Provisions for Implementation of Academic Programmes at Multicultural School in the USA

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Abstract

The concept of multicultural education is widely applied at educational institutions of the USA. The term of multicultural education refers to the process of education in the process of culturally diverse interaction aimed at establishing favorable relations of mutual exchange and mutual understanding between representatives of different cultures. In most US schools, teachers and administrators were forced to divide racial groups without any guidance in order to establish good ethnic relations and improve the performance of minority and majority students. The purpose of this article is to elicit important concepts and theories that serve as characteristics of segregated schools, and to find out guidance for effective desegregation under different conditions. The article is based on the analysis and interpretation of works on multicultural education written by well-established Russian and international researchers, dedicated to the identification of trends in the development of multicultural education in the United States and worldwide. The authors come to the conclusion that some of the essential aspects of multicultural education is career-long training teachers to work in a multicultural class. The teacher should ensure productive interaction among students of different ethnic and racial identity; understand and value students' cultural background; use multicultural strategies and training technologies to establish social justice in society.
Keywords: Student; Teacher; XXI century; Multicultural schools.

1. Introduction

Multicultural education is an algorithm of teacher's actions accompanied by strategies and teaching material in the process of education that serves to help teachers to cope with students of different social, racial and ethnic identity. It provides students with knowledge about the history, culture, and contribution of diverse groups. Bennett (2010) understands multicultural education as an integrated approach to teaching which comprises equity between students of different ethnic minorities at schools and other educational institutions; curriculum modernization and multicultural competence development. Agataeva (2010) says that multicultural education is education that gives all ethnic minorities equal opportunities to realize their cultural needs; introduces youth to cultural and moral values of other countries and nations. The dialogue and culture correlation principle is realized in multicultural school environment to the full extent. It forms a multicultural personality that recognizes cultural pluralism (Banks, 1995).

The main aim of multilingual education is the development of an intellectual, social and personal level of all students and their high potential. High academic standards and achievements are realized by means of corresponding innovative approaches. However, it depends on the knowledge of a teacher, his/her attitude and behaviour, whether he/she gives equal opportunities to all students during the process of learning and helps students become more multiculturally-conscious (i.e. helps them understand different systems of acquisition, evaluation and etc.). Basic theoretical principals of our study were established with the help of the analysis of the works by Agataeva (2010), (Makaev *et al.,* 1999),(Sabirova, 2015),(Pomortseva and Kolabinova, 2015) which are devoted to the development of multicultural education in the USA

2. Background

For the last quarter of the XX century the idea of preference for desegregated schools to segregated spread worldwide. Segregated schools are thought to cause the development of baseless fears, negative stereotypes between different ethnic groups and lead to unequal access to education. But it does not depend on the type of school. Desegregating a school formally does not eliminate these issues. Many desegregated schools face the same challenges as race discrimination, apathy and students' absenteeism as the cause of involuntary segregation of a school.

There are four approaches to school desegregation:
1) Business-as-usual;
2) Assimilation;
3) Pluralist coexistence;
4) Integrated pluralism.

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These approaches have been identified and described by Khanipova (2017), as a result of their research into desegregated schools. Business-as-usual approach aims at retaining basic curriculum, academic standards, and teaching methods as in segregated schools. Besides, schools try to provide the same standards of behavior and apply the same sanctions, if a student misbehaves. But school administration does not individualize the programme in accordance with the needs of new students. They have to adjust themselves to school. This approach considers that there is no need to change the old rules and the learning process, with the change of composition of a school. Assimilation implies that integration can be achieved if ethnic minority students are not separated from majority students in terms of economic status, education, access to social institutions and so on. This will be achieved if there is a positive interethnic relationship. It may lead to active socialization of minority students. In this case, a minority student is expected to behave like the majority one. The one who could not assimilate stays out of the group. The fact that the race and culture of a student can make any difference in the relationship between students and teachers is not taken into consideration. Assimilation is often based on the assumption that acception of a race means being a racist Khanipova (2017).

