GLOBALISED WORLD AND MOBILITY: SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

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Annotation. In the paper it is emphasized that in a globalised world intercultural experiences become almost integral part of daily routines of people of almost all ages, and therefore almost change the culture as more traditional societies used to know it. Interculturalism is defined as an active process that implies interaction among members in a culturally diverse environment. Therefore educators have to start to consider the possibilities to help students (in this paper the context of higher education is analysed) to reflect on their cultures, their cultural identities, and the perception of other people, whom they will be meeting more often in a globalised world. Therefore in this paper results of an empiric study on the students opinions what are their experiences and feelings in other countries and cultures, what they feel they learnt living abroad, are presented.

Keywords: intercultural education, culture, mobility, globalization.

INTRODUCTION

Interculturalism is defined as an active process that implies interaction among members in a culturally diverse environment. Intercultural interaction suits the needs for democratic communication in a multicultural environment. The development of united multicultural society at this moment is in the stage of creation of unified but not the same society[1].

Globalization in its widest sense is defined as a process of mobility of people, capital and information. Mobility seems to have achieved the largest scope in our history, and therefore we are witnessing the development of multicultural society. Cultural context always influences and shapes learning, because each person reacts to the world and experiences based or in relation to his/her beliefs. Cultural interaction broadens cultural understanding of members in multicultural environment, however, this process is also related to dangers and tensions. In a global world such interaction makes people react. Higher education, however, should provide opportunities to reflect and critically evaluate own culture, understand the importance of democracy and respect human rights. Without knowing yourself and your

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[1] Bagdonaitė, Giedrė; Zuzevičiūtė, Vaiva. Intercultural education in a multicultural environment: analysis of Latvian, Lithuanian, Finnish And Danish students' learning experiences // Actual problems of modern humanitarian science = Актуальные проблемы современной гуманитарной науки = Қазіргі гуманитарлық ғылымдарының өзекті мәселелері : межвузовский научный сборник. Вып. 2 / отв. ред. А. И. Ковтун. Алматы : Ценные бумаги, 2012. ISBN 9786012472264. p. 186-190.

identity it is almost impossible to experience and accept others' identity; this is an interesting and sometimes a challenging process[2].

The **object** of the study is cultural experiences and the implications for intercultural education they provide (context of higher education is at focus in our case). Therefore the **aim** of this paper is to present results of a study on students` opinions about their cultural experiences. **Methods** of analytical and empirical study (semi structured interview) were employed in the process of developing the paper. **The limitations of a study.** Study was completed in just one of the universities of Lithuania, therefore the data may only be considered as guidelines for further investigation. Nevertheless, data is illustrative enough to present picture of opinions of contemporary students, their cultural experiences and identities, and, therefore, to provide certain insights for intercultural education.

CONTEMPORARY INDIVIDUAL'S INTERCULTURAL EXPERIENCES

In a globalised world intercultural experiences become almost integral part of daily routines. Some of the features of globalisation mark positive changes, and there are changes, however, that increase anxiety and highlight the risks involved, such as collapsing markets, the dominance of economy over politics, and the change from a market economy to a "market society". Various forces of globalization have resulted in increased anxiety and uncertainty for many people in the world. Our lives are being challenged and integrated into larger global networks of relationships. All social systems are influenced by the need to meet values, morals, skills, and competencies from neighbouring regions or nations[3]. Religion and national identity, compared to most other principles for construction identity, are viewed as particularly relevant organizing principles at a time when modern society is making increasing demands on individuals[4]. But the spread of extreme nationalism (and religious beliefs) causes counter positions by emphasising that a certain culture or heritage will be sustained not so much by protection but by contrasting them with other cultures. Finding

[2] Bagdonaitė, Giedrė; Zuzevičiūtė, Vaiva. Intercultural education in a multicultural environment: analysis of Latvian, Lithuanian, Finnish And Danish students' learning experiences // Actual problems of modern humanitarian science = Актуальные проблемы современной гуманитарной науки = Қазіргі гуманитарлық ғылымдарының өзекті мәселелері : межвузовский научный сборник. Вып. 2 / отв. ред. А. И. Ковтун. Алматы : Ценные бумаги, 2012. ISBN 9786012472264. p. 186-190.
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[3] Doku, P. N., Oppong Asante, K. Identity: Globalization, culture and psychological functioning. *International Journal of Human Sciences. Volume: 8 Issue: 2, 2011.*
[4] Kinvall C. Nationalism, religion, and the search for chosen traumas: Comparing Sikh and Hindu identity constructios. Ethnicities. Mar2002, Vol. 2 Issue 1, p79-106.

