

## Living in a world of dynamic cultures' multiplicity. Interculturalism in the perspective of education

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### **Abstract**

The article is an attempt to describe the meaning of interculturalism, taking into account contemporary factors of openness to dialogue and respect for the difference between cultures. The criteria for distinguishing the cultures are indicated going beyond criteria such as ethnicity and religion. Contemporary culturalism includes, among others, such specific characteristics of individuals and groups as age, gender, cultural capital, place of residence and others. Based on that, the factors of openness to otherness and difference are analyzed, and the role of emancipatory pedagogy in the process of experiencing dialogicality and using one's voice in questioning inequality is indicated. Finally, there are selected proposals of educational practices in and for interculturalism.

**Keywords:** interculturalism, education, emancipation

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### 1. Introduction

Due to the openness of borders, information and access to global resources of human achievements, people live in a world of multiple cultures. They are immersed in many of them simultaneously. Sometimes they move from one to another for a shorter or longer period without changing place in the material space of being. They also experience being between cultures, at their crossroads, and they are faced with the necessity to choose which of them to focus on first, what conditions they have to meet in order to become a member, a participant in a selected cultural circle. The question is, what does the expression "cultural circle" mean today? Is it just an ethnocentric and sociocentric milieu? What other criteria for distinguishing cultures can be

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adopted today in order to understand what it means for and in intercultural education.

This article describes a group of reflections on this topic. Despite the fact that there was a lot of time to organize author's thoughts, there is still a chaotic understanding of interculturalism as a theoretical concept. This is because, despite the extensive literature on this subject, it is an open problem raising more questions than answers. For example, a web search engine finds 684,000 results in 0.48 seconds after typing the word interculturalism.

Although dictionaries and lexicons include definitions, these are only functional definitions, that is, those in which the defining element indicates what it is for, what this phenomenon consists of, and not what it is. So, there are such verbs as *supports*, *promotes*, *leads to* ..., etc. It is not surprising precisely because of the dynamics of social phenomena and new scientific discoveries, new social theories, which increase the meaning of this concept.

The content of discussions and analyzes of this phenomenon as well as practical social and educational activities aimed at improving life in the world of many cultures depend on the introduction of a certain order in the understanding of this concept. It will reveal the mechanisms governing openness to other cultures, and then understand the sources and essence of emancipation as a process of moving between cultures: the current and the new one, in which it is possible to achieve new fields of freedom, equality and responsibility. Such a structure of the article allows me to conclude with selected proposals for educational practices, education and upbringing in and for interculturality, leading to transformation, personal and social emancipation. Interculturalism is always for something/someone. It serves: a person, a group, a region, a planet, the universe (the cosmos in the Greek sense). The approach adopted in this article aims to respect all three generations of human rights (Vasak, 1977)<sup>1</sup>, and education plays a key role in achieving this goal.

## 2. Interculturalism as a theoretical concept

We live in the world of a multitude of cultures and we are participants in the modern migration of peoples. This journey does not always change the place of residence. We also move mentally and emotionally between different patterns of everyday life, celebration, between different values and symbols.

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<sup>1</sup> There are three overarching types of human rights norms: civil-political, socio-economic, and collective-developmental.

We experience being in several cultures and between cultures at the same time. Both vertically, in the course of life, and horizontally, at a given time.

It is almost universally accepted that the term “interculturality”, understood as the relationships that exist between culturally diverse human groups in a given society, in a given area. It is a complex term, used today to refer to the relationships that exist in society between diverse majority and minority groups, mostly defined in terms of ethnicity, language, religion and/or nationality. Less frequently, it is used to analyze relationships between individuals and groups with different characteristics, such as age, gender, cultural capital, and even place of residence.

Culture is a serious factor in social stratification and the positioning of individuals and groups. “Globalization has greatly reduced cultural differences across our planet, but also made it easier to meet strangers and be irritated by their peculiarities” (Harari, 2018, p. 186). It is also easier to get curious.

