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MIGRATION-SPECIFIC TRENDS, CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES FOR EDUCATION IN GERMANY

The need of educational and scientific discussion and reflection of migration-specific themes are dictated by the contemporary reality requirements of almost all European countries. Change in society, associated primarily with the processes of immigration, affects the processes and systems of goal-countries, especially the education system. This article reflects some trends and challenges in Germany in connection to immigration. In addition, I would like to draw the attention to the concept of *Migration Education* (Mecheril at all, 2010) with its basics, goals, perspectives and troubles. The associated migration-specific challenges can be viewed from different perspectives.

REFLECTIVE-HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The social context of migration and educational directions in postwar Germany always lived through new conceptualizations. The period between the 1960s-1990s can be characterized of total disregard for work migration, s.-c. 'Gastarbeiter'. About five million people from Turkey, the former Yugoslavia, Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Poland and other countries came to Germany in this period. Migration policy was based on two principles. The first was constructed on the interests of the industrial boom and the labor market. 'Gastarbeiter' were primarily intended for jobs which were not popular by German people. Besides, it suggested that migrant workers were paying taxes to the pension funds. This was due to the direct benefit from the German population, as migrant workers in consequence of the rotation (the second principle) were leaving Germany without taking advantage of social benefits in two to four years, and on their jobs, new workers have been invited. By the end of the 1970s it was clear that the principle of rotation did not work (cf. Bade, 2011, p. 18–20; Meier-Braun 2011, p. 36–37; Mecheril at a. 2010, p. 28–29). For the enterprises, it was unprofitable, constantly trained a new workforce and they sought to extend the work residence permits for skilled workers. On the other side, migrants wanted to stay in Germany. Moreover, they took their families to Germany. Despite the troubles of work and living, bad conditions of payment, lack of social protection and other difficulties, the life and work situation in

Germany was more profitable and attractive for immigrants than in their homelands. Faced this 'surprise' the political circles began to debate about the need to sort out the 'problem of foreigners', namely to stop the immigration (cf. Gogolin/Krüger-Potratz, 2006, p. 64). At the same time the immigrants must be assimilated in German society. The focus was German language, adoption to the German rules and standards of conduct, life skills, cultural traditions. It was reflected in the 'Pedagogy for Foreigners'. 'Pedagogy for Foreigners' tried conceptually and methodologically to identify any faults by foreign children and to fight these. Thus, migration was perceived as a problem and the immigrants as objects of pedagogical correction measures (cf. Eppenstein, Kiesel, 2008, p. 47–49; Mecheril at a., 2010, p. 17–18).

It should be noted that 'Pedagogy for Foreigners' encountered significant difficulties: immigrants did not hasten to be assimilated. Besides new trends became visible – manifestation of racism and discrimination against the immigrant workers and refugees in the late 1980s – early 1990s. New activities were needed. They were reproduced in the 'Intercultural Pedagogy'. Its aim was the formation of tolerance towards immigrants, intercultural dialogue and risk reducing of intercultural conflicts. The focus was on the sometimes dangerous, sometimes exotic 'immigrant culture' (cf. Beck-Gernsheim, 2007, p. 23–27; Mecheril at a., 2010, p. 46–48). Of the many human characteristics, such as gender, social status, level of education, regional origin, age and others, the focus was only on one – the foreigner, the immigrant or 'representative of a certain (foreign) culture'. The tolerance of immigrants to German society, their relationships among themselves, their migration situation, such as legal or illegal status, acquisition of citizenship, unemployment, education, ethnic ghettos, discrimination, etc. were not considered.

Since the beginning of the 21st century there has been a new trend in political and academic circles – recognizing the errors of migration policy and the compensation for people with a 'migration background' (MigBack). Diversity, migration as normality and enrichment for the modern society (National Action Plan Integration 2012) became the motto of education and politics. At the same time migration background would be a "compensatory signal" (Bade, 2011, p. 8). Accordingly, immigrants would be victims of migration, their socialization, their family relationships and continue to be a problem. This problem should be solved by professional doing, in the first line by pedagogy and social work.

The year 2015, marked by the massive immigration of refugees, brought a new perspective on immigration and immigrants – burnt asylum accommodation, people on boats in the Mediterranean „We can do it,” „the strongest wave of refugees since the Second World War”, media reports and political statements on refugee flows, waves, floods and avalanches, right-extremist demonstrations, the 'right' and 'false' refugees. Migration has become obvious and every day. Migration as normality and enrichment of society has ceased to be relevant. Instead, the topics of normality and the enrichment of society came the topics of crisis and overload of all social systems.

STATISTICAL PERSPECTIVE

Per the last Microcensus and statistics of the Ministry of Migration MINAS BAMF (2014, p. 11–12; 2015, p. 12), people with a migration background make up 21.0% of the total German population (81.2 million people). If we draw a category of regional residence, the picture takes on new shades.