ISSN 2029–1701 (print)
ISSN 2335–2035 (online)

Mokslinių straipsnių rinkinys
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PUBLIC SECURITY AND PUBLIC ORDER
2013 (9) Scientific articles

prospects for integration without the levelling effect, keeping in mind recent events (September of 2001 in the United States, March of 2004 in Spain, and July of 2007 in the United Kingdom), is a challenge for times yet to come. Globalisation manifests itself through the intensification of increased mobility of individuals, capital, information on a global scale, that is, a multicultural society is being constructed under our eyes on a global scale[5]. There are cases of extreme nationalist or religious movements, that express their protest in an inappropriate and sometimes even in an illegal ways and these issues start to become evident even in a relatively culturally homogeneous Lithuanian society.

Therefore educators have to start to consider the possibilities to help students (in this paper: context of higher education is analysed) to reflect on both their cultural identities, and the perception of other people, whom they will be meeting more often in a globalised world.

Effective intercultural communication is both learning and teaching experience. Interaction with individuals or groups from different cultural backgrounds is an ongoing learning experience, which may result in personal development[6].

CONCEPTUALIZING CULTURE

Cultural context always influences and shapes learning, also it influences our understanding of beliefs, attitudes and behaviours and enables us to identify the similarities or differences that affect our ability to communicate effectively and to focus our efforts for learning[7]. Culture is a sociological concept with a number of different meanings but usually it refers to the totality of knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and values of a social group. Culture is something material (books, paintings), and immaterial (ideas, conversations, songs) that has significance for us and that turns us into who we are, and what we are constantly creating. Culture shapes us, and we contribute to culture almost every minute of our life. Christensen (2003) summarizes definitions of culture and provides the following characteristics: culture is learnt; it is not a biological heritage, and it is handed down from one generation to the next. Author states that culture generates a common identity for the members of a society and it consists of whatever one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to the members of a particular society.

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[5] Zuzevičiūtė, Vaiva. Learning at university : challenges, strategies, perspectives for lifelong learning. Saarbrücken : Lambert academic publishing, 2011. 175 p. : iliustr. ISBN 9783846515501.
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ISSN 2029–1701 (print)
ISSN 2335–2035 (online)

Mokslinių straipsnių rinkinys
VISUOMENĖS SAUGUMAS IR VIEŠOJI VARKA
PUBLIC SECURITY AND PUBLIC ORDER
2013 (9) Scientific articles

Culture triggers human beings to engage into learning relationships with each other, where they can immerse into experiences and seek common interpretations of the world[8]. It should be noted that for many theoreticians, culture is intimately related to learning. What is more, the cultures are defined by concentrating on the way people communicate among each other, and the way they represent each other, rather than on just social institutions[9]. In individualist cultures clear messages, initiative taking, assertiveness, self–expression characterize its members, and in collective cultures group harmony, avoiding offending others are important. Therefore, despite the fact that such grouping is over-simplistic at times and straightforward, in individualist cultures we might expect the approach to learning to be more individualistic than in collective ones. Fenwick T. J.[10] says that individuals learn as they participate by interacting with the community (cultural values, rules, and history), the tools (including languages, images, technology) and the purposes and norms. Social interactions in learning construct both educators and learners. The potential response to an increasing awareness of the relationship between culture and education may be of a varied nature: if people want to expand their horizons, they need to be mobile and to take action, recognizing social relations and practices[11].

REFLECTING ON CULTURAL IDENTITIES – ROLE OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

We have noted that multiculturalism is a fact of a contemporary society. Intercultural education is preparation for the social, political and economic realities in culturally diverse and complex human encounters. Its aim is to help an individual to develop competencies for perceiving, believing, evaluating and behaving in different cultural settings that is, for reflecting one's own cultural identity[12].

