

Multicultural Education in the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan: General Trends and National Peculiarities

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study consists in the comparative analysis of the theory and practice of multicultural education in the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan. The work is performed within the scope of comparative educational research methodology. Main attention is paid to the comparative analysis of the legal framework and concepts of multicultural education, as well as to the content of multicultural education in higher education institutions. The article identifies and describes the general trends and national peculiarities of multicultural education in the partner countries. Both in Russia and in Kazakhstan, the multicultural education refers to a relatively new field of pedagogical knowledge and is an alternative to international education. In contrast to the Western tradition, the Russian and Kazakh pedagogical theory and practice consider multicultural education mainly in the context of ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity of modern society. The authors relate the further prospects of the development of multicultural education in the partner countries to the activation of the state's policy in this area, implementation of an appropriate pedagogical education, improvement of the theoretical foundations of multicultural education and provision of technological support for teachers in correspondence with changing socio-cultural concepts. The research results are of interest to a wide range of experts in the field of education, and extend the possibility to assess the development of education systems in Russia and Kazakhstan.

KEYWORDS

Multicultural Education, Comparative Education,
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Introduction

Active cooperation between Russia and Kazakhstan in the field of education, particularly in higher education within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization University (SCO University) determines the need for comparative educational research. The pride of place goes to the identification of common trends and national peculiarities, analysis of the priority directions of education development in the partner countries and the search for effective solutions to important problems, including the issues related to the education in a multicultural society. The education system of the Russian Federation, as well

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as the one of Kazakhstan, has to deal with a complex, ethnically diverse, culturally and mentally heterogeneous contingent of students. There are many challenges for the education systems of both countries: to promote tolerance and social cohesion, improve the academic performance of students under conditions of linguistic and ethnic diversity, etc.

In many countries, the problem of training and education in the context of cultural diversity is associated today with multicultural education. The concepts are based on the ideology and policy of multiculturalism that recognizes the value of cultural pluralism, the relevance and importance of diversity and a variety of cultures.

The development of multicultural education is an urgent task for the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the breakdown of the idea of a "new historical community: the Soviet people" enhanced the processes of ethnic and cultural self-identification and caused the increase of ethnic, religious and linguistic challenges in emerging states.

Problems of education in a multicultural society are subject to numerous psychological and educational research works in many countries of the modern world.

Multicultural education is presented as an essential component of general education. The main tasks are the preparation of the younger generation for living in a multicultural environment and providing representatives of different cultural groups with equal educational opportunities (Banks, 2013; Dzhurinskiy, 2008; Ghosh, 1996; Gollnick & Chinn, 1998; Ramsey, 2014; Suprunova & Sviridchenko, 2013).

Both in Russian pedagogical science and in Kazakh there is a significant amount of research works on various aspects of multicultural education, for example problems of its implementation in the framework of the national education systems (Basharuly, 2002; Gukalenko, 2003; Nadyrmagambetova, 2011; Bessarabova, 2012; Zhanar et al, 2013; Kozhakhmetova, 2015, etc). Some studies raised questions about peculiarities of personal development in multicultural environment (Batarchuk, 2012; Ezhova, 2010).

At the same time, there is no binary study, which would give the possibility of analyzing in comparative perspective current problems of the theory and practice of multicultural education in the partner countries.

Research Goals

The goals of the research are the following:

- to identify general trends in the development of multicultural education theory and practice in Russia and Kazakhstan;
- to discover national peculiarities in multicultural education theory and practice in Russia and Kazakhstan;
- to compare pre-service teacher training for professional activity in culturally diverse educational environment in Russia and Kazakhstan.

This binary study carried out by an international team of authors makes it possible to deeper understand the phenomenon of multicultural education and better define the common and specific processes in the national educational tradition.

Methodological Framework

The study was performed in the framework of the comparative education methodology (Vulfson, 2002; Bray et al, 2014) and is a binary, problematic comparison of multicultural education in the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan. The study includes a comparative analysis of the current regulatory and legal acts, national educational standards, research works and teaching aids on multicultural education.

Results and Discussion

Normative and Legal Bases of Multicultural Education

Comparative analysis of the legal framework of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan in the field of education shows that there have been no laws adopted so far which would provide for the mandatory implementation of multicultural education.

