



**Վ. ԲՐՅՈՒՍՈՎԻ ԱՆՎԱՆ ՊԵՏԱԿԱՆ
ՀԱՄԱԼՍԱՐԱՆ
ГОСУДАРСТВЕННЫЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ
ИМЕНИ В. БРЮСОВА
BRUSOV STATE UNIVERSITY**

**ԲԱՆԲԵՐ
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**ՄԱՆԿԱՎԱՐԺՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ ԵՎ ՀԱՍԱՐԱԿԱԿԱՆ
ԳԻՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐ**

ПЕДАГОГИКА И СОЦИАЛЬНЫЕ НАУКИ

PEDAGOGY AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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**Վ. ԲՐՅՈՒՍՈՎԻ ԱՆՎԱՆ ՊԵՏԱԿԱՆ ՀԱՄԱԼՍԱՐԱՆԻ
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**CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCIES
IN MODERN EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT**

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Keywords: *cross-cultural competencies, multicultural educational environment, multicultural education, multilingual education*

The article touches upon one of the most urgent problems of modern professional education - the training of a future specialist in multicultural EE (educational environment). At present, social development requires a thorough study of the notion of 'multicultural education' given the necessity to educate future professionals ready to interact in a cross-cultural team. Based on such core methods of the scientific research including analysis, comparison, abstraction and generalization, the authors analyze the basic pedagogical categories that underlie this process and clarify the key concept of the research, concluding that the multicultural educational environment is a complex pedagogical phenomenon that involves the comprehensive development of the individual with a special emphasis on his/her competencies to act in a multinational society effectively.

The current stage of development of society actualizes the need for a close study of the concept of multicultural education and cross-cultural competencies, in view of the need to train future specialists to carry out professional activities in a multinational team. To define the concept of "multicultural educational environment", it is necessary to clarify such terms as "environment" and "educational environment". The concept of "environment" is studied by many sciences: sociology, philosophy, cultural studies, psychology and pedagogy (Lesgaft 1988:6-15). From the point of view of sociology, it is "a set of material, spiritual and social conditions of human existence" (ibid). In the philosophical sense, the environment is "a complex of natural conditions in which the activity of humanity takes place". In psychology, the environment is defined as "a property that resists a person in the world around him; a socio-historical and social situation; certain conditions that surround a person and affect him as a person and as an organism" (ibid). As to the application of the term "environment" in

pedagogy, it was first discovered in the works of P. Lesgaft (ibid), who applied the concept in the pedagogical environment. Later, in various aspects, this phenomenon was considered in the studies of many scientists (Jasvin 2001). The so-called theory of the environment was developed by putting the category of interaction into the basis of this concept. This led to the emergence of a specific classification of the environment as a pedagogical phenomenon, and they began to distinguish *natural, subject-spatial, aesthetic, educational, socio-pedagogical* and *socio-cultural environments* (ibid:10-32). Modern scientists and teachers define the environment as a set of conditions for the flow of people's lives, their environment, as 'a space for the development and improvement of an individual, his knowledge, skills and abilities' (ibid). Taking into account all the above-mentioned opinions, as well as modern pedagogical practice, we will give such a definition of the concept of "environment" – it is a psycho-sociocultural notion, which consists of the physical, psychological, social and spiritual environment of the individual, in which his immediate formation and development takes place.

Derived from this is the concept of 'educational environment'. As in the case of the previous term, modern scientists do not come to a consensus. Thus, G. Beljaev (Beljaev 2000:10-40) puts into this concept the understanding of the educational environment as a part of the socio-cultural environment in which the interaction of various educational processes, their components, as well as the inclusion of the student in cultural communication with society. N. Spichko (Spichko 2004:40-48) specifies the environment as a complex of psychological, social, material and spatial factors and interpersonal relationships. O. Artemyeva, et al. (Artemyeva et al 2005:60) define the educational environment as learning and educational specific to a given school, which is created and managed by teachers and the administration of the institution. V. Slobodchikov (Slobodchikov 1997) explains this concept with the interaction of the individual with their environment and comprehension of it as a system of influence and a number of factors that ensure the development of the personality in its space-time and social environment. Based on the above definitions, as well as taking into account the analysis of pedagogical theory and practice, we will define the "educational environment" as a set of social, physical and psychological-pedagogical conditions that effectively contribute to the formation and development of the student's personality by taking into account modern educational trends.

Studying the problems of the educational environment, it is impossible to bypass the work of V. Jasvin (Jasvin 2001), who is considered to

be the founder of the theory of the educational environment. The scientist puts forward the statement that any educational environment consists of spatial-architectural, social and psycho-didactic components. The author also describes such components of the educational environment as a single educational, information environment; a set of electronic tools to support the educational process and scientific research; a set of training programs and literature, visual aids; laboratory equipment and furniture; infrastructure and method support for open education; a social security system, etc. physical education of participants in the educational process; architecture and construction of educational buildings and energy-saving technologies; training and retraining of scientific and pedagogical staff (ibid).

