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PART IV EDUCATION

1. CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF LEARNING - Teachers' cultural skills

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Abstract: *Current demographic changes are increasingly raising the issue of appropriate changes in the educational process as well. This paper brings into question a new imperative in current education: the teaching curriculum and educators must find ways to meet the needs of students with a wide range of experiences, skills and interests. Understanding the ways in which cultural specificity influences the educational context, opens the way for better communication between teachers and students. Teachers need to understand not only how culture influences student behavior, but also how it influences their own perceptions and behaviors. Like students, teachers reflect in their classroom attitudes preferences, perceptions, abilities, and expectations that specifically shape their communication. Teachers often question culture, viewing it as a limitation of the student. Students who overcome their culture succeed. Students who do not want to make this adjustment fail. Teachers rarely reflect on their own prejudices or the limitations of their pedagogical practices. Instead of placing full responsibility on students, we propose that teachers, regardless of their cultural heritage, increase their cultural competence so that they can be better prepared to facilitate students' learning. This perspective may seem difficult and threatening, but an honest and careful examination can also be rewarding.*
Key words: *cultural skills, education, didactic communication, learning*

1. Culture and its dimensions

Culture is a complex and difficult concept to understand. The analysis of specific definitions could be useful. Lustig and Koester (1999) defined culture as "a learned set of common interpretations of beliefs, values, and norms that influence the behaviors of a relatively large group of people."[274] On the other hand, Orbe and Harris (2001) characterized culture as an accumulation of "learned and shared values, beliefs and behaviors, common to a certain group of people; culture forms the identity of a group and helps it survive".[275] Individuals are taught, sometimes implicitly, sometimes explicitly, to look at the world in a certain way and to support this perspective through their behaviors. Samovar, Porter and Stefani (2000) presented the following conceptualization of culture: "the repository of knowledge, experiences, social hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, relationships, concepts about the universe, material objects and goods acquired by a group of people - over the generations, through individual or group effort".[276] Therefore, culture influences what people know, how they have acquired this knowledge, what

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[274]Lustig, M. W., & Koester, J. (Eds.). (2000). *Among us: Essays on identity, belonging, and intercultural competence.* New York: Longman, p. 30
[275] Orbe, M. P., & Harris, T. M. (2001). *Interracial communication: Theory into practice*. Belmont,CA: Wadsworth, p. 6
[276]Samovar, L., Porter, R., & Stefani, L. A. (2000). *Communication between cultures* (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, p. 7

roles they play and how they should play them, what they value and how they put their values into action. Clearly, culture plays an important role in the educational process.

Many researchers have investigated the role of culture in the process of intercommunication. Thus, Hall (1976) and Hofstede (1980) provided particularly relevant research in examining the **role of culture in education**. Hall believes that individuals face so many stimuli that they develop filtering mechanisms in order to make sense of them. According to Hall, **context** plays a significant role in how information is selected and how it acts on students. A communication context possesses physical, social and psychological characteristics. The physical characteristic is the actual conjuncture in which the interaction takes place (eg, classroom, principal's office, home). The social characteristic reflects the relationship between the participants (eg. teacher/student, teacher/parent, teacher/teacher). Psychological characteristics include the attitudes, feelings and motivations of the participants. Culture influences the extent to which communicators focus on these characteristics.

Hall postulated the existence of a continuum of high-context messages at one end and low-context messages at the other. A message with a high context contains most of the relevant information in the physical framework. Much of the meaning of the message is implicit. The Japanese, Koreans, Chinese and Latins are examples of high-context communities. Members of high-context groups developed similar expectations about how to perceive and respond to a particular communication event. Consequently, explicit verbal messages are not necessary for understanding. Low-context groups require that the message include a large amount of explicit information. Uncertainty is reduced and agreements are obtained through expressed verbal codes. Hofstede (1980), another expert in intercultural communication, explained that individuals possess cognitive processes shaped by culture which are expressed through the dominant values of the culture. He identified four dominant patterns and each has application to communicative exchanges in the classroom. These dimensions are as follows:

1. Distribution of power - refers to the way in which differences in status are assigned and negotiated. Some cultures believe that power should be distributed, while others argue that only a few people should have power and authority. Euro-American students tend to believe that power should be distributed and everyone has an equal chance of owning it. Students in Latin and Southeast Asian cultures tend to believe that power should be held by a select few.

