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Learning and education in community

The role of schools and community
organisations

Učenje in izobraževanje v skupnosti

Vloga šole in skupnostnih organizacij

Marko Radovan, Marek Kościelniak (ed./ur.)



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7 Interculturality as a principle and the cooperation of school with the local environment

Marijanca Ajša Vižintin

7.1 Introduction

In the second half of the 20th century, an intercultural approach was introduced in Europe, in relation to the circumstances of migrants in industrial states in particular. It was intended to be a strategy for reformation and changes in relations of power, as well as for the formation of a space that provided equal footing for all (that is, for both individuals and groups of migrants). The latter were underestimated regarding the development of their competencies, cultural references, and forms of expression. This intercultural approach recognised the inequality existent in educational opportunities, as well as in linguistic and cultural exchange. Efforts were directed towards democratising teaching and equalising educational possibilities (Rey-von Allmen 2011, pp. 35–38). Large groups of migrants were coming to Belgium, Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, and Portugal, especially from the former colonies of those states. In the fifties and sixties, people migrated from the Mediterranean states of Turkey, Greece, the former Yugoslavia, Italy, and Spain to Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and Scandinavia. Despite these migrants' initial expectations that they would eventually return home, it turned out that their migration was permanent; their family members followed and those members now represent the third and largest group of migrants in the majority of Western European states. In the seventies, the oil crisis dominated in industrial states, therefore, the countries began implementing social policies, the goal of which was to place limitations on the number of foreign migrants. The only exceptions were Sweden and the Netherlands, where the development of intercultural society was officially recognised. Nevertheless, Europe accepted large numbers of refugees and the most diverse group of migrants; the Netherlands, for example, is now confronted with growing communities of people from Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, Somalia, and Vietnam. Germany became home to relatively large numbers of people from ex-Yugoslavia (Portera 2011, pp. 23, Scheffer 2011, pp. 144–145).

In the sixties, seventies and eighties, Slovenia was simultaneously a country of emigration and immigration: people were leaving Slovenia, headed in particular for the Western and Northern European states, and people were also coming to Slovenia, mostly from the common state of ex-Yugoslavia. It is similar today: at

the threshold of the 21st century, similar to the second half of the 20th century, the majority of immigrants – approximately half of them coming from Bosnia and Herzegovina – still emigrate from the ex-Yugoslavian succession states (1945–1991). In the period from 2000–2006, the number of migrants increased (from 6,185 to 15,041), while between 2007 and 2009, the number stabilised to approximately 30,000.²⁰ In 2010 and 2011, the number of migrants decreased by half, which was “the consequence of the changed definition of residents and thus of international migrations, as well as of the increased economic crisis” (Medica, Lukič, 2011, pp. 36). Consequently, the migrant children from the first generation – those who were born in other states and moved to Slovenia (most frequently on the basis of family reunion) and are included in the Slovene educational system – mostly come from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia, and Montenegro (80–90%), and to a smaller extent from other countries (10–20%) (Vižintin 2014b).

In this article, the main emphasis is on the understanding of the concepts of intercultural education and interculturality as principles in education (Rey-von Allmen 2011, Skubic Ermenc 2007, 2010, Vižintin 2013a, 2014a). Later, our attention is directed to the most frequent mistakes in introducing activities for the development of intercultural education (Portera 2011) and on fake tolerance (Šlibar 2006, Žižek 2008). I call attention to the prejudice to the largest group of migrants in Slovenia and recommend how to overcome them. The overcoming of prejudice is the most effective if school cooperates with migrants who live in their local community and enables migrants to present themselves with their positive life stories. In the conclusion, it is recommended with which organisations should schools cooperate in the local community and why.

7.2 The Development of Intercultural Education

The beginnings of intercultural education in Europe can be traced back to the UNESCO's General conference in Nairobi (1976): the main topic of its conversation was “Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace”. From 1977–1983, while the group *Conseil de la Cooperation Culturelle* (CDCC) was in operation, its aim was to develop methods and strategies for educating teachers

20 In 2009, 30,296 migrants migrated to Slovenia. Among them, there were 27,393 foreigners and 2,903 Slovenian citizens; of those 23,935 people, or 87% of migrants, migrated from the succession states of former Yugoslavia (from Europe: 12,910 from Bosnia and Herzegovina, 3,576 from Kosovo, 2,987 from Macedonia, 2,907 from Serbia, 1,442 from Croatia, 539 from Bulgaria, 354 from the Ukraine, 271 from Italy, 183 from Germany, 165 from the Russian Federation, 117 from the United Kingdom, 113 from Monte Negro, 107 from Austria, etc.), while 55 people came from Africa, 564 from Asia, 45 from South America, 191 from North and South America, 23 from Australia and Oceania, and 22 from unknown states (Vižintin 2013a, p. 33).