In a multicultural society we need to have awareness of the rules and expectations in different situations. Therefore, one of the main issues to be emphasized in this paper is a reciprocal nature of intercultural learning. On the one hand, people have to be prepared for learning in multicultural contexts, e.g., mobility (have to know foreign languages at a certain

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[8] Zuzevičiūtė V., Mijoč N., Kondrotaitė E. (2008). Mobility in Adult Education: Intercultural Learning and Maturing. Hungary, Pecs, 02 – 05 October. ISBN 978-963—642-265-3; pp.340-355.
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[11 12] Kondrotaitė E. (2008). Experiential learning within multicultural context in student's mobility [Manuscript]. Bachelor degree thesis. Kaunas – Ljublijana.

level, and also have certain attitudes to new situations and people), and on the other hand, it is a multicultural context that accelerates learning of languages, communication skills, awareness building and even maturing.

Promotion of transnational mobility for learning purposes reflects increasing importance in the political priorities of the European Union[13]. After a few transformations during several decades, the contemporary European Union was established via the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. The European Union is expected to guarantee a sustainable and stable development and progress for the region as a whole, solve internal conflicts as well as those with neighbours, and accept neighbouring countries that recognise the same principles.

Free movement of persons was considered to be an essential element for the establishment of a common market. There are several documents describing free movement of persons as a fundamental right within the European Union area. In regards to the Treaty, which established the European Union, the European Parliament and the Council adopted the Directive on the Right of Citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States. The Directive states: "The free movement of persons constitutes one of the fundamental freedoms of the internal market, which comprises an area without internal frontiers, in which freedom is ensured in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty".[14]

The European Court of Justice has recognized freedom of movement for workers as one of the most important human rights. In *Bosman* case, Court stated: "As the Court has repeatedly held, freedom of movement for workers is one of the fundamental principles of the Community and the Treaty provisions guaranteeing that freedom have had direct effect since the end of the transitional period".[15]

The 60 years of peace (at least within this region) could be a good indicator for optimistic predictions regarding the effectiveness of such policies[16].

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[13] Nakrošis V. (2003): Europos Sąjungos regioninė politika ir struktūrinių fondų valdymas. Vilnius: Eugrimas.
[14] The Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States , Official Journal of the European Union, 2004, L 158/,
[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:158:0077:0123:EN:PDF]
[15] Union Royale Belge de Societe de Football Association/Bosman , Case C-415/93**.**
[16] Zuzevičiūtė, Vaiva. Mobility in a globalised world : implications for cultural identities and intercultural education // Česlovo Milošo skaitymai III : Kultūrų sankirtos : patirtys ir pokyčiai : [straipsnių rinkinys]. Kaunas : Vytauto Didžiojo universiteto leidykla, 2010. ISBN 9789955126256. p. 243-252.
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ISSN 2029–1701 (print)
ISSN 2335–2035 (online)

Mokslinių straipsnių rinkinys
VISUOMENĖS SAUGUMAS IR VIEŠOJI VARKA
PUBLIC SECURITY AND PUBLIC ORDER
2013 (9) Scientific articles

After Lithuanian's admission to the European Union, citizens of the Republic of Lithuania have become citizens of the European Union and together with other EU citizens enjoy the following rights:

- Right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States;
- Right to work and study in any Member state;
- Right to vote and stand as a candidate both at European elections and at municipal elections in the Member State of residence, etc.[17]

These freedoms provide a unique and privileged opportunity for our citizens to enjoy an open and democratic arena for studies, for employment and for social interactions on the one hand.

On the other hand, a necessity to face and to manage cultural diversity also increased. Therefore the need to reflect on these issues in higher education, and to help young people to become ready to face them in a critical and respectful way, also increased.

Intercultural awareness, respect for others, ability to somehow maintain constructive discussion and communicate, and collaborate in a multicultural world are one of the most important core competencies of a contemporary person. It would seem that these competencies have already been achieved by young adults, and however, as some of the studies reveal, awareness of the needs of the other person, awareness about the need for solidarity, mutual respect, and at least tolerance, if not an active support remain a challenge in our society[18].