2. Avoiding uncertainty - is concerned with the ways in which a culture approaches change and the unpredictable. Some cultures have a low tolerance for circumstances that may threaten the structure and hierarchy of the culture. There are serious consequences for the individual who does not adhere to the expectations of the culture. Individuals in cultures with a high degree of uncertainty avoidance have strict rules that govern appropriate behavior and there are serious consequences for violating these rules.

3. Individualism *versus* **collectivism** - describes the degree to which individuals are committed to themselves or to the community. Competition, autonomy,

intimacy, personal opinion and independence are basic elements in *individualistic societies*. The United States is an example of this. The school system, with an increasing emphasis on grades and scores on tests, competition and performance results, strongly promotes individualistic values. Cultures that subordinate the needs of the individual to the group reflect *collectivist* societies. Modesty and sharing are core values in collectivist cultures. Thus, drawing attention to an individual's achievements can bring a lot of stress. For example, it is inappropriate to highlight the success of a Native American individual in such a situation. Family obligation is another basic element in collective cultures. Some American teachers have become frustrated with students who miss class due to family business. Teachers do not understand that in some cultures, especially of new immigrants from collectivist societies, the obligation of family transcends school and education.

4. Masculinity *versus* **femininity** - discusses the degree to which culture values assertiveness and achievement *versus* care and social support. Some cultures judge others by their achievements and the manifestation of appropriate masculine behavior. In Mexico, for example, man is the head of the household, is primarily responsible for the financial security of the family, and ultimately makes all the important decisions. Women are expected to take care of household chores, such as raising children and cooking (Powell, R., G. & Caseau, Dana, 2004). The perspectives offered by Hall and Hofstede find great applicability in today's multicultural classroom. Remember that culture shapes perceptions, values, and behaviors. More and more students come from collectivist cultural experiences with a high context. Rarely are these issues clarified to students as they go through the training system.

2. Cultural identity

The connection with the values and dimensions of a culture is achieved by building a cultural identity. This denotes the way individuals see themselves and the way they want to be seen by others. Lustig and Koester (2000) noted that cultural identity involves learning and accepting traditions, heritage, language, religion, aesthetics, thought patterns, and social structures of a culture. According to Collier (1994), identities are co-created and negotiated through communicative exchanges. A person may have different identities depending on the context. Students can have a family identity, at the playground and in the classroom. A student may be silent and inattentive in the classroom and noisy and aggressive in the school yard. The identity of students plays a fundamental role in their orientation towards certain groups or in the avoidance of others. Let's think about the ways in which students group and how they participate in specific activities: athletes and schoolchildren, skaters or ballerinas dress and speak in ways that support their specific identity.

Goffman's (1959) **dramaturgical perspective** provides an excellent framework for visualizing students' cultural identities. He argued that whenever people participate in social interaction, they are engaged in a specific kind of performance. Like the actors in a play, they build an image that they want to be accepted by the public. Goffman (1959) stated that each person constructs an image and uses a way of speaking and gesturing to support it. A successful performance,

according to Goffman, requires the person to express the role they are trying to play and speak in such a way as to support the projected image. These performances are not always positive. For example, some students do not perceive that being a good student is cool, so they collapse on desks, seem bored, and rarely participate in class discussions. Unfortunately, these students build a social performance that takes them away from academic involvement. In multicultural classrooms, a student may adhere to a performance that the teacher misunderstands or does not accept. Cupach and Imahori (1993) examined how individuals from different cultural backgrounds manage categories/prejudices (an embarrassing or unpleasant situation) created by someone else. Although their research did not focus on training contexts, it has direct application to the topic discussed here.

