

THE 'MELTING POT' CONCEPT AS A PRECONDITION OF BILINGUALISM POLICY IN THE AMERICAN AND CANADIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

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The article deals with the multiculturalism concept as the pre-condition for developing bilingual education in the USA and Canada. The author traces the connection of the 'melting pot' concept and bilingual training as an education policy of the multinational states with multiethnic, multiracial and multicultural immigrant population. It identifies multiculturalism perspectives of including in the curricula the social studies materials about national minorities, their history and traditions by introducing the study of the culture of ethnic groups.

Problem formulation. Multicultural education and conflict-free intercultural assimilation play a vital role in the educational space of any multinational country. Education, including its content and organization of the educational process, represented by several cultures, different on language, ethnic, national or racial grounds, while built on the basis of immutable respect for the culture and history of the country, is an important condition for the development of civil society.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Multicultural education issues are highlighted in the works of many education scholars (Agaddulin R. [1], Banks J. A., [3; 4] Gershunsky B., Goncharenko L., [11], Dzhurinskiy A., Borisenkov V., Guletska G. [12], Dmitriev G., Malkova Z., Nieto S., Ravitch D. [15; 16], Simonenko M. [18], Suprunova L. et al.). One of the first definitions of the term 'multiculturalism' become widespread in the pedagogy of the US and Canada in the early 1960-s and since then has become a cliché in the pedagogical literature. The concept is applied mainly to the traditional socio-pedagogical problem in solving racial and ethnic conflicts.

The aim of the article. Analyzing the experience of inter-relation of the 'melting pot' concept and bilingual studying as a variable concept for developing multicultural education in the multicultural countries with large share of immigrant population.

The main results of the study. Pedagogy of ethnocentrism is the antipode of multicultural education. Extreme anti-democratic teaching ethnocentrism appears as a racist ideology and exaggerated nationalism, which are inherent in the submission of superiority of one ethnic group over another. In addition to openly preached racism and nationalism in the theory and practice of education there is a 'hidden' racism and the so called 'soft' discrimination.

This happens when the teachers, often unwittingly, pander to the racist and nationalistic stereotypes, do not take an active position in defense of the cultural and educational rights of ethnic minorities, and pass by their culture in silence.

Pedagogical literature often contains negative mentions of national minorities or even ignore their existence. Attempts to improve the education of children from racial and eth-

nic minorities cause secret or obvious rebuff of the monocultural education ideologists. They oppose the elimination of social, economic, cultural, educational barriers that bring to cultural and educational discrimination and do not allow raising the level of achievement in training and educating national minorities' representatives.

Multicultural education faces ethnocentrism of small ethnic groups and their closeness in relation to the dominant nations and other small ethnic groups. The manifestations of this type of ethnocentrism are often observed in special schools for ethnic minorities (e. g., African-American and Latino schools in the US). These schools focus education and training mainly on the minority culture, and are isolated from the cultural dialogue with the dominant and other smaller ethnic groups [6].

In the US, the term 'multiculturalism' initially was used in the context of racial separatism, and ethnocentrism and had a negative significance, and this was the essential difference from interpretations of teachers in Canada. However, the use of this concept only in the negative sense did not last long. In 1985, Diane Ravitch, a former Deputy Minister of Education of the United States, in the book "The school we deserve" considered for the first time the difference between the concepts of 'separatist pluralism' and 'pluralist multiculturalism', referring it to the positive socio-pedagogical phenomenon of our time [16].

In the United States and Canada, multicultural education is inseparably linked with the problem of close interrelation between the ethnic groups. Nations in both countries were formed of immigrants, so education turned to be a powerful tool for creating the nation on the inhomogeneous ethnic basis. In the US, ethnic groups united around the Anglo-Saxon Protestant core, which culture is dominant until today. In Canada, bilingual cultural foundations were laid by the first settlers from England and France. Multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity are typical features of the United States and Canada.

The need to take this into account in education is an objective consequence of the history of these countries, where the influx of immigrants

did not stop for three and a half centuries, and has actually increased in the recent decades. The European descendants of immigrants that are part of the population of the United States and Canada, try to preserve cultural heritage of their ancestors. Among the ethnic groups of cultural heritage can be identified dominant and minority groups (Anglo-Saxons in the United States, the Anglo-Saxons and Francophones in Canada).

