

INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN THE CIVIL EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULA OF THE GREEK SCHOOL(ELEMENTARY-HIGH SCHOOL)

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ABSTRACT: Multiculturalism is one of the main characteristics of contemporary societies as large numbers of populations move from their countries to other ones. Greece is among the countries that receive a large number of immigrants. This created significant changes in the society and the need for new teaching approaches and educational goals. Thus, new curricula were written, which would take into consideration the emerging new situation in our society. The currently in use Curricula for Compulsory Education propose the enhancement of both the cultural and linguistic identity of the students who live in today's multicultural society. The new Curricula of 2011 promote the spirit of the education of the students without any social, economic, educational, religious or cultural discriminations and inequalities. In this paper we investigated the courses of Geography and Civil Education in both curricula, the interdisciplinary projects, teaching scenarios, method and extent of management of cultural diversity. The comparison of the aims and objectives of both curricula showed that in the curricula of 2003: a) the references to the "other", the foreigner within the context of otherness and cultural diversity are very few b) the references to the "other" are mainly based on the acceptance, knowledge cultural elements, without effort for interaction and exchange of experiences. In the new Curricula of 2011, greater emphasis is given to the social coexistence with the "other", where, as stated in the aims, the student should form relevant attitudes. These references are many more in relation to the curricula of 2003.

Keywords: curricula, geography, civil education, multiculturalism, cultural diversity, coexistence

1. Introduction

The last years, the arrival in Greece of a large number of immigrants has resulted into significant changes in the composition of the school population in the Greek schools. This which has created the need for more experienced teachers and new educational planning and goals.(Anagnostopoulou &Maniati, 2008) Today school has to manage ethnocultural diversity, to integrate foreigners and repatriated Greek pupils, by providing them the prerequisites for a successful school attendance and social integration (Mitropoulou, 2008; Rantzou 2011; Anagnostopoulou, 2006). Thus, the curricula of 2003 and the new pilot of 2011 have taken into consideration the needs of the emerging multicultural society and integrated them in the goals of the school courses. Methodologically, the new curricula emphasize the teaching methods that promote active cooperation among pupils (e.g. project, teaching groups, team-teaching) and the participation of the pupils in various activities.

2. Methodology – Aim

In this paper we present our investigation concerning the presence of the 'other' and intercultural elements in the courses of Geography and Civil Education at the 9-year Compulsory Education (6 years in Primary Education – Elementary School and 3 in Secondary Education - High School) in both Curricula of 2003 and 2011. We compared the aims/goals, the learning outcomes and the proposed activities in the above courses. In our findings we tried to notice the method and the extent of management of cultural diversity and how the two Curricula meet the principles of intercultural education. The data drawn from our investigation (words, sentences, paragraphs) were classified in two categories. Finally, we compared our findings to conclude which of the two Curricula focuses and promotes, to a greater extent, the principles of intercultural education. For each of the two

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courses we conducted our investigation, first we present its aims as written/mentioned in the curricula of 2003 and then in the new pilot curricula of 2011, for Primary and Secondary Education Level and per Grade, second we record the terms related to the “other” and cultural differences and, finally, we present our findings and come to conclusions.

Our aim was to record how and to what extent the courses of Geography and Civil Education in each of the two Curricula (2003 and 2011) take into consideration and promote with the appropriate words, phrases etc the image of the ‘other’ (culturally, linguistically, religiously, nationally) in today’s greek society with the multicultural classrooms, thus cultivating in the pupils the attitudes of respect, tolerance, equality and solidarity.

3. Geography

Geography as a course is taught at the two last grades of the Elementary School (5th and 6th grades) and the first two grades of High School (1st and 2nd grades).

3.1 General Aims/Goals

Geography as a course taught in schools aims to help the students become *conscious citizens of the society they live in and of the world*, to *become aware of their responsibilities towards other people*, and capable to *understand and take position towards important world issues, such as the environmental issues and humanistic issues (diseases, racial discriminations, immigration)*. Thus, Geography in education aims to promote values *as understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups so as to preserve peace*

Among the basic geographical terms of the course is the term “Cultural understanding and diversification” which includes: a) accessing the differences and similarities between people, places, environments, culture, and provide information to understand the societies and economies, b) accessing how people's values and attitudes differ and may influence social, environmental, economic, political issues. (Government Paper 2003, Ministry of Education, 2011).

