

<http://dx.doi.org/10.16926/pe.2024.17.04>

Kinga LISOWSKA

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8404-4363>

University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Poland

Contact: kinga.lisowska@uwm.edu.pl**How to cite [jak cytować]:** Lisowska, K. (2024). "A Home-School for Everyone". Transcultural Identity in Education as a Chance for Formation of School Transcultural Communities. *Podstawy Edukacji. Education for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*, 17, 45–55.

“A Home-School for Everyone”. Transcultural Identity in Education as a Chance for Formation of School Transcultural Communities

Abstract

Europe and the world have recently changed their political, economic and socio-cultural face. Migration movements caused by many factors, like SARS-CoV-2 or Russia's attack on Ukraine, have destabilized the system of social structures in the macro and micro space, including groups and various communities. At the same time, progressive digitalization has led to an easy and rapid blurring of the boundaries between the cultures represented in the home and school environments of children and young people.

From the perspective of these changes, on the one hand, the threat of marginalization of students identifying with different cultures has increased, and the use of stereotypes that have prevailed so far causes exclusion due to ethnic, national or religious diversity. On the other hand, the way has opened up for the formation of societies, including transcultural groups and communities, which makes it possible to come to terms with the dynamics of cultures and construct new transcultural structures devoid of antagonisms.

The presented article attempts theoretical considerations on the essence of shaping transcultural identity among children and young people, introduced at school through education for acculturation, and leading to the creation of a transcultural school community open, ensuring safety for all differences and focused on creating new connections. In these considerations, transcultural identity was considered an "opportunity" for the school's new tasks to ensure the functioning of students in a culturally diverse, open, non-marginalizing school transcultural community.

Keywords: transcultural education, identity, transcultural identity, transculturalism.

Introduction

The article focuses on theoretical considerations concerning the issue of shaping transcultural identity among students (children and youth), which is an opportunity to enable the building of transcultural school communities through education for acculturation. Thus, it creates a "home" – a school for everyone, regardless of the cultural structure represented. A "home" in which antagonists cease to play a role and new spaces and networks of cultural connections are created.

It attempts to look at educational activities differently from the perspective of dynamically changing cultural structures. The world has undergone social, political and economic transformations in recent years. The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has changed the functioning of individual countries and nations in them, Russia's attack on Ukraine, and multiple migration crises. Currently, representatives of different – other nations function side by side, use similar products in everyday life and receive the same stimuli from the media, newspapers, professional environments and peer groups. Regardless of their roots, they receive information about the same ways of behaving and express the need to be part of new transcultural groups and societies.

In the era of digitization and the Internet, the existing boundaries of cultural identities resulting from cultural affiliation are also disappearing. Today's world is fluid and may seem unstable to an "uninformed" individual. The task of the school should be to ensure that students who identify with different native cultural structures are educated with a sense of security and openness to multiple influences depending on the time, place and context in which they occurred. Transculturalism provides tools to create and increase students' ability to combine and include different cultural approaches that become part of a new educational model where cultural differences are valued and accepted rather than considered a point of separation (Casinader, Walsh, 2015).

In the article, the problem of transcultural perception of the world from the educational perspective will be outlined in three thematic areas: acculturation as a term in the social sciences; education for acculturation as a way to create transcultural school communities – the formation of individual and collective identities; the transcultural Identity of the pupil as a determinant of the functioning of school transcultural communities open to all strategies of action of individuals and the communities they represent, i.e. transcultural identity as a "cure" for marginalization due to differences in the ways of solving problems and interpreting life experiences.

On the other hand, transcultural societies, including groups and communities of educational institutions, shape their structure by connecting through transitions (or transversions) between codes, elements and values of different cultures. They are focused on dynamics, changeability and openness, and the

cultures that exist in them take the shape of a puzzle (Welsch, 1999). As a result of the interaction between coexisting representatives of cultures, new shapes, forms, styles, beliefs, and customs are revealed that were previously not taken into account, and in which there are no generally known ways of marginalization due to cultural dissimilarity (Augustyniak, 2023).

Transculturalism in the perspective of social sciences

The sources of acculturation should be sought as early as the 16th century, and the theoretical foundations in the first half of the 20th century. Since the 1990s, there has been an increased appreciation for transculturalism and its approach, mobilizing changes in the psycho-socio-cultural spheres, cultural diffusion, and hybridization (Nikitorowicz, Guziuk-Tkacz, 2021).