Multicultural education in Canada and the United States is becoming increasingly important in view of the significant demographic changes: arriving from Europe and Latin America immigrants defend their cultural and educational rights, and are an impressive part of the population. In American pedagogy multicultural education is treated, at least, as the idea, as a reform of schools, the educational process (multicultural education is also considered in this context in some other countries).

In formulating the idea of multicultural education in the American pedagogy aroused a question: why students from ethnic minorities show the worst results for the test? The answer was often limited to the assertion that these students are outside the rules and basics of white culture that is the basis of education. There have been two approaches to solving this problem: either pupils from ethnic minorities need to effectively join and take up the white culture, or the values of minorities must become the essence of their education. Scientists at Stanford University have proposed the golden mean in considering these two approaches, grounding in 1987 the projects of educational content reform [10]. The new programs were suggested to include the values of non-European cultures along with the traditional values of Western civilization.

In turn, the ideologists of the ethnic minority groups raised the issue of including values of their subcultures in their subordination to the Euro-American culture in bringing up the younger generation, focusing more on ethnic differences, rather than on the national identity. For example, African-Americans consider specific study of the experience of black Americans the most important part of the education. Hawaiians insist on using textbooks in the Hawai-

ian language in schooling. Hispanic groups insist on introducing bilingual education.

Multicultural education is seen as an objective necessity. J. Banks distinguishes four groups of pedagogical results, which provides multiculturalism: equal opportunities of training, culture awareness among students and teachers, multicultural training programs, equal participation of minorities' representatives in the global society [4].

J. Banks identifies several steps (models) of the possible movement of US education toward the implementation of the multiculturalism idea: A – education is carried out exclusively on European values; B – prevailing Euro-cultural component of education is supplemented by small minorities' values; C – balance of cultural values of different ethnic groups is established in education and training [3].

However, there is a danger that multicultural education with its emphasis on the multi-ethnic and multi-racial society will keep and strengthen the distance between ethnic groups, and encourage separation. Meanwhile, properly implemented multicultural education should unite, not divide [5].

Approaches to the problem of multiculturalism in the American pedagogy had gone through a qualitative evolution. Initially it was proposed to strive for complete assimilation of the students from ethnic groups and speaking different languages. This approach bore traces of the segregation ideas. Its representatives, for instance, 'arrogantly suggested that Blacks do not have cultural values to be preserved, or that Blacks themselves want to forget his race'. Criticizing the idea and practice of assimilation, J. Banks argues that mythical Anglo-American culture demanded ethnic minorities going through the process of self-alienation, and that the cultural assimilation of immigrants and people of color are not a guarantee was full inclusion into society [5].

The idea of assimilation was followed by the theory of accommodation of ethnic groups through education. According to this theory, the intrinsic value of each group is supported and respected, their differences are regarded as public wealth, cultural and ethnic diversity was

not considered as a target for elimination. This approach seems democratic enough. However, it means maintaining the status quo, i.e. distinguishing the nation on the ethnic and racial grounds, and therefore, is contrary to the conception of education as the unification process, uniting members of ethnic groups into a single nation, harmonizing the views of representatives of different cultures for the general welfare.

The evolution and the formation of a multicultural pedagogy in the US went on within the framework of changes in the basic approaches to education as a means of society transformation. Until the mid 1980-s, American pedagogy focused on the of 'melting pot' policy, the concept of formation of a single American nation. This upbringing and educational strategy suggested consolidation of ethnic fragments around the Anglo-Saxon Protestant language and culture core. USA was presented as a 'melting pot', in which national, cultural and ethnic differences were supposed to disappear. The concept was based on the ideal point that mixing of ethnicities and races will generate a new race that will combine ancient values, differences, language and customs. According to Diane Ravitch, this strategy corresponds to the democratic ideal of a multicultural pedagogy, as it provides a free choice of all ethnic groups in education [15].

In fact, the 'melting pot' ideology resulted in teaching exclusively in English, its content of education reflected the values, traditions and way of life of white Americans. Languages, culture, peculiarities of thinking and behavior of ethnic minorities were neglected, which had a negative effect on the education of the non-white population [2].