in Europe. It was led by Micheline Rey-von Allmen and this was the start of the development of intercultural education (but not of multicultural education). In the late eighties, the Council of Europe supported trial periods of intercultural education. At the beginning, problems were reduced to aspects of language and initiatives were implemented for the learning of a second language, while projects were planned which encouraged awareness about diversity. In the nineties, European professionals in education hesitated in choosing between universal solutions, which reduced diversity, and relative solutions, which emphasised diversity. In 1984, the IAIE, or International Association for Intercultural Education, was founded, which published the magazine entitled *Intercultural Education*.²¹ In the late 1990s and during the first decade of the 21st century, after the fall of the Berlin wall and the emergence of numerous new states in Eastern and Middle Europe, the Council of Europe supported projects with which it encouraged cooperation among European states, as well as education on minorities, intercultural education, and education on democratic citizenship, human rights, and intercultural and interreligious dialogue (Rey-von Allmen 2011, pp. 39, 43–45).

All educational professionals are not equally thrilled about the idea of intercultural education as a key model for the further development of inclusionary societies. However, the changes in democratic societies imminently demand a long and complicated process, which also includes discussions and negotiations about positions in society, as well as values, if we truly wish to learn from diversity and start to live together successfully. We need to be aware that many teachers grew up and became educated in a monocultural and monolingual environment. The changes with which they are confronted in their environment and everyday work – the expansion of multicultural schools and classes, which results in a lack of homogeneity where diversity prevails – are considered disturbing by the teachers and they are afraid of the same. Simultaneously, prejudice, exclusion, violence, conflicts and the refusal of cooperation develop. These changes influence each teacher personally, and therefore they must redefine their viewpoints and their professional roles. Teachers play a crucial role in the preparation of young generations for life in the world – a world which will be even more multicultural in the future, and will be intercultural as well, with respectful cooperation among various cultures.

Micheline Rey-von Allmen (2011, pp. 35–38) enumerates the following key emphases in the understanding of the term “intercultural” and in the introduction of

21 In French-speaking regions, the Intercultural Research Association (ARIC) was founded, and in Switzerland, the magazine *InterDIALOGOS* was established (Rey-von Allmen 2011, pp. 44).

the term “intercultural education”: 1. intercultural education is aimed at all residents, 2. interculturality must develop in all social fields (not only in education), 3. intercultural teacher training is important, 4. interculturality promotes relationships among groups or individuals from different cultures and from the same culture, and 5. interculturality demands an objective and scientific description of a dynamic and changing reality.

On the basis of perceived unequal educational possibilities for children with a disadvantaged social background, schools were requested to take into consideration the migrant population. These schools were criticised for their inability to recognise and evaluate the values of *others*, to train *others* for their participation on equal footing in social functioning, educational institutions, and, later on, in professional life. It is much easier to marginalise the problems (and to attribute the reasons for failure to those people who disclose them: to migrants, schools, minority communities) instead of confronting them and attempting to find holistic solutions, which are complex – they consider everybody, not only the migrants. Some people err in thinking that the intercultural perspective is only applicable to education. Conceptually, interculturality has never only been reduced to education, although it is true that it first developed in education and schooling (because there was a possibility for its development). Its implementation in other fields was only waiting for those social representatives who would be ready to start the necessary work. As schools were confronted with diversity, some teachers accepted the challenge, despite those sociologists who criticised the school for reproducing social circumstances and for its inability to encourage change. The position of teachers is very complex; they need support and examples. Micheline Rey-von Allmen (2011) calls attention to the fact that we need to be careful when implementing intercultural education and that some approaches for the development of intercultural dynamics are more suitable than others. Active participation is necessary in the training of teachers and the teaching of students. Also required are common projects, which encourage the interest and the creativity of participants. The latter should be encouraged to use their competencies; they need to be trained to express themselves and to cooperate. Teachers must use various techniques and encourage an intercultural dialogue among students in a way which does not cause embarrassment or fear and which prevents the stigmatisation of children.

Klara Skubic Ermenc (2007, pp. 129, 2010, pp. 272–273) understands interculturality as a pedagogic-didactic principle. This means that the aforementioned principle directs the planning, implementation, and the evaluation of education

