

## MULTICULTURAL COMPONENT IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

© Vera STOJANOVSKA & © Biljana KRSTESKA-PAPIĆ  
(University Ss. Cyril and Methodius & Nansen Dialogue Centre Skopje,  
Skopje, Republic of Macedonia)

[veras@zfz.ukim.edu.mk](mailto:veras@zfz.ukim.edu.mk)

*The principles of multiculturalism, democracy, non-discrimination and respect for individual differences among people of the social, cultural, religious or linguistic nature are one of the leading principles upon which is built and placed the conception for nine-year elementary education in the Republic of Macedonia. Heterogeneous ethnic structure of the population in the Republic of Macedonia imposes the need for promotion of multicultural spirit and perspective. Therefore, it opens the question: to what extent and how truly the multicultural component of compulsory elementary education is represented, understood as a platform for developing multicultural awareness among young generations, which should be educated and sensibilized for tolerant attitude towards the diversity of different nature that surrounds them every day at local, as well at global level.*

**Keywords:** multiculturalism, multicultural education, nine-year elementary education, curriculum

Given the fact that multiculturalism and internationalism are one of the leading educational trends, all the efforts towards promotion of multicultural dimension of contemporary education are completely justified.

Given the circumstances where there is still quest for optimal mode for creation of quality and sustainable policy for cultural differences in many social communities, the field of education can be identified as reasonably invoked to take a lead in creating and directing the strategy for promoting multiculturalism through all levels of education system via exactly this advantage for implementation of this task through a subtle, spontaneous, natural, unforced shape that is based on many features incorporated within the national programs, the legal framework governing educational activity, and sensitiveness of staff about its importance.

A great challenge was to conduct an analysis of the representation of multicultural dimension in the elementary education in the Republic of Macedonia, as a model of a multiethnic society, in order to see how the layout of the program and legal framework are designed to promote the multicultural component in nine-year elementary education.

## Defining the basic concepts

Quality presentation of the above-mentioned problem requires clear and proper definition of the term: multicultural education.

Due to their identification, there is a need for a clear demarcation of concepts: multicultural and intercultural society/education.

Multiculturalism and interculturalism are actually two types of social concepts, among which exist the important qualitative difference, i.e. the degree of interaction between different cultural groups within a single social community.

We can see the intercultural education as a kind of educational and cultural policy, which leads to the creation of a society of intertwined cultures through the process of interaction, which is a prerequisite for the successful existence of social communities are a source of much diversity and differences (Velkovski, 2003).

That is the starting point where the principles and postulates of intercultural education arise from, i.e. it should be organized in order to implement the multilayered task – education for empathy, solidarity, respect and intercultural non-nationalistic mindset.

On the other hand, multicultural education is defined as understanding the ethnic differences; reduction, overcoming barriers, obstacles in communication, and developing awareness of identity, belonging to the community with multicultural colour (Kamcheva-Lakinska & Pesevska & Lakinska, 2003).

Some authors also advocate a much narrower view of multicultural education as education that puts the upbringing before the conflict, but should help to successful integration of the children of immigrants, boosting social and cultural distinctive features (Gudjons, 1994).

Generally, the new generations in the educational process should yield the knowledge that human community is a range of differences: racial, religious, national, cultural, ethnological and others. All should live not by each other, but together with others. The school should take responsibility for preparing and training the youth for cooperation, tolerance, equality, solidarity (Markovic, 1999).

Therefore, we should take intercultural education as a necessity for modern societies, because it should help to recognize the possibility of dealing with the challenge of finding the optimal ratio between cultural diversity and social cohesion.

## Analysis of the multicultural component in curricula

Educational programs should provide educational content that will enable cognition of culture and preservation of cultural identity with the development of cultural work (Markovic, 1999).

This position can be enriched and supported by the fact that today, "multicultural curricula and programs for mixed national and religious backgrounds are introduced (Ratkovic, 1997).