A number of scholars (Minasyan 2016:268-274; Spichko 2004:44 – 48; Kazaryan 2012:76-84) distinguish several functions of educational environments, depending on the point of its consideration, which can be generalized and reduced to the following ones: The consideration of EE (educational environment) as 1) a set of opportunities for the student's learning and development of his/her skills and competencies, as well as personal potentials; 2) as a set of training tools that are focused not only on the collective pedagogy but also on the student's development zone. Today, the ability of modern students to choose independently and build an EE for themselves is especially relevant, which makes the student the subject of self-development, and the EE is the object of choice and the tool used. It is to be highlighted that the vision of the EE is to design a course relying upon every student's requirement, which is key to our research. Following this, the EE of a particular educational institution should first be theoretically designed, and then practically modeled in accordance with the purpose of training, as well as several specific features of the contingent students and conditions of the educational institution.

The analysis of the EE as an object of psychological and pedagogical monitoring is dictated by the constant dynamic changes in the modern educational environment. We also share the opinion of O. Obdalova (Obdalova 2007:89-94) about the impossibility of considering the EE as an unambiguous pre-set model. According to the scientist, the EE has no beginning and no end, it opens where the teacher and the student meet, and where they work together to design and acquire knowledge. And such an environment should be considered both a subject and a resource for joint activities. The scientist considers the system of relationships between an adult and a child to be a special EE, in which it is possible to identify the processes

that occur with a person in the process of development and assimilation of norms.

V. Slobodchikov (Slobodchikov 1997) defines two basic indicators of the EE: its resource potential and structuralism. In general, from the point of view of the environmental approach, which will be discussed in the corresponding paragraph, the emphasis should be shifted from the dominant pedagogical influence on the student's personality to the development of such an EE, where his/her self-learning and self-development are to be organized. In this case, its internal learning mechanisms will be activated in interaction with the environment. This approach identifies a number of tasks that need to be solved, namely, to construct a variety of EE; to determine their general and local learning effect and its growth; and to analyze the influence of the environment on the further behavior of the subject.

The problem becomes relevant in regard of management impact on the operating system. It should be noted that at the level of a separate educational institution, it should be designed in accordance with the idea of expanding the spheres of current and immediate personal development, which is based on the transformation of the EE into an optimal productive one for personal development. Based on the refined definitions of the notions 'environment' and 'educational environment', we will define the key concept of this study – the multicultural educational environment. It should be noted that there are also a huge number of discrepancies in the interpretation of this concept, and below we have considered some of them.

Thus, I. Potapova, et. al. (Potapova 2012: 95 – 108) defines this term as a dynamic system of cultural elements, the mutual influence of subjects and objects of the educational process, which helps to instill universal and national values, social and cultural traditions, as a result enriching the life experience of all its subjects. According to the scientist, the multicultural educational environment contributes to the formation of tolerance, social activity, mobility, flexibility and self-regulation; the accumulation of life experience in various cultural and social contexts.

Relevant for our research is the scientific search of O. Reshetova (Obdalova 2014:60 (acc. to Reshetova O.P.)), aimed at the definition of the multicultural educational environment of a higher educational institution. The scientist interprets it as "a spiritually rich atmosphere of business and interethnic relations", which influence the worldview, way of thinking and behavior of its subjects, stimulate the introduction to some national and universal spiritual values. In a practical sense, a multicultural educational environment assumes the presence of a multicultural audience consisting of

multi-age, multi-ethnic and multi-confessional faculty and students. Summarizing the above works, we can conclude that the authors rely on the concepts of culture, environment and education, and understand the multicultural educational environment as the integration of the activities of the cultural sphere with the sphere of education in a particular region within the framework of ethnic and world components.

Based on the above opinions and the analysis of the concepts of culture, environment, multicultural education, and educational environment, we define multicultural educational environment as a relevant hierarchical space-time continuum, where various ethnic and international teaching phenomena interact practice cultural and educational competencies aiming at a comprehensive planetary (global) formation and development of the modern person with high-level tolerance, mutual interest, respect and empathy.

To increase awareness of cross-cultural competence (CCC) and fostering CCC among HEI students originating from various cultural settings, an international-intercultural student e-discussion-debate on “*From cultural understanding to cross-cultural competence*” was organized for Plekhanov Russian University of Economics (PRUE, Russia) and Yerevan Gladzor University (YGU, Armenia) by the authors of the article. During the e-event, the authors of the article, who acted as organizers and moderators of the virtual event, asked the e-event participant-students (40 participants from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds) to define “cross-cultural competence”. Firstly, based on the brainstorming, assumptions, associations and formulations of the participants, CCC was defined as “*a set of culture knowledge, skills and abilities developed through education, training and experience that aim at providing the ability to operate efficiently within any culturally complex environment with a close consideration of cultural, linguistic, and regional proficiencies and by its application in cross-cultural contexts*”.