in such a way that it supports the change of existing hierarchical relations between the dominant ethnic/cultural majority and the subordinate ethnic/cultural minority groups in the education system. In this way, it enhances the equity of actual possibilities for education, the maintaining of various identities, and the development of solidarity towards ethnic and cultural minorities. Interculturality as a pedagogical-didactical principle encourages the following: the development of a (more pronounced) attitude of equality in regards to other cultures/ethnic groups, an attitude towards the other as an equal and not as a deficient citizen, trailblazing with a pedagogical process which enables higher achievements in minority groups; and the development of common values. It is an interesting starting point that interculturality is a principle and not a special pedagogic discipline. In pedagogy, the principle is a guideline for teaching which directs the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the class, which means that it permeates the entire process of education. In order for the principle of interculturality to truly come to life, it must become part of the so-called "real school curriculum", which means that the connection of the formal (official) curriculum (legislation, rules, educational programmes, curricula, textbooks, pedagogical-didactical guidelines, etc.) and the entire pedagogical practice, together with human relations, as well as the selection and interpretation of school knowledge (the so-called "hidden curriculum"), because only "several similar measures provide more opportunity for reaching the goal. The less the measures are unified, the less there is a possibility for them to become effective" (Skubic Ermenc 2007, pp. 129). Nives Zudič Antonič (2010, pp. 212–213) also understands intercultural education in a holistic way, as a pedagogical principle:

It is not about the additional competence which we need to develop during a learning process, but it is about a key dimension of a lifelong learning process, which transverses learning contents of various subject fields, learning approaches and strategies and which spreads into the field of interpersonal relations. This means that intercultural education does not get implemented only with adding the contents of foreign cultures, but with the in-depth research of existing models of curricula. We also need to research the relation between the school system and the state, the relation towards the profane and its development, the role of cultural history in the formation of an individual and other ideological concepts. If we want to implement the intercultural curriculum, we need to critically examine the existing learning programme and overcome eventual prejudice in changing the concepts of the existing curriculum. (Zudič Antonič 2010, pp. 212–213)

7.3 The Intercultural Educational Model

The intention of the intercultural educational model developed in this doctoral dissertation (Vižintin 2013a) is to contribute to the successful inclusion of migrant children, to the development of an intercultural dialogue in the Slovene educational system, and to the improvement of “the existing circumstances – when not much has been developed for the unrecognized language minorities, as has been critically evaluated by Klara Skubic Ermenc (2010, pp. 277).

I adopted the model of intercultural education (and not that of multicultural education), because the prefix “inter-” contains added value because it emphasises the cooperation among various communities in society. Micheline Rey-von Allmen (2011, pp. 34–35) advocates for the same position: despite multicultural education (the prefix “multi-”) not excluding cooperation among various communities, it is intercultural education (the prefix “inter-”) that exposes and emphasises cooperation. Interculturality is a dynamic process which invites people and communities not only to live beside each other, but also to cooperate and to co-create an intercultural society together.

In order to develop an efficient model of intercultural education, the goal of which is the successful inclusion of migrant children and the development of an intercultural dialogue at school, I recommend development in the following seven fields (Vižintin 2013a, 2014a): 1. interculturality as a principle, 2. systemic support for the successful inclusion of migrant children, 3. teachers who develop intercultural competence, 4. awareness-raising about multicultural society in all subjects, 5. the development of an intercultural dialogue at school, 6. cooperation with migrants (and their parents), and 7. cooperation with local environment. In this article, I focus only on first and last field.

7.4 Interculturality as a Principle

I understand multiculturality as a principle as:

- an equal relation between cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and other communities,
- different meaning equal and not deficient,
- a pedagogical process that supports the higher achievements of all students (positive actions and systematic support),
- the recognition of multicultural society and the development of intercultural society: the development of community values,
- the employment of teachers with their own migration experience,
- supporting a change in existing hierarchical relations,

- targeting all residents: the development of intercultural competence of all residents,
- the presence of interculturality during the entire educational process, and
- supporting common principles (human rights and duties, autonomy, justice, equality) and educational goals (Vižintin 2013a, 2014a)

An equal relation among cultural, ethnic, language and other communities could be understood as respectful and equal cooperation among various communities which coexist in our society inside a certain local environment and school community.

We can cooperate on equal footing with a person who is different, if we treat him or her as equal and not as deficient. When migrant children enrol in school, we include them in the class pursuant to their age and to the class from which they graduated in their country of origin. Migrant parents and teachers of mother tongues and cultures who come to school are treated as equal partners with whom and in partnership with whom we can develop an intercultural dialogue at school.

A pedagogical process supports the higher achievements of all students so that it develops various supportive forms and activities which contribute to higher achievements. Aside from the starting point that interculturality is an educational principle, I would like to particularly emphasise here the development of systemic support (positive action), which differentiates in order to eliminate unfair differences and to maintain equal opportunities for all. The following activities, enabled by the Slovene educational legislation, and examples of good practices, which were developed at individual schools in order to include migrant children, are included in the systemic support: teaching Slovene as a second language, a two-year adapted evaluation, an individual programme, inclusion into a wider programme, an introduction in the school premises²², the preparation of a student community to accept migrant children, and peer support.

