

Intercultural Education as a reinforcement of Multicultural Policy

A Comparative Case Study Research on the Intercultural Education in The Netherlands, The United Kingdom, Finland and Sweden.

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“In terms of politicians, they should encourage the development of education policies, and intercultural policies as well. For the purpose of protecting your well being, and protecting the needs of other people as well.”

Ms. Yulia Pererva on Intercultural Education

*Representative of the Education Policy Division
Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation
Council of Europe*

(Excerpt of interview, Appendix A, 2016)

Foreword

Intercultural Education might be the most important and the most invisible topic of the 21st century. While teachers are struggling to find pedagogical tools to deal with multicultural aspects in the classroom, international organisations are trying to get national governments involved in promoting Intercultural Education. This is an immensely difficult task, as intercultural education is not as vastly implemented as desired in the eyes of many educational scholars and administrators. For the last two years, I have humbly tried to help all teachers and administrators to better this process. I hope this thesis brings some attention to Intercultural Education as a tool to help people understand each other better, starting from the classroom.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

If imagined communities exist according to Benedict Anderson (1983), do these communities imagine their ideal identity? Are the fundamentals to those ideas shaped within the education system of a country? This thesis explores the relationship between multicultural policy and education within four European countries with different approaches towards integration, using theories on immigration and the nation-state of Christian Joppke (1999) and Will Kymlicka and Keith Banting (2006, 2013). This thesis tries to explain how multicultural policies in Western-European States are growing and intensifying. It illustrates this with the case of ‘intercultural education’ in four Western European nation-states: The Netherlands, The United Kingdom, Finland and Sweden. It builds on intercultural education as an indicator, because intercultural education is on the one hand becoming increasingly popular as an advanced way of multicultural policy measures and because education is one of the most fundamental parts of a society for building and spreading discourse (Pitsoe and Letseka, 2012).

In this study, multicultural policy (MCP) styles per country are discussed, before zooming into intercultural learning strategies of the countries. Intercultural Learning in education is seen as a subpolicy of multicultural policy. The terms multicultural and intercultural are interrelated, but they do not mean the same. Multiculturalism is described as the preservation tendency of cultural heritage (Sze and Powell, 2004). Interculturalism is concerned with the task of developing ‘a shared common value system and public culture’, based on ‘personal identities that go beyond nations or simplified ethnicities’ (Booth, 2003:432). Intercultural learning can thus be seen as an extended form of multicultural policy.

How is this study executed? The study contains a combined approach of analysis of statistical data and literature research on national multicultural policies and education. Multicultural policy styles differ per country and the literature on MCPs provides enough evidence that countries differ in their approach to immigration policies. Some countries are stricter than others when it comes to immigration and integration opportunities for immigrants. In this thesis, a model is presented which makes the distinction between Predominantly Pro-Multicultural countries and Predominantly Coercive countries. This distinction is based on literature on immigration and integration. It helps to fit the case studies under a particular category. Furthermore it helps to give the reader insight into the impact of the MCP style on the national intercultural education policies.

1.1. Intercultural Education as part of Multicultural Policy

In order to see what the relationship between a state MCP and education entails, two things must happen. Firstly, a country profile must be provided that describes the multicultural policy style. For this purpose of profiling, a lot of bibliographical sources on the case study countries (the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Finland and Sweden) have been consulted. After consulting experts on multiculturalism and bibliographical sources, these are the four factors that are considered influential to the multicultural policy style:

1. Parliamentary history
2. Colonial history
3. Gender differences
4. Well-being

Secondly, a table is presented which illustrates the differences between countries. Grouping countries according to their MCP-style hopefully makes it easier to generalise which countries are more hands-on in their intercultural learning policies and why. There are two style categories on the table: Predominantly Pro-Multicultural and Predominantly Coercive. The Predominantly Pro-Multicultural type adheres to the idea of a “universal personhood across states” (Joppke, 1999:141). The opposite can be said about its contender: Predominantly Coercive, which adheres to a “strong national citizenship model” (ibid). In other words: where the Pro-Multicultural groups’ MCP might be driven by sensitivity towards a persons’ cultural and ethnic identity, the Predominantly Coercive groups’ policy are more driven by state-determined models of citizenship and nationality. The table indicates a *tendency* of a country towards a style, but it does not lock countries into one of the two categories. The MCP-style table should be seen as a style gradation table.