Since the mid-1980-s the 'melting pot' concept has become subject to increasing criticism [6]. Critics believed it was not only wrong, but vicious as well, as it did not take into account the complexity and dynamism of human cultures, and they could not ignore them.

The US pedagogy became more and more aware of the importance of accounting ethnic diversity as a condition for the stability of society and cultural wealth. According to the multiculturalism idea, the metaphor 'America is a 'melting pot' was replaced by another one – 'America

is a 'salad bowl'. Supporter of cultural pluralism Pei Yang says that it is an ideal that does not just assert itself and support cultural diversity, but also lays the foundation for connecting multicultural ethnic experience in American society [14].

According to the new approach, the group of the Canadian and American teachers identified multiculturalism perspectives by including the social studies material about national minorities in the curricula, their history and traditions by introducing the study of the culture of ethnic groups. In their view, building the content of education of this type should have promoted the formation of a broader view of their own history and culture among Americans themselves [6]. The training materials are determined to avoid everything that can provoke cultural differences. It was argued that the study of cultures of different ethnic groups could not be limited by one-time events, such as 'Month of Blacks' when students are given confused and fragmentary information about African Americans, while it is necessary to systematically introduce them to ethnic subcultures.

Special problems arise in education of national minorities and ethnic groups from Asia and Latin America. They undergo serious difficulties in school due to the poor knowledge of the language and culture of the indigenous population, and are in desperate need of backlog propaedeutics. Asians had complicated access to a decent education because of lower economic standard of living, long-term restrictions on rights, manifested in prejudices and preconceptions of white environment. The similar severe cultural and educational situation was for many Hispanics. They make up the largest and fastest growing minority of the US population and inhabit the so-called 'dispossessed areas', where schools are located in the slums of the big cities and are in rural areas remote from cultural centers.

Over the last 40 years the number of Spanish speakers in US schools has increased 8 times. Along with blacks, they account for about 50 % of students in urban public schools. Hispanic groups differ by their steady tendency to resist cultural assimilation by the English-speaking majority. They are trying to save their national

identity, speak Spanish mostly, and tend to live in their secluded communities.

A significant part of the population, especially in the US, is made up of the blacks. Experiencing racial discrimination by the white majority, black Americans tend to assert their ethnic identity, including means of education as well. Through education, they are also trying to accustom themselves to the culture of Africa, but it is more likely a declaration than a real possibility since the blacks had developed the subculture that is different from the culture of any African people. More likely, it goes about the education of African Americans as a certain ethnic group with its subculture.

Historical fate of Native Americans proved to be extremely difficult. Until the twentieth century, the aborigines were subjected to the most brutal genocide, cultural and educational discrimination. They were partly destroyed, often isolated, and currently are ethnic minorities. In Canada, for example, Indians and Inuits account for 1 million people (3 % of the population). Long-term suppression of the Indian culture has sharpened their negative attitude to European civilization and education [8].

It is now in the past, when Indians were subject to genocide. Thus, systematic measures to support Aboriginal education in Canada have led to the fact that the percentage of indigenous ethnic groups of students who complete the full course of secondary school, has reached the national average. However, special cultural and educational needs of the Indians remain largely unrealized: until recently Indians were subjected to systematic assimilation, forced to study in boarding schools, where they were accustomed exclusively to European culture.

An important way to meet cultural and educational needs of ethnic minorities in the United States and Canada is the so-called ethnocentric school, i.e. special schools for representatives of small ethnic and racial groups. Teaching is carried out in the context of the subculture the students belong to. In the United States such schools began to appear at the beginning of the 1990s for blacks and Hispanics. President of the association "African-American images", Dr. Kunjufu Jawanza was among the first who

formulated the tasks of training and education in the Afro-American schools: academic performance, discipline, racial self-esteem, increased knowledge about their culture and its contemporary meaning [13].

