PAL

Training Toolkit (WS 2.3): Challenges and barriers in education

"Fighting discrimination and anti-Gypsyism in education and employment in EU" (PAL)

Publication edited by Corvinus University of Budapest

25 July 2016, First Version

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This project is co-funded by the European Union -
Justice Programme Rights, Equality and Citizenship
Programme and Pilot Projects 2014 of DG Justice

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I. The concept of stereotype, prejudice and discrimination

Key words:

stereotype   **prejudice**   **discrimination**

segregation

Starting questions:

1. How do stereotypes help and confine the processing of information about the social world?

2. Why do people have stereotypes about Roma people?

3. What levels of discrimination can be distinguished?

4. What effects can prejudice and stereotype have on the target in a school environment?

Definition of terms:[1]

stereotype: belief about the characteristics, attributes, and behaviours of a group and its members

prejudice: evaluation or prejudgment of a group and its members

discrimination: unequal treatment of individuals based on their group membership

segregation: keeping a member of a given group apart by another person without any justifiable reason

Content of the chapter:

It is an inherent feature of living in groups that group members perceive their group and another (external) group differently, they think about them differently and also their behaviour will differ towards the outgroup. One basis of differentiating groups may be ethnicity. Roma communities as the biggest ethnic minority of the European Union are exposed to such category-based, distorted perception and emotional and behavioural reactions (Ryer 2016). Why do we use intergroup bias? (Barrett, 2016)

1. By deprecating the outgroup we improve our and our group's self-esteem. By considering members of the Roma ethnic group less qualified, we can attribute higher value to our own cultural attainment.

2. Thinking in categories makes the world simpler, helps to find our way around, spares our information processing capacity. Upon meeting a Roma student we may not waste energy to get to know her/him but apply our "knowledge" related to Roma people that we had had learnt from our past experiences, from other people or the media.

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[1] Barrett, 2016: 315. Farkas, 2014: 26.

3. Finally, biases support the maintenance of social order and hierarchy as well, by protecting the deprecating group's power, status and sources.

Stereotype means beliefs about a group, prejudice is an evaluation of a group, while discrimination refers to treatment and behaviour of/towards a group. Below is a definition of concepts (Smith & Mackie, 2007[2]) with examples regarding Roma students in education:

Stereotype is a cognitive representation or impression of a social group that people form by associating particular characteristics and emotions with the group (e.g., teachers are more likely to give easier tasks for Roma students[3]).

Prejudice is a positive or negative evaluation of a social group and its members (e.g., the statement "Roma students do not want to learn"[4]).

Discrimination is any positive or negative behaviour that is directed towards a social group and its members (e.g., making Roma pupils sit separately from the others[5]).

That is, *stereotype* is an attribution of characteristics and behaviour to a given group and its members. It may be positive or negative, and they have a self-confirmatory effect, they justify reactions towards the group.

Prejudice as an attitude is an evaluation of the given group that determines our emotional reaction to the group and its members.

Two types of attitudes towards ethnicity can be distinguished: old-fashioned and modern prejudices. The former means rigid, open prejudices, the latter is more covert, it is manifested in prejudiced opinion-forming. We are not always aware of our own prejudices, because social norms do not allow their open expression. Implicit prejudices can be assessed by the *Implicit Association Test* (IAT).[6]

Discrimination is unequal treatment of individuals based on their group membership. It has various levels: rejection can be oral, manifested in avoidance, segregation, physical attack or elimination.

Segregation is "the act by which a (natural or legal) person separates other persons" on the basis of a ground such as race, colour, language, religion, nationality or national or ethnic origin, "without an objective and reasonable justification, in conformity with the proposed definition of discrimination" (Farkas, 2014: 26).

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[2] http://www.psychologypress.com/smithandmackie/resources/chapter.asp?ch=05
[3] http://www.czechkid.eu/si1360.html
[4] http://www.czechkid.eu/si1360.html
[5] http://www.bbc.com/news/in-pictures-25101956
[6] https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/education.html

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Different forms of school segregation can be identified in the case of Roma pupils, which result in the low educational attainment of Roma children. Ryder (2016) differentiates intra school and inter school forms. The former refers to setting up Roma-only, catch-up classes in the majority language for Roma children, who get into these classes on the basis of their ethnic background.

Farkas (2014) differentiates two types of the latter form: formation of Roma-only schools and segregation in special schools designed for children living with mental disabilities, by misdiagnosing socially disadvantaged but otherwise mentally able Roma children.