The pluralistic coexistence approach also includes resegregation. But unlike assimilation, pluralistic coexistence is based on the separation of different racial or ethnic groups. Students have the right to practice different cultures and values within the school. As a rule, there are many different minority students at school who are not encouraged to communicate with students of other cultures. Unlike desegregated schools, integrated pluralism, or integration, tries to avoid the problem of student resegregation. This approach admits tolerant coexistence of different cultures, emphasizing the role of every culture in the development of the entire system of education. An educative aspect plays the main role in this approach. It is depicted in admitting different points of view, standards of conduct, contributing towards rapprochement of student of different culture, thus creating positive relationships in class. In practice, many of the above mentioned approaches have disadvantages. The one which stands above the others is integrated pluralism. Segregated schools cannot solve all problems. Only integration admits and ensures collaboration of different ethnic groups, in other words, it creates conditions for cultural pluralism.

More than half a century ago, African American sociologist DuBois wrote about problems of segregated and desegregated schools: *"Desegregated school provides a natural basis for the education of all young people. Students learn to be more self-confident. It helps to suppress a sense of inferiority complex"* (Khanipova et al., 2017). According to DuBois teachers should be free from racial prejudice and ethnocentrism, and should equally treat students of different cultural, racial and socio-economic groups. A study of the characteristics of effective integrated schools shows that programmes based on integrated pluralism approach have the best potential for encouraging good racial relationships, scientific achievements, and personal development among students. The integrated pluralism is based on three inevitable conditions:
- Positive expectations of teachers;
- Learning environment that maintain positive interethnic contacts;
- A curriculum for multicultural schools.

3. Materials and Methods

To provide well-grounded conclusions on the status of the problem of multicultural education in the USA, the following theoretical and practical methods were applied to achieve the solution of the research problem:
- A descriptive method for observation and classification of the investigated material;
- A system oriented analysis of literature as well as government and non-government official papers, codes, plans and reports on the problem (Sadykova et al., 2018).

4. Results

Many scientists believe that students' achievements depend on teacher's personal attitude to students. One of the first studies in this field was conducted by Rosenthal and Jacobson. They succeeded in their theory and proved that fact by giving teachers fake data about students. About 20 percent of students randomly selected had low scores in their IQ test. Teachers were told the names of successful students, and as a result, these students really gained scores higher than their classmates did. The following decades, research conveyed in this area showed that teacher's attitude could influence the student's performance in a subject, their conduct and beliefs. Rosenthal and Jacobson carried out a research in which teachers had to divide students into two groups in accordance with their abilities after being two days in class. The researchers examined teachers attitude: student with poor academic results were rarely examined. Teachers paid less attention to them in comparison with successful students. Another problem concerns racial difference between white teachers and non-white students. An anonymous poll among teachers of two large urban schools in the USA showed that most teachers believed that African American students had lower learning potential than white students had, with the exception of the basketball game (where African-American students considered as equals) (Khanipova and Sabirova, 2017).

A new study of teacher-pupil interaction in 40 classes in US secondary schools showed that when teachers have equal expectations in students' progress regardless of race identity, students are more friendly and tolerant. This atmosphere in class may raise the level of students' achievements. In this regard the problem of teachers training to work in multicultural class is one of the urgent in modern education. The main requirements for teachers teaching in multicultural class are: to have equal expectation for students' achievements of all ethnic groups; to understand cultural difference among students; help students transfer their knowledge of values, manner of behavior in other cultures to prevent misunderstanding. Teachers often join students of different race, ethnic, historical and cultural

identity and hope for good interaction in the group. However, it can strengthen existing negative stereotypes or create new ones. Here is an example of one of these phenomena in the primary school in the provincial school in Florida during its desegregation. At the beginning of a school year student were divided into two groups according to the level of their achievements. The performance of white students was higher than that of non-white ones, because white pupils had attended preschool unlike the latter. Parents of white students were alarmed by negative attitude of their children about their peers from another culture. So, desegregation caused the establishment of students' negative racial prejudices to representatives of other cultures. In order to build good intercultural relationships a teacher should try to avoid misunderstanding and chauvinistic behavior in the class. In this regard, the theory of social relations has some principals, which could be followed by a teacher. They are the following:

- Interaction should be close enough to gain mutual knowledge and understanding between groups;
- Members of different social groups should have an equal status;
- Communication should lead people to joint activities;
- Cooperation between the groups is necessary to achieve common goals;
- Support of local authorities plays an important role in encouragement the interethnic contacts.