22 In the last week of the summer holidays (the end of August), right before the start of the school year, the so-called *induction in the school premises* is provided. This 20-hour programme is important not just for the intensive Slovenian language course, but mainly as a way of familiarising students with the school environment and the city: children are shown around the school premises, so that on the first official day at school (in Slovenia, this usually falls on September 1st), they feel more secure and welcome among the hundreds of children returning to their school desks. They take a walk around the city and are shown the location of shops, the market, the library, the bookshop, the health centre, and other institutions important for everyday life. Migrant children come to school with their parents and they tour the city together, but they are separated when attending the Slovenian course, which is provided for the parents in a different form. The integration of migrant children can of course not be completed in one week, and continues for (at least) two school years: children are provided support in regular lessons by teachers and classmates, as well as in supplementary lessons and individual professional assistance; they are included in special interest activities. With the agreement of their parents, they are included in morning care and after-school stays, and they continue their individual learning of Slovene, etc. (Vižintin 2013b, pp. 59–60).

Teachers encourage the development of common values, taking into consideration that we “originate from the common European heritage of political, cultural and moral values which are united by human rights and duties that belong to them, as well as by the principles of plural democracy, tolerance, solidarity and a rule of law” (Krek, etc. 2011, pp. 13). However, this is not enough. Our starting point for the development of common values is the recognition that our society is multicultural and that we require the development of an intercultural society.

Interculturality as a principle can be realised more easily and quickly if teachers with migration experience are employed at school. These are the teachers who had themselves moved and experienced culture shock (or one of their relatives experienced it):

If you move out of the country into another state, if you have a child – my children also walk around the world, my daughter is enrolled in the postgraduate studies in Spain, she will do a PhD; my son is a professional sportsman and has been living in Germany for two years, next year he will go to Italy, he has small children – when I look at my family in Germany; it is not easy to get included in the community! [...] It is difficult for them to get in contact with the community which is different, and refuses them and it is very hard for them to learn Slovene. Here, I have in mind our community, which is the same if you transfer it to Germany. There, a Slovene woman, who takes care for the family at home, experiences difficulties in getting included or in learning fast. One has to invest a lot of energy into learning the language in the community in which one lives. One has to experience that the community accepts him or her. If one gets the feeling that the community refuses him or her, it is even more difficult to hone one’s language skills. If these people had such an experience and saw how difficult it is outside, that you are in the same position as Macedonians in our country [...]. (A teacher, Vižintin 2013a, pp. 389–90)

Teachers who experienced the process of emigration and integration into a new society and the challenges encountered in those processes also endeavoured hard to learn the language of their environment. Teachers who experienced the dilemmas of how to maintain and develop their mother tongue and the culture of their country of origin at the same time accepted certain (different) social rules and habits from their new environment. Finally, the teachers who experienced a change in their identity and the development of a hyphenated (compound) identity themselves – those teachers can contribute significantly to the more successful inclusion

of migrant children with their knowledge and experience, because they can apply their own experiences:

Regarding the fact that I am a foreigner myself and I am not a Slovene, because I am a migrant and I was not born in Slovenia, I can enrich them with my knowledge that if they keep everything they have in their own culture and respect and add everything offered by this state, this combination can be fantastic. (A teacher, Vižintin 2013a, pp. 358)

I suggest a new professional term instead of the term “a teacher with a migrant background”, namely, “a teacher with his or her own migration experience”. The word “background” has a negative connotation: it usually denotes something dark and negative, “something that draws you backward”, while the term “experience” has the opposite effect and meaning: it means something precious and important, something from which we learn and move forward.

Teachers cooperate in changing existing hierarchical attitudes, which means that they recognise the examples of (systemic and hidden) discrimination in their environment; these teachers are aware of prejudice and stereotypes, raise their awareness of the same, and overcome them (in themselves as well as in students) – and they overtly oppose them. They are critical towards Eurocentric work plans and teaching resources. Natalija Vrečer (2012, pp. 56) calls attention to the fact that we need a “greater sensibility for the overlooked marginalized ethnic and cultural groups and for the development of intercultural competencies, which are necessary for the successful intercultural dialogue”. We need to research “the image of minorities in school curricula and media in order to find out if they are stereotypical and if they adequately recognize the contributions of migrants to the national history and the world culture” (Kymlicka 2005, pp. 498).

Mojca Peček and Irena Lesar (2006, pp. 187) call attention to the fact that Slovene curricula do not take into consideration the characteristics and idiosyncrasies of minority communities, and that, in the primary school curricula, there are practically no contents dealing with migrants and their activities in Slovene society. This was confirmed by Janja Žitnik Serafin (2014)²³ in her analysis of teaching resources for Slovene. Klara Skubic Ermenc (2007) also discovered that Slovene curricula

23 It is similar in the Austrian textbooks. Luciak and Khan-Svik (2008, pp. 498) discovered that intercultural aspects do not play any significant role in them. Migrants are rarely mentioned, and when they are, they are mostly mentioned with the connotation of *foreigners* and *Others*, or they are described in a prejudiced way. Similarly, this holds true for the autochthonous ethnic minorities (the Slovene, Croatian, and Hungarian minorities have the right to bilingual education, while the Czech, Slovak, and Roma minorities do not have this right; some schools offer these languages). Autochthonous minorities are described as linguistic minorities, while their history and current life in Austria are barely mentioned.