Questions for thinking:

1. What advantages may stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination have in the case of Roma students?

2. Do you have prejudices towards other ethnic groups? What could have contributed from your experiences to the development of these biases? If you have taken the IAT, did the result confirm what you think of yourself?

3. How can these biases contribute to maintaining the current social order?

II. Discrimination in Communication – Types and examples of Discriminatory Communication

Key words:

unintentional discrimination   **discriminatory communication**   **stereotyping**

omission   **denigration**   **paternalisation**

word order

Starting Questions:

1. Is it possible to communicate discriminatively unintentionally?
2. How is our world view manifested in our language use?
3. Can awareness of the discriminatory potential in communication raise the capability of communicating inclusively?
4. What are the types and forms of everyday discriminatory communication?

 Definition of terms/Content of the chapter:

"Discriminatory language is that which creates or reinforces a hierarchy of difference between people. Discriminatory language can be targeted to a range of different facets of identity, including sex and gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, age, political or religious beliefs, and physical,

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intellectual or psychiatric disability." [7]

Broad types of discriminatory communication:

Stereotyping: In stereotyping communication we apply selectively generalised and fixed attributes of a group to an individual. In stereotyping our communication may express the selectively generalised and fixed characteristics attributed to a group in an open or covert way. In many cases stereotyping may not have a negative intention, often the speaker can hardly recognise even in retrospect that s/he had applied it. There are various forms of stereotyping: we do not consider someone capable of doing, understanding or accepting something (e.g., *You can't know/understand this*); we reflect on the person we are talking to as a group; in specific topics we address an individual as if s/he were a representative of a given group (e.g. *Let's ask John about this, they are very good at music*); we reflect on the language or word use or accent of a person (e.g., *Oh yes, you say it like that – only I did not understand it right away*).

Further forms of discriminatory communication:

invisibility	*omission*: omitting reference to a person and to our relation with her/him in our communication, emphasizing the dominance of the speaker	(about a third person, in her/his presence) "Did they receive the benefit?"
	false generic: a statement that seems to refer to all the members of a group but actually leaves some members out	"Roma people respect women very much"
word and phrase hierarchy	a fixed order of lists and pairs of word denoting also the order of their significance	husband and wife, boys and girls
extra visibility	supplementing a statement by extra information that is not relevant in the given situation but emphasizes difference	Although Annie is disabled, she is an open, cheerful little girl who will be a good friend of everyone.
degradation, denigration	*negative labelling*: using adjectives and similes to describe someone or something overtly or implicitly in a negative way	This homework is worth as much as the person who did it.

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[7] Equal Opportunity Unit 2005. Watch Your Language: Guidelines for Non-discriminatory Language. University of Melbourne: Melbourne. https://hr.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/87501/Watch_Your_Language.pdf

	depersonalisation/under-specification: using a common term (especially in addressing) for a person suggesting that the commonality described is interchangeable with her/him	The gypsies.., The poor learner…
	patronising: referring to someone in such a way as if s/he were the property, accessories or part of the speaker	This was done by my Peter again, wasn't it?
paternalisation, so-called-compliments, false strokes	communication that appears as a compliment, a positive statement on the surface but in its meaning it is simplifying, stereotyping, labelling and expressing the control and dominance of the speaker: a so-called false stroke	Considering the way you live at home, it is very impressive how well you perform in school.
discriminatory humour	pointless joking at the expense of some national, ethnic or cultural group	

Questions for thinking:

What type of discriminatory communication do the following quotes represent? Why do you think they were used? How could they be turned into inclusive (non-discriminatory) communication?

1. Dear guests! Now I'm calling Alex to the stage who will recite a poem by Coleridge for us. Alex has worked very hard to get where he is now, therefore it is especially delightful that it is him whom I can call now. Let's applaud for Alex!
2. You did very well at this test, I did not even think you would do this well right for the first time!
3. What did you say? Say it again, it sounded so funny! – Do you really say it like that at home?
4. It's ok Mary, let Anne help you, you might not yet have seen such a computer.

III. Origins and signs of stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination in the education of Roma children

Key words

socialisation   **disadvantaged status**

early school leaving   **dropout**

Starting questions:

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1. What sociological factors lead to the development of a multiple disadvantaged status?