The authors argue that all individuals want their identity to assert themselves during social interaction. Receiving unwarranted recognition, criticism or correction, violation of privacy, and the challenge of creating a bad impression are the types of situations that cause individuals to lose self-esteem (Cupach & Metts, 1990, 1992). They will thus invoke a strategy to save their self-image. Some examples of strategies that individuals use are: apology (accepting guilt and seeking forgiveness, minimizing responsibility), justification (reducing consequences), humor (joke or laughter), remediation (active attempt to restore the damaged relationship), avoidance, escape and aggression (verbal or physical attack).

Cupach and Imahori (1993) stated that American and Japanese students will use different strategies to deal with threatening situations. They assumed that the Americans would use humor, storytelling and aggression, while the Japanese would use excuses and remedies. The results supported the hypotheses. The authors concluded from the findings that Americans use strategies to support their own image, while the Japanese use strategies to support others. These findings have direct implications for classrooms. Teachers criticize students' clothing, taste for music, and academic performance. Unintentionally, teachers can also threaten students' cultural identities. Shortly after the World Trade Center bombing, Muslim students and students who appeared from the Middle East were criticized, ridiculed and challenged by teachers and students. Likewise, students create difficulties for teachers when they question teacher grading, tell the teacher that the topics are not clear, or challenge their authority. How these issues are handled can dramatically influence the classroom climate.

Intercultural education can be done only if the educator has the competence to correlate different cultural symbols or if the stakes of different cultural formations of the space in which they operate are known (Powell, R., G. & Caseau, Dana, 2004). Teachers involved in intercultural education have the obligation to ensure a democratic management of the classroom or school, in order to allow everyone the opportunity to express themselves, to debate, to take into account each other, to assume responsibilities (Liviu Plugaru, Mariela Pavalache-Ilie, 2007).

Micheline Rey argues that intercultural training presupposes a dimension of "knowledge" and one of "experience". The teacher must acquire conceptual tools that relate to knowledge of human rights and international instruments related to them, a knowledge of the main problems of our time and situations of human rights

violations, knowledge of institutions, governmental and non-governmental organizations, local, national, regional, international that could facilitate openness to intercultural education and to which the school could appeal, a knowledge of the schools, professional and media networks of the region with which it could collaborate, the knowledge of the disadvantaged populations of the region, their situation and their needs.

The continuous training activity targets all teachers and can be achieved through training modules in intercultural issues, carried out at the Teaching Staff House, the departments for the training of teaching staff within universities, schools or high schools. The modules will be diversified and negotiated with teachers, depending on concrete needs. The workshops will bring together specialists in education sciences, philosophy, political science, sociology, legal sciences and economics. Can be debated topics such as (Anca Nedelcu, 2008): "Democracy and diversity", "The right and duties of minorities", "The state and multicultural communities", "The citizen", "European integration - cultural possibilities and barriers", "Awareness and competences in intercultural mediation", "Intercultural mediation strategies", "Educational globalism and transnational education". In the training of teachers, it is useful to capitalize on all research in the field of intercultural psychopedagogy, as well as those in the field of cultural anthropology, developmental psychology and conflict resolution management.

The role of teachers is to create positive relationships in the interaction between peers, to promote the development of the person and constructive relationships in groups and somehow, to live the feeling of their own identity. The student must be helped, encouraged, modeled, or as Micheline Rey says, "it is necessary to be aroused and nurtured to get intercultural competence"[277], this nurture is defined in terms of conceptual means, methodologies and pedagogies, and the environment of this achievement is the teacher's creation. The intercultural competence of the teacher supposes (Cătălina Satmari, 2021)[278]:

1. Interpersonal competence:

- knows and respects the different cultural origin of the students;
- is aware of his own culture and receptive to people from other cultures;
- is aware that he/she has prejudices;
- creates moments of meeting, of relationship between students belonging to different cultures;
- discusses openly about differences and similarities, which allows the identification of prejudices;

2. Psychopedagogical competence:

- is empathic towards the life situations of children from other cultures;
- encourages students to present the specific elements of their culture;
- discusses openly about cultural conflicts, seeks solutions with students;

[277] Micheline Rey (1996) Between memory and history A word about intercultural education, *European Journal of Intercultural studies*, 7:1, 310, https://doi.org/10.1080/0952391960070101

[278] Satmari, Cătălina, (2021), Dimensiuni ale profesorului intercultural. *Revista profesorului.* https://revistaprofesorului.ro/dimensiuni-ale-profesorului-multicultural/, 27 aprilie, 2021

- analyzes and relates the norms and values of different cultures to the norms of the students' class.