A special space for globalization and meeting other cultures and being in them is the world of digital media. The media becomes a modern agora, a meeting place of often very distant cultures. This applies to experiences in both temporal dimensions, that is, in the longitudinal (in the course of life) and in the current (here and now) dimension.

Considerations on interculturalism, including interculturalism in and through education, reflect the increasing differentiation and mental and emotional stratification of cultures. Harari calls it culturalism (2018, p. 200)<sup>2</sup>. This generates the dynamics of changing the understanding of the concepts of interculturalism. Analyzes and internship projects are conducted from different theoretical perspectives. They also reflect cognitive interests in the sense of Jurgen Habermas (1985, p. 157-169)<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, it is important to choose and indicate the theory from the perspective of which the relationship between cultures and between their participants is described, interpreted and explained. This has far-reaching consequences for the understanding and ways of practicing the interaction between cultures, values and patterns of behavior in everyday life and festivities. It is worth emphasizing that in view of the dynamics of the phenomenon and the diversity of places and times of its occurrence, it is not possible to formulate a general theory of interculturalism.

Theoretical perspectives are related to the conditions in the specific space-time in which they are formulated. It is worth paying attention to the specificity of the social order (premodern, modernist and postmodern) as well as socio-cultural development (pre-industrial, industrial and post-industrial). These conditions of individual and collective existence are crucial for intercultural

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<sup>2</sup> Quotations of Yuval N. Harari’s text come from the Polish edition (2018).

<sup>3</sup> Jurgen Habermas distinguished the following interests that constitute cognition: technical, practical and emancipatory.

interactions. As a result of the differences between them, different arguments and interpretations of this phenomenon are possible, as well as different approaches to the goal and function of interculturalism. What is common to particular theoretical approaches is the recognition that interculturalism is understood as a relationship between at least two cultures. On the other hand, the indication of these cultures is related to the adopted theoretical perspective and is an important factor in formulating the theory of interculturalism and interculturalism. According to Gunter Dietz: “In the literature created both in the European and Latin American context, there is an increasingly noticeable tension between, on the one hand, understanding interculturalism as a programmatic, political and educational strategy of smoothing out, easing relations, and, on the other hand, looking at interculturalism as a transformational strategy to expose, challenge and change historically entrenched inequalities in society.” (2018, p. 3)

In the adopted perspective – emancipatory pedagogy – interculturality is the recognition of the difference, the distinctness and respect for the right to be different in the conditions of the existence of a person/group between at least two cultures. It is an expression of the realization of human rights to choose the place and style of one’s existence. It is a process and an effect of dialogue with the Other, mutual recognition and experiencing active coexistence with the Other.

In this perspective, social interactions between representatives of different cultures maintain the equal status of material and symbolic artifacts and attributes without recognizing the primacy, the superiority of some and depreciating others. This is of particular importance, especially in the conditions of increasing commodification, fragmentation and privatization of culture and the observed shift towards separatist ideas, including racist and nationalist ones.

Everyday life on the border of cultures is a subjective experience of cultural differences in at least several dimensions, in particular: axiological (through transmission, transgression and transformation of values), mental/intellectual (through learning about the specificity of one's own and new culture, including the ways of expressing emotions and reacting to them), emotional (especially by balancing reluctance, fear and excitement), and behavioral (through openness to customs, rituals, rituals). This means that the foundation of interculturalism is knowledge about the Other, about the specificity of his/her culture, understanding their features and mutual trust. It is no less important to become resistant to nostalgia, especially in the situation of intercultural generationalism, i.e. patterns and values specific to the cultures of individual

generations and solastalgia<sup>4</sup> (Albrecht, 2005), e.g. in the situation of immigration, the presence of the Other(s) in the native space and his/her material and symbolic artifacts.

Living between different cultures, or rather moving between them, does not mean leaving one to become a participant in another. Rather, it is an integrated, dynamic, interactive existence characterized by openness, courage, optimism and responsibility. It is worth remembering that intercultural interactions are a means to create better conditions for a person's development and social change, and to create a better world. With this understanding of interculturalism, it becomes an important task and challenge in education.