Table 1. Population with a migration background

In the federal states	
Nordrhein-Westfalen	4,5 Mio
Baden-Württemberg	3 Mio
Bavaria	2,7 Mio
Hessen	1,7 Mio
Niedersachsen	1,4 Mio
In the big cities	
Berlin	967.000
Hamburg	510.000
Bremen	195.000

Source: Statistisches Bundesamt. Microcensus, 2015, p. 41.

Of these, 35% are foreigners (people with foreign nationality). In western Germany and Berlin live 96.3% of all foreigners, and eastern Germany only 4.7%. In big cities with good infrastructure, foreigners account for the share of the total population¹.

Table 2. Foreigners in the big cities and federal states

Bremen	27.9%
Hamburg	27.4%
Berlin	24.3%
In the federal states	
Baden-Württemberg	26.2%
Nordrhein-Westfalen	26%
Hessen	25 %
Bavaria	20.3%

Source: MINAS, 2015, p. 16–17.

The distribution by age is even more interesting. More than half (55.0%) of people with MigBack born in Germany are underage. In total, they are.

Table 3. People with migration background to total population (Age)

under 5 years	5–10 years	10–15 years	15–20 years	20–25 years	25–35 years
36%	36%	33%	29%	27%	27%

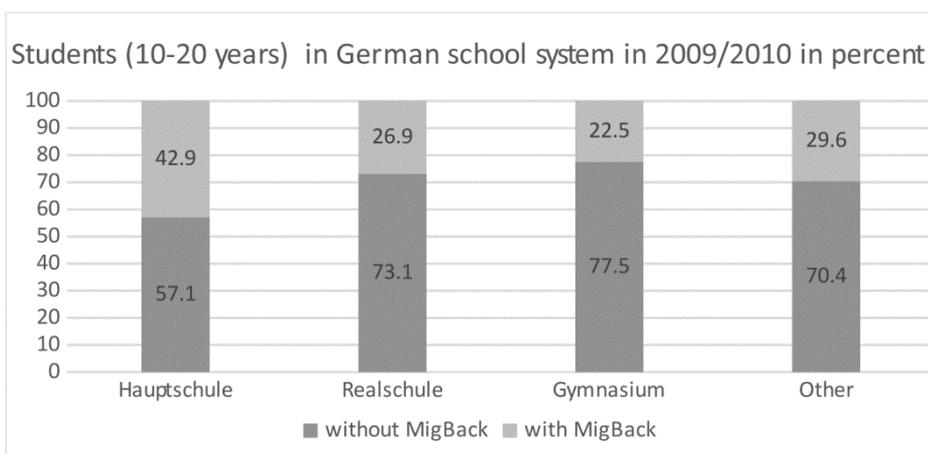
Source: Microcensus, 2015, p. 22–23.

¹ This information does not include about two million refugees, because there is no exact recording.

These children, adolescents and young people attend educational institutions, kindergarten and schools. In addition, only in 2013-2015 1.3 Mio asylum seekers were under 18 years (Ministry of Migration, 2016). Also they visited kindergarten and schools. If we take the statistics of same communities in the industrial areas, in some areas in Berlin, Hamburg, Frankfurt am Main and the other, in separate schools, the number of non-migrants (native Germans) reaches the numbers of 1 – 3% (Bade, 2011, p. 161).

In the German education system, we find a specific distribution of students with and without migration background in the school forms:

Table 4. Source: DJI. Jugend-Migrationsreport, 2012, p. 40



What effects do we see in relation to school qualifications?

In terms of school qualifications, immigrant students also differ significantly from students without a MigBack. 15.5% of the population with a MigBack have not a school diploma, among the population without MigBack, it is 2.3%. People who have immigrated themselves often do not have a school diploma (18.8%). Already in Germany born persons with a MigBack have still graduated more than twice as often no school graduation (5.3%) as persons without migration background (2.3%) (Microzensus, 2015, p. 49).

DISADVANTAGE PERSPECTIVE

The PISA results of 2003 and many scientific studies show relevant and significant differences between the educational situation of immigrated children and children without migration background. Children with MigBack are disadvantaged in terms of enrolment in type of school, duration of attending school, indicators of achievement, drop-out rates and types of school diploma reached (NESSE Analytical Report 1 for EU Commission DG Education and Culture. Heckmann, 2008, p. 2).

This is due to different factors. One fact is that immigrants leave often in disadvantaged city quarters and legally, children must attend preschool (kindergarten) and elementary school at their place of residence. Thus, the concentration on children with MigBack in segregated schools is formed. Teachers are confronted with diverse family situations, languages, cultural peculiarities. This often leads to the overburdening of the pedagogical staff and thus to the reduction of the learning quality.

