

**GEOGRAPHY, MULTICULTURALISM, CITY: MODERN ASPECTS**Svetlana N. Ijudina<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** Education is an inseparable part of current global processes which is shaping and at the same reflecting the basic changes in economic, social and ecological spheres. One of the most significant current global trends is the high level of mobility of people - from tourism to growing working migration. Relocation of people, mixture of ethnic groups and nationalities have taken place in all epochs of the history of humanity but it has never been so grand-scale, that is including absolutely all continents. The development of transport, information technologies have simplified people's relocation, including with educational purposes. Such state of things has identified multiculturalism as a separate branch of pedagogical theory and practice. Russia is a multicultural state that has formed a corresponding

system of education as the foundation of national culture, outlook, based on variety of cultures, languages, traditions. Modern challenges of social development formulate a sophisticated task of up-bringing in the spirit of deep respect to all nations, the ability to communicate and cooperate with people of various nationalities, social groups, religions. Among the multitude of tasks of multicultural education, connected with designing of its contents, the most important from our point of view is the up-bringing of a multiculturally orientated personality. Multiculturally orientated personality possesses civic self-actualization, means of creative self-organization and self-realization in the multicultural world. It must possess key general competences, including the knowledge of basics and objective laws

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of the development of multicultural world, the ability to orientate in the cultural multi-variety of the world. The major role in solution of the task is given to studying geography, shaping geographic culture. Geoculturalistic agenda, various aspects of studying geography has very deep roots. Geography is tensely connected with the idea of culture. Culture is territorial, that is it experiences full-scaled influence of geographic factor, it is differentiated in space, and is organized in a very special way, developing and functioning in specific, immanent territorial forms. Besides, teaching geography at school does not correspond to the current demands to full extent. In secondary school, especially in city, geography is taught only in specialized classes which obviously diminish the opportunities of developing multicultural environment to full scale. These and many other aspects of shaping geographic culture of students are realized on bachelor degree course and master course in institutions of higher education. Thus, the development of geographic culture, advance of geographic education should become the important part in solution the problems of multicultural education and multicultural preparation of specialists.

**Keywords:** urban areas, multicultural education, multiculturally orientated personality, geographic culture, globalization, sustainable development.

### **Introduction**

System-forming sphere of modern large and largest cities is a diverse and ramified system of both secondary and higher education. At present, the education system is not only and not so much a social area serving the needs of society, and not only of a town site in the training of personnel, but it is also a powerful economic force that provides jobs, investments, "floating" of knowledge and intensification of the innovation process, and has a number of other system-forming conditions that enhance the competitive advantages of a town site [1, 2, 11].

One of the complex, long-term consequences for urban development is a "magnet" role played by the education system in the migration of the population, especially the youth. In addition, educational and cultural functions performed by the educational system are of large importance for the adaptation of immigrants. No one modern largest city can actively evolve in a closed state from the point of view

of migration due to the emergence of new diverse jobs. The largest cities, especially those that are actively developing, were, are, and will be a magnet for the population of other territories [7].

Obviously, the social profile of urban immigrants differs in their cultural, ethnic, educational and other characteristics. The movement of people, the mixing of ethnicities and nationalities took place during all epochs of human existence, but modern mobility, from tourism to the change of permanent residence, is strengthened and facilitated many times due to the large-scale development of the most diverse and, most importantly, affordable, fast and safer transport. The facilitation and acceleration of the process of displacement leads to an increase in migrant flows, which in turn leads to a significant social impact. Among which, one can point out the poor knowledge of the country's language, its cultural traditions, etc., as a consequence, the complexity of adaptation. On the other hand, cities are not always ready to accept and adapt a significant number of people of a different culture. The task of creating skills for fruitful communication and cooperation in a

multicultural environment sounds urgent. [3, 9].

