Modern strategies for teaching-learning of intercultural education

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Abstract:
The intercultural education represents one of the most important educational dimensions available in a contemporary society. Its main objectives are to prepare people to become more tolerant with other values and, also, to be ready for an effective solving of every kind of conflicts between cultures or populations. In this sense, school becomes the main institution able to form at their pupils an intercultural attitude starting with earlier ages. Therefore, in the following paper, we intend to describe some interactive strategies which can be used by professors to teach intercultural education, as a distinct scholar discipline, or as a content of other ones.
Keywords: intercultural education, values, cultures, interactive didactic strategies, teaching and learning.

By its structure, content and aims, education has mission to answer at new challenges of contemporary world, which in the last few years became more and more consistent. The increasing of informational luggage, demographic explosion (which in a few countries imposed some drastic acts to limit this phenomenon), technical-scientific revolution, economical development, pollution or increasing of free-time, oblige the society to redefine its own values and, by consequence, the role of education for accomplishing them. In this sense, some dimensions of educational phenomenon – which not so long time ago were intangible – are now really insufficient in front of new changes of society. It becomes necessarily to create a new

educational design, which includes dimensions such as: education for peace, education for respecting fundamental human rights, education for environment, economical education, an education for health, education for changes, demographic education, intercultural education, an education for spending free-time, education for life quality and so on. Of course, the whole society must accomplish these new dimensions of educations, but school – by their mission – extra-more. It can achieve these noble aims by introducing of new scholar disciplines in different curricular areas, or simply, by "infusion" of some didactic messages from new dimensions of educations into traditional curriculum (Marinescu, 2009).

The major transformations which are characteristics for contemporary society make daily life too dynamic, which means a very quickly movements of peoples, ideas or values from a community to other one, or, sometimes, into the same community. In this conditions, the passing of human beings from a culture to other suppose the passing from an "old" axiological system (promoted into "home" society) to a "new" one (used in the community in which person is just coming). This transition could be sometimes a very difficult process, if not exist any common points between those different cultures and this phenomenon will become stronger when the difference between them are obviously. We intend to define the culture of one community as an ensemble of values (moral, civic, spiritual, religious, professional ones and so on) which are constituted by a historical background and lead a society to a certain moment (Blândul, 2005).

In such conditions, by culture of one community we did not refer at only that values which damage a population who lives on a more or less well-determinate geographic area, but also at values of every historical human group, who has common aims and activities and whose life-together are regulate by precise norms. Therefore, we can talk about culture of national, spiritual, ethnic or sexual community and also about culture of every group in which their members have the same characteristics (for instance, persons with disabilities, so on). Starting with that huge diversity of human race, it becomes absolutely necessary that every person to be multicultural trained such as to be ready to adapt at every cultural values.

That are just a few reasons for which is compulsory that in schools pupils to be trained in the following directions (Cucoş, 2006):

☺   communicative aptitude (listen and talk);

☺ group cooperation and trust;
☺ respect by own person and for the others;
☺ assumption of own responsibility and for the others;
☺ control of own feelings and effective management of conflicts.

So, we can define intercultural education as a form of education for all, in spirit of recognition of difference which appear into the same community, but also of respect for the others and for him. A person who is open by intercultural viewpoint will accept the diversity as how it is and will accept that people can be (and it's normal to be) different, without to hostile one other from this reason. In this context, we can use some associate concept, such as "tolerance" which means that people can detach the problems of diversity, considering that every culture could have a certain place. Recently, the concept was replaced into "acceptance", which insists by involvement which people must prove and also, by their contribution regarding to interpenetration of different culture and closing their common values (Cucoş, 2006).

During the history, the problem of interculturality had different approaches, function of politic, historic, social or economic context. There were some periods in which the intolerance, racial hate or xenophobia led the society and, unfortunately, in some places from world, this kind of attitude is still persisting. The main argument for closing in mono-cultural system is "undermining" of group identity by penetration on its culture of other foreign values with negative impact for majority. The reasons which stay on the base of numerous doctrines could be accepted only if we agree that values which belong to other culture have an aggressive and negative impact for majority and that fact is not always correct. By contrary, the intercultural education has no undo the cultural identity of any community, but it has valuate that, promoting those values which can bring together different culture and make peoples to accept to one other.