2. What factors could explain the lagging behind of children from disadvantaged families in preschool education?

3. How do differences of social status influence students' achievements?

Definitions of terms:

socialisation: the "process of integration in society through which the individual learns to know her/himself and her/his environment, the rules of living together, the possible and expected modes of behaviour" (Bagdy, 1986)

multiple disadvantaged status: holding more than one disadvantaged status related to education that leads to the child's social disadvantage (in Hungary this concept is defined in the education act and refers to low educational attainment and low income of parents)

early school leavers: youth of 18-24 years of age, holding a qualification of at most ISCED 2 or 3C short, and who declared not having received any education or training in the four weeks preceding the Labour Force Survey[8]

dropout: it may mean a status when the individual does not continue on her/his school pathway, does not obtain a qualification, or it can be understood as a process, which shows the types of attitudes and behavioural patterns and characteristics of school performance that make dropping out likely (Rumberger, 2012)

Content of the chapter:

In his study 'Socialisation and school achievement'[9], in relation with the concept of socialisation Mollenhauer refers to the fact that children's development is socially differentiated. In this interdependence multiple factors play a role. The level of these factors is defined not by the individual but the society. School presupposes the process of socialisation and represents an educational practice that hinders the total participation of children in the education system or makes it difficult.

The efficiency of school can be measured by two factors: by its formal function to enable the optimum participation of every individual in social and political events and by the concepts of school performance and maturity.

Mollenhauer states that the cause of disadvantages experienced in school is not only school itself

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[8] http://www.observatory.org.hu/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/ReferNet_2013_ESL_HU.pdf
[9] Mollenhauer, K. (1983/2003). Vergessene Zusammenhänge. Über Kultur und Erziehung
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but the roots of school failures must be looked for in early childhood. Disadvantages that appear before school age relate to the parental practice of the family on the one hand, and its social status that defines that, on the other hand. There is a connection between the values followed by the mother in her parenting and her social status. Mothers from lower social strata apply control and continuous inspection much more often. As a result, their children are less independent, less creative and less curious, which results in their lagging behind and disadvantages in school. International research results also confirm that children from disadvantaged families start school with significant initial disadvantages. Kertesi and Kézdi (2009) emphasize that in respect of cognitive competences these children are so much lagging behind compared to their peers that only good quality, long-term and adequate early childhood education compensation programmes can ensure their catching up. Increasing the number of years in kindergarten (pre-school) education may provide a solution to reduce falling behind in early childhood.

Early school leaving and dropout

Early school leaving is one burning symptom of educational inequalities. In Hungary, data on early school leaving showed a decreasing tendency until 2010 when it started to grow again. Dropout indicators are especially high among Roma youth, only 22% of whom complete their upper secondary level studies. Individual causes behind dropout include: students' weak motivation to study, low level of competences, school absenteeism, adverse social background, behavioural problems, unexpected pregnancy; teachers' inadequate methodological competences, inadequate level of motivation, inadequate professional competences[10] (Mártonfi, 2013).

Ryder (2016: 19) lists the 10 Common Basic Principles for the successful design and implementation of actions to support Roma inclusion, based on the European Commission recommendation. These policy recommendations can be applied in designing school integration programmes as well:

- Constructive, pragmatic and non-discriminatory policies
- Explicit but not exclusive targeting
- Inter-cultural approach
- Aiming for the mainstream
- Awareness of the gender dimension
- Transfer of evidence-based policies

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[10] http://www.apa.org/pi/families/resources/school-dropout-prevention.pdf

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- Use of European Union instruments
- Involvement of regional and local authorities
- Involvement of civil society
- Active participation of the Roma

Questions for thinking:

1. Identify the key characteristics of a good Roma integration programme based on the above principles!

2. What other causes can lead to early school leaving?

3. How do you think the pre-school falling behind of disadvantaged students could be overcome, what elements would you consider important?

IV. Ways to address the challenges and barriers in the education of Roma children

Key words:

multicultural education   **sensitization programmes**

parents-school partnership

Starting questions:

1. What does multicultural education mean?

2. Why is it important to involve parents in school life?

3. What good practices are there to overcome the barriers in the education of Roma children?

Definitions of terms:

multicultural education: "a major goal of multicultural education is to change teaching and learning approaches so that students of both genders and from diverse cultural, ethnic, and language groups will have equal opportunities to learn in educational institutions". Its objective is to assist students acquire the knowledge, attitudes and relations that are necessary for the effective operation of a plural, democratic society. (Banks & Banks 2001)

sensitization programmes: their objective is to create a more understanding, sensitive environment different from accepted social norms and stereotypes (minorities, disabilities, etc.).

Parent-school partnership: children are raised primarily in families, therefore no efficient school work is possible without building adequate relations with the child's family. All families need and expect to be treated as equal partners in school and to receive useful information from teachers

regarding their child's education.

