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## The Dialogue of Cultures in the Aspect of Multicultural Education (Russian Approach)

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### Abstract

The article is devoted to the problem of the dialogue of cultures in multicultural education according to the Russian approach. The role of the dialogue of cultures in multicultural education is discussed. Dialogue of cultures is considered as a basis of the concept of multicultural education. The concept “multicultural education” is considered as access to education by representatives of different ethnic groups and is increasingly used in the meaning of “multi-ethnic”. Thus, the multicultural educational system must take into account the diversity of ethnic cultures, the dialogical relationship of national and universal values. It is concluded that multicultural education based on dialogue of cultures is aimed at finding a balance between ethno-cultural diversity and social ties, at preserving and promoting the diversity of ethnic and cultural values, norms, patterns and forms of activity prevailing in the society, and at transferring this heritage to younger generations.

**Keywords:** culture, cultural diversity, dialogue of cultures, multicultural education, multicultural society.



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## Introduction

Relevance of the topic chosen is due to ever-increasing change in the nature of education. Occurring in Europe and the CIS integration and differentiation processes set before modern pedagogical science and practice the task of creating conditions for the training of new generations to live in an open multicultural society, collaborate and interact.

The scientific literature indicates the need to pay special attention to multicultural education, promoting students' basic and special knowledge about the traditions, lifestyles, cultural values of peoples, educating young people to respect other cultural systems. That's why the objective of this paper is to consider the role and basic features of dialogue of cultures in the multicultural education through descriptive design and observational method.

Dialogue concept of culture, with its fundamental idea of the universality of the dialogue as the basis of human consciousness has had a tremendous impact on the formation of the idea of multicultural education. The idea of dialogue as a means of human communication was proposed by Socrates and was seen as a method of obtaining knowledge. Theme of the dialogue of cultures first emerged in the early twentieth century.

It was developed by M. Bakhtin, M. Buber, S. Frank. Thus, S. Frank proceeded from the fact that "Me" does not exist till a meeting with "You", till a relationship with "You". In this relationship of "Me" and "You" the researcher saw the essence of human life [Frank, 1992].

M. Buber also determined the dialogue as an ontological relationship, which opens a special condition of human existence [Buber, 1993]. Later, the dialogue of cultures was studied by V. Bibler. In the mind of people the theory has remained as the dialogue conception of culture of M. Bakhtin–V. Bibler.

Indeed, the culture as an anthropological phenomenon (the dialogue concept of culture of Bakhtin - Bibler) serves as a methodological basis of the theory of multicultural education. It is known that M. Bakhtin was the first to transfer the concept "dialogue" from the literary genre to philosophical category [Bakhtin, 1993].

M. Bakhtin's ideas about cultural perception of human being, about anthropological character of culture are important for understanding the essence of multicultural education. Understanding of culture in the conception of M. Bakhtin has 3 aspects:

- Culture is a form of simultaneous being and communication between people of different - past, present and future - cultures, a form of dialogue and mutual procreation of these cultures;
- Culture is a form of self-determination of an individual in the horizon of personality, that is to say a culture is a form of free decision and re-decision of its own destiny in the consciousness of its historical and general liability;
- Culture is "the invention of the world for the first time" [Bakhtin, 1994: 447-478].

Thus, the culture exists as communication, as the dialogue of people of different cultures, as a form of free choice of life sense and responsibility by an individual, as creativity.

The concept "other" was the key to the philosophy of M. Bakhtin, as a person becomes a person and knows himself as such only by reference to the "other". The "other" of M. Bakhtin is not only a man but also a personality, within whom, in his mind, there are many different positions.

Dialogue within the individual mind is the dialogue of different cultures, the development of an individual and society is impossible without it. Cultural pluralism reflects multifaceted and contradictory nature of social reality. Cultural diversity of the world needs unity, indicating a need of one culture for another. In such a dialogic meeting of two cultures, they do not merge and do not mix, each retains its unity and open integrity, but they mutually enrich each other.

To understanding of the phenomenon of dialogue between cultures contribute philosophical and logical ideas of V. Bibler. So, V. Bibler believed that culture is "a space of many spaces", and "inside of each culture - art, philosophy, morality, theory" [Bibler, 1991: 284]. When determining the concept emphasis was made on considering it as a form of simultaneous being and communication between people of different cultures. It was emphasized also that the "communication of cultures as individuals, capable of infinite actualization, the very definition of culture implies communication of different minds, that is, communication across the chasm of complete misunderstanding to true understanding" [Bibler, 1991: 286].

V. Bibler suggested such understanding of the dialogue in which all philosophical and cultural systems are not rejected, but co-exist and interact. According to the concept of the philosopher, every subject of culture must feel incompleteness of being in front of an endless variety of the world culture. In such circumstances the only reasonable and at the same time moral way of genuine unity of different cultures can be recognized only as the dialogue between them.

In understanding of the dialogic school of Bibler, culture is acquired in interpersonal relationships and includes value, sign, and institutional components. According to V. Bibler, in our time "even spiritual spectra of different forms of culture are pulled together in a single cultural space, in one mind and thinking. They require from a person not a clear choice, but the constant spiritual conjugation, intertransition, deep dispute in the midst of some constant points of surprise and "eternal questions of life". And in this - in the dialogue of different cultural meanings of life - the essence of contemporary concept, the logic of modern thought" [Bibler, 1993: 123].

And, in his opinion, "... culture is capable to live and develop just on the verge of cultures, simultaneously, in dialogue with other holistic, going beyond their limits, cultures" [Bibler, 1989: 33]. V.S. Bibler argues that the only reasonable and yet the moral way of genuine unification of different cultures can be recognized only dialogue between them.

