian, Muslim, etc.).

Ideological. The main problem is freedom of value influence, access to different, typical values of the children's respective ethnos, as well as understanding of this specificity by the others.

Historical. Overcoming national parochialism and narrow-mindedness.

Political. Giving students a clear idea of the contemporary democratic system which does not discriminate against people on the basis of different criteria. Understanding the consequences of that (immigration, migration, etc.).

Economic. Understanding the relation between democracy-pluralism-market-freedom.

Social. Developing the ideas of differentiation and community of life, ethnic groups, classes, strata; interconnection, diversity of relations, equality, impossibility of upsetting social harmony through social engineering.

Ethical. Inadmissibility of discrimination in any sphere of public life. Observance of human rights. Humanism tolerance, etc.

3.6. ASPECTS OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

Inretcultural education has four main aspects:

1. Education of minorities. The purpose is their integration into society, reciprocal acquaintance and enrichment in regard to the majority.

2. Education of foreigners and immigrants. Education of foreigners who want to learn the culture and language of the majority. Protection of their ethnic culture.

3. Preparing people for integration into other cultures (emigration), with dual identification treated as a positive personal quality (s/he has become American, but has remained a Pole...). Study of foreign languages and cultures.

4. Intercultural education is also inter-generational, since the different generations in society practically have different cultural backgrounds and live in different cultural niches.

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