The development of this concept in the humanities and social sciences was made by Wolfgang Welsch (1999), who pointed to the essence of the interpenetration of contemporary cultures, styles and values of life, the image of which is not separated and is characterized by heterogeneity and mixing. On the macro- and microsocial level, there is an interaction between at least two cultural poles. Cultures take the shape of puzzles by creating so-called transversions (puzzling forms of cultures). This phenomenon covers an increasing number of populations and areas and thus creates "configurations of connections" – cultures have lost their homogeneity and distinctiveness (Welsch, 1999).

Transculturality is also defined by Jerzy Nikitorowicz (2021) and Marta Guziuk-Tkacz (2021) as "the spatial being "beyond" the border(s) of specific cultures and cultural mixing, which results in the formation of new cultural structures and formations, built from heterogeneous networks, containing components common to other transcultural networks and differentiating elements" (Nikitorowicz, Guziuk-Tkacz, 2021, p. 28). In this way, acculturation leads to the emergence of new cultural qualities characterized by a hybrid structure, taking into account the constant crossing of cultural boundaries.

In the school space, acculturation is designed to enable children and young people to enter into "transversions" – to be ready to move between many frames of meaning. Students should strive for the human-culture relationship and adopt an active attitude to shape their cultural identity. Self-liberation occurs during contact with art, language, religion, and science; the individual gives meaning to cultural artefacts (Misiejuk, 2015). The building of a collective mentality begins, which we discover thanks to evaluation. Elements of culture with an assigned cultural value are transformed into specific symbols of social groups. They become part of the reference for moral evaluation of all human behaviour (Linton, 2000).

The development of acculturation in the education process depends on the establishment of personal relationships between individuals and cultural artefacts, which are divided into physical (material culture) and linguistic (language, myths, legends of a given community, expressing its views and history) as well as behavioural (rituals, customs and patterns of behaviour). Children and adolescents coming into contact with the world of artefacts should consciously read and then process the data encoded in the behaviours and things that surround them. By reconstructing their emotional value, they can then notice that the artefacts determine the relation of the thing to the specificity of this thing. It, in turn, determines the will to assimilate and maintain the elements of culture that characterize a given area and do not define a specific generation. Transculturalism allows for cultural identity formation, characterized by the individual's adaptation of artefacts to his activities and the needs of civilization. A person with this type of structure makes it available in his biography, which proves his high cultural awareness. Therefore, a student experiencing transculturality in the education process goes through a path in which he or she considers it appropriate to combine inherited culture with the one experienced, acquired, sought and constructed. However, it must receive a signal, a chance to develop in a multicultural social reality. Otherwise, cultural identity in the concept of transculturalism will not be initiated in any way (Misiejuk, 2015).

Acculturation and its contemporary approach can be an alternative to perceiving human nature as an unchangeable, eternal, homogeneous and autonomous being. Therefore, it is essential to provide knowledge and open the perspective of thinking in a hybrid-transcultural approach. In order to bring about a change in the education process, it is necessary to properly construct questions and pose challenges, perceiving cultural heritage from the perspective of connecting multicultural communities in micro and macro terms with "genius loci".

Education for acculturation as a way to create school transcultural communities

Dynamically progressing changes in the political, economic and socio-cultural reality assign new tasks to schools to create the cultural identity of children and young people. In macro and micro terms, the world becomes a place of meetings and coexistence of culturally and ethnically heterogeneous identities. The student becomes part of a globalized reality in which education should be an element of more broadly organized identity formation processes in which the contingency and changeability of cultural networks play a role.

A determinant of modern education is following the ability of students to adapt creatively, guaranteeing the ability to create themselves and to maintain

the core of identity despite changing living conditions (Wróblewska, 2011). Children and young people must learn to function in the so-called triad: inherited identity co-occurring with the Identity of roles and challenges and the Identity felt and realized (Nikitorowicz, 1995). Then, the educational process simultaneously deepens students' sense of autonomy, develops openness to other cultures, and draws on their values. On the other hand, education is freed from the marginalization of different individuals in terms of experience and ways of solving problems. It enables creative adaptation to any environment in which a person finds himself.

A school in which individuals representing different cultural spaces meet more and more often must take into account universal values and cultural and religious pluralism in its educational activities. The process of education in a culturally changing school, considering the creation of communities with diverse reference cultures subject to hybridization, is an opportunity to form an open student – able to find himself in the dynamism of the outside world. A student who emphasizes his or her traditions but assimilates the experiences of colleagues representing different structures, at last, receives the necessary elements to shape his or her transcultural identity and is no longer subject to marginalization and stereotypical treatment of "strangers – others".

