Multicultural Education as a Risk Space

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Abstract

The paper explores the aspects of multicultural education in the context of risk theory. The authors make the case about multicultural education as an essential feature of the processes that occur in all spheres of the global society. This is evident when the cultural systems adapt to the global educational space. The article puts forward the idea that synthesis of different cultures can act as a substitute for their adaptation performance. This conclusion is supported by reference to examples of practical training of migrant children in Russia. The authors analyze migrant education on the basis of modern statistic data; this makes the conclusion that state measures aimed at regulation of migrant education weaken the tension but don't solve the problem. The urgency of migration is specified by internal and external migration. This mostly concerns the migrant children whose social status is identified by education they can receive in the host country. Following the ideas of R. Robertson and N. Stehr, the authors identify the specific features of migrant education. They see the relation between migrant education and social risks appeared in education as the result of inappropriate migration policy. The authors state that the main risks in education of Russia are concerned with the legal, information and psychological ambiguity of migrant children.

Keywords: culture, adaptation, migration, education, Russia.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, globalization influences all the social institutions of the social systems. Most research into the globalplease processes carried out in the area of human activities shows that consequences of globalization are positive and negative. A split heteropolar world and specific national cultures require conceptual thinking and its practical application. Due to this fact, cross-cultural aspects have become essential tendencies of all research devoted to studying the global community.

G. Malinetskiy sees the XXI century as being characterized by 3 key features. The first assumes a global demographic transition in which earlier human growth was hyperbolic, whereas nowadays the tendency is being changed. There has been a transition from the strategy "high birth rate – high death rates" to the strategy "low birth rate – low death rates". The second feature assumes technological transition. The researcher notes, that 98 % of mining output is transferred to intermediate consumption or to disposal; and only 2 % of the mining production is transferred to the waste products. Malinetskiy argues that should be reversed. The third trend implies resource transition. There was a Neolithic revolution on the planet when humans haunted mammoths and other big animals resulting in depopulation. This led to crisis in which 9/10 of people died. The survivors managed to domesticate animals and sow crops. This year has seen a key development in food production as now sea farms produce seafood than the farms produce beef on land... The destiny of humankind depends on how successfully we move towards these transitions (Malineckij G., 2015).

Furthermore, economic differentiation has reached a trigger point. Market competition and the struggle for financial influence has led to a contradiction between economic interests and global understanding. This is supported by contemporary international politics. Otherwise, these are integration processes not the contradiction ones, which generalize the human and social life. The variety of cultural alternatives, their unification and integration are necessary for humankind in order to protect people and deal with current and prospective global challenges and problems (Mul'tikul'turalizm i transformacija postsovetskih obshhestv, 2002 & Parshikov V.I. & Chernyh S.I., 2012).

2. Research Objective, Materials and Methods

This paper employs an interdisciplinary approach and draws on fundamental principles of risk theory in considering the

problem of migration and its influence on the educational space of Russia.

The relationship between multiculturalism and education has been the object of much consideration over the last 20-30 years. The papers and proceedings reveal the functioning of methodological principles and focus on the models of relationship between multiculturalism and education. They include multicultural education (Y. Pay and R. Lacier), multiethnic education (G. Banks), polycultural education (V.V. Makaev, Z.A. Malkova and L.L. Suprunova), school of the cultural dialogue (M.M. Bakhtin and V.S. Bibler), and approach of complicated culture (V.A. Tishkov), global education (A.Yu. Kodzhaspirov), cultural conformity education (P.E. Vidt) and others. Multicultural experience in India (since 1950s), Malaysia (since 1960s), Canada (since 1970s), Austria (since 1970s), Sweden (since 1970s), South Africa and USA has been considered and investigated in theoretical research. This has affected social policy and humanity space within the countries and outside of them. Thus, multiculturalism in Sweden was officially endorsed as a state standard in 1975 and it was based on 3 main principles: "Equal standards of living for minority groups and other peoples. Free choice between ethnic identity and Swedish cultural identity. Social partnerships that allow for cooperation in the professional field" (Le Multiculturalisme, p. 49–50). A. Absalyamova has studied many works by foreign and Russian scientists and helped further our understanding of the "multiculturalism" phenomenon (Absaljamova A., 2005). In our evaluation, the most appropriate interpretation of the phenomenon has been suggested by J. Habermas, where he denotes multiculturalism as a special form of integrative ideology contributing to multicultural national communities through the implementation of a strategy of social concertation (cohesion) and stability on the basis of equitable co-existence of different cultural lives (Habermas J., 1994).

J. Habermas implies the methodological principles as integrative ideology, social concertation and stability, equal rights for different kinds of cultural life, which are supported by the authors and tend to be the most general for comprehension of multicultural education and its development in the global world.

It is evident, when educational systems are based on geopolitical interests, it changes the nature and idea of education; the functions of teaching and learning compromises the effectiveness of education and turn out to be subordinate and nonproductive. Earlier, education the main function was the transfer of knowledge whereas the main goal is harmonization of positioning and personal identity as a subject of educational interaction. This leads to new technologies of subjects assembling and functioning of such educational subjects as state, civil society, family and a person (Chernyh S.I., 2011 & Problema sborki subektov v postneklassicheskoj nauke, 2010). This confirms the necessity of adopting an interdisciplinary approach in considering the problem of multicultural education.