3. Scientific and methodological competence:

- uses appropriate teaching models from the perspective of intercultural education;
- chooses the most appropriate approach for his group;
- ensures that the work environment reflects the cultural diversity of the classroom (classroom layout, materials used, textbooks, notebooks, worksheets, etc.);

4. Competence in organization:

- is able to manage the class in such a way that students belonging to different cultures discover each other;
- pays special attention to events representative for the students' home culture;
- discusses and negotiates with the students the group norms;

5. Collaboration with colleagues:

- collaborates with teachers from other cultures, in order to obtain feedback on how they treat intercultural situations;

6. Ability to involve other educational environments:

- cooperates with out-of-school partners (parents, institutions, organizations) from other cultures to enable students to come into contact with cultural diversity;

7. Ability to select:

- provides feedback to colleagues on their style of approaching intercultural situations;
- reflects on his knowledge, skills and attitudes;
- is concerned with his/her way of understanding his/her own culture, as well as with the way in which it influences the relationship with students and the educational activity.

Extracurricular educational activities have an important role in the conditions of multiculturalism. We recommend informal meetings between children of different cultures, "creating opportunities for described discussions in order to help them understand the differences and see them in a complementary relationship".[279] Clubs remain a favorite form of activity for teenagers and young people, musical-choreographic, theatrical and sports events are encouraged at all levels of schooling, with the aim of combating prejudices and stereotypes, to expand the cultural-cognitive horizon. However, we insist on reducing the activities on stage (which continue to be quite numerous and often with low educational performance) and opt for free discussions, less directed, which improvise authentic situations of intercultural learning, perennial axiological education. Collier (1994) observed that cultural identities are expressed through **symbols, labels** and **basic norms.** The basic symbols refer to beliefs about the universe and people's position in it. These symbols direct members of a cultural group to perceive the world in a certain way and to behave in a way that is consistent with that definition. The basic symbols for African Americans are authenticity, power/ helplessness, and expressiveness (Hecht, Collier, & Ribeau, 1993). The basic Latin symbols are the obligation to family, respect and faith.

[279] Micheline Rey, (1999). *Educaţia interculturală – experienţe, politici, strategii,* Iaşi, Editura Polirom, p. 17

Labels are important components of cultural identity. Students with Mexican ancestors may, at different times, be described as Mexican, Mexican/American, Hispanic, or Latino. Some students say they are African-American, while others call themselves black. White Hmong people are different from green Hmong, and an Afghan is different from an Iraqi. Tanno noted that all individuals take on multiple roles and considered that we should respect this complexity. Teachers can also be mothers, fathers, husbands, wives, uncles, coaches, etc. Students can be sons, daughters, football players, etc. Moreover, these labels are not static, but fluid. Individuals can use different labels to define themselves at different times. Sometimes teachers mislabel students or use a label that students do not prefer or perceive as insulting or embarrassing. Cambodian students are often confused with Chinese students. It is important for teachers to recognize that the way they respond to these labels may indicate student acceptance or rejection.

Although labels may seem useful, they can become problematic. Group norms also play an important role in cultural identity (Collier, 1994). Rules are the standards for competent participation in a community. There are rules for how individuals should speak. Competently forming a cultural identity means using language in a way that supports and projects that identity (Ogbu, 1999). Students raised in Western society, where the basic symbols of individuality and self-expression are emphasized, do not hesitate to ask questions or challenge a teacher. For these students, knowledge is negotiated. Students in traditional Asian homes have a very different orientation. Their task is to absorb the information provided by the teacher. For Asians, a student's reflections or opinions are perceived as having little value, and provoking a teacher is inappropriate. Students manage multiple identities through their clothing styles, ways of speaking, and norms of behavior. Some of these identities are received positively and others are rejected. All these, however, influence the way the interaction takes place in the classroom.