are mostly Eurocentric and monocultural. The curricula for geography and history are based on the Western European and partly on the American cultures, while the cultures which do not belong to the Western civilization appear rarely in the curricula and only in relation to the Western civilization, not as “interesting cultures which are worthy of discovering per se, and not worthy enough for us to get to know their viewpoints” (Skubic Ermenc 2007, pp. 131). Those planning curricula and assembling teaching resources, as well as teachers, should demand changes and cooperate in realising them with their knowledge and actions as active citizens.

When we try to develop interculturality as a principle, we target all residents, not only migrants or a certain cultural, ethnic, linguistic or other community, as we all need to develop our intercultural competence. Intercultural education is a concept intended for all members of society, as was emphasised by Micheline Rey-von Allmen (2011, pp. 35–38). She also stated that intercultural relations are not solely a matter of foreigners or any other special group. Intercultural education is not education for migrants (the so-called *Ausländerpädagogik*, or pedagogy for foreigners, as it was called in Germany). To be intercultural demands working towards developing qualitative relationships with others, regardless of to which group they belong. Additionally, from the intercultural perspective, the quality of interpersonal relations not only refers to those relationships among individuals and groups from various cultures, but also to the relationships among individuals and groups from the same culture. Nevertheless, the intercultural work in the Western industrial European states was introduced in connection with the migration experience in particular, which can be very versatile and which has not yet been properly emphasised (cf. Milharčič Hladnik 2010, Vižintin 2014b).

Interculturality is a principle and not a special pedagogic discipline. Like other principles, interculturality is a guideline for teaching, which directs the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning, meaning that it is present throughout the entire educational process (Skubic Ermenc 2007, 2010). Interculturality as a principle means that it is present everywhere and permeates everything: the school atmosphere, the physical environment, and the curricula, as well as the relationships among teachers, students, and the community. Intercultural education should be present in every lesson, in each curricula, unit, publication, and in each official letter sent home. It is also evident in each purchase of books and audio-visual accessories for a school library, in plays, and during breaks, as well as in each lunch served. Intercultural education is a philosophy – a worldview, and not simply a programme or a teacher. Teachers at school represent the versatility of intercultural society. The curricula include the history, viewpoints, and understanding of various communities of men and

women. It is possible to discuss topics considered *dangerous* (racism, examples of discrimination at school and in society, etc.) in a classroom setting, which encourages students to pursue critical thinking. In textbooks, one notices that multiple perspectives are represented; migrant families and the families of other communities are visible in schools because they can offer an important and useful point of view.

An intercultural school is completely different: international meals are offered in a dining hall, not for exotic pleasures, but because people from the community eat them in their everyday life; plays can be acted out and sports played from all over the world, not necessarily on a competitive basis. Letters and information sent home from school should be sent in the language understood by a child's family; children should not be punished, despised or humiliated because they use their mother tongue. On the contrary: its use should be encouraged and guided. The school is a learning environment in which curricula, pedagogy, and achievements are permeated with intercultural psychology (summarised according to Nieto, Bode 2008).

Interculturality supports general principles (human rights and duties, autonomy, justice, equality) and educational goals. Additionally, we find important starting points for the development of the intercultural educational model in other principles. Klara Skubic Ermenc (2007, 2010) has demanded time and again that interculturality become one of the principles of primary school. In the latest *White Paper on Education* (Krek, Metljak 2011, pp. 114–117), interculturality is included among the principles and goals for the further development of primary school in a parallel way as “the principle of formation and spreading the national culture *and* encouraging interculturality”, meaning that interculturality, together with the formation and spread of national culture, forms one principle, the components of which complement each other – they are not in mutual contradiction.

Many Slovene schools have adopted their own “vision of school”: we suggest that interculturality become one of the principles in this school vision, namely, one of the goals for which the entire educational process strives and the principle on which relationships in a multicultural, multilingual, multi-ethnic, and multireligious society are based; Slovene society is such an example.