One might ask: Why is the policy style based on these four factors and not solely on the interpretation of statistical and bibliographical sources and policy papers? Firstly, bibliographical sources on the relationship between MCPs and education are hard to find. Policy measures and statistics do not automatically explain the attitude of a country towards immigration and integration. Policy measures and statistics are seen as outcomes of a certain decision making process. The decision making process is important to investigate, as it reveals much about the rationale behind policy measures and says a lot about statistical outcomes. For example: the Dutch parliamentary history with pillarisation is what sets it apart from other countries (Andeweg and Irwin, 2009:19). It explains why only 25% of Dutch schools is state-run (Berglund, 2015:20). The rest is private and considered confessional. As

the Dutch government has a Christian heritage with an institutionalised tolerance towards different denominations, Islamic schools are also state-funded. There are very few Islamic confessional schools compared to Christian schools. Also, the quality of the Christian schools is generally better and preferred amongst all parents compared to i.e. Islamic alternatives (ibid). Based on the data in table 1, we can conclude that the overall Education score for the Netherlands is lowest of all countries. This means that children of immigrants are less encouraged to achieve and develop in school like the children of nationals than in the other countries. This also indicates some odd fit between the state MCP and its Education system, because the overall MCP-score is 61, and the Education MCPs score 50, whereas the Intercultural Education for All scores a high 80/100. The Netherlands scores high on Intercultural Education, meaning that all pupils and teachers are encouraged to learn and work together in a diverse society. These are confusing statistics, which need to be elaborated on in order to provide clearer answers on the relationship between the MCP style of a country and its educational reform according to the MCP. This study seeks to fill the void between education statistics and the historical background of the MCP-style of a country.

TABLE 1. SCORES: OVERALL MCP, EDUCATION AND INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

MIPEX 2014	Overall MCP (out of 100)	Education	Intercultural Education for All
NL	61	50	80
UK	56	57	90
FI	71	60	40
SE	80	77	80

1.2. Research Goal

The main goal of this study is to fill parts of the void between the data and the motives for the manner of execution of the multicultural policy in education in the case-study countries: The Netherlands (NL) and the United Kingdom (UK), Finland (FI) and Sweden (SE). It serves this purpose by combining existing literature and data on education policies and multiculturalism. It provides a practical tool that tables the MCP-style of a Western nation-state. This tool is useful and insightful for all scholars interested in Western MCP orientations, because it helps scholars understand *the institutional history* behind the orientation. This is something that data and theory cannot immediately reveal.

The effectiveness of multicultural (education) policy is closely looked at in the following case-study countries: the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, Sweden and Finland. These

countries are chosen based on different reasons. The first reason is these countries are Western-European welfare nation-states, which is important for comparison between all four. Secondly, it is important to be able to distinguish between the case-study countries (NL, UK, FI and SE) by selecting two countries with a stricter immigration policy and two countries with a less strict immigration policy. With stricter immigration policy (versus less strict) is meant in this thesis: laws and regulations by which a government increases barriers for immigrants to become a(n) integrated or assimilated citizen. These barriers may have different outcomes. For example: citizenship tests. Both the UK and Canada use this instrument for immigrants, however the Canadian citizenship test is an instrument to achieve ‘naturalisation and integration’, whereas the UK’s citizenship tests has been proven to be a form of immigration control (Paquet, 2012:243). By implementing strict immigration requirements, government puts up strategic barriers that could result in a reduced amount of immigrants. By making this distinction, it is possible to build a spectrum, a table that gives visual insight in the multicultural policy styles of a country. The group distinction happened with the support of several sources: discussions with immigration and multiculturalism experts, data and the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX). The MIPEX is a tool that measures what states do to promote the integration of migrants within their nation (MIPEX, 2017). Thirdly, the literature on immigration and the nation-state helps to fill in the factors of distinction per country. Lastly, what this research hopes to achieve is to increase awareness of education as a highly important factor in the creation and execution of effective multicultural policies.