At the same time, certain provisions of the Federal Law "On Education in the Russian Federation" (2012), the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Education" (2007), The National Doctrine of Education in the Russian Federation (2000), the Strategy of education development in the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025, the Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan of June 29, 2011 No. 110 "On the State program of functioning and development of languages in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020" and a number of other documents correspond to certain goals and objectives of multicultural education.

For example, the Federal Law "On Education in the Russian Federation" considers the protection and development of ethnic and cultural peculiarities and traditions of the peoples of the Russian Federation in a multinational state as one of the most important principles (Federal Law, 29.12.2012). Among the basic principles of state policy in the sphere of education there are the following: "to ensure the right of everyone to education, prohibition of discrimination in education", "humanistic education, priority given to the human life and health, rights and freedoms, free development of personality, cultivation of mutual respect, work ethic, citizenship, patriotism and responsibility..."(Federal Law, 29.12.2012). Among the basic principles of state policy in the sphere of education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, there are: "secular, humanistic and developing education, priority of civil and national values, human life and health, free development of personality", "respect for human rights and freedoms" (Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 27.07.2007). The Kazakhstan Law "On Education" has specified objectives of the education system, among which there are the following: "introduction to the national and world culture; study of the history, customs and traditions of the Kazakhs and other peoples of the republic; learning the state language, Russian and foreign languages" (Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 27.07.2007). It is noted that secondary education

programs are aimed at the development of high culture of interpersonal and inter-ethnic communication" (Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 27.07.2007).

In the "National Doctrine of Education in the Russian Federation" (2000), the priority is given to national spiritual values in educational policy. Among the most important state objectives there are the following: "harmonization of national and ethnic-cultural relations, preservation and support of ethnic and national-cultural identity of the peoples of Russia and humanistic traditions of their cultures" (National Doctrine, 2000).

The partner countries are focused on language policy. In Kazakhstan, in the framework of the cultural projects such as "Trinity of languages", "Kazakhstan's way 2050", the State program of functioning and development of languages in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020, Messages of the President Nursultan Nazarbayev, the concept and strategy of multilingual education have been elaborated, and it is regarded as an effective tool for the preparation of the young generation for living in an interrelated and interdependent world.

An analysis of official sources and the modern scientific periodicals (Azimbayeva, 2016; Zhanar et al, 2013) shows the trend of education and the formation of personality in the context of the trinity of the Kazakh, Russian and English languages and cultures. The strong position of the Russian language in the country is historically conditioned, according to various sources, now 20 to 25% of the population in the country are the Russians (refer to Figure 1), and 75% of the ethnic Kazakhs speak Russian (Azimbayeva, 2016).

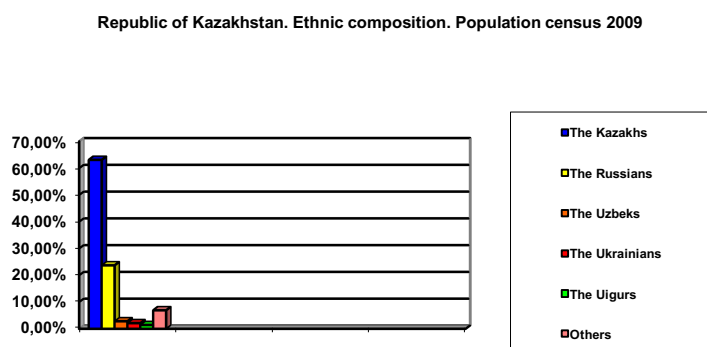


Figure 1: Ethnic composition of Kazakhstan

The opting for English is undoubtedly determined by the dominance of this language in the modern world. The knowledge of English is regarded as the important resource for professional growth of the citizens of Kazakhstan (Strategy "Kazakhstan – 2050").

Preserving linguistic diversity of Kazakhstan and creation of conditions for development of languages of ethnic groups living in the territory of Kazakhstan are considered as one of the tasks of the state language policy. Knowledge of languages and language education is regarded as public, social and personal value. Obviously, the deliberate and smooth implementation of the concept of multilingual education in the practice of educational institutions will increase the efficiency of multicultural education. Currently, however, it is still difficult to make an objective assessment of these processes.