In our opinion, this approach reviews complicated discourse of multiculturalism as a social, ethic and economic problem. This approach allows minimizing risks related to these problems in Russia and Europe.

3. Results and Discussion

Russia faces the problem of multicultural education in various ways. V.S. Malakhov highlights two things that weaken the positive impact of multicultural education; the ethnic consciousness of ethnic Russian society (particularly in the sphere of education) and institutionalization of ethnicity leading to population segregation, which is manifested in ethnic federalism (Mul'tikul'turalizm i transformacija postsovetskih obshhestv, 2002, pp. 48–60). Consequently, ethnic groups acquire the features of political sovereignty. This political sovereignty is concerned with public consciousness and intellectual and political elites of different ethnic groups. Recently, the risks of ethnic cultural space have appeared as religious ones.

The great amount of migrant workers arriving in Russia between 1994-2005 exacerbated the situation. Immigrant labourers officially registered in Russia increased 1.6 times during this period and reached 211 000 people. According to data provided by the Migration Service (April 3, 2015), 4.8 million foreign people arrived in Russia, which is 4 % more than in 2014. Most foreign workers didn't leave the country (Ponaehali i poostavalis, 2015). A round-up of illegal immigrants, the use of data on blacklisted immigrants, raids, the introduction of work licenses, exams (in Russian language for migrant workers), difficult living conditions and other institutional and non-institutional measures weaken the tension but don't solve the problem. This is just one side of the problem. Also relevance of the problem is associated with the naturalized former foreign labourers and children born in Russia since 1990s, who immediately became the residents of the country. The able-bodied population of Russia is 78 million; of this figure 4.8 million people are guest workers presenting the risk of a possible breach in social stability.

Multicultural education as a risk space is to be considered by means of dividing the subjects of migration processes into "external" migrants and "internal" migrants. One of the mistakes made in many publications (particularly in mass media) devoted to the problems of integration and risks caused by migrants consider the external and internal migrants as one whole. This is not correct. There are differences and particularly differences in education. Residents of other countries differ greatly in regards to the legal status. Considering moral-psychological and socio-cultural status

there are differences but they are not as great.

The second difference implies external migrants' cultural affiliation made by means of education of another kind (it differs from the people from North Caucasus). Acculturation is more complicated and difficult for external migrants. Regardless the fact that acculturation is transformed into mutual cultural adaptation, many difficulties including educational discourse occur. The paper deals with external migrants of the "second generation", that is the children, who have grown up in the migrant families and who are studying in Russia; and "1.5 generation" migrants. i.e. the children born in their native country and moved to Russia.

The third difference assumes the idea formulated by R. Robertson, that the modern global field contains 4 main elements; "countries", "systems of the countries (nation state)", "humankind" and "individuals". He argues that main internal globalization processes occur on an interpersonal level and ... personal interaction   can have a serious impact ... globalization takes place in the streets, supermarkets, within couples and other relationships (Robertson R., 2014, p. 278).

The fourth difference relates to the philosophical statement, that the main feature of modern society is ambiguity (J. Baudrillard, I. Wallerstein, N. Stehr, and others). I. Wallerstein writes in *The End of the World as We Know It: Social Science for the Twenty-First Century* "We live in the Universe of ambiguity and the only value of the Universe is constant ambiguity" (Vallerstajn I., 2003, p. 333). If the reason of unity assumes rising social complexity, than the risk is a result of ambiguity and can be considered as a social feature and activity feature. Many researchers regard detraditionalization as an experience of risk situations. Thus, V. Tshchekotin mentions that the nature of the detraditionalization implies the elimination of standards that prevent human choice and is supported by social institutions and restricting their repressive power (Shhekotin E.V., 2014, p. 96).

Following on from what is mentioned above, we can distinguish the following aspects of the risk space. Firstly, risk is related with ambiguity and secondly, risk is related with possibility (prospective or implemented) to the loss of something.

Does multicultural education have features of the risk space? In considering the problems related to "knowledge society", E. Rosa and N. Stehr point out the misconception that knowledge as an expansion of social possibilities and experience can lead to a reduction of risks. N. Stehr states that application of complex technologies and social dynamism (incl. integration of cultures) have a destabilizing effect on the development of society. In Stehr's opinion, the risks resulting from emancipation potential of knowledge are the reverse side of emancipation. He sees science and education and the associated technologies as a source of social ambiguity and socio-political problems (Rosa E.A., 1998 & Shter N., 2002).