The multinational Republic of Tatarstan, and especially its capital, the city of Kazan, with a population exceeding 1.2 million, has deep historical roots of interethnic and interfaith harmony. Dynamically developing economy of the Republic of Tatarstan and its capital, and its favorable social environment attract migrants from other regions of Russia, CIS countries and far abroad. The largest number of arrivals for the last five years is recorded from Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan. The overwhelming majority of arrivals, over 80% fall to the cities of the Republic of Tatarstan and especially in Kazan [12].

Modern realities dictate also new requirements to cities, including to the education system. There is a noticeable strengthening of the positions of multicultural education as an independent branch of pedagogical science and practice. The university system of Kazan has a certain advantage, a certain reserve and experience of multicultural education and upbringing due to historically developed conditions: the city, like the republic for centuries, is a multicultural territory. In the

universities, in particular in the former pedagogical university (now incorporated in the KFU) teaching of geography was conducted on a bilingual basis. The Kazan scientific school has accumulated a great deal of experience in studying the traditions of the indigenous peoples of the republic [4]. Essential developments in the conduct of scientific sociological research of social well-being are exemplified by the youth of various ethnic groups [5].

The purpose of this article is to analyze the state of teaching geography in the schools of Kazan and the Republic of Tatarstan from the point of view of multicultural education.

### **Methods**

Modern challenges of the development of a large city put forward the opportunities, methods and approaches of multicultural education and upbringing [11]. In this problem, a special place belongs to geographical disciplines which include the reflection of a territorial aspect of the entire diversity of our planet, from ecology to ethnic identity and cultural characteristics in different regions, countries and cities. Leading among the multitude of tasks of multicultural

education and upbringing associated with the design of its content, is the task of educating a multicultural-oriented personality. The most important feature is the ability to assess and perceive the diversity of the world as an indisputable advantage. A multicultural-oriented personality is a person with a civic ethno-cultural identity, possessing the skills of creative self-organization and self-realization in a multicultural world, with inherent key general cultural competences, including knowledge of the foundations and laws of the development of the multicultural world, the ability to orientate him (her)self in the cultural diversity of the world. Obviously, such competencies can be acquired only within the framework of a comprehensive study of territories, what is possible only when studying the system of geographical disciplines. One of the necessary conditions for the formation of a multicultural-oriented personality is a set geographic culture based on comprehensive and deep geographical knowledge, on the basis of studying the two main branches: physical and socio-economic geography [8]. The generally accepted definition of geographical culture is a system of worldview, generalized views, and

beliefs that express the practical relation of a person to the world, his/her way of seeing and understanding the surrounding reality, assessments and norms in the capacity of benchmarks for action. Culture is territorial; it is mediated by the full-scale impact of the geographical factor, spatially differentiated and organized in accordance with historically developed features. In geographical science in general, and in geographical culture in particular, the most important elements are: humanization, sociologization, ecologization and economization. Obviously, a multicultural-oriented personality is formed on the basis of systemic relationships of these elements.

### **Results**

In the Russian Federation, in accordance with the federal state standards of basic general education, compulsory teaching of geography is carried out from grades 5 to 9. In grades 5 and 6, one hour per week, and from 7 to 9 classes, two hours a week. The program as a whole covers issues of general physical geography, physical geography of continents and oceans, and geography of Russia. The study of geography at the stage of basic general

education is aimed at achieving a wide range of goals, among which the objectives of the multicultural component are:

- Raising of love of their locality, region, and country;
- Mutual understanding with other nations;
- Knowledge of their ethnicity, development of national values, traditions, culture, knowledge of the peoples and ethnic groups of Russia;
- Development of the common cultural heritage of Russia and the world cultural heritage;
- Orientation in the system of moral norms and values and their hierarchization, understanding of the conventional nature of morality;
- Respect for history, cultural and historical monuments;
- Emotionally positive acceptance of their ethnic identity;
- Respect for and acceptance of other peoples of Russia and the world, interethnic tolerance, readiness for equal cooperation;
- Respect for a person and his/her dignity, benevolent attitude towards others, intolerance of any kind of violence and readiness to confront them, etc. [13].

In a higher general education school, geography teaching is carried out at the school's choice, depending on its profile. As a rule, geography studies take place in the 10th and 11th grades, one hour a week. The program includes issues of economic and social geography of foreign countries.