Issues of language policy in education are also very relevant for the Russian Federation, where the school education is currently carried out in 39 languages, and 50 more languages are learned. According to article 68 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the republics being part of the Russian Federation shall have the right to include in their education programs together with the Russian language their national languages. The Russian Federation citizens shall have the right to receive pre-school, primary and secondary general education in their native language among languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation, and the right to study their native language among languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation within the possibilities offered by the education system, in the manner prescribed by legislation on education (Federal Law, 29.12.2012). Traditionally, much attention is paid to the study of foreign languages at the level of both the school and higher education. At the same time, the idea of multilingual education in terms of the entire territory of the Russian Federation is not discussed at the official level. Russian is the official language and the only language of international communication in the country, and for 80.9% of the population (2010 Census data) it is the native language. For comparison, the second most common language is Tatar: it is native to 3.87% of the citizens; the Ukrainian language is native to 1.41% of Russian citizens (refer to Figure 2).

**Russian Federation. Ethnic composition.
Population census 2010**



Figure 2: Ethnic composition of Russia

In general, the analysis of state policy, legal documents in the field of education of both the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan leads to the conclusion that, despite the lack of legislation directly related to multicultural education, specific provisions and the principles stipulated by the current legislation stimulate the development of theoretical and applied research activities and implementation of aspects of multicultural education in the practice of educational institutions.

Discussion

Multicultural education as a field of pedagogical theory and a practice of educational institutions has arisen in countries historically created as a result of the voluntary mass immigration from other countries: Australia, Canada and the United States (Banks&Banks, 2013; Suprunova & Sviridchenko, 2013). Issues about language learning,

different learning styles of students from different ethnic groups, the role of the teacher and his/her attitude to minorities have been widely discussed in these countries already since the 1960s (Banks, 1981). As a result, it gave rise to the concept of multiethnic education, the supporters of which proceeded from the fact that ethnic diversity enriched the nation and increased the possibility of solving personal and social problems; that people who did not know other cultures were not able to know their own one. Theorists of multiethnic education set the following objectives:

- to help students achieve a higher level of self-knowledge and understanding of their culture;
- to cultivate a respect for the representatives of other ethnic and racial groups, facilitate the recognition of the value and importance of their culture, and reduce the discrimination in society;
- to give to all students the knowledge necessary for life, both within their own ethnic group, and in conditions of the dominant culture (Banks, 1977).

As shown by the analysis of pedagogical literature, the term "multiethnic education" did not last long. In the mid-1970s, some researchers started using the concept of "multicultural education" in their works (Glazer, 1997). In the early 80s, the "multicultural education" term appeared in the leading educational encyclopedias: in 1982 in the 5th edition of the Encyclopedia of Educational Research, and in 1985 in the International Encyclopedia of Education.

"Multicultural education" originally appeared as a broader term: some researchers believed that multiethnic education did not solve the problem of conflict, violence and intolerance, as it was limited to ethnic and racial differences and ignored cultural peculiarities typical for any group: professional, gender, age (The International Encyclopedia of Education, 1994).

As for the Russian and Kazakh pedagogical science, the basis for multicultural education was formed in the 1990s. Despite the fact that the studies and concepts originally used the term "multicultural education", the focus of the majority of experts has been on questions mainly related to the ethnic culture and ethnic diversity of education environment.

In 1996 in the Republic of Kazakhstan a concept of ethno-cultural education was developed. Among the main objectives the following was put forward:

- education of multicultural person: creation of conditions for his/her identification with the native culture and assimilation of other cultures; focusing on the dialogue of cultures and their mutual enrichment;
- development of multilingual individual: educating citizens capable to effectively communicate in their native language, state one and Russian.

The concept contained the definition of "multicultural person": it is "an individual oriented through his/her own culture on the other ones. Thorough knowledge of his/her own culture for this person is the foundation of the interest toward the others; meeting many people is the basis for spiritual enrichment and development" (Concept of ethno-cultural education in the Republic of Kazakhstan, 1996). Important traits of a multicultural person consisted in the following: linguistic, historical, geographical, legal, artistic and aesthetic

consciousness, a holistic worldview. The concept of ethno-cultural education was formally approved by Order of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated July 15, 1996, which undoubtedly stimulated theoretical research activities and practical implementation of the ideas of multicultural education in Kazakhstan.