Transcultural education is a response to cultural, social, economic and political changes taking place in the international arena. In the transcultural approach, the student is considered the subject of pedagogical influences. At the same time, he has "transversal reason, which is a separate cognitive competence" (Nikitorowicz, Guziuk-Tkacz, 2021, p. 29). Only thanks to the assimilation of multifaceted rationality can modern man acquire an awareness capable of coping with instability.

The school can shape an individual, characterized by an internal pluralism of personality, and reveal a specific lifestyle. The phenomenon of such a student will be the ability to accept and see many variants of himself. To start an internal discussion in the face of discovering one's abilities, and at the same time to accept the idea of cognition concerning others and oneself. The school must go beyond ossified cultural structures – and open up to a different approach to constructing identity perspectives of the individual's growth in various reference groups.

A student ready to give up certain cultural elements of his or her choice can function on the cultural borderline. Therefore, he is ready to move into the world of new spaces, where, using the "storehouse" of value, he reaches for what gives him a hybrid view of reality. In transcultural education, the individual creates his or her identity, in which he or she considers the simultaneous experience of "being at home" and "strangeness". It assumes that it functions in a multicultural reality, so one of its tasks is to confront representatives of other cultures, especially the ways of behaviour they represent. The pillars of a student's identity depend on the way and ability to evaluate themselves and con-

structive criticism concerning multidimensional groups and people, as well as the associated conditions, situations and stereotypes.

An individual can – should – construct multiple identity variants, consisting of scattered "puzzles" – cultural proposals he encounters. Thanks to the possibility of transcultural identity creation in the school space, the student does not experience a "shock" and, from an early age, becomes ready for a dynamic transition between the cultures of reference without marginalizing any of them. Depending on the moment of his life, difficulties, desires and aspirations, man needs to be in different cultures and draw on the elements and experiences they express. This skill will stabilize and protect them from exclusion – for themselves and others standing between cultures.

In order to see the possibilities of different cultural spaces, an individual must acquire autonomy that will allow him to make choices and distance himself from social antagonisms. It must allow itself to leave what in the native culture does not deserve recognition and assimilate elements from other groups, which it defines as valuable.

Children and adolescents, seeing an opportunity for cultural hybridization, can adapt, maintain life balance, develop and meet their own needs regardless of where they function. The guarantee of creating the identity of children and young people in transcultural societies is the ability to critically evaluate and understand one's actions and accept the diversity of experiences and related values flowing from various social groups, not marginalizing otherness but respecting otherness.

In transcultural education, individuals who can cooperate, engage in dialogue and negotiate in a changeable, socially and identity-diverse reality are formed to be with others, to treat them equally and to recognize their differences.

Children and young people must understand that in the 21st century, they cannot be prisoners of inherited culture. The guarantee of their identity success is "between" and "beyond" a given perspective of reference, but with a holistic view of their needs and possibilities. The meeting of what is native with what is different but has developmental forms, new cultural spaces from elements revolving around the core of identity. Through transcultural education, the student can enter this "space" and reach for what he or she considers right for the development of his or her person (Nikitorowicz, Guziuk-Tkacz, 2021, p. 30).

Transcultural identity of students as a determinant of the functioning of hybrid – open–school transcultural communities

The transcultural identity of individuals is shaped based on a transnational territory, and belonging to it does not require their physical presence. The pen-

etration of cultures into an increasing number of groups and communities and the areas they inhabit leads to the creation of "macro-complexes". From the perspective of creating cultural identity, the individual has a sense of contingency and dynamism of cultural networks that affect the situations and problems functioning in his or her life. It is also in constant contact with others, i.e., a constantly developing hybrid. Such multiple cultural connections provide a better perspective on the cultural formation of man.

On the other hand, identity formation is directed towards integrating various components characterized by multiple cultural origins (Welsch, 1999). Man must accept the transcultural community, enabling him to follow a cultural route – the search for authenticity through reconstructing the past and the dynamic and fluid blurring of boundaries between cultures. Only then does he acquire the ability to experience manifested as a "feedback loop" (Kamińska, 2009).

Children and young people who create a multidimensional cultural identity during education are subject to constant change, acceptance, and rejection of given values and ways of behaving and solving problems. At the same time, they remain aware of their identity in each new space in which they find themselves.

Transcultural identity is created in micro and macro societies and depends on the values and experiences of the communities that make up these spaces. Its acquisition occurs through basic family structures, the education system, and the socio-cultural, economic, and political world surrounding the individual. In order for children and young people to be able to shape their own cultural identity and settle in a specific reference group, and at the same time open up to other cultural groups, children and young people must receive correct patterns of movement in the course of education among multicultural, regional, national and international society, as well as among peer groups and communities of care and educational institutions.