### **3. Criteria for distinguishing cultures between which contemporary man lives**

The relations between different, sometimes very distant cultures and the search for a balance between the native/indigenous culture and the Other(s) are discussed in the context of “responsibility for creating understanding between cultures, maintaining and creating world peace” (Nikitorowicz, 2019). It is assumed that culture is a framework for the organization of the world and the location of individual material and symbolic beings within it. It is a set of principles that locate and orient a person in their relations with the direct and indirect surroundings and being between cultures. It requires understanding your real and potential own position in each of them. The dynamics of the relationship between a person/group and culture, both one's own and that of the Other(s), is emphasized. It is related to “moving”, “traveling”, “migration of peoples” between cultures, mental, emotional and often also physical.

Considering interculturalism as a task and challenge in education suggests the need to establish, or at least indicate examples, between what cultures contemporary man lives and what are/may be the criteria for distinguishing cultures. In addition to traditionally distinguished cultures between which we operate, such as ethnic, religious, class cultures, gender and generation cultures, industrial and agrarian, urban and rural, partner and corporate cultures, modern man experiences being between the culture of real and virtual reality, including many web cultures, such as social media.

With regard to education, it is important to pay attention to interculturality in generation, especially being between the culture of youth, adults (parents) and seniors (grandparents). It is worth emphasizing the fact that the globalization of values and patterns of culture causes the emergence of specific

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<sup>4</sup> Solastalgia – the term denoting the longing caused by changes in the immediate environment. The concept was introduced by Glenn Albrecht, an environmental philosopher.

generational cultures that weaken, or at least can weaken, ethnic and class differences. Instead, they require dialogue between generations. This, in turn, requires knowledge of the values and patterns of behavior, and an understanding of the language used by individual generations. One example is the culture of “global teenagers”. This is how Naomi Klein writes about them: “For them, nationality, language, ethnic and political affiliation, origin, etc. are reduced to colorful, exotic accessories that give a sense of belonging to a community. A survey by the New World Teen Study of 27,600 middle-class young people aged 15-18 in 45 countries found that, regardless of cultural differences, these young people live in their own parallel world. They get up in the morning, put on their Levi pants and Nike shoes, grab their Sony hats, backpacks and portable CD players and go to school.” (2000, p. 119). However, the culture of radical-minded young people is different, among which there are participants in environmental movements, in defense of the climate, as well as in extreme nationalist or fascist movements.

It is no less important to learn about the interactions between cultures in educational institutions. This means the cultures of individual participants in school life. Everyday school life is a space of existence between these cultures. For it is filled with the interactions of a multitude of contradictory aspirations, needs, languages, struggles and clashes between the cultures of the school class, family home, the street and the world of media. (McLaren 1989, p.186). At school, we can distinguish the culture of the “teacher’s room”, student cultures of the “school class” and “extra-curricular”, cultures of self-governance of parents, culture of administration in education, etc. Each of them has its own values, interests, rituals, and the language they communicate with oneself. The relationships between these cultures determine the real, inconspicuous empowerment of education. These cultures overlap with the differences between the school culture and the culture of the family home. Paulo Freire draws attention to this, writing about the teacher’s respect for the culture of students, the ability to “read with understanding” for the elements of the culture of their family environment (2005, pp. 128-129). An interesting example of this type of interculturalism are the personal experiences of Didier Eribon (2009 It trans. 2019<sup>5</sup>).

It is equally important to take into account in education the experiences between mass and elite culture as well as popular culture and its products and “high” culture. It involves understanding culture-specific behavior. Education focused on the development and dissemination of the dominant, official culture is the field of its values and models clashing with what are carried by the cultures of minorities, which are numerous in modern schools. These are not

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<sup>5</sup> 2009 refers to the French edition and 2019 to the Polish edition.

only the cultures of ethnic and religious minorities, but also minorities with disabilities, non-heteronormative, *fast* culture *and* slow culture, etc. In the university environment, one can observe the clash of the traditional culture of universitas with corporate and digital culture. There are also visible experiences between the *homo academicus* culture and the *homo oeconomicus* culture (Czerepaniak-Walczak, 2014).