In 1999, the faculty of Pyatigorsk State Linguistic University together with the Academician of the Russian Academy of Education and the founder of the modern school of comparative education in Russia (Z. A. Malkova) developed the Concept of Multicultural Education in the modern comprehensive school in Russia. The authors of the concept identified the main goal of multicultural education as "the formation of a person capable of active and effective living in the multiethnic and multicultural society, having a strong sense of understanding and respect for other cultures and the ability to live in peace and harmony with people of different nationalities, races and beliefs" (Makaev et al, 1999). This concept was not formally recognized at the state level, but it has had a significant impact on future research in the field of multicultural education and its practical implementation, both in Russia and in Kazakhstan.

The Concept of multicultural education in the higher educational institutions of the Russian Federation appeared in 2003. In the given concept, multicultural education is regarded as an important mechanism for introducing the young people to a native culture, the Russian one and the world culture. Among the main objectives there are the following: learning about the cultural diversity of the world; understanding cultural differences as a source of social progress and self-improvement; cultivation of students' respect for their own culture; development of intercultural interaction skills (Davydov & Suprunova, 2003).

In 2010 the draft Concept of multicultural education in the Russian Federation was published on the official website of the Ministry of Education and Science. Among the main goals of multicultural education, the concept outlined: the reproduction and development of national cultures and native languages of the peoples of Russia as a necessary tool of younger generations' socialization and the essential foundation for the establishment and functioning of Russian civil nation in its baseline, i.e. ethno-cultural and national-territorial levels; formation of Russian civil identity in the conditions of social and political heterogeneity of Russian regions, multicultural and multilingual Russian nation; development of educational and professional potential of Russia, training young people prepared for responsible and productive intellectual, organizational and operating activities in an open multicultural and multilingual world (Concept of multicultural education in the Russian Federation, 2010). However, in contrast to the "Concept of ethno-cultural education in the Republic of Kazakhstan", this draft did not receive official status, which definitely affected the educational practice.

The study has shown that both in Russian and in Kazakh pedagogical science, multicultural education is seen mainly in the context of ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity of society, as opposed to the Western tradition, where the problem field also includes social, gender differences, differences in sexual orientation, and special needs (Banks, 2013; Hansen, 2015). The priority task for both countries is the integration of the younger generation into the national culture, the formation of civic identity based on native ethnic culture.

Content of Multicultural Education in Higher Education Institutions

A necessary condition for effective implementation of the idea of multicultural education, according to the majority of its supporters, is the reform of the school system and pre-service teachers' education (Banks&Banks, 2013; Dzhurinskiy, 2016; Gollnick & Chinn, 1998; Gukalenko, 2003).

In this article, we will mainly focus on the practice of pre-service teachers' multicultural education. The study of the actual practice of multicultural education at the school level requires a separate research.

Comparative analysis of the pre-service teachers' preparation for professional activity in a culturally diverse classroom shows that the key ideas of multicultural education developed by both Russian and Kazakh specialists are only partially reflected in the formal requirements for the content of pedagogical education. Thus, the Russian federal state educational standards in the "Teacher education" section does not contain a mention of the concept of "multicultural education"; among the competences that teacher training program graduates must possess there is an ability to be tolerant to social, cultural and personal differences. The requirements to "Psychological and pedagogical education" program graduates are more clearly defined and focused on professional work in the conditions of ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity. In particular, the standards state that the graduate should be able to conduct professional work in a multicultural society, taking into account the features of the socio-cultural development situation (FSES, 2016).

The Compulsory State Educational Standards of the Republic of Kazakhstan for Higher Education stipulate that the higher education institution graduate should know the traditions and culture of the peoples of Kazakhstan and accept the traditions and culture of other peoples of the world.

The necessary pre-service teachers' competencies are developed, first of all, within class activity.

"Multicultural education" is a compulsory course only in Russian universities. This course is studied within "Psychological and pedagogical education" programs. "Multicultural education" course is focused on the formation of a system of ideas and concepts related to the basic principles of multicultural education, the development of the students' willingness to put multicultural education into practice and use in a creative manner modern methods and technologies of multicultural education in their professional activity (Suprunova & Sviridchenko, 2013). Russian researchers developed textbooks and teaching aids focused on the needs of modern students, to ensure the teaching of "Multicultural Education" course in the education institutions (Dzhurinskiy, 2016; Khukhlaeva, 2014; Suprunova & Sviridchenko, 2013).