There is no doubt that, having in mind these views and beliefs of modern curricula and programs, the question arises about the needed qualifications to determine our plans and programs for nine years compulsory elementary education.

It was recognized the necessity to study of the current Law on Elementary Education (Закон..., 2008) and the recognition of provisions that

could be basis for promotion of multiculturalism through a variety of educational content and activities.

The analysis of the Law on Elementary Education (Закон..., 2008) of R. Macedonia shows that the legal framework puts a strong emphasis on the promotion of the principle of multiculturalism. Due to the Article 3, as a goal in the elementary education, it indicates the importance of developing mutual tolerance, cooperation, respect for diversity, fundamental human freedoms and rights, as well of developing pupils' awareness about belonging to R. Macedonia and nurturing their own national and cultural identity. At the same time, it pointed that the priority goals of education mean establishing of general cultural and civilisation values arising from the world traditions, and developing awareness among pupils about their own personality and identity.

Article 9 provides that the members of the nationalities should perform their education on the language and alphabet of nationalities, but at the same time, learning of the Macedonian language is compulsory.

The provision in Article 11 prevents political and religious organization and action behind the curtain of the educational content, while Article 7 covers both category of the pupils-foreign nationals and stateless persons-who are able to acquire elementary education in the Republic of Macedonia.

We will extend our presentation with the analysis of curricula and review of content provided by curriculum for nine-year elementary education as the basis of compulsory education in the Republic of Macedonia.

We directed the analysis of the programming documents only to the first two periods of development, i.e. from the first to third grade and from the forth to sixth grade. According to the performed dynamics of the introduction of the nine-year elementary education in R. Macedonia, during the coming two school years, new programs for the fifth and sixth grade will be introduced, and then successively will follow the introduction of innovative programs for the final three years, i.e. for seventh, eighth and ninth grade.

Analyzing the document "Concepts of nine-year elementary education" we are particularly glad to acknowledge that the principles of democracy, non-discrimination, respect for individual differences among pupils and the principle of understanding others and multiculturalism are among the numerous principles of elementary education that were pointed out. It clearly emphasizes that schools need to continually develop tolerance, mutual respect, respect of differences of different nature, and systematic development of skills for understanding and respect for others and otherness. This process should enable and develop the values of coexistence, respect for differences among people, cultures, languages, and traditions.

If you perform an analysis of the aim of elementary education in the Republic of Macedonia, you will be able easily to recognize the same sensitivity to *otherness*, the *other* in the educational process that at the same time has to create positive impact on promoting multicultural component.

The importance of harmonious development of pupils' personality is clearly stressed in the goal of elementary education which is based primarily on respect for basic human rights and freedoms and gender equality, and the continuous development of civic awareness among pupils that they belong to R. Macedonia, as is representative of a democratic society open to the diversity of social, religious, cultural, and linguistic nature.

This multilayered goal operates through more specifically modelled objectives and activities, such as training of pupils for expressing, understanding and acquiring information in Macedonian language; in multi language environments and Albanian, Turkish, Serbian and other languages;

their awareness for the cultural and historical heritage of R. Macedonia, as well as the achievements of other cultures around the world, as well through the study of foreign languages. It was emphasized the importance of promotion of the principles of equality between people, tolerant and non-violent behaviour, and enabling the pupils to resolve conflict situations on a constrictive manner by themselves.

Analyzing the curriculum of the nine-year elementary education one can see that there were provided a variety of compulsory and facultative subjects, which should respond to the task of promoting multicultural view of the world. Besides learning the mother tongue, pupils that are members of other ethnic communities can have opportunity to learn the Macedonian language, as an official language in RM. Introducing English language from the first grade gives a clear signal that learning the foreign languages gives the pupils an opportunity to learn different cultures and traditions. We are glad about the fact that the subject Civic Education has the status of compulsory subjects in higher grades of elementary education. Broad basis for incorporating multicultural component exists in the category of facultative subjects as Ethics; Language and Culture of the Vlachs; Roma Language and Culture; Language and Culture of Bosnians; Albanian Language; Creative Works; Introduction to Religions, Our Country, Researches of the Homeland; Dances and Folk Dances; Life Skills; Musical Art Projects; Painting Art Projects.