Interculturality in the university environment deserves a separate analysis in the light of the tendency to internationalize academic education and research. It generates new challenges for the university as a place of meeting and coexistence of many values and models of everyday life and celebration. Cultural interaction takes place in student dormitories, lecture and seminar rooms, and research laboratories.

Moreover, new challenges emerge before education in and for interculturalism, including inter alia non-anthropocentric relationships. To understand that it is necessary to take a broader look at what is already there: intercultural relations between people and non-people/other beings, including nature as well as products of artificial intelligence. In addition, modern adolescents will experience many new situations and contacts with other cultures, unpredictable from today's perspective. Maybe even extraterrestrials. It is brought up because an inseparable element of interculturalism is imagination and openness to the most utopian utopias.

It does not mean developing the theme of interculturalism at the level of genres, that is, the content and forms of filling the space between homo sapiens and other beings. This issue developed on the basis of posthumanism requires separate analyzes.

#### 4. Factors of openness to other cultures

“The role of man is not only to be in the world, but to interact with the world; through the acts of creation and re-creation, man creates a cultural reality” (Freire, 2005a, p. 39). This means that an encounter with a different culture can be a source of choice based on cognitive interest and emotional attitudes resulting from the importance that the person/group assigns to the encounter. However, it can also be the result of coercion, displacement or flight from the parent culture. Regardless of the reason and circumstances of mobility, it is worth emphasizing that the parent culture in which the person is rooted leaves permanent traces (Eribon, 2019, p. 201)<sup>6</sup> and is an important factor of behavior in social relations in and towards a new, Other/different culture. An important

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<sup>6</sup> Quotations of Didier Eribon's text come from the Polish edition (2019).

task for educators and educators is to search for common, not to say general mechanisms governing openness to other cultures, respect for differences and readiness to enter into dialogue with them. These are not new issues but are still open and consist challenges for education.

At home in one “own” culture, in our identity, we look at other cultures with uncertainty, suspicion, aversion and even fear, especially those about which we know little or are threatened, presented to us as a threat to our existence, our values. Experiences of interaction with Other cultures favor the implementation of heterology as an idea, principle and attitude, and the acquisition of intercultural competences (Nikitorowicz, 2019). This makes it possible to perceive the multitude of cultures in one person, that is, to understand the specificity of belonging to many cultures at the same time. It is nowadays not a rare phenomenon of multiple identities. It is an example of a specific internal dialogue conducted by a person.

People can also experience their own cultures and own identity through the lens of others. Understanding people who are culturally different from oneself and recognizing one’s own cultural norms through an ethnorelative experience is central to developing intercultural competence. Hence, being interculturally competent is a process that often occurs when people’s experience of cultural differences becomes more sophisticated. (Sjøen, 2021).

A specific site for experiencing intercultural relationships is education. This applies both to peer interactions in the school classroom and to the content of school education, including the content of textbooks. The contents of textbooks and workbooks contain both explicit and implicit messages of attitudes toward other cultures. Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey (2002, p. 21) write: “Grammar exercises may reinforce or challenge prejudices and stereotypes. For example, female topics can be linked to stereotypically feminine activities or actions (Mary likes to cook; John likes soccer); or stereotypical generalizations about groups can be encouraged (French people like...; Germans are...; Older people...)” The findings of Marzanna Pogorzelska and Małgorzata Adams-Tukiendorf (2021) show some significant differences between textbooks used in the Sweden and Poland highlighting the ways Swedish textbooks promote issues related to an intercultural perspective and showing the relative drawbacks of the Polish sample in this respect.

Intercultural peer interactions are now observed in a Polish school, which has unexpectedly included many pupils – refugees from the war in Ukraine. They bring to the Polish “grammar” of schooling<sup>7</sup> the culture of the Ukrainian school, their experiences as students and colleagues. Mutual learning continues. New patterns of peer relations emerge. Many of them require transgression,

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<sup>7</sup> This is an expression coined by David Tyack and William Tobin.



changing previous experiences, and critical evaluation of one's own position in a new social and cultural context.