Entering the dialogue of cultures, a man not only expands his horizons, but pushes the boundaries of his world view. Neither situations of intercultural communication, no phenomenon of another culture is perceived by him impartially. They are evaluated through the prism of linguocultural norms and values of his society. In the conditions of intercultural interaction the relations are formed in "cultural system at the moment of going beyond the boundaries of the system" [Galskova, 2004: 4].

This means that, using his socio-cultural experience and national-cultural traditions and habits, a subject of dialogue of cultures tries to consider at the same time not only another language code, but also other customs and habits, and other norms of social behavior, while recognizing the fact of their foreignness.

An important philosophical-cultural basis of multicultural education is the thesis of cultural pluralism, intended to reflect the multifaceted and contradictory nature of social reality. Dialogue, recognized as a fundamental principle of vital activity of cultures, indicates a substantial need of one culture for another. Staunch supporter of the "culture of multi-ton" M. Bakhtin wrote: "We ask foreign culture new questions which it did not ask itself, we search answers to these questions in it, and foreign culture responds us, opening up its new sides, new depths ..." [Bakhtin, 1993: 43].

Thus, the dialogue is regarded by scientists as a fundamental principle of culture existence. The creators of the dialogic conception present culture as the communication process in which the translation of spiritual values is realized (especially moral and aesthetic). In the basis of culture, understood as communication, lies a dialogue - an elementary part of culture.

Indeed, first the problem of multicultural education was limited to the problem of a national school, but currently there is a problem of school of human culture and effective dialogue between cultures of a wide spectrum. V. Tsaturov's view of it is interesting in this context. He separates the traditional philosophical and pedagogical paradigm that can be built on a mono-ethnic culture, and humanistic (free), which basically refers to self-realization on the basis of absolute human values and may depart from the ethnic culture. V. Tsaturov offers ethno-humanistic paradigm based on the fundamental principle of a combination of ethnic, multicultural traditions and world culture in translating of cultural and historical experience [Tsaturov, 2000].

V. Makayev's point of view deserves our attention as well. He sees the main purpose of multicultural education in "creation of the conditions for becoming a person capable of active and effective life in a multiethnic and multicultural environment, possessing a strong sense of understanding and respect for other cultures, ability to live in peace and harmony with people of different nationalities, races, beliefs" [Makayev, 1999: 6].

Individual belongs to multiple cultural layers. Everyone is intersection of many cultures, that is to say a man is multi-identical. "Multicultural Self"- this statement is an important principle of multiculturalism. In this context, a student is characterized as a carrier of several cultures; male or female, urban or rural, age, racial, ethnic, social, etc. Education creates possibility of understanding people who grew up in different time-space framework, different and even contradictory social, national, ethnic, and cultural systems.

However, all educational systems are rooted in certain sociocultural soil, which determines the cultural diversity of languages and mentalities. And so they are as diverse as the world generating them. This diversity creates a cultural and educational dynamics of mutual enrichment and development of cultures.

Seeing the real problem of the modern and quite possibly the problem of the future world in the "mental incompatibility" of men and nations, the predominance of centrifugal, isolating forces over integrating, unifying forces, B. Gershunsky distinguishes only two kinds

of attitudes to the "alien" truth, to the different outlook, different mentality - understanding or suppressing [Gershunsky, 1998].

For multicultural education the first type of relationships, that involve mental interaction of mind, tolerance, compassion, kindness, altruism, in some respects noble sacrifice, is important. Knowledge of mentality, mental values and priorities of other nations, especially in multinational countries is important as well.

Therefore, in Russia, according to the objective and subjective reasons, in the focus of multicultural education - access to education by representatives of different ethnic groups. The problem of ethnic multiculturalism is solved differently depending on the specific geographical area of Russia.

Traditionally, the question of multicultural education occurs in regions where there are large ethnic groups. Separate ethnic schools or classes are usually created there. Thus, in our country the semantic field of the term "multicultural education" does not include representatives of other cultural groups (social, gender, etc.), as it happens in the western world, and the term "multicultural education" is increasingly used in the meaning of "multi-ethnic."

In modern conditions the interaction of cultures is characterized primarily by the fact that the universal features help to realize the objective value of "own" culture, to reveal new features and forecast its development. In the process of cultural interaction increases the amount of perceived values, consequently, the very nature of perception changes.

It takes more "vigilance", the ability to reflect the properties of the object in the entire complexity, depth. Isolation, desire for restraint may contribute to gradual degradation of culture. The idea of dialogue of cultures, the underlying concept of multicultural education, allows us to consider the same phenomenon from different perspectives and argue according to a comparative analysis of the "general" and "partial" in their dialectical unity.

Thus, the educational system must take into account the diversity of cultures, the dialogical relationship of national and universal values and not isolate itself from society in its uniqueness. It should aim to preserve and promote the diversity of ethnic and cultural values, norms, patterns and forms of activity prevailing in the society, and to transfer this heritage to younger generations. Cultural pattern as a system of different values and cultural samples is unified not by its unitarity but by multiplicity and variety of its elements, which have a right to exist within it.

## **Conclusion**

Therefore, we can conclude that the principle of dialogue of cultures is the main idea of multicultural education. It implies that culture is most fully realized only if there is interaction, dialogue of different cultures, when features of each culture become visible and comprehensible.

Thus, multicultural education based on dialogue of cultures is aimed at finding a balance between ethno-cultural diversity and social ties, at preserving and promoting the diversity of ethnic and cultural values, norms, patterns and forms of activity prevailing in the society, and at transferring this heritage to younger generations.

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