It is recognized, that migration of population can be an important factor of development. Harnessing the potential of migration depends on the implementation of legislation and other managing measures. These processes are managed by official structures such as the state and its social institutions and non-official structures such as employers, associations of migrants, non-official migrant communities and criminal organizations. Migration policy is implemented in accordance with the observance of human rights. Russia guarantees free secondary education for all migrants arriving and this secondary education is mandatory. This education provides the opportunity for participation in the institutions of civil society, and helps with the socialization of migrants to certain norms and standards of Russia and is important in defining ethnic and cultural diversity within both the public and private sectors. The sociological review carried out by the Higher School of Economics in 2013 demonstrated the low level of education among migrants: a quarter of them had vocational diplomas and only 16.5 % had higher education diplomas or incomplete higher education. Women were found to be better educated and trained than men; and half of them have vocational diplomas and 22.3 % had higher education diplomas. Men migrating to Russia were trained in vocational schools (39.1 %) and in higher institutions (14.1 %). 17.9 % of these male migrants possessed a level of Russian that was estimated to be poor and very poor (Sociologi VShJe sostavili portret gastarbajtera, http://migrant.fergkana.ru/neshhslashh/chronicle/).

Education as an active factor of cultural integration between migrants and the host country is related to the "second generation" of migrants. The first generation of migrants was found to display a high level of conformity to the conditions of the host country whereas the "second generation" having received or in receipt of education in Russia did not conform as closely to the conditions of the host country. This is evident in the hate speech and negative attitude of Russian residents towards these migrants. According to data collected by the Levada-Centre, more than 60 % of Russians thought that migrants take their jobs and half of those poles (46 %) think migrants destroy the national culture (Nacional'naja politika i otnoshenie k migrantam, http://shhshhshh.levada.ru/25.11.2012/natsionalnaja-politika-otnoshenie-k-migrantam). Federal Law No. 86-FZ passed in 2010 doesn't allow for the complete regulation of migration flows as not all of the relevant instruments are utilized. Today we observe that socio-economic mechanisms prevail at the expense of the socio-cultural and socio-educational ones. Education as rendered in the Federal Law No 86 of 2010 is an

obligatory factor in shifting the focus of immigration policy from assimilation to adaptation and integration of migrants. This shift was related to strong ethnic tensions. The aim of multicultural education was concerned with increasing the mutual tolerance between the host country and migrants. In her study on migrants in Hong Kong, Lis Jackson finds education to be the most significant factor in the development of tolerant attitudes. Banks and Jackson identify certain problems with state policy towards migrant education (Lis Jackson, 2014 & Banks James A., 2008).

Education policy in Russia is characterized by similarly weak features related to the migration policy of the country; the actions are not systematic; insufficient attention is paid to the problem from the side of official educational structures; and society doesn't understand migration policy in the way it is implemented in education. The third weakness is specific to Russia as national research, which began 25 years ago, falls behind European, English and American, Australian and even South-Asian research in the applied aspect. This affects the quality and speed of migration policy implemented by the government. Employee of the Centre of Migration Policy E. Varshavskaya sees the problem as a result   Russia knows nothing about its immigrants. This idea is supported by M. Denisenko, an employee of the Institute of Demography, who thinks that the lack of information about migrant activities, living conditions and salaries leads to a misunderstanding by the government and authorities of the migrant role in society and the labour market (Sociologi VShJe sostavili portret gastarbajtera, http://migrant.fergkana.ru/neshhslashh/chronicle/).

Migrants' children present the most difficult problem. They are considered to be a disadvantaged group as their parents' legal status influences theirs one. Statistics demonstrate that one third of migrants, who have children aged up to 16, take them when migrating to the host country. According to Migration Centres only 15-20 % of migrant pre-school children attend pre-school institutions in Russia. In some regions migrant children make up to 10 % of all children attending pre-school institutions. In this case, the regional authorities have to restrict the migrants by means of tax certificates. Data from Migration Centres shows about 70-80 % of migrant children who go to school. The main difficulties for migrant children of pre-school and school age are attributed to poor knowledge of the Russian language, lack of medical insurance and the attitude of the host country. The authors point out that a more favourable climate and atmosphere is found in vocational schools and higher institutions; education there is provided for migrants on a fee-paying basis only. There are no limits and restrictions on this (Florinskaja Ju., demoscope.ru/weekly/2012/0515/analitoz.php).

4. Conclusions

Regardless of the measures taken by the Government of Russia, the situation concerning education for migrants and their children is not considered a favourable one. According to data supplied by the Federal Migration Service, the flow of legal, illegal and circulating migrants has been increasing for the last 3-4 years and today there are about 10 million migrants in Russia. The experts take into account that the majority of migrants don't pay direct taxes, but they contribute to the national economy 7-8 % of Gross Domestic Product. Multicultural education does not correspond to the needs of the national economy and society when taking into account globalization processes. The State Migration Policy failed in the sphere of education as in 2011 one in ten migrant children didn't have access to education whereas in 2013 the number grew to one in three (Ivanova O., www.ethnoinfo.ru/statji/1728-migranty-i-obrazovanie). It is evident that migrants of different ages require different treatment and this need to be the subject of further investigation. We put forward three key points:

- – Migrant education is an under researched phenomenon both in theoretical and applied aspects;
- – Russia falls behind world tendencies in building the information, legal, psychological and economic space for the development of migrant education; this compromises the country's competitiveness on the world educational stage;
- – Multicultural (ethnic cultural, polycultural, multiethnic) education is a risk space for Russia in all aspects, particularly in regard to the legal, information and psychological dimensions.

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