7.5 The Most Frequent Mistakes in the Development of Intercultural Education

Before we begin to introduce intercultural education in a school, we need to be aware of certain traps and the most frequently repeated mistakes. The lack of transparent concepts with definitions, goals, and conditions is one of the factors most

frequently reproached in the introduction of the intercultural educational model and in its implementation, as Agostino Portera explains (2011, pp. 24–27). On the basis of European experience, he calls attention to the limitations and traps in the introduction of the intercultural educational model:

- The lack of transparent concepts (meta-, trans-, multi-, intercultural)²⁴ represents a danger to the teachers and other educators to such an extent that in the attempts to define the circumstances connected with migrants, interculturality becomes associated with the connotation of a trend. Following some *professionals* from various disciplines, who used different terms for the same meanings or the same terms for various meanings, teachers often celebrated exotic cultures in classes and planned projects without a critical analysis of values and the knowledge necessary.
- Many professionals and teachers think that intercultural education is the only and the best possible model. Sometimes a dialogue and mutual function are not the best solutions, especially if we do not have enough knowledge about the other culture; this results in injustice and discrimination for them. Certain preconditions need to be created and teachers need to obtain an adequate knowledge.
- Some teachers only emphasise differences; however, this can stereotype or marginalise the students.
- There is a danger that we expect the children to be the ambassadors of their countries and that we thus can end up forcing them to present a culture with which they are not well-acquainted. Migrant children often wish to liberate themselves from the culture of the state from which they come – this is not unproblematic – and to develop their identity. In order to do so, they use the synthesis of cultural standards which suits them.
- The risk exists of teachers identifying too strongly with migrant children (also known as “xenophilia”). These teachers understand intercultural education as always having to protect a migrant child. It was observed that migrant children did not want to (or could not) give up their privileged status in the class and that they therefore suppressed many of their interiorised cultural standards.
- Education is not a panacea (a cure for everything), although it can solve many problems that migrants encounter (e.g. poverty, political and legal discrimination, psychological problems, the lack of a home, employment, and proper nutrition, etc.). (Intercultural) educational strategies must be implemented in

24 The prefix *inter-* denotes interdependence, interaction, exchange. In Latin, the prefix *multi-* and in Greek, the prefix *poli-* means many; *pluri-* means “more” in Latin. These terms are suitable for describing the circumstances: for example, all groups and societies are pluricultural/multicultural. The terms “trans-” and “cross-” define the surpassing of borders, while, similarly, the prefixes “pluri-” and “multi-” do not denote mutual functioning (Rey-von Allmen 2011, pp. 34–35).

tandem with measures in the fields of economy, politics, legislation, and social fields. Complex problems demand interdisciplinary answers: teamwork and networking are needed.

- Intercultural education is frequently used in schools as education only for migrant children. However, intercultural education is intended for all residents, not only for migrants; namely, the adjective “intercultural” means that all kinds of diversities should be taken into consideration (social status, culture, gender, etc.).
- An intercultural approach demands scientific discussions about practical programmes together with a theoretical basis and mutual epistemology for the researchers of various nationalities and languages.

Agostino Portera (2011, pp. 27–28) emphasises that the best goal is that of overcoming all forms of dogmatism, ethnocentric views, and nationalisms, without at the same time falling prey to relativism or spontaneity, with which we would think that everything is possible. For Portera, education is the tool for managing both of the following: maintaining ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity, and attaining the goal of social inclusion, equality, and intercultural understanding.

7.6 From the Apparent (Fake) Tolerance to the Overcoming of Prejudice

According to Allport’s theory of contacts (Allport in Bennett 2011, pp. 23–24), prejudice is lessened and friendly points of view increase in number when the following conditions are fulfilled: the encouragement of cooperation among majority and minority groups, different activities which enable people to get to know each other and to reach common goals, and intergroup contacts that should last longer and take place on various occasions. The self-fulfilment of individuals should be enabled, individuals should have an equal position in society, and the tendency for positive relations among various groups must be clearly declared by a recognised authority or an influential third party.

Despite advocates for tolerance towards those who are different presenting this development in comparison with intolerance, Neva Šlibar (2006) calls attention to the inadequacy and insufficiency of the meaning of the word “tolerance”: it does not seem very adequate for the world which endeavours for the positive motivation, because it is originally connected to the words ‘suffer’, ‘endure’, which gives it a negative connotation. Tolerance can be proven and realised in relation to difference and foreignness. “It has to be emphasized that its opposites are not

only intolerance or conflict and violence, but especially fake tolerance, indifference, apathy, passivity which also kills with its lack of help, attention, negotiation (Šlibar 2006, pp. 23). Slavoj Žižek (2008, pp. 41) also critically dismisses the apparent attitude of tolerance:

Today's liberal tolerance towards others, the respect of otherness and openness towards it, is counterpointed by an obsessive fear of harassment. In short, the Other is just fine, but only insofar as his presence is not intrusive, insofar as this Other is not really other ... In a strict homology with the paradoxical structure of the previous chapter's chocolate laxative, tolerance coincides with its opposite. My duty to be tolerant towards the Other effectively means that I should not get too close to him, intrude on his space. In other words, I should respect his *intolerance* of my over-proximity. What increasingly emerges as the central human right in late-capitalist society is *the right not to be harassed*, which is a right to remain at a safe distance from others.