Dialogical relation is facilitated in the conditions of spatial and axiological proximity.

Therefore, the neighborhood plays an important role in this process. Through such features of the neighborhood as curiosity, respect for otherness, mutual trust, a readiness to learn from neighbors is created, and at the same time understanding for their specificity, often the differences in their everyday life practices, including such as kitchen, types of family relationships, aesthetic preferences of apartment/house furnishings, ways to celebrate, etc.

The experience of interculturalism is fostered by the management and use of public space. Both in the small neighborhood, that is, in the vicinity (village, housing estate, city district) as well as further. In this context, traditional (sometimes even cult) marketplaces deserve attention. They are a place of exchange of goods, but also information, opinions and even ideas. As casual and inclusive, they are places to build relationships and everyday relationships (sometimes friendly, sometimes hostile) of people and groups.

A specific type of contemporary public space is created by digital media. They are a place of exchange of values and models of many cultures and creating new common ways of realizing oneself and participating in collective life. They are a space for participation (passive or active) in other cultures.

Among the factors of getting to know other cultures and entering into dialogical relations with their representatives, tourism should be mentioned. The richness of the content and forms of tourist experiences makes it possible to personally experience the specificity of often very distant patterns of culture, learning about rituals and understanding signs and meanings. As Lucy R. Lippard writes in the Preface to Dean MacCannell's book *Tourist: tourism is a game that changes the world*. (2002, p. XI). "Together with tourists, modern values spread all over the world" (MacDonnell, 2002, p. 7), which favors mutual understanding and recognition of differences.

Emotions are an important mechanism regulating intercultural experiences. They are related to the sources and reasons for entering the intercultural space. Other emotions are aroused by being in this space out of your own choice, out of curiosity or a desire to improve one's own living conditions (voluntary migrations). Others are forced migrations, refugees. In this text, attention is paid to two emotions related to the meeting of the Other, Other culture, namely *oicophobia* and *xenophilia*.

The need to find oneself in a different, unknown, foreign culture is accompanied by uncertainty caused by going beyond the usual patterns, beyond the patterns of thinking and acting. This requires a critical assessment of one's

own position in the world, critical awareness (Freire 2005a:39)<sup>8</sup>, openness to otherness, to new experiences, consciously breaking and rejecting stereotypes and patterns, and courage in dealing with roles, sometimes consciously, voluntarily accepted (e.g. a citizen in another cultural circle or a tourist), and sometimes forced by various factors (e.g. an exile, outlaws from their own circle or a refugee).

Therefore, settling in the native culture does not always provide satisfaction and a positive attitude towards it. It happens that it is a source of individual and collective nuisance and even suffering. Then he becomes an object of aversion, sometimes even hatred – oikophobia (Greek: *oikos* – home and *phobós* – fear). Oikophobia is a fear of what is familiar, a tendency, in every conflict taking the side of “them” against “us” and a felt need to reject customs, cultures and institutions that are clearly “ours”.

Oikophobia is an expression of a reaction to the humiliation, suffering, insults, fear and a sense of shame experienced in one’s own culture (Eribon 2019, p. 200/202). Sometimes it is even a sense of shame for the mother culture. This can be seen, among others, in social movements such as #Metoo, or recently in Poland in the questions “Where are the children from Michałów?”<sup>9</sup>

Oikophobia is sometimes accompanied by xenophilia – admiration for what is different, foreign. Other cultures are seen as a promise to go beyond intellectual, emotional and/or physical humiliation, to enter a new, dignity circle. The desire to be in a different cultural circle is not always accompanied by a critical knowledge of the New. It is often an emotional choke on this, succumbing to the promise of changing the position of a person or group. This, in turn, can lead to behavior which is similar to the flight of a moth to light.

Being aware of these emotions makes it possible to understand behavior in interactions with Other/Other culture.

