

ABSTRACT

The topic of this dissertation is to investigate the characteristic features of the image of the Other constructed by pupils completing the first stage of education. The study assumes that the Other is a culturally different individual. The aforementioned difference should be understood as a separate nationality, a different language, customs and traditions constituting important components of the cultural code. The dissertation is divided into two parts; a theoretical and an empirical one. The first chapter of the theoretical part presents a brief overview of key concepts such as Other, Stranger, and Own, as well as selected categories of strangeness and otherness in social sciences, i.e. philosophy, psychology, sociology and pedagogy. Concepts such as tolerance and acceptance, which are closely related to attitudes towards otherness, were analysed. In addition, stereotypes and prejudices were also taken into account. This analysis was aimed at trying to clarify the concepts in the context of the perception of otherness. The theoretical section also talks about the issue of the Other and the Stranger as members of school folklore. The subjects of such folklore were persons with disabilities or who were culturally different. These considerations demonstrate the strong need for change in the practice of the school system to make it a place of inclusion instead of discrimination. The paper also presents the factors determining the shaping of attitudes towards the Other, particularly in relation to the school space. The author pointed out the important role of the family, school and social environments as well as mass media regarding the perception of the Other. She also reflects on the challenges and problems associated with migration in the context of the process of integration and education of foreign pupils in a Polish school. Based on the analysis of existing data, the attitudes of children and adolescents towards cultural diversity were also revealed. The second chapter of the theoretical part was devoted to the issue of cultural diversity in Poland and the historical issues that influenced it as well as to the analysis of data of migration in Poland from 2011-2021 and the mentality of Poles towards migrants within selected studies. In turn, the empirical part of the dissertation presents the methodology of its own research conducted in public primary schools in Warsaw in 2021 and presents the results of a quantitative and qualitative study conducted among third grade students. The following research methods were used to achieve specific objectives within the framework of the qualitative and quantitative research: a group interview (unstructured) supplemented with the visualisation method conducted among third grade pupils (deepened with the exemplification of pupils' creations - the author's image of the Other), a survey investigating social distance towards selected nationalities and ethnic groups using a questionnaire based on the Bogardus Social Distance Scale, and content analysis (materials in the form of drawings and written notes recording information saved from the interview).

The results of the research showed that, among other things, girls statistically achieved a significantly higher percentage rate of positive attitudes towards Others compared to boys. The most positive attitude of the examined participants is noticeable towards Spaniards and Ukrainians, while the least positive attitude is visible towards Roma and Jews. In addition, statistically a significantly higher proportion of the children surveyed said that they would be able to live with people of particular nationalities in their

city. The only exception was Jews, to whom the pupils surveyed expressed divergent opinions. The study also showed that pupils distinguish a person from a different country in a polarised way and that adults have a strong influence in shaping attitudes towards the Other. This dissertation contributes to the discussion on children's perceptions of cultural differences and highlights the importance of the teacher's role in preparing students for life in a multicultural world, among other things.

Keywords: the image of the Other, cultural diversity, younger school age, attitudes towards cultural difference, migration

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