3. Interculturality and learning

The relationship between the student's culture and learning preferences was frequently discussed, but teachers were not particularly effective in incorporating culture into the instructional-educational process in the classroom. Kuykendall (1992) suggested that students who find their learning culture and learning styles reflected in the instructional process are more likely to be motivated and less likely to become disruptive students. Therefore, it is important to understand how culture influences learning and how to integrate this knowledge into the classroom.

Learning style refers to the characteristic ways of processing instructional information. Researchers generally agree that culture plays a role in learning preferences (Guild, 1994; Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995). Researchers' observations suggest that Mexican-American students feel more comfortable with broad concepts than with isolated facts (Cox & Ramirez, 1981). African-American students prefer tactile, hands-on learning, and Native Americans relate well to instructional tasks that require skills in visual discrimination and image use (Shade, 1989). European white students generally appreciate independence, analytical thinking and objectivity.

There are cultural differences in pencil and paper measurements of learning styles. Researchers who have used assessments to develop style profiles for certain groups have observed differences in domain-dependent and domain-independent learning (Gollnick & Chin, 1994). Field-dependent learners process the information holistically, are more concerned with the social context, and are more intuitive. Those who study independently in the field process the information sequentially, do not consider the social situation important and are more rational. White students tend to be independent of the field, while students from minority groups tend to be dependent on the field.

It is important to note, however, that there is no direct relationship between culture and learning style. As Guild (1994) observed, there are as many variations within a group as there are commonalities. Moreover, many conceptualizations of the learning style are **bipolar.** One end is represented by analytical processes, while the other end is represented by holistic processes. For many years, educators have recognized the relationship between culture and learning orientations, but few have offered concrete recommendations on how a teacher can integrate culture into classroom practice. Claxton supported the development of **teaching strategies** that integrate the two modes of knowledge. The model he developed is called **the connected teaching model** and consists of four central features. The central metaphor of the connected learning model is the teacher as a *midwife* and not the teacher as a *banker*. Bankers, according to Claxton, submit acquaintances, while midwives help students get them out. The teacher's role is to help students build on what they know and connect to what they don't know. This can be done from the following points of view:

• **Organizational** - preferred structural arrangements for work and study space, learning resources and organized spatial locations; the rigidity or flexibility of living space.

• **Perceptual** - preferred sensorial stimulation for receiving, processing and transmitting information, including multiple visual, tactile, auditory, kinetic, oral or sensory modalities.

• **Relational** - preferred modes of interpersonal and social interaction in learning situations, including formality/informality, individual competition or group cooperation, independence or interdependence, etc.

• **Motivational** - preferred incentives or stimuli that evoke learning, including individual achievement or group well-being, competition or cooperation, conquest or harmony, opportunity or fairness, image or integrity (Claxton, C. S., 1990).[280]

According to Gay (2000), some members of ethnic groups have purer learning style characteristics than others. The degree of purity is determined by the identification of group, sex, social class and level of education. African-American students with a high degree of ethnic identification can best relate to group-based instruction in the procedural, motivational, relational, and substantial dimensions of learning. Traditional Japanese or Chinese students could be bistillists; because of their collectivist cultural values, they can respond well to activities that require

[280]Claxton, C. S. (1990). Learning styles, minority students and effective education. *Journal of Developmental Edu cation*, 14, 6–8

solving group problems. These students can also perform well in mechanistic, technical and atomistic learning tasks.

4. Culturally responsive teaching

We believe that the key to managing cultural diversity is the development of intercultural competence. Wlodkowski and Ginsberg (1995) provided the following definition of culturally receptive teaching: "culturally responsive teaching occurs when there is equal respect for the contemporary environments and circumstances of all learners, regardless of individual status and strength, and when there is a design of learning processes that embrace the range of needs, interests and orientations of students."[281] Gay (2000) emphasized the basic characteristics of culturally receptive teaching.

First, culturally responsive teaching is **validating** - it is based on the cultural knowledge, traditions and styles of the various students, extending and affirming their strengths and competencies. Among its other features, culturally receptive teaching incorporates multicultural information into the teaching of all disciplines and uses a variety of training strategies.