1.3. Background

Migration has posed a threat to the notion of a shared identity within the Western nation-state (Joppke, 1999). Each European state has its own legal-constitutional, economic and political history with migrants. This history has shaped the state policy strategy (or a lack of) towards immigrants. Although the character of the issue differs per nation, it is most definitely a common issue of Western nation-state (Joppke 2003). Who decides who belongs and who does not? It seems like national communities dream of different kinds of civilizations within the territory they share, and become disappointed when the imagined vision differs too much from the outcome. The blame has been easily put on multicultural policy as a flawed concept, both by media, scholars and politicians. For example, both in 2010 and late 2015, German chancellor Angela Merkel stated the following: “multiculturalism remains a life lie” (der Spiegel, 2015). Long before that, in 2000, Dutch Professor Paul Scheffer wrote a highly influential and much debated article called “The Multicultural Drama” (NRC Handelsblad,

2000). Beyond the criticism on multicultural policies, there is so much convincing research on the effectiveness and livelihood of MCPs. Examples are the “Investigation of Integration Policy” by Commission Blok¹ in 2003, which concluded that the integration policy of the Netherlands between the 1970s and the early 2000s had been for the most part successful. Another example is the MIPEX, which measures the effectiveness and promotion of policy instruments to integrate migrants in over 38 countries. Although the liveliness and intensification of MCPs is debated amongst politicians and scholars, this thesis discovers that multicultural policies are highly dynamic, relevant and important as migration is a central issue within European Union member states. This thesis follows the empirical and theoretical patterns of multicultural policy within education and considers education a cornerstone of society and government: educational institutes are influenced by norms and legitimated by values and therefore serve a society-wide purpose (Brint, 2006:14). Education equips members of society with knowledge to survive and be accepted outside of school, as welfare states in Europe have connected schooling and work. Policymakers implement strict examination requirements and introduce certain curricula and alter the lengths of degree programmes (Brint, 2006:1 and 65)

1.4. Main research question

In this study, the different approaches towards intercultural education of four European countries (the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, Sweden and Finland) are examined. The main question within this thesis is as follows:

How can the differences in the degrees of intercultural education policies be explained in countries which are Predominantly Pro-Multicultural or Predominantly Coercive?

Because of the complexity of this study, this research question is explained and discussed in the next chapter.

1.5. Relevance

Why is it relevant to study the difference in the amount and effectiveness of intercultural education? To answer this question, this thesis has a theoretical relevance as well as a societal relevance. The success and failures of MCPs are not only dependent on governments, but are

¹ Kamerstukken vergaderjaar 2003–2004, 28 689, nrs. 8–9, accessible through: www.parlement.com/9291000/d/rapportcieblok.pdf

also a communal responsibility. As Raadschelders writes: “In a society where instrumental rationality thrives, the quality of knowledge is determined by how it was generated (...) and validated. It is up to the societal leadership of politicians, civil servants, scholars, journalists, and the like, to make expert knowledge accessible to the public at large. In turn, the public should demand the opportunity to participate in public decision-making on the normative, valuing, and ethical side rather than only on the factual and informational side” (2011:46; Lindblom, 1990). The quality of education is reflected by the quality of life of a group. American philosopher and educational reformer John Dewey claims that if we want general educational ideas and measures to work, we have to ‘come to closer quarters with the nature of present social life’ (Dewey in Lauder et al, 2006:91). Intercultural learning is one educational idea, that can be adapted to the national curriculum and MCP tradition. Intercultural learning as part of multiculturalism can be seen as a theoretical idea, but the empirical data regarding intercultural education is what is analysed within this thesis. The key findings will reveal best practices and policy issues with intercultural education per country. The knowledge gap that is partially filled with this thesis is on the workings of multicultural policies on education. MIPEX brings us to the actual empirical evidence on multicultural policies. It thus handles the ‘what-question’: Which data supports claims of whether multicultural policy works or does not work? It however does not explain thoroughly *how* and *why* nation states differ from one another on their multicultural policies. This study fills parts of the void between the data and the motives for manner of execution of the multicultural policy in education in the case-study countries. Such work is needed, since data and other neutral sources on multicultural schools are scarce and an education system constantly tailoring to the diversity of society increases intellectual stimulation (Bunar, 2009:3; Dewey, 2006:93). In ‘The Means of Correct Training’, Foucault writes about the individual being a product that is fabricated by discipline. Discipline is a technology of power. Reaching back to the findings of Raadschelders and Lindblom, power is distributed by the most knowledgeable and society has to make sure to stimulate participation in public policy making. In order for all citizens to participate in a democracy, education standards must be increasingly inclusive to accommodate democratic participation to all.