3.1.1 Curricula 2003 of Elementary and High School (Government Paper, 2003)

In the aims of the interdisciplinary curricula of 2003 is stated that the course content aims to help the pupils (i) accept the human values and develop attitudes of understanding, acceptance, communication, collaboration and solidarity with the ‘others’ and (ii) realize the cultural differences among peoples (races, languages, religions) and their importance to the cultural variety of humanity

3.1.2 Curricula 20011 of Elementary and High School (Ministry of Education, 2011)

The new pilot curricula of 2011 refer to helping the students (i) appreciate and understand the differences and similarities among the peoples and cultures, (ii) understand those who live in the same society and our interactions with them (iii) understand and accept diversity and social cohesion (iv) realize that values and attitudes differ and affect social and other issues (v) understand that societies influence values and attitudes.

3.1.2 Findings

In the aims of both Curricula there is emphasis in providing information on cultural differences, appreciation of differences and development of attitudes to understand, accept, communicate, collaborate with the ‘other’, the culturally different. In the Curricula of 2003 the aims refer mostly to ‘other’ peoples and humanity. In the Curricula of 2011 the aims focus more to the ‘others’ in relation with the society, are introduced the terms diversity and interaction and is promoted the importance of social cohesion.

3.3 Classifications

After indexing the content of the curricula of 2003 and 2011 of Elementary and High School in Geography we classified the references into the following categories for both Elementary and High School:

1st category: information on diversity and cultural difference in Greece and abroad

2nd category: develop and adopt attitudes to accept, interact with the ‘others’, respect and coexist with cultural diversity (language, religion, customs).

3.4 Elementary School

3.4.1 1st category: information on diversity and cultural difference in Greece and abroad

In the Curricula 2003 of Elementary School: At the level of providing information on the existence of the ‘other’ and cultural diversity in Primary Education Level aim to make the pupils become conscious on the problems of the humanity and develop attitudes of understanding, acceptance, communication, collaboration and solidarity with the other peoples (Curricula 2003, p. 627) Specifically, in the aims of 5th grade is mentioned that the pupils should be able to recognize the states-members of EU. In the next grade (6th) in the unit “Languages and Religions”, the aims state that the pupils should “*notice some of the cultural differences of the peoples and recognize the geographical location of religions and languages*” and in the unit about “Europe” that the pupils should be able to *note down and use information on the peoples living in Europe and their cultural elements (languages, religions)*. Furthermore, at the 6th grade, are suggested interdisciplinary projects such as, one with title: “*Songs or fables from all over the world*”. The pupils are asked, in groups, to *collect information (from books, internet, correspondence) on songs, fables, traditions of the various different peoples of the world, and connect them with history and culture of the other peoples*. (Government Paper, 2003)

In the Curricula 2011 of Elementary School: The aims of the new pilot curricula of 2011 do not have any references to the other or cultural differences in the 5th grade, but only in the 6th grade, in the sub-unit “the Continents”, where it is stated that the pupils *should recognize the importance of the collaboration of the peoples of the earth....* (Curricula 2011, p. 64) The suggested activities for the pupils refer also to the sub-unit “*Languages of the peoples*”. One of the aims is that the pupils should notice the “international” languages and express views on their expansion. The pupils are guided by the teacher to (i) construct a board on which they will write the same sentence in many different languages. (they will discuss on the respect of the different languages), (ii) notice and comment on maps which present the distribution of the basic languages on the world (iii) watch a video or photos from the big religious centres of the world. (Ministry of Education, 2011)

Findings: The curricula of 2003 at both 5th and 6th grades have references on information that will provide knowledge to the pupils so that they will recognize/notice diversity, cultural difference and ‘others’. The curricula of 2011 place emphasis on the information and the importance of collaboration and noticing of existence of different languages. However, in both curricula are suggested activities which promote group work of the pupils.

3.4.2 2nd category: develop and adopt attitudes to accept, interact with the ‘others’, respect and coexist with cultural diversity (language, religion, customs).

In the Curricula 2003 of Elementary School (Government Paper, 2003): The curricula of 2003 at Primary Education aim to help pupils develop attitudes for understanding, acceptance, communication, collaboration and solidarity with the other peoples at both 5th and 6th grades. In the 5th grade in the sub-unit “Greece and EU” in the aims is mentioned that the pupils should adopt positive attitudes and behaviors regarding the tolerance towards the cultural particularities of the other peoples (Curricula 2003, p. 630) Furthermore, in the suggested activity the pupils should be instructed by their

teacher to *discuss and exchange views on the importance of the respect of the cultural differences (language, religions, customs) among the various groups of people in other countries and in EU*. In the aims of the 6th grade in the sub-unit “*Languages and religions*” the pupils are expected to *adopt a positive attitude towards the cultural differences of the other peoples and be able to appreciate the importance of the international understanding and collaboration of the peoples and adopt the human and democratic values*. (Curricula 2003, p.635) Accordingly in the suggested activities the pupils should be able to discuss on the need for freedom of religion all over the world. (Government Paper, 2003)