Only openness to the dynamics of a world composed of overlapping cultural structures will provide students with an understanding of the otherness and differentiation of values subject to history and tradition, specific interpersonal relations and the system of power, or socio-economic conditions. It will enable the building of a self-image based on satisfaction, a sense of fulfilled duty, and the ability to adapt to constantly developing new values – emerging transcultural societies.

An increase in cultural mixing, and thus the individual's contact with many markers and codes different from the family environment, can destabilize the individual. Understanding the existence of values and the possibility of implying what is different- alien- into one's identity space is the way to understand one-self. At the same time, openness to preserving fundamental values that do not change in multicultural structures means acquiring the ability to combine the experiences of multiple generations. It is conducive to forming transcultural

communities based on the hybrid experiences of individuals in communities created in care and educational institutions.

On the one hand, transcultural identity should open children and young people to new and unknown spaces and, on the other hand, indicate markers of fundamental values, without which it would not be possible to find oneself in cultural hybridization. The latter, universal, unchangeable, permanent, timeless and universal human, include peace, the right to life, freedom, tolerance, truth, faith, love and justice (Kowolik, Pośpiech, 2009).

The destabilization of social structures forces the school to perform new tasks in creating the identity of students. The need for a different view on education is evident among representatives of local communities, but also among parents, who receive messages from children about their "surprise" at the cultural diversity of other/new participants in social life. There is a phenomenon of identification in micro-social spaces of representatives of other nationalities, Poles returning after economic emigration, and followers of various religions (Lisowska, Leszczyńska-Rejchert, 2023). Shaping transcultural identity among students is a way to eliminate the sense of instability and create one's close world – a community of peer and school groups open to multiple perceptions of reality – communities that are part of regional, national and international reality. It is a pursuit of the understanding that society on a micro and macro scale is built by different cultural groups (characterized by different reference cultures), which need to be constituted. By becoming transcultural societies, these groups prevent exclusion due to the diversity of values and traditions rooted in native reference cultures. They also open up to learning how to solve problems and make choices by individuals and communities that are not yet known to them/new.

Understanding the transcultural construction of individual and collective identity will allow students to preserve the historical values of a given space and actively respect and accept experiences from other cultural structures that determine the current reality of the school community. Education should consider the dynamics of the world, in which isolated patriotic values become an artefact, closing children and young people into a group of national identification. The school should show that patriotism is an approach that opens up to multicultural thinking about oneself and the space in which the individual lives and a firm negation of the rejection of other ways of solving solutions resulting from cultural diversity.

Conclusions of Theoretical Considerations

The formation of the transcultural identity of students, leading to the building of school transcultural communities, should be based on the following goals:

- 1) Creating students' autonomy and subjectivity as a way to be open and get rid of cultural stereotypes leading to the marginalization of culturally different individuals and groups;
- 2) forming children and young people characterized by transversal reason, which will enable the active building of transcultural school communities;
- 3) creating open-minded individuals capable of creating hybrid individual identities; ready for transitions – transversions between cultures and for adopting completely new solutions;
- 4) introducing pupils to the world of cultural networks in which they take action to coexist, coexist and intermingle experiences and values accumulated by different cultural groups with which they coexist at school;
- 5) providing knowledge about regional cultural resources and intercultural complexities that are stages of education for acculturation;
- 6) constituting a sense of the contingency of the individual in a world in which native cultures discover the meaning, feel (perceive) in the course of growth and education, and finally choose because of the experiences and values adopted in the school environment.

In this way, transcultural identity in education should lead to integrating individuals identifying with different cultures and a sense of security and understanding of students representing multiple experiences and values. Transcultural Identity developed through education for acculturation enables the creation of hybrid spaces where all representatives of cultures, people with different views, and different (socially acceptable) ways of solving problems will find a place. It is also an opportunity to help students find balance and understand and support individuals in need who are marginalized because of their cultural, ethnic, and religious differences or represented values (different from standard models, but worth getting to know and noticing). Finally, there is the possibility of rejecting stereotypes while entering into openness for cultural instability.

Transcultural identity formed during education is a way to build modern societies, including groups and communities, in which the ability to connect and make cultural transitions is essential. It is an opportunity to consciously come into contact with other lifestyles, learn about discrepancies, and permeate. As a result of establishing relationships across borders and cultures, new – previously unknown forms – hybrids – styles – beliefs are created, and customs and ways of solving problems are created. Thus, transcultural communities are formed, including school transcultural communities, in which, while maintaining equality, interaction with strangeness is built and maintained.