Secondly, the participants of the virtual event were asked to mention cultural awareness indicators that build up the complex multicultural competence. As well, they were facilitated to elaborate on each of the indicators, exchange their viewpoints and speak out pros and cons on a number of topic-related statements put forward by the event moderators. Based on their replies to the question related to cultural awareness indicators that build up the complex multicultural competence, the following chart (See Chart 1) has been developed:

Chart 1. Cultural Awareness Indicators Building Multicultural Competence



Afterwards, the participants were asked to elaborate on the importance of cultural competence in education. As to the importance of cultural competence in case of students, the participants shared the idea that *culturally competent students have a variety of attributes that help them as individuals to produce better outcomes for themselves and others*. As to the importance of cultural competence in case of educators, the participants emphasized *the fact that the level of awareness of cross-cultural competence helps university professors to assist their students to achieve higher levels in their studies and to be well-prepared for careers in the 21st century*. Moreover, some the students provided real-life examples from their own student life that proved their views on the significance of building and incorporating cross-cultural competence by university educators in the classroom. The students primarily pointed out that *those professors who generally redirect their role in the classroom from instructor to facilitator, thus expressing interest in the ethnic background of their students and maintaining a strict level of sensitivity to students' language concerns, motivate and inspire students to feel less marginalized and pressured, and demonstrate better academic performance*. As an outcome, the participants of the virtual event came to the conclusion that level of sensitivity and power of observation definitely may be initial steps and trustworthy tools both for students and educators to be well aware of cultural diversity and cross-cultural competencies, as well as, to bridge the culture gap and to overcome possible hindrances of unconscious and conscious cultural unawareness in a multicultural educational environment.

To sum up, it is worth mentioning that the main directions of the further study of the problems raised in the article include the study of

features, justification of pedagogical conditions, as well as modeling of foreign language training for future specialists in a multicultural educational environment. Thus, we can conclude that the multicultural educational environment is a complex pedagogical phenomenon that involves the comprehensive development of the individual with a special emphasis on his/her competencies to act in a multinational society effectively.

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**ԵՎԱ ՄԻՆԱՅԱՆ, ԼԻԼԻԹ ՍԱՀԱԿՅԱՆ - ՄԻՋՄՇԱԿՈՒԹԱՅԻՆ
ԿԱՐՈՂԱԿԱՆՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԸ ԺԱՄԱՆԱԿԱԿԻՑ ԿՐԹԱԿԱՆ
ՄԻՋԱՎԱՅՐՈՒՄ**

Հիմնաբառեր՝ միջմշակութային կարողականություններ, բազմամշակութային կրթական միջավայր, բազմամշակութային կրթություն, բազմալեզու կրթություն

Հոդվածում դիտարկվում է ժամանակակից մասնագիտական կրթության ամենահրատապ խնդիրներից մեկը՝ բազմամշակութային կրթական միջավայրում ապագա մասնագետի պատրաստումը: Ներկայումս սոցիալական զարգացումը պահանջում է «բազմամշակութային կրթություն» հասկացության մանրակրկիտ ուսումնասիրություն՝ հաշվի առնելով ապագա մասնագետներին միջմշակութային թիմում կրթելու անհրաժեշտությունը: Հիմնվելով գիտական հետազոտության այնպիսի հիմնական մեթոդների վրա, ինչպիսիք են՝ վերլուծություն, համեմատություն, արստրակցիա և ընդհանրացում, հեղինակները վերլուծում են մանկավարժական հիմնական կատեգորիաները, որոնք ընկած են այս գործընթացի հիմքում և հստակեցնում հետազոտության հիմնական հայեցակարգը՝ եզրակացնելով, որ բազմամշակութային կրթական միջավայրը բարդ մանկավարժական երևույթ է, որը ներառում է անհատի համակողմանի զարգացում՝ բազմազգ հասարակությունում արդյունավետ գործելու նրա կարողականությունների վրա հատուկ շեշտադրմամբ:

**ЕВА МИНАСЯН, ЛИЛИТ СААКЯН - МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНЫЕ КОМПЕТЕНЦИИ В
СОВРЕМЕННОЙ ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНОЙ СРЕДЕ**

Ключевые слова: межкультурные компетенции, мультикультурная образовательная среда, мультикультурное образование, мультилингвальное обучение

В статье рассмотрена одна из актуальных проблем современного профессионального образования – подготовка будущего специалиста в мультикультурной образовательной среде. В настоящее время социальное развитие требует тщательного изучения понятия «многокультурное образование», учитывая необходимость обучения будущих профессионалов, готовых к взаимодействию в кросс-культурной команде.

На основе таких основных методов научного исследования, как анализ, сравнение, абстракцию и обобщение, авторы анализируют основные педагогические категории, лежащие в основе этого процесса, и уточняют ключевую концепцию исследования, делая вывод о том, что мультикультурная образовательная среда является сложным педагогическим явлением, которое включает в себя: всестороннее развитие человека с особым упором на его / ее способности эффективно действовать в многонациональном обществе.

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