PROCESS OF EMPIRIC STUDY

The empiric study (carried out in 2012, in Lithuania) was carried out on the basis of the critical references analysis.

Procedure of focus group discussion. In order to find out more about the readiness of young people to engage in multicultural society, the empiric study (focus group discussion and reflection) was organized. The method enables to provide students with opportunities both to reflect and to report on what they think about other people. Young people (students in higher education) were asked to discuss among themselves (in groups of 3 or 4) about certain issues (what were their experiences abroad, what were the reasons to go abroad, what have

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[17] Consolidated Version of the Treaty of Functioning of the European Union. Official Journal of European Union, 2010.03.30, C83/47. [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:083:0047:0200:en:PDF]
[18] Martikienė, G., Adomkus J. (2009). Socialinės sanglaudos stiprinimo galimybės suaugusiųjų mokymosi aspektu).Tiltai, Nr. 2, ISSN 1392-3137.

they learnt) and provide their consolidated reports in a written form. Questions have been formulated by an international team lead by assoc. prof. A. Liduma, in the framework of CiCe4, Erasmus Academic Network[19]. An hour was provided for exercises. Researchers were not present during exercises. On the one hand provided an anonymous and comfortable atmosphere and on the other hand enabled students to share whatever they thought on the issues without guidance and possibly shaping their ideas. Respondents were asked to reflect on several issues that were identified in a references analysis as relevant to the issue at focus.

Later, a content analysis of reports was performed; an opinion expressed in a written report was considered to be a unit. One person's written contribution, if rich, might have resulted in a number of categories. Therefore, the maximum number of respondents (7) does not equal to maximum number of contributions in many instances.

Table 1. Profile of respondents

No.	Code (further used in data presentation)	Age	Gender	Current occupation	Nature of experience of other culture
1	Inf1	23	Man	Student	Studies abroad
2	Inf2	24	Man	Employed	Worked abroad half a year
3	Inf3	23	Woman	Employed	Three years in a row works abroad (during summer)
4	Inf4	23	Woman	Student and part time employed	Two years in a row works abroad (summer)
5	Inf5	24	Man	Student and part time employed	Worked abroad half a year
6	Inf6	24	Woman	Student and part time employed	Worked abroad half a year
7	Inf7	22	Woman	Student and part time employed	Worked abroad half for three years

The limitations of a study. The study was completed in one of the universities of Lithuania, therefore the data may only be considered as guidelines for further investigation. Nevertheless, data is illustrative enough to present picture of opinions of contemporary students, and, therefore, to provide some insights for intercultural education.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE EMPIRIC STUDY

Analysis of contributions of reasons for experiencing living abroad revealed several groups of reasons that prompted the decision to go abroad, Table 2.

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[19] Rhone, S, Zuzeviciute, V et al (2009). The Baltic's Youth change of attitudes against the 'Others". International Conference HUMAN RIGHTS AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION. Malmo, Sweden, May 21 -23, 2009 (presentation).

Table 2. Reasons for going abroad

Categories	No of contributions
To study and to gain more experience abroad.	1
To see world, get to know other cultures.	4
Financial reasons	5
Improvement of competences (especially, language)	2
Visit family, who lives there	1
To try out new things and to try out myself	1

Evaluation of experiencing living abroad also revealed that two groups of feelings may be identified, and in both groups the same number of contributions were allocated, Table 3.

Therefore the question about a feeling of the level of being accepted also generated different groups of contributions. This is logical. However, in this item, three groups were identified altogether, Table 4.

Table 3. Feelings while living abroad

Categories										
Positive (9)						Negative (9)				
Subcategories										
Study programmes of higher quality	Increased competences	New rewarding experiences			Respect for all professions and occupations	Disrespect for employee from other culture	Difficult and un-rewarding work	Missing family and social isolation	Food is different and that causes problems too	Consultations on conditions (of living and working) are scarce	No cultural experiences in Lithuanian language (e.g., theatre)
		Better trans-port	Beautiful nature	Friendly people, new contacts						
No of contributions										
1	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	4	1	1	1

Table 4. Respondent's impressions on how they were accepted in another country

Categories	No of contributions	Example of contribution
Positively	3	*Local inhabitants are polite and tolerant so they look and behave with me very well* (If1)
In a neutral way	3	*I was accepted well [the USA], however, also the requirements are set at a very high level.* If7
Negatively	1	*Even if neighbours, service people were quite friendly, employers demonstrated disrespect, emphasised us being not from the country, not being sufficiently effective and so on..*If 4

The same logical identification of groups of contributions was generated with regards to the next question, and namely, a question about the general impressions about a country they stayed in, Table 5.