Overall analysis of curricula indicates that it is created and oriented to sensitise the pupils to recognize and to have respect for cultural differences, but above all values that characterize life in the heterogeneous society.

We will try to present the goals and tasks provided for different learning areas, contained within the new curricula for nine-year elementary education.

Even within the field of math (which at first glance looks like an area, which is not in direct correlation with the subtle issue of multicultural education) there is a space and opportunity for promotion of universal values typical of multicultural education. The conception of the program states that one of the meanings of mathematics is that it is part of culture and leisure, and therefore can have an impact on the formation of the proper attitude toward cultural wealth and heritage, as well toward creative achievements of people worldwide.

One example of this is information that pupils can obtain, for an example, on ancient Chinese, abacus, the emergence of Roman letters and numbers, by learning the content: Money (by introducing different types of national currency, coins, bank notes), etc.

The program provided for the subject Introduction to the Environment is certainly one of the areas that are most appropriate for successfully shaping the content that would be characterized with multicultural orientation.

In the continuity from first to third grade, some common goals are set in order to develop awareness of respect for the rules of social life and taking responsibility for one's own actions. In other words, they are aimed at encouraging human relations between the sexes, fostering of mutual multicultural communication and understanding, and developing respect for cultural differences.

In the first period, the gradual development and adding complexity to objectives and activities is carried out, so for example in first grade there should be developed respect to one's own culture and cultural heritage of other nations. In second grade, emphasis is put on the development of tolerance, friendship, mutual assistance, tolerance, and humanity. Strong emphasis is also put on a need for introducing to the customs and holidays of

one's own culture and the cultures of other communities in the Republic of Macedonia. Pupils from third grade are planned to enhance their basic knowledge about children's rights, and to develop positive attitude towards multiculturalism, as a prerequisite for acceptance of differences in their immediate surrounding. Evident is the abundance of activities through which pupils have the opportunity to learn about the past of their native place, homeland, legends, tales from different cultures, customs, traditions, holidays, their way of celebration, monuments, buildings, folklore, ethnological items.

The same potential is also recognized while analyzing the program for the subjects of Nature and Society (planned for pupils in fourth and fifth grade).

While analyzing the purpose of teaching the subject Nature one can again perceive emphasis on the importance of training pupils for individual, group, and team work, while in the program of the subject Society the same goal is deepened and enriched with emphasis on the need for cooperation, refined with respect to traditional and cultural values of different ethnic groups. From the analysis of specific goals it is clear that planned content should educate pupils to respect the cultural and religious differences, and to mutual assistance and understanding as a prerequisite for overcoming the conflicts and stereotypes as the reasons for conflict situations.

General conclusion is that the contents of this subject are skilfully structured and directed towards education of pupils for good neighbourly relations, and for building quality coexistence.

Activities that are directly targeted towards the realization of the education in the spirit of multiculturalism were offered at the same time: constructing the family tree; arranging ethnology corner; making ornaments – folk embroidery and carving; collecting and recording folk tales, riddles, legends, customs, and old money; observing the details of the monuments; visits to museums; making models of old houses with all facilities (yard, well) etc. The programs allow many potential opportunities for promotion of the multicultural values, but certainly the mode of their utilization depends on the flexibility, creativity, originality, and above all, on the sensitiveness of a teaching staff in regard to the need, role and value of this specific type of education.

Much potential also lie in the content provided with the program for Macedonian language, or native language – a segment of the goals of developmental period from the first to third grade clearly emphasizes that the content should enable the development of feeling of belonging to R. Macedonia. In addition, it should be in a function of development of respect to all other languages that are in use in the Republic of Macedonia.