1.6. Limitations

This study tries to answer why nations differ in their intercultural learning programmes as part of MCPs. In order to compare countries, the most comparable countries in terms of administration and MCP-style are chosen. Thus, the case study groups for this thesis contains

only four European countries. The Netherlands and United Kingdom belong to the Predominantly Coercive group while Sweden and Finland belong to the Predominantly Pro-Multicultural group. This grouping of countries already presents many shortcomings: it would be favourable to include all European countries within this study. Unfortunately this is not possible because of time and budget restrictions. One measure to relieve this limitation is the report on the NECE Networking Citizenship European Education conference in Zagreb. More than half of European Union countries' education Systems will have representatives present, and the latest ideas, measures and problems will be discussed. This makes it a concentrated place to gather information on multicultural education schemes and general attitudes of policy makers of different administrative levels, teachers, academics and specialists in the field of education and migration. Another limitation is that of comparison. It is almost impossible to compare when governmental structures differ so greatly from one another. One solution to this problem is the theoretical modelled distinction between two attitudes of countries towards their MCPs: Predominantly Pro-Multicultural and Predominantly Coercive. Lastly, literature on multicultural policies is scarce. Will Kymlicka is one of the leading researchers in the Multicultural policy area, and is also the initiator of the Multicultural Policy Index. Canada, Kymlicka's country of origin, is an international success story when it comes to multicultural policy implementation. The experiences with Multicultural Policies in countries could affect the positionality of the researcher. All sources within this thesis have been thoroughly researched on the background of the author, and the source background (publishing journals, websites).

1.7. Reader's Guide

This introductory chapter acquaints the reader with the choice of subject, the subject background, the theoretical and societal relevance and research goal. The body of knowledge that supports this thesis, will be presented in the next chapter (2). It includes theories on migration and the nation-state which support my research question. Chapter 3 will be a methodological chapter. It will explain the research question in detail, and discuss all the sub questions in detail. Chapter 3 will also discuss the operationalisation of this research. I will justify my research design which includes a model for country MCP-profiling and an MCP-Style table. Furthermore I will present the questionnaire that is used to execute this research on education in four countries, which has been distributed to almost 160 teachers in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Finland. Unfortunately, the lack of response has led to little to no data. Nevertheless, the questionnaire will be presented within this thesis.

It will also explain the pitfalls within this research. It will present a visual of the research design, with a summation of the pros and cons of each developed method and the current theoretical issues addressed by scholars in the field of multiculturalism and education. Accordingly, I will describe how I will gather the data that is used to fill in my MCP-profiling and MCP-type-table. After that, I will present the analysis and results in chapter 4. Chapter 5 presents a summary and the main conclusions of this research.

Chapter 2. Theory on Migration, Integration and the Nation-State

The purpose of this study is to explore how the general MCP-style of a country influences the number of intercultural learning policies of a country. The question is of concern to public administration scholars because governments and non-governmental organisations are increasingly seeing education as a pillar to achieve a more inclusive society (UNESCO 2014:9). This trend is visible in many Western nation-states. Triggered by multiculturalism, American public schools are seen as instruments of ‘ethno racial consciousness building’ (Joppke, 1999:175). But also in Great Britain, since 1980, multiculturalism was introduced to the school classroom and incorporated into teacher training (Joppke, 1999:236). But what is meant by multiculturalism and multicultural policy? What exactly is meant by intercultural learning? And why do we need the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden and Finland as four case-study countries to illustrate how multiculturalism affects the classrooms in those countries? How is a comparison between these very diverse nation-states possible?

