

THE PEDAGOGICAL ACCESS ON INTERCULTURALISM AS A METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGE IN EDUCATION

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Abstract: *The pedagogical Pluralism and interculturalism in education are defined as pedagogical relations of the differences (knowledge, understanding, respect). Certainly this is the basis which prepares the individual for inclusion in the new social changes by transferring knowledge and developing specific skills (ability to communicate and develop interpersonal and intercommunal relations, critical thinking in relation to identity specifics). Regardless of the methods of working with children, the prospects of interculturalism in education implies that at some point will face model where they lived with models of other cultural backgrounds.*

Keywords: *The pedagogical pluralism, interculturalism, education, communication skills.*

Introduction: Attempts to find appropriate models by which multicultural societies can restructure having cultural pluralism as the base, they developed the idea that such changes are needed for reorientation to directed education even in the early years of education. The result of these trends is the idea of interculturalism in education.²The basic aim of interculturalism in education is that the younger generation to become aware of their cultural identity, as well as tolerance for differences, to develop specific sense of belonging to society, but also the awareness that they belong to several communities, to mankind entirely. On behalf of interculturalism in education is expected to solve many problems of coexistence between different groups, develop national

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²**Syntagms***multicultural society and interculturalism in education* are used by Perotti, A. (1995): *A plea for intercultural education*, Educa, Zagreb, 9.

consciousness about their identity, culture, language, religion, gender, race, and mutual understanding and respect for differences.

The objectives and goals of intercultural education

Interculturalism in education is a vast space, so far based on normative and speculative definitions, and sometimes it becomes hardly accessible and very provocative. In this context, it would be superfluous, accepting some methodological possibilities, to put under the magnifying glass durability multitude of ideas that occurred in this area and the various possibilities for their realization. The answer to this challenge can focus on the conceptual definition of the phenomenon underlying the multicultural education, on the culture that can be investigated, operationally establishing the variables accessible to observation and measurement.

This is an initial methodological challenge because from a notion that is assigned dozens of meanings, the most appropriate pmr should be selected for the research of this phenomenon, even its epistemological determination.³ In the scientific literature are presented scientific attempts to develop this problem, but most remained at the conceptual level, so during the investigation were some who suggested that this complex phenomenon should be defined partially.

Whatever the problems in the field of interculturalism in education because of imprecise definition of the forms of appearance, there are a large number of researches dealing with this theme, but there are few those derived from existing condition and well designed methodology.⁴ Each research should start from detailed knowledge of the area in question, and when it defines what is known, it can clarify and complete what is not known. Then we can define the problem and develop access for research and methodology on the issue.

The researches in the field of interculturalism social phenomena are often present irregularities. Such research is sometimes the consequence of disregarding improper purpose and methodology of the research, but also to methodological limitations arising from the intention to only use methodology

³ Fletcher, T.V., Darrell, L. S. (1995): *Focus on National Context in Academic Achievement: Interaction Effect in Cross-national Studies in Achievement*. in: *Comparative Education review*, nr. 4 (39), 455-467.

⁴ Fulgosi, A. and others.(1987): *Children of Workers Living Abroad and their Peers in the Native Country; Cognitive and Personalitic Characteristic*, *Journal of Psychology*, vol.17,19-36.

based on qualitative and directed towards obtaining scientific data available. The insistence to the application of that methodology leads to narrowing of the problem, considering that through it can not be investigated more problems arising in the humanities, especially in social interactions, so this methodology becomes an obstacle instead of being the basis of scientific development.⁵

Because of the danger to not deflect *quasi-research*, they can direct you to other extreme, almost *larpurlartism*, and become *research because of research*. With such a methodology it is possible by measurements, with a subtle statistical processing, to carry out research that does not result in new scientific knowledge and contributions, but confirms what is already found or comminuted problems regardless of the overall concept. The complicated statistical treatment, in which many factors are present, acts so convincingly that some elementary mistakes which put in question the final conclusions are not seen, and which could be achieved through more simple ways.

As an example that illustrates this observation, can serve testing of different cultural groups belonging, differing from educational and socio-economic aspect. The statistical processing of the obtained data will always show differences in favor of those living in more favorable cultural backgrounds. Researching the intellectual development and the academic level of some minority groups, Triandis di Beri indicates the danger of cultural subjectivity tests, posture towards the success of the tests, cognitive and social stimulation, the results, which should be considered when interpreting the results.⁶ Naturally the interpretation of these data is the primary benchmarking of the groups from which they were obtained, especially after difference in curriculum that teaches children and parents towards education. Flecer, Dareli⁷ and Ogbu⁸ talk about these benefits referring to the conclusion that the tests must meet the difference between different groups.

New trends in the development of research methodology in the social field especially when it comes to multiculturalism in education go to reaffirm its moderate quantitative methodology and advancement, because it has been observed that by implementation can be investigated more issues. The basic concept is that the methodology is not an end in itself and should not be

⁵ Robinson, V (1993): *Problem Based Methodology*. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 42.