At the crossroads of ideas multicultural and ethnocentric education in the United States and Canada there developed a special education for the autochthonous minorities [17]. According to American Indian teacher Mick Fedullo, the supporter of these schools for aboriginals, it is necessary to teach young Indians to live in a different cultural environment, without losing touch with their own culture. It was recommended to build education on the basis of writings in English devoted to Indian culture. It was suggested to clearly explain the differences between Indian and European cultures. For example, young Indians should be explained that the gaze of the white man is not always a sign of hostility, and could mean a simple curiosity or interest [9].

Native speakers and representatives of ethnic groups' culture come to work schools of Canadian aboriginal — teachers, teachers of folk crafts and other school subjects. Since 1968, there has been a specialized training of teachers from aboriginal people for these schools, and special training programs were introduced.

Most comprehensively requirements of Aboriginal education in their native language are met in British Columbia, Northern Territories, prairies and remote areas of Quebec. Here natives teach their native language, sometimes using the appropriate system of writing. Methods of teaching, especially at the initial stage, are in line with national traditions and culture. For example, Native Americans are encouraged the inherent respect for nature, the desire to understand its laws, to learn to live in harmony with them [7].

The key point in the multicultural education in the United States and Canada is a bilingual education. It is intended to help realize their cultural and ethnic identity. Propagating of bilingual education in North America was the result of a number of social factors, among them — the need for cross-cultural communication, teaching national languages; the need to maintain local languages; growth of multiculturalism in condi-

tions of urban civilization; the growth of linguistic nationalism, i. e., aspirations to keep cultural and ethnic identity through language.

Bilingual education in the United States and Canada is carried out in a variety of ways, which combines the study of two languages differently.

In the United States the right to bilingual teaching in schools is primarily stood by Hispanics and immigrants from Asia. By the end of 1980-s up to 8 million Americans renounced English as their native language; 5,8 mln people in this group were aged between 4–18 years, a third of them were Hispanics.

In Canada, bilingualism, i.e. educating in both official languages, English and French, is guaranteed by the constitution. However, more than 2/3 of the children of immigrants do not speak either of the official languages. This gives rise to the necessity of their special training. The federal government provides financial support to provincial authorities in the organization of the relevant bilingual education. As a result, at the end of the 1980-s bilingualism was included in curricula programs across the country. Distribution of bilingual education was predetermined by the desire of Canadians to join their subcultural ideals that would have been impossible without the knowledge of the native language. At the same time, ethnic minorities are aware that in order to make a living, to achieve civil rights, it is necessary to learn the dominant languages.

Bilingual education programs are various: some of them are aimed for the development of skills of language speaking. All programs suggest that students of bilingual schools should acquire the competence in the language and culture of the majority that will provide the necessary level of communication in the society.

In general, social and educational results of bilingual education were positive. It was proved that it improves the conditions for successful teaching students, who had poor level of English and French. Bilinguals are more creative, active and dynamic. Bilingual education particularly useful is for gifted children.

Conclusion. Thus, the positive experience of multicultural education and cross-cultural assimilation in the educational space of the USA

and Canada can be considered in the development of new principles and approaches to the creation of a multicultural educational environment based on ethnic tolerance, the ability to adapt to the ethnic educational environment, tolerance of individual differences of others, to other cultures, religions, ethnic differences, readiness for dialogue between cultures, cultural interaction with representatives of other ethnic groups, mutual understanding and mutual support.



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The author traces the connection of the 'melting pot' concept and bilingual training as an education policy of the multinational states with multiethnic, multiracial and multicultural immigrant population. It identifies multiculturalism perspectives of including in the curricula the social studies materials about national minorities, their history and traditions by introducing the study of the culture of ethnic groups.

Автор простежує зв'язок концепції "плавильний котел" з двомовним навчанням в якості освітньої політики багатонаціональних держав за наявності багатоетнічної, мультикультурної і багаторасової імміграції. Він визначає перспективи мультикультуралізму як включення в навчальні програми соціальних наук матеріалів про національні меншини, їх історію і традиції шляхом запровадження вивчення культур етнічних груп.

Автор прослеживает связь концепции “плавильный котел” с двуязычным обучением в качестве образовательной политики многонациональных государств при наличии многоэтнической, мультикультурной и многорасовой иммиграции. Он определяет перспективы мультикультурализма как включение в учебные программы социальных наук материалов о национальных меньшинствах, их истории и традиции путем введения изучения культур этнических групп.

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