Migrants very often only present their cuisine or folklore in the name of multi- or interculturality at schools, and in this way we even strengthen the anchored stereotypes and prejudice – however, during the lessons, they rarely speak about cultural, economic, scientific and other achievements, which the members of migrant communities contributed to the development of humanity. Here I focus on migrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, which represent nearly half of all of the migrants in Slovenia and who are unjustly labelled as “dumb Bosnians” in Slovene collective prejudice. I would like to emphasise here that the only Nobel Prize winner for literature from the region of ex-common state of Yugoslavia comes from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Namely, in 1961, Ivo Andrić received a Nobel Prize in literature for his novel *Most na Drini (The Bridge over Drina)*.

Well-educated and socially active migrants should more often present themselves during lessons and intercultural school events. They concretely contribute to the image and economic development of contemporary Slovenia with their knowledge, experience, and ideas (De Toni, Kožar Rosulnik, Vižintin 2013, pp. 45–48). There are not only Bosnians who live in Slovenia and work at construction sites and Bosnian women who work as cleaners,²⁵ but also female and male migrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina and their offspring in all professions and with different levels of education in Slovenia. Aside from entrepreneurs, medical assistants, medical doctors, teachers, sportsmen, artists, etc., there are also, for example, the

25 These two professions are mentioned here, because they are stereotypically connected to migrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, I need to emphasize that all employees pay taxes, even cleaners and construction workers, because taxes and contributions are paid from each monthly salary and yearly personal income tax.

scientist Milena Mileva Blažič, Ph.D., (Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana), a co-author of the *Bosnian-Slovene dictionary*, Amra Halilović (2014), a ballet teacher, Manjana Milostnik (Koper Music School), an actor, film director, and musician Branko Đurić-Đuro, the sculptors Mirsad Begić and Jakov Brdar, a radio and television personality, Denis Avdić, and the writers Ismet Bekrić, Josip Osti, and Senada Smajić (Dimkowska 2014), to name only a few. We should be talking about them in Slovene schools; when we discuss Bosnians, we should present their work during intercultural lessons and intercultural school events, so that migrant children from Bosnia and Herzegovina would be able to enhance their positive self-image and create a positive image of Bosnians in Slovenia. It would be even better, if we invite well-known personalities and successful local migrants to schools and they would present themselves in the scope of intercultural lessons or at intercultural school events – which would be intended for all inhabitants not only for migrants. This can be asserted for all migrant communities in Slovenia as well, like in any other state.

Only apparent/fake tolerance (Šlibar 2006, Žižek 2007), which does not include mutual cooperation, connecting and learning from each other, keeps the distance. Pursuant to the theory of contacts I recommend common projects and planning of intercultural lessons, as well as intercultural school events with migrants. Teachers can take actions against stereotypes and overcome prejudice with the selection of positive life histories and the cooperation with migrant (parents). I recommend not only close cooperation with (migrant) parents, but also with other organisations in the (local) environment.

7.7 The cooperation of school with local communities

A school is a part of the wider social community. Migrants are successfully included in the society only if they are included in all its spheres not only school. The opening of a school into the local community and the cooperation with the organisations in it has a strong influence on the inclusion. The latter is understood as a two-way process in which all the collaborators cooperate. It enables the exchange of the examples of good practice, the cooperation in local, national and interstate projects, trainings and searching, and acquiring of the support for the successful inclusion of children and migrant parents, as well as the understanding of the migrants' needs for their inclusion and consequently for the development of intercultural competence in all inhabitants, the development of intercultural dialogue in schools and local communities, and the development of intercultural education. Each school should maintain contacts with the organisations in its local

environment: if a school is acquainted with their activities, it can advise children and parents, where to get additional support in their inclusion in the Slovene society (Vižintin 2013a), and at the same time, it acquires new (intercultural) experience. When we speak about the cooperation of schools with local communities, I recommend the cooperation with the following:

- Other primary schools,
- Local communities,
- Voluntary associations,
- Local Friends of youth associations,
- Folk universities which enable Slovene courses and further vocational adult education,
- General libraries,
- The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, the National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia,
- Research institutes, faculties,
- Organisations which formally influence the inclusion of migrants (social work centres, administrative units, the Employment Service of Slovenia),
- The embassies of the states from which migrants at school come from,
- The associations of migrants (and minorities),
- Other migrants,
- The teachers of mother tongues and the cultures of migrant children,
- Active individuals who operate in the field of the inclusion of migrant children and intercultural dialogue.