A few main concepts within the main hypothesis allow for elaboration. The hypothesis reads as follows: *The differences in the degrees of **intercultural learning** implementations in countries that are **Predominantly Pro-Multicultural** or **Predominantly Coercive** can be explained by their: (1) **familiarity with integrative measures** in former and current times, and (2) **the discretionary power of schools** to influence the (secondary) school curricula.* The following concepts will be explained: Multiculturalism, the Relationship between Multiculturalism and Education, the Meaning, Strengths and Weaknesses of Intercultural Education, The Meaning of Predominantly Pro-Multicultural and Predominantly Coercive, (A States’) Familiarity with Integrative Measures, Discretionary Power of Schools. At the end of chapter 2, a summation of all theoretical findings is to be found.

2.1 Multiculturalism

There is a lot of debate on what ‘multiculturalism’ exactly entails, but fortunately most definitions provide some overlap. This section gives an overview of these overlapping structures within those definitions. The number of definitions make multiculturalism an easily misunderstood as a concept, and the lack of one clear definition is a weak spot, which highly exposes ‘multiculturalism’ as a phenomena to political criticism (Rosado, 1997). Exploring the political criticism of the concept is however not the aim of this paragraph. It might be useful to provide a working definition of ‘Multiculturalism’ for this thesis, since this research concentrates on intercultural learning policies as part of an MCP. All concepts that are explained within this paragraph, are first introduced by a summary of the theories per concept.

Multiculturalism defined

In most definitions of multiculturalism, it describes the phenomena as a means of preservation of a common culture. This preservation tendency is induced by a confrontation with cultural diversity.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Multiculturalism emerged as an ideology and a policy to manage cultural diversity that resulted from non-Western immigration into Western states (Schrover, 2010:333). But, it could also be a way for states to avoid coping with change (ibid). According to Berry, Kalin and Taylor (1977) the definition of multiculturalism includes two elements: Firstly, the presence of ethno cultural diversity in a society and secondly, the presence of equitable participation by all cultural groups in that society. Multiculturalism is described as the preservation tendency of cultural heritage (Sze and Powell, 2004).

Multiculturalism as an ideology

In most descriptions of multiculturalism as an ideology, it is said that it was promoted as a method to facilitate integration of groups (although the outcome has resulted in segregation within societal groups).

Multiculturalism as an ideology, emerged as an idea to increase inclusiveness by introducing rights to minorities (Schrover 2010). It is an acknowledged principle and practice within the international state system (Joppke, 1999:17). Joppke argues that global capitalism and the human rights discourse have incapacitated states to admit or reject migrants according to their own standards. Because those standards impose certain expectations of what a legitimised group is, multiculturalism should always be assessed in line with the historical constellation of a state, as the state is the prime source for facilitation of minority rights and means

(Schrover 2010, Joppke, 1999:22). This essentialist approach could lead to separatism and lines for conflict (Verkuyten and Brug 2004:648). Although multiculturalism as an ideology favours the idea of a mosaic of equivalent cultures, it often ignores the fact that one culture is dominant (Schrover 2010, Verkuyten and Brug 2004).

Concluding, within this thesis ‘Multiculturalism’ is thus understood as an ideology which emerged from the 1960s onwards as a coping mechanism for cultural diversity. It was meant as an inclusive measure to facilitate democratic (and legal) participation of minorities within a nation-state. Multiculturalism as a policy has led to segregation, because of states overlooking the influence of a prevailing cultures above others, leading to essentialist views within policy excerpts.

2.2. The Relationship between Multiculturalism and Education

The focus from the definition of ‘Multiculturalism’ now shifts towards defining the relationship between multiculturalism and education. This section defends the idea that multicultural policies have sub policies, and although often overlooked, education is one very important sub policy for the enforcement of a multicultural policy of a state, because education is seen as the cornerstone of society (Durkheim, 1956:79). To illustrate what is meant here by ‘sub policies’ of multicultural policies, I have designed a simplified graph (see next page) to help explain the relationship between Multicultural Policies, the MCP style and sub-policies, using MIPEX.