Second, culturally receptive teaching is **comprehensive**. Teachers use cultural references to transfer knowledges. This requires teachers to be willing to learn about the cultural backgrounds, traditions and histories of the students represented in the classroom. In addition, teachers need to work to strengthen connections with the community, maintain cultural identity, and instill successful attitudes and commitment. Responsibility and commitment to oneself and others are encouraged. Students are expected to internalize the idea that learning is a common, reciprocal, interdependent issue and need to manifest it routinely in their expressive behaviors (Gay, 2000).[282]

Third, culturally receptive teaching is **multidimensional**. Any problem can be approached from several perspectives. Gay described ways teachers could work together to teach the concept of protest. Students could be encouraged to discover ways in which different groups symbolize their problems and concerns. By examining literature, poetry, music, art, interviews and historical recordings, students could learn about what gives rise to the protest and how it is expressed. Assessments should also be multidimensional. In this context, the teacher does not use a single standardized assessment, but uses several assessments. Gardner (1984) and his fundamental work on multiple intelligence is applicable to culturally receptive teaching.

Fourth, culturally receptive teaching **provides strength**. Teachers who successfully implement culturally receptive teaching expect all students to succeed and develop structures that increase students' chances of academic success. Success is achieved by "strengthening students' morale, providing resources and personal assistance, developing an *ethos* of achievements and celebrating individual and

[281]Wlodkowski, R. J., & Ginsberg, M. B. (1995). *Diversity and motivation: Culturally responsive teaching.*San Fran cisco: Jossey-Bass, p. 17

[282] Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory research and practice*. NY: Teachers College Press. p. 30

collective achievements."[283] Culturally receptive teaching shifts the focus from external to internal forces, thus involving students in the learning process.

Fifth, culturally receptive teaching **is transformative**. The training practices are based on the strengths of the students and further extend them in the learning processes. According to Gay, success is perceived as a non-negotiable mandate for all students. They are encouraged to give something back to the communities they come from and to participate fully in the national society. Education is transformative when students come to understand the structures and processes related to discrimination and prejudice and when they develop skills to combat them.

Finally, culturally receptive teaching **emancipates**. Students have the freedom to go beyond the traditional canons of knowledge and explore perspectives and alternative ways of knowing. Thus, students challenge, question and come to understand that no truth is total and permanent. According to Gay (2000), "These learning commitments encourage and enable students to find their own voices, to contextualize issues in more cultural perspectives, to engage in more ways of knowing and thinking, and to become more active participants, shaping their own learning".[284] For example, consider the different ways in which a lesson about the discovery of America could be taught. Loewen (1996) pointed out what is omitted from most texts /books about the circumstances, events, and tragedies involved in Columbus' journey. Allowing students to explore and examine alternative stories can help them make connections that are not possible in official interpretations.

Reyes, Scribner, and Scribner (1999) have shown that culturally sensitive teaching has extraordinary results. These authors studied eight high-performing Hispanic schools located in lower socioeconomic communities along the Texas-Mexico border. One of the most significant findings was that the eight schools studied had a strong commitment to culturally receptive teaching. The authors reported: "Perhaps the strongest finding regarding classroom learning was the incorporation of students' interests and experiences, the funds of knowledge they bring with them into the learning situation, whether it is reading, writing, math or other subjects".[285] Teachers built students' cultural values and made the classroom a culturally welcoming place.

Gay (2002) made specific recommendations on how to achieve culturally receptive teaching. The researcher argued that culturally receptive teaching has four main features. First, the teacher develops a **cultural knowledge base**. The development of this database requires teachers to understand the cultural characteristics and contributions of different cultural groups. Cultivating a cultural database through the specific contributions of cultural groups helps the teacher to establish a context for learning. She said that culturally sensitive teaching deals as much with multicultural strategies as it does with adding specific content to lessons. The implementation of this knowledge in the training practice helps the teacher to make the necessary connections for learning.