An important task that stands before the contents of the native language for the first grade pupils is training for mutual contact and understanding, and identifying the differences in speech expression of other languages. In second grade, the pupils should be gradually introduced to popular and artistic works and literature from their own literary heritage, but also from that of other cultural communities. Continuously from the third to sixth grade there are selected contents that are aimed at developing awareness of the importance of peace, tolerance and cooperation between people from different cultures, familiarity with historical and cultural heritage, with significant impact on cultural developments in the country and the world; development of humanism, truth loving, solidarity, love for fatherland, education in the spirit of peace and tolerance, cultural relations and cooperation among peoples and nations.

This is nothing but a platform for modelling a variety of situations in which you can accomplish tasks of multicultural education.

It would be enough to point to just one of the obligatory reading text: Magic-tale stories of Slavic nations or Orhan written by Nexhat Zekerija, and immediately to recognize and identify constructive preconditions for stressing the values of multiculturalism which is not imposed at all or unnaturally and artificially inserted into the regular content, but is, on the contrary, carried into the core of those values, so we only need to emphasize its presence.

This is the best example of how to shape the sources, and content for multicultural education.

A novelty in the programs is certainly the introduction of an English language as a compulsory subject starting from the first grade, which is certainly a major step forward in building and developing of multicultural spirit among pupils, since on the very start of their elementary education they will have an opportunity to get introduced in some elements of the cultures of countries whose citizens speak the English language. The Culture is also contained as a program component, as an area whose goal is to help sensitize pupils to identify cultural diversity through educational content of social character, as a prerequisite for developing tolerance, empathy towards otherness and diversity, while using the contents as games, songs, counting rhymes, simulation models of cultural behaviour, and so on.

Art education, directly through its tasks (which extend continuously from first to third grade) allows sensitization of pupils to *others* through introduction to the artistic heritage of the Macedonian people and other national communities, nations, countries – through activities such as visiting galleries, museums, monuments, landmarks, media monitoring, etc.

Content planned for Art education from fourth to sixth grade should enable the construction of the overall positive attitude towards overall cultural heritage in R. Macedonia, created in different ethnic communities, which of course leads to the creation of multicultural spirit among pupils, continuously throughout the process of elementary education. Great advantage of the contents planned with the programs in art education is their capacity for readily integration into other program contents in various educational areas.

Music education provides pupils with the introduction to the works from folk arts from their own nation, but also the nations around the world. This is done through listening to music tracks, introducing the various instruments typical parts of the world, performing elementary folk dances, listening to music and folklore of one's own and other ethnic communities, singing songs related to state religious holidays, and so on. The developmental goals from first to third grade indicate the intention of introducing pupils to musical creation, both from their own people and from other cultural communities. The same goals are extended in the next developmental period, i.e. from the fourth to sixth grade, because the development goals are also elevated by emphasizing the importance of teamwork, as well by promoting tolerant relationship and readiness of pupils to help someone else.

Activities are also planned within the contents of Physical and Health education, such as introduction to folk dances, traditional games, games without borders that are a good basis for introducing pupils to various sports games and dances typical for different regions in the world.

Yet another important feature in the organization of education in the native language of the children from other national communities indicates the potential for implementing and promoting universal human values and multicultural values through the teaching of Macedonian language in classes in Albanian, Turkish and Serbian language.

The goal of teaching indicates that it is multicultural in its orientation, because of the tendency of training the children for mutual understanding, friendship, coexistence, development of closeness, unity, coexistence, development of positive attitudes towards literature and heritage seen in world frames.

There is no doubt that content within the following subjects: technical education, working on computers, creation, and life skills (the latter two courses are facultative) offers opportunities for promotion of the multicultural values. Again, there is a question of the extent of the sensitization of immediate executors of the programs about the importance of this approach in presenting the curricula-which is another aspect from which the issues of multicultural education in the Republic of Macedonia should be treated.

From this, it generally can be concluded that our compulsory education has a potential for successful conduct of regular educational and training process, enriched by multicultural values.

Let us locate the problem in another area: how qualified are the executors of the educational process for successfully dealing with this task; that is, whether it is sufficient only to choose quality contents that do not guarantee to transform the idea into actual results and benefits.