In the Curricula 2011 of Elementary School: In the 5th grade there are not any references to the ‘other’ or cultural difference, except perhaps in the sub-unit “*the Hellenism of Diaspora*”, where in the expected outcomes/results is mentioned that the pupils should be able to understand the relations of the immigrant greeks with their homeland (Curricula 2011, p. 55,56) and at one of the suggested activities they are asked to collect information and photos from the places where there are Greeks of Diaspora, their way of life and their achievements. However in the aims of the 6th grade in the sub-unit “*The Continents*” the pupils are expected to appreciate the importance of the collaboration among the peoples of the earth and the humanistic and democratic values. (Ministry of Education, 2011)

Findings: In both 5th and 6th grades of 2003 Curricula of the elementary school pupils should be able to adopt positive attitudes of tolerance of the cultural differences and promote understanding, acceptance, communication, collaboration and solidarity with the other. In the Curricula 2011 the pupils are expected to appreciate the importance of understanding and cooperation among people, to respect all peoples, cultures, values and to understand the need for international solidarity and cooperation. In this curricula is emphasized more the acquisition of values and attitudes, mostly in the form of awareness of the “other’ and diversity.

3.5 High School

The same classification was followed for the High School where Geography is taught in the 1st and 2nd grades.

3.5.1 1st category: information of diversity and cultural difference in Greece and abroad

In the Curricula 2003 of High School: There are not any references to the “other” or cultural diversity at the 1st grade in the curricula of 2003. At the 2nd grade at the unit “*The inhabitants of Europe*” the students should *notice (through examples) the issues created by the multicultural population of Europe and recognize some cultural elements, which characterize the peoples of Europe*. Also to *notice/observe some of the cultural differences of the peoples of Europe (language, religion)*. And in the sub-unit “*the Balkan countries*” among the aims are the students to *notice/determine similarities and differences among the Balkan countries and their people*. (Government Paper, 2003)

In the Curricula 2011 of High School: Unlikely, the previous curricula of 2003, as from the 1st grade there are many references to intercultural elements and the “other”. Among the aims of the 1st grade are the students to notice and *distinguish the terms immigration and emigration, notice on the world map the regions with the largest transfer of population, understand the causes of the major population movements*. Reference in the aims of the 2nd grade are in the sub-unit “*Political division of Europe*” where the students should be able to *recognize some common cultural elements, which characterize the inhabitants of Europe* and in the sub-unit “*Population-cultural elements*” the students should be able to *notice some of the characteristics and cultural differences of the citizens of Europe (e.g. language, religion)*. In the expected outcomes the students should be able to *recognize some of the common cultural elements and differences, which concern the citizens of Europe and.... Mediterranean, ... as places of communication among different cultures*. (Ministry of Education, 2011)

Findings: In both Curricula through the goals and relevant activities is expected that the students will recognize some common cultural elements and differences relating to the people not only of Europe but also of the world and appreciate the cultural importance as a space for communication of the different cultures. Both curricula emphasize the respect for diversity. There are more references in the curricula of 2011 as the curricula of 2003 there are not any references in the 1st grade.

3.5.2 2nd category: *develop and adopt attitudes to accept, interact with the 'others', respect and coexist with cultural diversity (language, religion, customs).*

In the Curricula 2003 of High School: Among the aims in the 2nd grade in the sub-unit "Cultural differences in Europe" is the students *to accept differences and admit that they consist important wealth of the continent which should be maintained.* The aim is enhanced with an activity which suggests the students *to discuss the need of mutual respect of the cultural differences of people who live in Europe (history, language, economy).* (Government Paper, 2003)

In the Curricula 2011 of High School: There are many references in the aims of the 1st grade in the sub-unit "Earth a world in change", where the students are asked *to become conscious for the immigrants' problems* and in the sub-unit "Changes in the Human Environment" they are expected to *realize/understand the causes for the immigrations and suggest ways for the reduce of the problems created by them.* Furthermore, in the expected outcomes of this sub-unit the students are expected to *acquire attitudes of solidarity in cases of emergency and be concerned on issues of unequal wealth and resource distribution among countries as the causes of big problems.* At the 2nd grade among the aims of the sub-unit "Political Division of Europe" the students should be capable to *accept the differences and recognize that they consist an important wealth of EU which should be preserved and be concerned on issues of minorities and respect of rights and diversity.* Furthermore, in the expected outcomes of this sub-unit the students are expected to *be concerned on issues of minority and respect of rights – diversity and to reflect on cultural stereotypes and prejudices.* (Ministry of Education, 2011)