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[283] Gay, op. cit., p. 32

[284] Idem, p. 35

[285]Reyes, P., Scribner, J. D., & Scribner, A. (Eds.). (1999). *Lessons from high-performing hispanic schools.* New York: Teachers College Press, p. 14

The second feature involves **the transformation of cultural knowledge into relevant programs**. The third characteristic of culturally receptive teaching is **the demonstration of cultural care**. To achieve this, teachers need to build on students' experiences and broaden their intellectual horizons. Understanding communication styles and knowing how to connect them to learning objectives is a crucial feature of culturally receptive teaching. Thus, teachers must have "…knowledge of the linguistic structures of different styles of ethnic communication, as well as contextual factors, cultural nuances, discourse features, logic, rhythm, delivery, use of vocabulary, role relations of speakers and listeners, intonation, body gestures and movements" (Gay, 2002).[286] Serious classroom management problems can arise when teachers do not understand these communication differences. Wlodkowski and Ginsberg (1995) observed that "Probably the area where the dominant perspective in education is in the greatest conflict with other styles of behavior - is that of language and dialect."[287] Therefore, it is essential for teachers to increase their communication skills in intercultural exchanges.

The fourth feature of culturally receptive teaching refers to **the actual delivery of training**. Gay argued that teachers need to multiculturalize educational practice. This final feature involves the strategies that teachers use to bring the material to life. Cooperative learning strategies stem from the knowledge that some ethnic groups prefer tasks that allow them to work with others. Knowing that some groups do not communicate in a linear, analytical manner, allows the teacher to use narration as a way to present the material. Finding ways to integrate diversity into high-level academic fields (eg, math, reading, and science) is a great way to show commitment to students' worldviews.

Gay's (2000, 2002) recommendations can help teachers understand the role of students' culture and their learning preferences. However, this goal is difficult to achieve. Teachers, administrators, school boards and some parents may not support this type of approach. A rural California school board would not allow students to do projects about Cesar Chavez, although 90% of students are Latino. Some teachers struggle with the goals of these perspectives, and school boards may criticize these types of strategies. Even with this information, however, some teachers will favor students whose behavioral and learning styles match their own. When there are linguistic distinctions between teachers and students, teachers can use their own language as an assessment lens to judge students' abilities. A student who uses non-standard speech may be perceived as less intelligent and less competent. The fact that students with non-standard English language patterns are considered less proficient has been documented in research (e.g., Powell & Avila, 1986). In addition to the speech and accent pattern, a teacher may respond negatively to other stylistic features of a student's communication. Latin students can use metaphor and other ornamental forms of speech. These forms move away from the linear-reductionist features of individualistic cultures. Teachers may find their comments unclear or inappropriate.

[286] Gay, op. cit., p. 111
[287] Wlodkowski și Ginsberg, op. cit., pp. 146–147

5. Conclusions

Intercultural training of teachers involves not only knowledge, but also the practice of interculturality. Only theoretical knowledge of cultural characteristics or differences does not impress cultural competence on the one who possesses this baggage. Training in the intercultural perspective is difficult and encounters two problems:

- the first problem is the inherent difficulty for each person to perceive the cultural differences of minority groups, especially. Perceptions are selective, ethnocentric, driven by fear of the other, preconceptions, tendencies to schematize, attitudes of devaluation and discrimination;
- the second problem is the fact that our socio-cultural identity "colors" the process of knowing others, informs through its own mechanisms the process of knowing others. The value decodings regarding the foreign cultures are made through value paradigms already fixed and which influence the quality of the other's perception.

Humanities and intercultural education is today in the attention of all education systems and all educators. They are a result of social learning, whose mission is constantly expanding. We can summarize the skills, knowledge and privileged concerns of the intercultural teacher:

• democratic organization of classes (groups);
• experiencing different social roles (including animators, leaders);
• to militate for a deep understanding of cultures, languages, traditions, religions, etc .;
• to follow the quality of the relations between the students in the service of promoting the prestige of each one;
• to control the phenomena of violence;
• to ensure the observance of the rights of all categories of minorities;
• to ensure the openness of the group to the outside, favoring empathy in relation to other individuals or other groups.

Training educators for interculturality will help us to respond to the needs of each child, to recognize their skills, to ensure the mediation they need and to ensure that each is recognized in the group; to discover, appreciate and help to capitalize on the skills of children born in disadvantaged environments.

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