⁶ Triandis, H.C., Berry, J.W. (1980): *Handbook of Cross-Cultural psychology*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 16-18.

⁷ Fletcher, T.V., Darreli, L. S. (1995): *Focus on National Context in Academic Achievement: Interaction Effect in Cross-national Studies in Achievement*. in: *Comparative Education review*, nr.4 (39), p. 455-467.

⁸ Ogbu, J. U. (1994): *Ispitivanje ljudske inteligencije: kulturno-ekološki pristup*. Napredak, nr. 2 (135), 141-153.

limiting factor in selecting who will investigate the problem.⁹The research of multiculturalism phenomenon should not subordinate the selection of the methodology problems, since no methodology is one that will determine who will investigate the problem, but will investigate issues that will determine the methodology to be applied.

The next challenge methodological is directed towards researching the factors underlying the development of different forms of culture and their mutual influence, and the consequences that arise, something difficult to achieve due to variability of the research object and the difficulty of generalizing and the discovery of new legality. This is one of the possible reasons that practical achievements related to the idea of interculturalism in education level are only hypotheses, which can not be reason for them to not be verified through practice and corrected later.

Since in the idea of interculturalism in education is inserted the social interaction, the research of this phenomenon are more applicable methods based on humanistic paradigms than those based on rigid paradigms of scientific research.¹⁰This is a reason why serious development and application of methodological procedures that allow sufficiently well defined phenomena research by applying qualitative research. These two methods of investigation are inclined to different epistemological foundations and as a result many differences between them arise.¹¹Sometimes there are in science debates about qualitative and quantitative research paradigms in the field of multiculturalism in education, and first dilemma occurs in the research problem. While research based on scientific paradigms are directed towards generalizations, wider knowledge, humanity-based research paradigms frames controlled ideographic access towards solving Individual practical problems. However, permanent dilemma is present as well as how one could perform generalization in the humanistic oriented research and with what dose of safety? Further, it can be said that the directed scientific research go to quantitative access of the research problems and application of the empirical-analytical procedures, while humanistically oriented research go to qualitative access and application of hermeneutic procedures, so, as said, in scientific research methodology quantitative methods are applied, while in humanistical research methodology

⁹Robinson, V (1993): *Problem Based Methodology*, 47-49.

¹⁰ Keeves, J.P. (1988): *Educational Research, Methodology, and Measurement: An International Handbook*. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 2.

¹¹Ibid ...17.

qualitative methods are applied.¹²For this reason in quantitative research focus is on data numerical marking, while in qualitative on attributive marking, becoming apparent that the quantitative research methods applied in research are more suitable in static appearances research, while for the qualitative the dynamic ones. The results obtained by qualitative research must be done using instruments that have good material base, while the application of quantitative research can be used and the results obtained by ad hoc observations.

The difference between these two research models is significant and the role and location of research and research participants. While in quantitative research respondents serve only to obtain some data, whether there are no information for purpose of research in qualitative studies are often treated like they are contributing and participating in their design and implementation. These differences are also reflected on generalizations which can be reached through research based on humanistic and scientific paradigms, and until scientific hypothesis is verified and accepted by a dose of safety during investigations, the humanistic one ends with a hypothesis, conjecture about solving possible practical problems.¹³

For the development of interculturalism in education it is very important quantitative and qualitative synthesis accesses over the research, because much of what happens in this area lies in compulsory documents and practice without the possibility of applying previous check. Certainly the question arises: how to ensure this synthesis and its realization under following theses:

- by quantitative and qualitative connectivity methods and their parallel use;
- by connecting multiple data about the same appearance;
- by integrating qualitative and quantitative techniques for data collection;
- a qualitative quantitative data transformation and vice versa.

To achieve this synthesis, appearances to the phenomenon of interculturalism in education should be investigated during the dynamic change with a logical explanation. Whenever possible, be investigated in natural situations presented with accurate data, thus making subjective and objective synthesis access.¹⁴

¹² Reichardt, C. S. Cook, T.D. (1979): *Beyond Qualitative Versus Quantitative Methods*,y: Cook, T.D. and Reichardt, C.S. (Eds): *Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Evaluation Research*. London: Sage, 9-30.

¹³ Göncz, L. (1988): *Kako postati i ostati dvokulturalan i dvojezičan uz pomoć škole u migrantskoj situaciji*, Primijenjena psihologija, nr. 1-2 (9), 113-120.

¹⁴ Ogbua, op.cit...139.

Conclusion

Interdisciplinary interculturalism as a basis for access to interdisciplinary research in education and training is not only a pedagogical but also a space problem that meet multiple disciplines, because it is also a psychological and sociological phenomenon that requires a scientific access and its development. The area of interculturalism in education puts the researchers in front of many methodological challenges, and one of them is developing tests relieved of cultural influences, and the real challenge presents the human action research in social context, in order to achieve cultural pluralism ideas through interculturalism in education.

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