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<sup>8</sup> Critical awareness is a category of emancipatory pedagogy introduced by Paulo Freire. He distinguished three types of consciousness, namely: magical, naive and critical. Critical awareness enables adequate recognition of the mechanisms governing the functioning of the system of power and authority. The person sees them and understands their meaning; gives them meaning; is aware of own participation in the condition and status of individual elements of reality, including his own condition and status. As a result, it is possible to deliberately influence a selected area of reality and introduce effective social changes. This is because of understanding and emotional involvement, as well as being aware of your own driving power, your ability to make choices, and your willingness to take responsibility. This kind of relationship between the person and the world is the basis for liberating the subject from the perceived and understood limitations.

<sup>9</sup> It is a question posed in the context of the behavior of the Polish border guard – push back – towards refugees crossing the border with Belarus.

## 5. Emancipation as an intercultural process

Emancipation is one of the processes of social integration of people and groups experiencing deprivation in order to change their own situation. Not only social and economic, but in order to achieve equal rights of access to goods recognized by the subject / entities as valuable. For emancipation is inextricably linked with the recognition of difference and otherness. It is a transition from exclusion to mutual recognition and joint participation. It should be understood as a process of identifying and eliminating inequalities in access to goods, removing, or at least reducing, injustice and violence in culture and with the use of its material and symbolic elements, signs and meanings. Thus understood, emancipation practices are dialogical and reflective. Critical awareness in the sense of P. Freire (2005a) plays a key role in this process. It is a subjective process which, through an effort to free oneself from the limitations and oppressions experienced (by a person, group and/or humanity), enables courageous and responsible use of equal access to highly valued goods.

Understood in that way, emancipation requires an education free from prejudices, open to transgressions and transformations of the existing canons and axiological schemas and a sense of identity. The opening of individuals and communities to meet Others, their values, symbols and models of their everyday and festive existence, to create in common spaces where respect for differences and human rights is experienced, with particular emphasis on equality, justice, peace and solidarity. The fulfillment of these conditions is possible in social relations and in education with the possibility of using their own voice by each person.

As the second argument for the importance of emancipation in the understanding of the specificity of relations between cultures, emancipatory competences, i.e. innovation, emancipatory rationality, as well as courage and responsibility in bearing the consequences of decisions made are indicated. These subject attributes are the basis of balanced relationships between cultures with respect for difference, difference and diversity. They protect against domination and being dominated, against enslavement and deprivation of the rights and dignity of others and by others. They ensure real integration and respect for identity. These competences are the result of learning, the implementation of the idea of emancipation in education and through education.

Emancipatory education for and through intercultural interactions focuses on securing the primacy of nondogmatic, progressive politics by examining how culture as a force of resistance is related to power, education and agency in respect of human rights and children's rights. It exposes and weakens the machinations in the use of culture as a factor in the stratification of individuals

and groups. On the other hand, it strengthens the experience of dialogue and courageous questioning of the phenomena and factors of oppression and deprivation due to belonging to a specific culture.

## 6. Selected educational practice proposals

The implementation of the ideas and principles of intercultural education is a pressing existential necessity today. Educational policy supporting or hindering intercultural processes can be considered at several levels, namely: global (e.g. UN activities, including UNESCO, INICEF, ...), regional, including EU policy towards multiple minorities and immigrants, national - ministerial and local, i.e. at the level of individual schools and universities.

The *praxis* of interculturalism in education and through education is expressed in getting to know other cultures, in which language learning, bilingual education and direct international relations of children, youth and teachers are of key importance. Language is an important medium for understanding the essence of the difference between cultures and respecting the difference, otherness. “The variations of languages, like literacies, carry nuanced meanings for the receptor depending on the context or position one possesses. This unique array of contexts matter as they present varying levels of (dis)alignment between people’s ideologies, language practices, and aims.” (Babino, Stewart, 2020, p.101).

Literacy and language research collectively reveal complex truth(s) of our social realities through multiple modalities and language varieties. From an intercultural perspective, the combination of multilingualism, transnationalism, and multimodality in the expression of thoughts and emotions is important.