Same situation is also identified in the higher grades of elementary education, with only difference that possibilities further are expanded and deepened, especially due to subjects like foreign languages, History, Geography. It is necessary to point out the significant moment for development and promotion of democratic values and civic concept with the introduction of subjects of Civic education in seventh and eighth grade. Certainly, the contribution is done by following skilful shaped subjects as Ethics (sixth grade) or Introduction to Religions and Ethics of Religions, i.e. classical culture in European civilization.

We will indicate a few components, programming situations contained in the subject Civic Education that reach the core of this problem:

- Community of people (nations, nationalities and relations among them, inter-ethnic relations, integration and disintegration, conflicts and dangers, rural and urban community, and relationships between them);
- Relationship between individual and the moral and legal norms (moral and legal norms, obligations and duties of the citizen, the rights of nationalities, etc.);
- International organizations (United Nations, European Union, European Council, the International Red Cross and others);
- Modes for resolving problems in the society (violence, tolerance, dialogue, peace, mutual understanding and so.) (Murati, 1998).

We are glad with the fact that following contents are provided as a possible facultative courses in the sixth, seventh and eighth grade: Our Homeland; Research of the Homeland, Dances and Folk Dances; Life Skills; Musical Art Projects; Painting Art Projects, because they are in close correlation with the concept of multicultural education. That is the reasons why we think that the idea of multicultural education does not require the introduction of an additional, new subject, which would put additional burden on a teaching process and the estimated amount of hours, but skilfully incorporation of the multicultural component in the overall educational and training process.

Education is given a role of responsible factor in the creation of an entirely new, global worldview freed from local, national framework.

Essential for the formation of citizens who are aware, free and responsible are:

- equality of every person;
- respect for self and others;
- freedom;
- solidarity;
- ethnic, racial, political, linguistic, cultural and religious tolerance;
- understanding;
- civic courage, boldness, etc. (Murati, 1998)

In the offered instruments for implementation of this concept for civic education can be noted that there are many activities that will affect on the acquisition of knowledge about the recognition and acceptance of differences, establishment of a constructive relationship with the others free of pressures etc.

Besides the advantages that will be felt during the teaching process and ones that arise from the introduction of such a subject, we should ask ourselves why the official curriculum could not disclose the content that has been characterised with the spirit of multiculturalism? Will the curriculum focused on multicultural education be able to deal with un-inventiveness and even the danger of distortion of this image due to the influence of the hidden curriculum?

These are only part of the dilemmas that arise through the process of finding answers for implementation of the concept in our current education.

It is therefore necessary for education to prepare young people for life and work in the new type of society. It certainly does not mean that we should forget the lessons from the past. Europe should particularly maintain the values and the attainments of its rich cultural past, but those should be incorporated in a culture which now emerges, because it would be insufficient, per se (Ratkovic, 1997).

Democracy, tolerance, and multiculturalism are based on the developmental aspirations of the education today.

This means that in programming of educational content, they will need to be a parameter for quality, contemporary curricula, and programs.

The principle of multiculturalism brings a completely new spirit in the education – education towards world, local, regional, European, and global competence, competition, and communication.

It is exactly the advantage of every contemporary, modern curriculum that resides in its sensitivity and openness to everything that carries the meaning of the current and significance and it is left to the holders of the educational activity the obligation to utilize it, as a basis for transferring the given values into concrete results.

Curriculum, which is the basis of elementary education in R. Macedonia, is highly susceptible to the implementation of the multicultural spirit in the regular education process, but considerations will need to focus on the preventing improvisations and dangers that lurk from the so-called hidden curriculum.

One could ask whether a large number of elementary schools in the Republic of Macedonia, which are characterized by mixed, heterogeneous ethnic and cultural structure of the entities, really use this to promote multiculturalism. Alternatively, if sometimes, just due to the effects of so-called hidden curriculum, this diversity is experienced even as a barrier and impediment to the implementation of the regular contents and activities. Those are the moments when the competition and search for cultural features



start, features that are dominant in relation to others, which create a vacuum between cultural groups in a school, local community, even at the level of overall social life.