These four conditions for creating positive social interaction might be used as guidance's for desegregated schools. The underlying causes for many conflicts are hidden problems as the lack of knowledge about the manner of conduct; different values and prejudice among teachers and students of different cultures, which often leads to misunderstandings. For example, many white teachers and students do not know the structure of the dialect of Afro-American English. Double negative are not got no could mean low-class, that is, uneducated person, while the use of the term Negro among the whites may sound for African Americans as an insult or threat. Black students, on the other hand, can consider all the white people to be racists and interpret the behavior of the white teacher and classmates from this point of view. While students and teachers are not aware of this problem, it will be impossible to establish close contact between students of different cultures that could promote mutual understanding.

George Washington High School in Texas, where only African-American students studied, had a good national reputation. Most of its graduates have become outstanding figures, successful people in business, art and other fields of science. The school encouraged academic achievement of pupils, contributed to the development of personal qualities, ambitions and self-confidence among students. Many African-American primary and middle-school students wanted to enter this school. But the school was closed a couple of years ago, by a school desegregation court order, despite the protests of African-American communities; and the children were distributed to different schools. The number of black students at those schools was from 10% to 15% of white students in every school. Many of these African American students had to spend a lot of time to get to the school they needed. Besides, there was great discontent from the part of white people about their presence at school. After school extracurricular activities were canceled due to long trips by bus home. Many African-American students were identified in the low-ability tracks, and those children who were assigned to the high-ability tracks experienced stress and pressure on the part of school staff and peers. As a result, many African American children left school, even those who studied hard at primary and secondary school (Boscán Leal and Villalobos Antúnez, 2016).

5. Discussion

Studies conveyed by Elizabeth Cohen suggest ways to create equal status among students of different races who demonstrate different entry-level skills in the classroom. In one study, Cohen offers special programmes to teach students with low achievement before they begin to study in small groups. In future such students can make a unique contribution to the group, which will allow them to equalize their class status. In addition, academic achievements and interracial friendship are strengthening. The theory of social relations can be used as guidance for students to make the learning process easier. Although the view point on the problem of integrated schools may differ, there are at least two characteristics that are necessary to mention. Firstly, there is free ethnic and racial interaction among students and teachers in a casual and informal atmosphere. Secondly, there is an increase in academic achievement and personal growth among all students. At schools where there are good interracial relationships, students' achievements are higher. Many studies show that group and team work among students of different races is one of the most powerful ways to improve relations in class. One of the promising strategies based on this fact is team training – it is an approach developed by Khanipova (2017) and his associates at the Center for Social Organization of Schools at the Johns Hopkins University. Team training can help to provide equal opportunities for students, because tasks can be planned taking into account strong students (DUNAEV, 2018).

6. Conclusions

In our study we analyzed the learning conditions in different schools and tried to show the benefits of integrated education despite of the large socio-economic difference between students. There is no standard for integration of desegregated schools. There is a lack of experience in this field. However, there are necessary conditions for positive interaction (equal status, knowledge, cooperation and institutional support) that schools can use as a guide in making decisions in a specific situation of segregation. For example, some forms of grouping may be appropriate in creating equal conditions in one school, but not in another. One of the important conditions in desegregated schools is the fact that the class should not produce any racial differences and limit the opportunities for students from low-income families. Another condition is career-long training teachers to work in a multicultural class. The teacher should ensure productive interaction among students of different ethnic and racial identity; understand and value students'

cultural background; use multicultural strategies and training technologies to establish social justice in society, i.e. have cross-cultural competence.

Acknowledgements

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