Findings: The references on values, attitudes, behaviors, skills are many more in the curricula of 2011, than in 2003. The emphasis is set on the acquisition of attitudes and values and thus, is recognized that what is expected from Intercultural Education is not only the enrichment of the teaching content with intercultural elements (knowledge, folk dances, religious celebrations, myths and traditions), but mostly is the awareness of the "other" and his/her positive attitude towards diversity

4. Political and Social Education

The course is taught at the 5th and 6th grades of Elementary School and the 3rd grade of High School and among its aims is to help the students *understand their roles, rights and obligations as citizens* and become able to *handle the social and ethical issues that come up in their social environment.*

4.1 Aims/Goals

4.1.1 Curricula 2003

In the general aims of the curricula of 2003 for compulsory education (9 years) among the aims of the course is *the cultural growth by the acceptance of diversity and pluralism as well as the cultivation of social relations and social cohesion, individual responsibility and social solidarity.* Furthermore with the teaching of the course in Elementary School the pupils should (i) *be informed on the social reality* and (ii) *develop respect towards diversity and skills for the acceptance of diversity.* In the aims of the High School the students are expected to *become conscious of the interaction among peoples and the need for their collaboration and solidarity.....and learn to accept the different views.* (Government Paper, 2003)

4.1.2 Curricula 2011

The aims of the course in 3rd grade of High School should help the students (i) develop skills of understanding social differences, inequalities, diversity (ii) develop attitudes of respect to the other, social justice, solidarity... (iii) emphasize on respect to rules of social coexistence (iv) develop values of equality, acceptance, respect of the ‘other’, tolerance, dignity, solidarity, justice. (Ministry of Education, 2011)

Findings: Both curricula have references on information on diversity and gain consciousness and developing attitudes and skills of respect for diversity and cultural difference.

4.2 Classifications

After indexing the content of the curricula of 2003 and 2011 of elementary and high school in Civil and Social Education we classified the references of the otherness and diversity into the following categories:

1st category: information/ learn to notice otherness – cultural diversity

2nd category: develop attitudes, understanding, skills towards otherness – cultural diversity

4.2.1 Elementary school

4.2.1.1 1st category: information/learn to notice otherness-cultural diversity

In the Curricula 2003 Elementary school: For the Elementary school references are made in chapter “*The individual and the International Community*” in the unit “*International Organizations*”, where the aims refer to the pupils *being informed on the international organizations, their aims and role in keeping peace and brotherhood among peoples* and the next unit “*Human rights*” where the pupils should be able to *recognize that there are common rights for all the peoples on earth and understand the need to preserve them*. The activity suggested is a project with the topic “*With the Others*” where the pupils *investigate and present through (role playing, constructions, galleries) ways for harmonious coexistence through common or not common cultural elements related to festivities, games, nutrition, of different people independently of their national, religious, linguistic and cultural characteristics*. (Government Paper, 2003)

In the Curricula 2011 Elementary School (Ministry of Education, 2011): There is only one reference in the 6th grade in among the aims of the sub-unit “*Nation-State and Culture*” where the pupils should be *informed that every culture is important and influenced by other cultures, ...*(Ministry of Education, 2011)

Findings: In this category there are more references in the curricula of 2003. They emphasize the informing of the pupils and being able to investigate and recognize the cultural characteristics. The references in those of 2011 emphasize the informing of the pupils on the importance of cultural differences.

4.2.2.1 2nd category: Develop attitudes/ understanding/ skills/ behavior towards otherness/cultural diversity

In the Curricula 2003 Elementary school: There are no references in the 5th grade regarding otherness or cultural differences. In the 6th grade in the unit “*the European citizens*” one of the aims states that the pupils should *understand the importance of preserving the cultural differences of the various people within the frames of a multicultural Europe* and in the unit “*International Organizations*” the aims refer to *develop an attitude of collaboration, solidarity with the other peoples of the earth*. (Government Paper, 2003)

In the Curricula 2011 Elementary School: In the 5th grade in the sub-unit *School life and rules of democracy* among the expected results is the pupils to *realize the value of social coexistence and co-living with the others*. In the sub-unit “*we and the others: Equality and Diversity*” among the expected results is the pupils to *understand the cultural differences between groups and individuals, that we all belong to humanity with common characteristics, needs and desires*. The pupils are gradually led to *become conscious that the correlation of the differences of cultures with the natural differences can lead to discriminations and racism*. In the 6th grade in the sub-unit “*Nation-State and Culture*” among the aims the pupils should *develop social conscience so as to recognize and respect the cultural difference, adopting actions against phenomena of racism and diversity..... to learn to approach (in school and other social cases) with respect the ‘other’, the different*. (Ministry of Education, 2011)

Findings: In this category there are more references in the curricula of 2011. In the curricula of 2003 is promoted the forming of an attitude of collaboration and solidarity with the others, while in those of 2011 the emphasis is on developing social conscience, understanding and respect for the ‘other’ and cultural difference.