Maybe the best way to conclude this review is to cite one thought of Isaac Adizes: *We should not put all your faith in technology for solving problems of the future...* The decision is not to have more technology. *The solution is first to learn how to be social beings and how to integrate ourselves at almost every level of the society – in politics, ethnic relations and as creative beings.*

## Final impressions

No culture is intruder in the history of human thought, and so it is with the European civilization. Not a single person in Europe should be considered as a cultural intruder. Knowing the benefits of all civilizations of human thought is a starting point to interculturalism (Perotti, 1995).

As a prerequisite for the creation of multicultural education, we must approach to the “construction of the ideology of multiculturalism that corresponds to the state in which Macedonia is now. The first step in that direction is to reject – through education and public activities (forums, debates, etc.) – everyday human fear and resistance to multiculturalism. Namely, this idea for many people here is just like another minority scarecrow. But multiculturalism is not only a policy of minority cultures and communities, but for all who live in a society in conditions of democracy” (Dodovski, 2005).

Therefore, the main task and the burden fell on the schools that got an important, large, new task – *children should be able to identify the mutual differences, but also to recognize similarities* in the spirit of the thought of Claude Levi-Strauss; it underlines that the discovery of the others means discovery of relationships, not obstacles.

This means that the school will have a strong influence on shaping the new, in the true sense of the word, democratic societies.

Multicultural education should not be taken as a burdening process of teaching one more subject, neither as education which would be intended for “*culturally more different ones*”, but as a process which would have impact on overcoming ethnocentrism in the educational systems or in the textbooks- especially in the field of history.

A key moment is how to incorporate the multicultural component in the formal educational process, within the existing subjects.

That is why again it should be emphasised that a crucial role here lies in the readiness and competitiveness of teachers for continuous implementation of intercultural education that will have to encompass all aspects of *otherness*, such as ethnic, religious, linguistic, cultural and so on.

Great efforts will be directed towards raising the level of professionalism and sensitization of educational workers for proper recognition of the possibilities and potentials, embedded within existing curricula for promoting of multicultural elements in the formal educational process.

Possible ways of incorporating multicultural component in the educational process are:

- "Coeducation of children with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds rather than their education in various, separate schools;
- *Opening of the school curricula to, so-called, minority culture*, to overcome the ethnocentrism often present in the curricula of history, literature;
- Rejection of prejudice, stereotypes, and hostile attitude towards others in curricula and textbooks, presenting not only differences but also similarities between people;
- Organization of joint projects for pupils with different cultural backgrounds, which will have positive impact on mutual rapprochement;
- Introducing teachers in the skills of intercultural education through continuous training" (Dodovski, 2005).

The analysis of pedagogical documentation showed that the national curriculum and current legislation contain the possibility of incorporating the promotion of multicultural values in the regular educational process.

For now in our elementary school, we can only recognize unorganized, unplanned, and accidental introduction of multicultural elements in the formal educational process. This can serve as an important indicator for the necessity of organizing more cycles of training, workshops for teachers, tutors, vocational employees, and executives through education institutions that would sensitize them for independent recognition of elements in the various educational content that would be promoted as multicultural values.

Therefore, the priority activities, which could be taken towards tracing the path of multicultural education in the Republic of Macedonia, would be production of multiple collections with a proposal for activities, games, multicultural workshops for teachers, educationalists and for children, pupils with different calendar ages and different ethnic background, but also further development and enhancement of the same for secondary education.

We believe that the new curricula for nine years education has enough space to promote multicultural values in the existing subjects, that there is no need for additional discussions of the expert public on whether we need another subject that would be aimed exclusively towards multicultural education.