References

- Augustyniak, J.A. (2023). eTwinning – narzędzie do budowania społeczeństwa transkulturowego. *Edukacja Międzykulturowa*, 1(20), 156–167. <https://doi.org/10.15804/em.2023.01.1>
- Casinader, N., Walsh, L. (2015). Teacher Transculturalism and Cultural Difference: Addressing Racism in Australian Schools. *The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives*, 14(2), 51–62.
- Kamińska, K. (2013). Szlak kulturowy – nowa strategia uobecniania przeszłości. *Zeszyty Naukowe Ostrołęckiego Towarzystwa Naukowego*, 27, 321–329.
- Kowolik, P., Pośpiech, L. (2009). Istota wartości i ich znaczenie w edukacji. *Nauczyciel i Szkoła*, 3–4(44–45), 21–33.
- Linton, R. (2000). *Kulturowe podstawy osobowości*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.
- Lisowska, K., Leszczyńska-Rejchert, A. (2023). Jak wychowywać do wartości w przestrzeni przedszkolnej w społeczeństwie transkulturowym. *Edukacja Elementarna w Teorii i Praktyce*, 18(3), 43–54. <https://doi.org/10.35765/eetp.2023.1870.03>
- Misiejuk, D. (2015). Strategia transkulturowości w edukacji. Perspektywa artefaktu kulturowego. *Pogranicze. Studia Społeczne*, 25, 209–220.
- Nikitorowicz, J. (1995). *Pogranicze. Tożsamość. Edukacja międzykulturowa*. Białystok: Wydawnictwo TRANS HUMANA.
- Nikitorowicz, J., Guziuk-Tkacz, M. (2021). Wielokulturowość – międzykulturowość – transkulturowość w kontekście pedagogicznym. *Edukacja Międzykulturowa*, 2(15), 23–36. <https://doi.org/10.15804/em.2021.0>
- Welsch, W. (1999). Transculturality – the Puzzling Form of Cultures Today, [in]: M. Featherstone and S. Lash, (eds.), *Spaces of Culture: City, Nation, World* (pp. 194–213). London: SAGE.
- Wróblewska, M. (2011). Kształtowanie tożsamości w perspektywie rozwojowej i edukacyjnej. *Pogranicze. Studia Społeczne*, 12, 176–187.

„Dom – szkoła dla wszystkich”. Tożsamość transkulturowa w edukacji szansą na kształtowanie szkolnych społeczności transkulturowych

Streszczenie

W ostatnich latach Europa i świat zmieniły swoje oblicze polityczne, ekonomiczne i społeczno-kulturowe. Ruchy migracyjne spowodowane wieloma czynnikami, m.in. SARS COV-2 czy atakiem Rosji na Ukrainę, zdestabilizowały system struktur społeczeństw w przestrzeni makro i mikro, w tym grup i różnych społeczności. Jednocześnie postępująca cyfryzacja doprowadziła do łatwego

i szybkiego zacierania granic pomiędzy kulturami reprezentowanymi w środowisku domowym i szkolnym dzieci oraz młodzieży.

W perspektywie tych przemian z jednej strony wzrosło zagrożenie marginalizacją uczniów identyfikujących się z różnymi kulturami, wykorzystywaniem do tej pory panujących stereotypów powodujących wykluczenie ze względu na odmienną etniczną, narodową, religijną. Z drugiej strony otworzyła się droga do formowania społeczeństw, w tym grup i społeczności transkulturowych, umożliwiających pogodzenie się z dynamicznością kultur oraz konstruowanie nowych struktur transkulturowych pozbawionych wszelkich antagonizmów.

Prezentowany artykuł jest próbą rozważań teoretycznych nad istotą kształtowania wśród dzieci i młodzieży tożsamości transkulturowej, wprowadzanej w szkole za pośrednictwem edukacji na rzecz transkulturowości, a prowadzącej do tworzenia szkolnej społeczności transkulturowej – otwartej, zapewniającej bezpieczeństwo wszelkim odmiennościom i nastawionej na tworzenie nowych powiązań. W rozważaniach tych tożsamość transkulturowa została uznana za „szansę” na nowe zadania szkoły ukierunkowane na zapewnienie funkcjonowania uczniom w różnorodnej kulturowo, otwartej, niemarginalizującej szkolnej społeczności transkulturowej.

Słowa kluczowe: edukacja na rzecz transkulturowości, tożsamość, tożsamość transkulturowa, transkulturowość.