The most prominent explanation conceptualizes the underachievement of immigrant children in terms of a shortage of the cultural and economic resources that is necessary for successful education. The parents often do not have the material resources required, e.g. to pay the tuition and to support the children. The majority of immigrant parents themselves have a low or no school diploma (54.4%), because they have come to Germany as a 'Gastarbeiter' or refugees. There may be a low level of cognitive stimulation, decontextualized language use and literacy. The parents do generally not seek the contact with schools. The family language may be different from the school language and the parents cannot speak German or not so good. The good contact with the school is however a prerequisite of the school success of the children in Germany. Thus, immigrant children already have bad chances at primary school level. When moving to elementary school, migrant children face a higher risk of a retirement. Above all, language deficits are also linked to other deficits and ensure that migrant children are examined more closely for possible problems than usual. Ethnic and social origin is also used to bring the children back in doubt (cf. Gomolla at all, 2002, p. 91–92).

Enrolment of immigrant students in secondary schools is often in schools that are academically less demanding and of shorter duration (Hauptschule). The EUMC survey also found that immigrant children and youth usually stay for a shorter duration in secondary education. Another important aspect of school enrolment is the overrepresentation of immigrant children in schools for special education (ibidem, p. 12). Integration problems and educational disadvantage of immigrants often are explained or interpreted as the effects of discrimination, for all, an institutional discrimination. As a good example to explain this phenomenon we find in the study by „Education, Milieu, Migration” at the University of Düsseldorf, sponsored by Stiftung Mercator and the Vodafone Foundation (Barz at all, 2016). The study refers about different discrimination forms at the level of individuals and groups and institutional discrimination which often overlap.

Without going into a detailed discussion, young people with migration background often lose valuable years of life on their way through the German education system. The potential of children with a MigBack is systematically underestimated over the entire course of education from primary school to university. Immigrants are more often in a marginalized situation and are experiencing of discrimination, especially in the field of education, than native German (cf. Mecheril, 2010, p. 10). Ethno-cultural identity, cultural

characteristics and differences of immigrants are often involved to explain the problems and conflicts, attributed to ‘migration and the other’, and become the basis for scientific research. Education is also an area where most of the difficulties of resource transfer occur (Metz, 2015, p. 225-228). The results of the study about the immigrants from the former Soviet Union show that the social structures in Germany are not sufficient or ineffective for the transfer of educational and professional resources. Thus, the overcoming of the constraining contexts such as the non-recognition of educational qualifications, linguistic difficulties as well the discrimination experiences is more or less an individual performance. It is up to the individuals whether they can create it or not. In general, it can be stated, if the structural framework of education system is not sufficient, individual efforts are more intense and / or individual and family resources are heavier to achieve the desired level of education for immigrated parents and their children (ibidem, p. 228).

What are the implications of this analysis?

Based on the analysis of statistical data and scientific literature we can draw the following conclusions:

First: Migration is an integral part of modern society and form the modern society processes. To some extent migration defies static and inflexible systems of society, causes stress and makes even more explicit the already existing disbalance. The presence of immigrants at all levels of public function puts the task of renovation of systems and devices. These processes must take by the method of top-down, require the strategic development and reorganization processes and related to the large material costs. At the same time, new pedagogical concepts are necessary.

Second: Must pedagogical concepts are based on binary antagonistic model ‘host society – immigrants’. At the same time, they comprise a monoculture static understanding about the host society and immigrants, the “model of containers” (Pries, 2010, p. 58), complicated by the perception of migration as a problem and immigrants as people with different disabilities and abnormalities. It is often overlooked, that migrants, regardless of length of stay, regional origin, legal status or other categories live in a certain part of the city or in the village, are involved in the labor process, in the social system, social structure. They are part of the modern society and take an active contribution to its transformation.

Migration Pedagogy (Mecheril et al, 2010) is a possible answer to the dynamic changed society, associated with the immigration process. Migration Pedagogy comes from the fact that migration is a social reality of contemporary society and brings a change in society and its system. Migration processes have an impact primarily on the educational system, which need to be upgraded.

Migration Pedagogical view is a critical view, aiming at the realization of equal opportunities for education for all members of society, regardless of their migration history, to oppose racisms, nationalism and other forms of discrimination. It shows the need of rethinking many concepts: migration and immigrants, their own and others, the norm and deviation, culturalistic reduction

and euro / ethnocentrism. Here, in the first place it requires different dynamic approach, as a scientific and methodical-didactic, the revised concepts of culture and cultural identity. Migration Pedagogy opens up any prospects for the formation of a new pedagogical practice – thinking, speech, activity, training and didactic materials. One of the difficulties associated with the scientific and practical understanding of intercultural learning that is based on a static and stereotypical understanding of culture, ethnicity / national origin, and ethnic and cultural attribution of certain qualities and characteristics. This requires interdisciplinary research, the exchange of practical knowledge, skills and improving educational outreach. Following the principles of the Migration Pedagogy, pedagogical practice and the education system should be restructured for the needs of immigration and immigrants, and not vice versa. This is certainly a long stressful process, which cannot go off without conflicts, fears and challenges at the different levels.

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Abstract

This article reflects some trends and challenges in Germany in connection to immigration. The need of educational and scientific discussion and reflection of migration-specific themes are dictated by the contemporary reality requirements of almost all European countries. Change in society, associated primarily with the processes of immigration, affects the processes and systems of goal-countries, especially the education system.