4.2.2 High School

In High School the course is taught only at the 3rd grade

4.2.2.1 1st category: information/learn to notice otherness-cultural diversity

In the Curricula 2003: There are two references in the aims of the unit “*Social groups*”, where among the aims are the students to *be informed on the different kinds of social groups and their characteristics* and of the unit “*Rights and Obligations of the citizen*” to *notice and recognize the rights and the obligations of all the members of a group, independently of social, economic and cultural differences*. (Government Paper, 2003)

In the Curricula 2011: There are no relevant references in the aims of the course content but only in an activity suggested for the unit “*the individual in the society*”. It concerns a role-playing where the students will be employers and persons seeking for work (including the ‘others’) and will discuss the possibilities, limitations, discriminations and inequalities they notice. (Ministry of Education, 2011)

Findings: References on the aims are only in the curricula of 2003 which emphasis is on the information of the pupils to notice and recognize the cultural differences. In the curricula of 2011 there is an activity focusing on the noticing of issues related with the ‘other’.

4.2.2.2 2nd category: Develop attitudes/ understanding/ skills/ behavior towards otherness/cultural diversity

In the Curricula 2003: There is only one reference in the unit “*Social groups*” where among the aims are the students to *develop a spirit of collaboration and respect of the other groups*. (Government Paper, 2003)

In the Curricula 2011: There are references in the aims of two units. In the unit “*The individual in the society*” where among the expected results is the students to *develop critical thought and sensitivity towards inequality and exclusion*. The students are furthermore expected to *realize that social inequalities are met in every society and are due to the social factors (not personal)*. The other reference is in the unit “*European Union, International Community, International Economy*” among the expected results are the students to *enhance their national identity through the national and European cultural heritage without ethnocentrism and racism*. (Ministry of Education, 2011)

Findings: There is only one reference in the curricula of 2003 referring to the developing of a spirit of collaboration and respect. In the curricula of 2011 on the other hand there are more references and the focus is on the students to develop critical thought, concern for the ‘other’ in every society.

5. Concluding Remarks

We proceeded to a comparison of the terms regarding ‘other’, diversity, cultural diversity, difference, (and the related terms respect, tolerance, understanding) in the aims and goals and suggested activities of the Curricula of 2003 and 2011 in the courses of Geography and Civil Education, which resulted to the following findings.

The comparison of the aims and objectives of both curricula showed that (i) in Curricula 2003 of Elementary and High School: a) the references to the "other" –within the context of otherness and cultural diversity are fewer, b) the references to the other are mainly based on the acceptance, knowledge cultural elements, without effort for interaction and exchange of experiences. (ii) in the new Curricula 2011 of Elementary and High School: a) greater emphasis is given to the social coexistence with the other, where, as stated in the aims, the student should form adequate attitudes. These references are more in relation to the curricula of 2003, b) there are many multicultural references about the human environment, and are promoted and developed values /attitudes/skills, which contribute to the cooperation, solidarity and equality of people in multicultural societies. All in all, in the Curricula of 2003, at both courses there are fewer references to the ‘other’, but not at both levels and not equally distributed at every grade. The importance of the recognition and acceptance of the “other” is pointed out but in a way that refers more to the information, knowledge of cultural elements and not to the exchange of experiences among the pupils.

In the new Curricula of 2011 we notice that there are obviously many more references to the “other”, which are not only informative, but aim that the pupils will develop experiences and attitudes of respect, tolerance, understanding. More emphasis is given to the coexistence within multicultural societies. It is notable that at both curricula there are terms referring to the other and the differences even from the 5th grade of the Elementary School.

Our findings lead us to the conclusion that if all students and teachers accept that *different cultures can coexist if there are developed skills and attitudes that promote interaction, understanding, mutual respect, tolerance and communication*, as it is stated in the aims of the Curricula, of both 2013 and 2011, then we can have quality and effectiveness in intercultural education.

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