Teachers have a special role in this process, both as practitioners and as researchers (Boyd, Szplit, Zbróg, 2022). Their competences, i.e. conscious and observable harmonious compositions of knowledge, efficiency and responsibility, are the key factor in shaping the attitudes of openness to otherness of people and communities. They play an important role as a mediator and organizer of experiences in the “third space”. This applies not only to students and their parents newly arrived in a given culture, but also to those who, rooted in their native culture, face contact with another, new one, with its values and models. This, in turn, has to do with the presence of intercultural content in teacher education programs. Personal experience, including apprenticeships and activities in NGOs, play a significant role in this respect. Therefore, among the proposals of educational internships, the effect of which is/may be openness to other cultures and experiencing being in the “third

space”<sup>10</sup>, there should be mentioned teacher education programs, including initiatives such as EDiTE<sup>11</sup>, in which the author participated as a promoter and reviewer of doctoral dissertations and a participant in seminars, conferences and summer schools. It is a real opportunity to get to know each other’s cultures, not only ethnic, religious, but also academic and educational, and adopt values and models of participation in the achievement of ambitious research goals, as well as mutual intergenerational learning – young researchers and experienced professors. It should be emphasized that the effects of this project go far beyond the measurable effects in the form of research results and defended doctoral dissertations. Working in this project was an experience of being between cultures and learning from Other and with Other.

The source of similar experiences are also other Joint European Projects. An interesting educational practice is the implementation of projects such as Erasmus, Socrates Copernicus and twin schools, but the educational policy towards Other Cultures is also important. From my point of view, an immigrant is not only a newcomer from another country, but each person from a different cultural circle, from a different social class, fitness group, religious group, from a different environment, also in the same country.

The educational policy towards interculturality can be learned, inter alia, by examining how much content about other cultures (in the meaning mentioned), their material and symbolic elements is in school programs and textbooks. How are the programs of out-of-school initiatives to educate openness to other cultures supported by the educational authorities - central and local?

Public pedagogies play an important role in shaping openness to other cultures, but they are usually outside the interests of formal education policy.

## 7. Conclusions

The condition for positive experiences of interculturalism is understanding and accepting the values and fears of the environments of the person/group and with which he or she interacts directly and indirectly. In other words: going

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<sup>10</sup> The “third space” mean the place, time and circumstances of experiences in being between formally defined cultures. It is an opportunity to gain experience on other cultures and with members of those cultures in natural, informal, everyday interactions.

<sup>11</sup> EDiTE (The European Doctorate in Teacher Education). It was a four-year project (2015-2019) supported by EU Horizon2020 research and innovation programme, MCS grant agreement number 676452. Under the project 15 of Early Stage Researchers from 11 countries (Buthan, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Nepal, Poland, Serbia, Syria, USA) were employed by five partner universities, where they pursue individual research projects in the framework of the EDiTE joint research programme.

outside the box, crossing own an ethnocentric sentiment and cultivating an optimistic attitude towards the Other(s). The main mechanism that governs the interactions of cultures is dialogue, the element of which is asking questions and questioning arguments. From the point of view of critical pedagogy and education in and for interculturalism, it is crucial to provide a space where the complexity of knowledge, culture, values and individual and social issues can be realized in an open and critical dialogue. In this approach, it is possible to ensure non-dogmatic interaction of representatives of Other cultures, free from prejudices and stereotypes, and above all, understanding how everyday life is organized in Other Culture, as well as what rules and mechanisms govern it. On the one hand, it is precisely getting to know and understanding one's own position and, on the other, that of Other Culture. It means discovering the specificity of one's own identity, social practices and ways of fighting for recognition in contact with Other culture. This is evident now when we deal with such dramatic experiences of war in Eastern Europe. When people, both, fleeing war and receiving refugees have to learn from each other, from the Other Culture and in the Other Culture.

The process of interculturalism understood in the context of emancipatory pedagogy is a never-ending-history. Spaces of experience and forms of interaction are changing. This becomes particularly important in a situation of increasing culturalism as a factor explaining differences between individuals and groups.

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