So, it is very important that intercultural education (Blândul, 2005):
→ to effective solve different conflicts between peoples;
→ to encourage critical reflection and acceptance of different opinions;
→ to develop moral, civic and cultural autonomy of every person.

The accelerate rhythm of daily life obliges people to a permanent "movement". The migration of population, economic and

cultural relationships and exchanges, politic activity and so on, determinate an intercultural adaptation continues a majority and minority as well, no matter what it's about them. Therefore, it is absolutely need to be developed an intercultural spirit of pupils as soon as possible. The intercultural system must promote some values like: democracy, human rights defense, social justice, tolerance / acceptance, equality between people, peace and good cooperation between populations, cultural traditions, ecologic equilibrium and so on. The modalities by which school can promote this kind of values are various and can include, for examples, policy management of school, or didactic strategies used in classes. From first category, we can mention the introduction in scholar curriculum a different disciplines such as: foreign languages, history of different countries and populations, civic and cultural education and so on. From didactic strategies, professors can use cooperative learning or methods for development of critical thinking, to form for their pupils of team-spirit, the capacity to accept diversity, to make judgments based on pertinent arguments, reciprocal respect and so on. It's still very important that pupils understand those cultural and moral values are not binary, antithetic, but contrary, they are complementary to each other. So, if some values which are promoted by a culture are not find themselves in other one, no means that they are superior or inferior. The most important is that every person have access at them, to understand their really signification and only after that to make judgments using rational reasons.

To accomplish that mentioned aims, C. Cucoş (2006) recommends some suggestions very useful for Romanian learning system:

- increasing of cultural and educational autonomy of schools;
- prevention of segregation in learning system taught in minority languages;
- elaborating of some didactic objectives focused on self-education and self-instruction;
- creating an intercultural trends for content of different scholar disciplines;
- using some tiny and intercultural opened didactic strategies.

In the following paragraphs, we intend to describe a few didactic strategies which can be used in teaching and learning of intercultural education (Blândul, 2010):

Jigsaw Method
Objective: pupils will be able to learn into a small group a long and complex content.
Method:
- at the beginning, professor will form a few small "home-groups", in everyone, all pupils will receive a number (1, 2, 3, 4 …);
- professor will divide the text which have to be learned in how many parts is need for every pupils from each "home-group";
- pupils will for another "expert-groups"; those with no.1 – one group, no.2 – other group and so forth;
- pupils from every "expert-groups" will learn the received part of initial text, they will discuss it and at the end they will be able to teach it to all their colleagues from "home-group";
- every pupils will come back in their "home-group" and will teach for their colleagues the part of material in which they became "experts";
- at the end of activity, all pupils will be well-prepared in one part of learned content and they will have some basic knowledge for the rest of material.

     This method can be successful used when professors intend to teach much information about a culture, country or population.

The Cube
Objective: pupils will be able to analyze a subject from different point of view.
Method:
- pupils should read a text or solve a task;
- working individual, in a peer or in a small groups, (not more than 4-5 persons) pupils have to make a CUBE according with following instructions (see Table 1):

Table 1 *Process and instructions used in CUNE method*

No.	Cognitive process	Task
1	Describe	How is it? What is happen?
2	Compare	With how is look like? With how is different?
3	Associate	What do you think about it?
4	Analyze	Which are its structure / constitutive elements?
5	Apply	How it can be used?
6	Evaluate	Are you agree or not with it?

This method can be used when professors intend to analyze and compare a cultures from their strong /weakness elements.

Venn Diagrams
Objective: pupils will be able to identify the similitude or differences between two or more elements.
Method:
- everypupils will draw two circles which are intersect themselves;
- professor will present those two elements which have to be compare and then, working individual or in a small groups, pupils will mark in intersection the common characteristics for those elements and in the rest space of every circles, the specific characteristics for both elements;
- every group will have a rapporteur who will present the results of work in front of entire class.

This method can be successful used when professors intend to compare between them different cultures.

As a conclusion, the intercultural education represents one of the most important educational dimensions in contemporary society. It could be a possible solution for solving actual problems, which become more and more complex. In this sense, the school represents the main factor which can contribute to develop a multicultural attitude of their pupils and generally speaking, of whole society. Starting of today, the school can prepare tomorrow's world, a society which must be more tolerant and opened for every cultural problem.

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