Preparing the manual, which would be a kind of handbook (for educators, teachers, and professional associates) for the curriculum, and program content and will provide easy incorporation and integration of the multicultural items from the natural-scientific, artistic or linguistic area, can be helpful tool for quality implementation of multicultural education goals and objectives. For example through: introduction to folk music heritage of different peoples, illustrations of the geographical location of various states, specific types of buildings, monuments, short stories, presentation of some folk elements, tasting of typical dishes, getting familiar with rare specimens of fauna and flora characteristic for certain regions, countries and so on.

It is necessary to perform detailed analysis of the actual textbook literature, to set it free from nationalist elements, illustrations, and pejorative expressions, derogatory names directed towards other nations, stereotypes and prejudices in relation to a nation or ethnic community, and so on.

A huge problem is also an overcoming of the danger of organizing bicultural education as a substitute for intercultural education, which is one of the negative directions recognized in our education.

It is absurd to organize the multicultural education in our schools until we make efforts to revive the coeducation in schools that would be centres for mutual, natural, and everyday contact between cultures.

Today, in ethnically heterogeneous environments, there are almost no *mixed* schools in which the regular education process for pupils with different ethnic backgrounds, within the same school building, is carried out at the same shift.

An important step will be done by organizing extra curriculum activities that would be supported by municipal authorities and NGOs operating at the municipality level.

They can easily support more joint projects, activities (e.g. music, dance, literature, etc...) for pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. This means that multicultural education lies in the very core of the non-formal education. There certainly is a support to start bilingual education in R. Macedonia, which has its origin at the several pre-school groups, which conduct their program activities in two languages simultaneously. Their spread through several areas in the Republic of Macedonia, as well as support for the idea of learning of languages in early life stage (through the game, from pre-school age) aims at the promotion of intercultural values.

Political parties also should give their support, but this time as supporters of the idea of multicultural education, and not as (in) direct participants in the creation of educational reforms that are superficially devised and inappropriate for everyday practicing in educational institutions (the latest examples are the many controversies and debates about the idea of introducing religious teaching in elementary schools).

There lies the importance of joint participation in defining unique educational purposes (nationally and locally), whose form would not be directly affected by the changing political situation in the future period.

"*Otherness* is, undoubtedly, emotional phenomenon that occurs everywhere in everyday life, especially in the most sensitive area of contemporary life – education. Besides that, we are aware that the climate is not very suitable to replace the textbooks in which *otherness* and *the other* are missing, and that would not happen immediately. We should expect their implementation on a long term, which will strengthen multiculturalism in the memory and consciousness of pupils and students as future academic citizens of this country" (Dodovski, 2005). The challenge is great, the brave will try, and the tenacious will succeed!

## References

- DODOVSKI, I. (2005): *Experimentum Macedonium – трагајќи по иднината на мултикултурализмот, Мултикултурализмот во Македонија- модел во настанување*. FIOOM, Skopje.
- GUDJONS, H. (1994): *Pedagogija temeljna znanja*. Educa, Zagreb.
- KAMCHEVA-LAKINSKA, B. & PESEVSKA, O. & LAKINSKA, K. (2004): *The Urban Culture in Function of Civil Awareness Development among the Young People, Intercultural Education in the Balkan Countries*. Kyriakidis Brothers, Thessaloniki.
- MARKOVIC, D. Zh. (1999): *Savremenost i obrazovanje, Savremena pedagogska misao*. Contemporary Pedagogical Thought, Belgrade.
- MURATI, Xh. (1992): *За демократизацијата на образованието*. Prosvetno Delo, Skopje, No. 4.
- PEROTTI, A. (1995): *“Plaidoyer” of the Intercultural Education*, Educa, Zagreb
- RATKOVIC, M. (1997): *Obrazovanje i promene, Savremena pedagogska misao*. Contemporary Pedagogical Thought, Belgrade.
- VELKOVSKI, Z. (2004): *Intercultural education in the Republic of Macedonia, Intercultural Education in the Balkan Countries*. Kyriakidis Brothers, Thessaloniki.
- Закон за основно образование* (2008). Службен весник на Р.М., Скопје, бр. 103.