We can see from Table 1 that a significant number of high schoolers do not study geography in the upper grades. In the cities of the Republic of Tatarstan, in 25% of schools, geography is studied only from grades 5 to 9, i.e. pupils of 116 municipal schools in the republic out of 461 municipal schools do not study the social and economic geography of the world. In practice, one in four high schoolers does not get acquainted with the international geographical division of labor, features of modern world processes of urbanization, migration of the population and many other issues so important in the formation of a multicultural-oriented personality. In rural areas, the number of schools where geography is taught only from grades 5 to 9 is even higher. In 393 rural schools, out of 866 rural schools in the Republic of Tatarstan, or in 45% of rural schools, social and economic geography of the world is also not taught. Obviously, this

situation is very negatively reflected both in the system of school geographical education and in multicultural education and child guidance in general. At the same time, this problem can be considered as an essential reserve in the system of multicultural geographic education and child guidance. The question arises, why are so many pupils limited in obtaining a full-fledged geographic education in the school? From our point of view, the answer is connected with the fact that geography is practically absent when enrolling in universities. A single state examination in geography is taken only for geographic and environmental areas of university preparation. As a result, out of more than 5,000 graduates of the Republic of Tatarstan, only a little more than 100 pupils take their geography. An increase in the number of training courses for admission, for which geography is needed, would significantly improve the situation.

It is necessary to settle on one more aspect of teaching geography in terms of multicultural education and child guidance. In the sixties of the last century, geography, as well as history, was studied in special schools with advanced study of English. There were

textbooks on geography in English. In modern conditions, when attention is paid to the study of foreign languages, it is necessary to restore this effective methodology from the point of view of mastering the language, as well as

regional, cultural and geographical knowledge.

Table 1. Teaching geography in schools in Kazan and the Republic of Tatarstan in 2016-2017 academic year

<b>Subjects of the Republic of Tatarstan</b>	<b>Total number of schools</b>	<b>Learn geography from 5 to 9 grades</b>	<b>Learn geography from 5 to 11 grades</b>	<b>Additional hours for learning geography from national component</b>	<b>Geography of Tatarstan (Number of schools)</b>
Municipal districts of the Republic of Tatarstan	866	393	473	1	21
Cities of the Republic of Tatarstan	461	116	345	-	6

**Conclusions**

In multicultural education, as well as in the formation of a geographical culture, the role of the sustainable development theory that affects a range of problems, from social to environmental aspects of territorial

development, the problem of economic development, social stability of society and social capital, relying on diversity as an important asset, is especially high, what is important for the largest cities that collide in a limited area with a complex of problems. A special role in

geoecological education and education within the framework of sustainable development is played by design work in the course of the educational process which aims to study and achieve small, measurable positive changes in the state of the surrounding urban environment, including its improvement [6].

The analysis of the basic educational programs of secondary general and basic general education in schools Kazan and the Republic of Tatarstan showed that there are a number of problems associated with the teaching of geography. The main thing is that there are not enough geography lessons in a week, especially in 5 and 6 grades, where only one hour a week is spent on studying geography. At this age, the foundations of the geographical culture of pupils are laid, geographic concepts and images, and the skills to work with a geographical map are formed. Numerous surveys, and questionnaires of teachers show that the existing number of lessons is clearly not enough to solve these problems.

### **Resume**

Thus, in conditions of dynamic migration as one of the system-forming features of modern major cities, the

formation of a multicultural society based on the education of a multicultural-oriented personality is possible in the conditions of expanding geographical culture, and the system of geographic education has the necessary reserve for solving the problems of multicultural education in a large city. At the same time, the increase in the number of schools studying geography in the senior 10-11 grades, the expansion of the list of areas for the preparation of bachelors for which geography is required, and the return to the experience of teaching geography in a foreign language would significantly improve the state of multicultural geographic education and child guidance in our school.

### **Acknowledgements**

The work is carried out according to the Russian Government's Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

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