In many universities, the variable part of the all-humanities cycle include the courses aimed at the formation of students' intercultural competences, prevention of ethnocentrism and xenophobia ("The psychology of ethnic conflict", "Ethics of international communication and the specifics of working in an international team", "Intercultural Communication", "Ethnic Psychology", etc.).

In the higher education institutions of Kazakhstan the "Multicultural Education" is not taught as a separate compulsory course, but the issues of multicultural education are considered in the "Pedagogy" course for all future specialties in the field of education. In a number of universities, curricula include subjects aimed at the formation of multicultural competence of graduates. For example, the students of the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University as part of the "Pedagogy and Psychology" educational program study the "Pedagogy of multicultural personal development". Until now, there have been no textbooks on multicultural education published for students of higher education institutions in Kazakhstan. In the framework of the "Pedagogy of multicultural personal development" course, along with the textbooks of Russian authors, the students are recommended to use the Kazakh books on Ethnopedagogy (Kozhakhmetova, 2001). A book of Professor R. Basharuly devoted to methodological aspects of multicultural education in the Republic of Kazakhstan is of particular interest for future teachers (Basharuly, 2002). There has been also an "Education in multicultural society" manual for teachers printed, which contains materials for "Culture of the Peoples of Kazakhstan" and "Spiritual Heritage of the Peoples of Kazakhstan" optional courses, as well as ethnic psychology materials, music, arts and crafts of the peoples living in Kazakhstan (Education in multicultural society, 2001).

In general, we have to agree with the Kazakh researchers that the theoretical basis of multicultural education has been insufficiently developed in the national pedagogical science and the theory "is behind" the practice (Nadyrmagambetova, 2011).

Studying the content of multicultural education in education institutions of Russia and Kazakhstan, we took into consideration the concept of J. Banks of the four basic approaches to Multicultural Curriculum Reform (Banks&Banks, 2013). James Banks, one of the American and world's leading scholars and researches in multicultural education features four approaches to Multicultural Curriculum Reform: *the Contributions Approach* (focuses on heroes, holidays, discrete cultural elements); *the Additive Approach* (courses, content, concepts, themes, and perspectives are added to the curriculum without changing its structure); *the Transformation Approach* (the structure of the curriculum is changed to enable students to view concepts, issues, events, and themes from the perspective of diverse ethnic and cultural groups); *the Social Action Approach* (students make decisions on important social issues and take actions to help solve them) (Banks&Banks, 2013). Comparative analysis of state standards, educational programs and curricula leads to the conclusion that the multicultural education of pre-service teachers is carried out mainly in the context of an additive approach providing for inclusion of individual courses and subjects in the educational plans and programs, but not involving the review and cardinal changes of the content of education, the reformation of the teacher training system as a whole.

Conclusion

The political, socio-economic and demographic conditions existing in the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan require such education systems that would meet multicultural society needs; it is also necessary that educational institutions not only cultivate in younger generations the tolerance of differences, but also can maintain the high level of teaching under conditions of

ethnic and linguistic diversity. In this context it becomes urgent to develop the concept of education focused on the cultural diversity of the society. Both in Russia and in Kazakhstan the multicultural education refers to a relatively new field of pedagogical knowledge and, in fact, is an alternative to international education, which (despite its humanistic values) could not meet the challenges of 1990-es.

Both in Russia and in Kazakhstan, the educational theory and practice of multicultural education is considered mainly in the context of ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity of modern society, which, in our opinion, contributes to a better understanding of this phenomenon, focused development of conceptual frameworks, methodologies and technologies.

The analysis of existing concepts of multicultural education shows that they meaningfully complement each other; objectives formulated within individual concepts can be regarded as directions of activities of educational institutions in terms of the implementation of multicultural education.

In Kazakhstan, the development of multicultural education is largely determined by the peculiarities of the language situation (the essential feature of which is the historically formed Kazakh-Russian bilingualism) and modern language policy actualizing multilingual education. Multilingualism is seen as the basis for the formation of a multicultural person.

In our opinion, future prospects for the development of multicultural education in the partner countries are associated with a number of conditions: intensification of the State activity in this area, implementation of an appropriate pre-service teacher training courses, further development of multicultural education theoretical framework and providing teachers with effective methods and instructional materials according to the changes in socio-cultural situation.

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