A school which cooperates with other schools, exchanges good practices, and parents from various schools can mutually cooperate in projects, they can learn from each other and they together find solutions for new challenges. Various voluntary associations which already cooperate with migrants and voluntary associations, and with the countries of origin can support schools. In cooperation with migrant associations and migrants, some general libraries organize the evenings at which migrants present their lives or their own literary texts. Folk universities implement the adult courses of the language of the environment and other adult education. In the past, some faculties and institutes have already dealt with interculturality, intercultural education and education, the development of intercultural competence, searching for the examples of good practices in this field. I recommend to schools to connect to them, to study and use their teaching resources, to improve and create new materials. The cooperation of schools with the organisations which formally influence the inclusion of migrants (social work centres, administrative units, the Employment Service of Slovenia) is useful for teachers at school to understand

how much time, energy and financial resources newcomers need for dealing with the documentation (the prolongment of the permission for temporary or permanent stay, a work permit, the application for the citizenship after ten years of residence etc.) – and thus being able to advise them according to their best capacities.

Schools can request the embassies of the states from which migrant children come from for free library material in the mother tongues of migrant children and thus they can enrich school library collections. On the basis of their experience, migrants who moved to Slovenia some years ago, can essentially enhance a quicker and easier inclusion of migrants into the Slovene society. At the beginning they can provide support in translation, therefore it is recommended that schools connect with them and develop close cooperation. I suggest that connecting with local migrant associations who provide migrants support in the inclusion into society besides the possibilities for cultural functioning, maintaining of mother tongues and the culture of origin, as well as quality free time (cf. De Toni, Kožar Rosulnik, Vižintin 2013, pp. 57–64). The cooperation with the teachers of mother tongues and cultures who come to school (cf. Vižintin 2010) does not only mean the opportunity for common co-creation of intercultural lessons and intercultural events, but also a concrete support in the development of multilinguality which is, according to my opinion, based on the mother tongue and it continues with the learning of the language of the environment and neighbouring, and foreign languages.

7.8 Conclusion

Intercultural education is intended for all residents. It should develop in all social fields (not only in education). It is crucial for the development of intercultural education that teachers are provided in-service training, because only those teachers who have developed intercultural competence themselves can develop it in their students. Intercultural education demands an objective and scientific description of a dynamic and changing reality and this article aims to contribute to the same. Klara Skubic Ermenc (2007, 2010) and Nives Zudič Antonič (2010) understand interculturality as one of the pedagogical-didactical principles, which was also thematised in the new *White Paper on Education* (Krek, Metljak 2011): among the principles, interculturality is written parallel to the formation and spread of national culture; it forms one principle, the components of which compliment each other – it is not in opposition to itself.

Interculturality as a principle is also the first field in the intercultural educational model (Vižintin 2013a, 2014a). The model proposes seven fields of intercultural

competence development: 1. interculturality as a principle, 2. systemic support for the successful inclusion of migrant children, 3. teachers who develop intercultural competence, 4. awareness-raising about multicultural society in all subjects, 5. the development of an intercultural dialogue at school, 6. cooperation with migrants (and their parents), and 7. cooperation with the local community. Interculturality as a principle is understood in the model as equal relationships among cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and other communities. Different means equal, not deficient, and the pedagogical process supports the higher achievements of all students (positive action/systemic support). Also necessary is the recognition of a multicultural society and the development of an intercultural society: the development of common values, employing teachers who have their own migration experience, supporting teachers in changing existing hierarchical relations, targeting the entirety of the population, the development of the intercultural competence of all residents, the presence of interculturality in the entire educational process, and the support of educational principles and goals (Vižintin 2013a, 2014a).

Agostino Portera (2011) calls attention to the most frequent mistakes in the development of intercultural education in the European experience. In the article, special attention is paid to the events at which, for the sake of interculturality, migrants mainly presented themselves via their folklore and cuisine, which additionally stigmatises them if these are the only forms of intercultural cooperation. I also warn readers about fake tolerance (Šlibar 2006, Žižek 2008), which maintains distance and does not include mutual cooperation, connecting and learning from each other, and Slovene prejudice towards migrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Among these migrants, I mention some well-known personalities who co-created the Slovene cultural, social, and economic space with their activities, knowledge, and experience. I also suggest that teachers take action against stereotypes and overcome prejudice in cooperation with migrants and with the selection of positive life stories. Congruent with the theory of contacts, I recommend common projects and the planning of intercultural lessons and intercultural school events together with migrants. I also recommend to schools to cooperate with the organisations in the local environment: with other primary schools, local communities, voluntary associations, local friends of youth associations, folk universities, general library, The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, the National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, research institutes, faculties, the organizations which formally influence the inclusion of migrants (social work centres, administrative units, the Employment Service of Slovenia), the embassies of the states from which migrants at school come from, the associations of migrants, other migrants, the teachers of mother tongues and the cultures of migrant children, and with

active individuals who operate in the field of the inclusion of migrant children and intercultural dialogue. Such cooperation brings many benefits: a school which is acquainted with the activities of local organizations can advise migrants and migrant parents how to get additional support in the inclusion in the Slovene society and at the same time acquires new (intercultural) experience. Together with migrants and local organizations, the teachers who receive in-service training and develop intercultural competence can truly develop intercultural education.

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