Almost all (6) respondents think that every young person should try to study or work abroad at least for several months, because this experience gives different perspective on what you have in your country.

Table 5. Respondents' impressions on foreign country they stayed

Categories	Subcategories	Number of contributions
Positively	Well establishes social services	2
	Less restricted access to medical services	1
Negative	Very expensive and no degree of freedom (i.g., for paying for services/accommodation a bit later)	3
	A burden of taxes and types of taxes - higher	1

Studying and working abroad shows that there are advantages and disadvantages everywhere. Students shared that experiences abroad teach to be more responsible for oneself, to value one's family and education. Increased competence in foreign language was almost universally mentioned among measurable gains. One respondent of the 7 thinks his life is more orientated to living abroad. All others seem to consider the experience as a valuable and insightful phase of their life, but seem to associate their future with their own country, their culture, and people.

CONCLUSIONS

Mobility seems to have achieved the largest scope in our history, and therefore we are witnessing the development of multicultural society. Globalization is defined as a process of mobility of both people, and capital, and information. Even in quite culturally homogeneous society (Lithuania), there is a need for intercultural education in order to equip students better to learn and gain from learning experiences in a multicultural world. Certain prerequisites are needed in order to maintain an intercultural dialogue and learning. People have to be aware of themselves, of their cultural identity, they have to be empathetic and tolerant, and they need a set of certain social skills.

Empiric study revealed that students in higher education have experiences of living abroad, however, this experience generated very different feelings: both positive and negative.

Almost all respondents think that every young person should try to study or work broad at least for several months, because this experience gives different perspective on what you have in your country. Studying and working abroad shows that there are advantages and disadvantages. Among advantages, the fact that experiences abroad teach to be more responsible for oneself, to value one's family and education, were mentioned. Increased competence in foreign language was almost universally mentioned among measurable gains.

Empiric study enables identification of several implications for intercultural education, and namely, students seem to be quite aware of the fact that advantages and disadvantages may be experienced in any country or culture. A fact that almost all respondents seem to

ISSN 2029–1701 (print)
ISSN 2335–2035 (online)

Mokslinių straipsnių rinkinys
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consider the experience abroad as a valuable and insightful phase of their life, but seem to associate their future with their own country, own culture, and people, may be identified among main educational implications. Therefore, teachers in higher education should try to start and foster the reflection and discussions on students` experiences abroad for building up discourse on issues of respect for all cultures, on paradoxes when cultures meet and on values that should be defended in any case or any culture.

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GLOBALIZACIJA IR MOBILUMAS: UŽDAVINIAI TARPKULTŪRINIAM ŠVIETIMUI

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A n o t a c i j a

Straipsnyje pažymima, kad globaliame pasaulyje tarpkultūrinė patirtis tampa beveik neatsiejama kiekvieno žmogaus kasdienos dalimi. Ugdytojams tenka atsižvelgti į šiuos iššūkius ir ieškoti galimybių padėti studentams (šiame straipsnyje pagrindinis dėmesys skiriamas besimokantiesiems aukštojoje mokykloje) reflektuoti savo kultūrinės savasties, kitų žmonių, kurių jie globaliame pasaulyje sutiks daug, suvokimo aspektais, todėl pristatomi empirinio tyrimo, kuriuo siekta išsiaiškinti studentų patirtį ir išgyvenimus kitoje šalyje, taip pat, ko jie jaučiasi kitose šalyse išmokę, su kokiais sunkumais susidūrę, rezultatai.

Pagrindinės sąvokos: tarpkultūrinis švietimas, patirtis, mobilumas, globalizacija.

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