Content of the chapter:

Parent-school partnership: why is it important to involve parents in school life? Efficient school is inconceivable without adequate cooperation with the pupils' families. The possible levels of cooperation with parents are:

1. pupils and parents from diverse language, ethnic or cultural minority groups share the values of their culture and customs with their children's school community;

2. parents participate in school presentations and other events as audience or volunteers;

3. active involvement of parents in the home learning of children, to assist them to do their homework;

4. involvement of parents in the decision-making, managing, inspection or representative bodies of the school, aiming at cooperation with the broader environment and cultural community.

According to the *contact hypothesis* of Allport (1954), the source of separation between groups is differentiation between groups: people show positive attitudes towards their own and negative attitudes towards other ethnic groups. Prejudices can be reduced through intergroup contact, subject to these criteria: members of the two groups have personal interaction, hold an equal status, have a common, superordinate goal for which they work together and their contact has institutional support (authority, law or custom). Benefits of intergroup contact can be explained by three reasons: it facilitates learning about the outgroup, reduces anxiety and gives a chance to take the perspective of the outgroup and empathize with their concerns. In school environment the *jigsaw classroom technique* provides an opportunity for the cooperation of children from different ethnic groups. According to Turner, Crisp and Lambert (2007), in addition to real contact *imagined intergroup contact* between members of diverse groups can reduce prejudices as well. The effect stems primarily from reducing anxiety, which changes the desire for contact in a positive way.

The issue of *equal opportunities* has long been on the agenda of education policy. An international research project (*Bajomi – Berkovits – Erőss – Imre,* 2003) has studied ways to address unequal opportunities in five European countries (Belgium, France, England, Portugal and Hungary):

- free public education allows entry to school for children from poor families as well;

- uniform curricula not only in the first grades but also in most lower secondary schools;

- stricter rules regarding making students to repeat a school year, so that the student would not be lagging behind her/his peers;

- VET should not be a dead end so that students could later go on to higher education (e.g., possible horizontal transfer in higher grades of different types of upper secondary schools, VET graduates' opportunity to pass an exam to enter higher education; retraining classes);
- system of free assistance for children from poor families outside school (e.g., teaching the language of education, volunteer catching up trainings, after school clubs);
- positive financial discrimination for schools and social institutions working with a large number of disadvantaged children.

Multicultural education is not merely the integrated education of students from different cultural background but a form of education that accepts and appreciates these differences and builds deliberately on them in creating and implementing the curriculum and school activities.

Banks' typology (2007) distinguishes *five dimensions of multicultural education*:

– content integration: infusion of ethnicities, gender, religions and social groups in the curriculum;

– knowledge construction: how the teacher can help students to understand implicit cultural presuppositions and how these influence the formation of our knowledge about various social and ethnic groups;

– prejudice reduction: focuses on students' prejudices and examines how these can be eliminated;

– equity pedagogy: aims to increase the academic achievement of students from diverse disadvantaged groups, by modifying the curriculum and adapting targeted teaching methods;

– empowering school culture: its objective is to enable students from diverse background to experience equality; it involves the restructuring of school objectives, norms, practices and the physical environment.

Good practices of *sensitization* and compensatory measures in many European countries include extracurricular programmes that aim to support the successful educational, social and economic integration of disadvantaged students by providing after school classes for them. Farkas (2007) and Ryder (2016) list further good practices to reduce the discrimination of Roma:

Inclusion of Roma communities: Inclusion of Roma community members in education provision; raise awareness among Roma of their rights and enable better access to justice.

Teacher training: Curriculum and/or teacher training on Roma language and culture.

Educational institutions: Teachers assisting in maintaining contact with the community and families – assistant teachers, visiting teacher; Extra teacher for Roma; Distance learning and dual registration to accommodate traveller needs; Staff training; "learning by working" (on-the-job training).

Supporting institutional and labour market transitions: Pre-school provision; Programmes addressing minority language speakers (zero grade classes; majority language adaptation classes and minority language teaching); Return programmes from special to mainstream education; Programmes to access secondary or university education (tutors, scholarships); Training centres for adult Roma (second chance education); Reach-out for early school leavers; Mediators in education and employment.

Policy measures: Mainstreaming and inspecting Roma needs within national education (officers); Enhanced per capita support or other financial support for Roma students; Cohabitation program; Grants and bursaries –meals –transport; Affirmative/positive action in, for example, civil service employment; Inclusive and accessible Labour/Employment Centres; Microcredit and cooperatives and social enterprise; Partnership with civil society.

Questions for thinking:

1. What shows that the jigsaw classroom technique is effective? How would you measure the effectiveness of the the jigsaw classroom technique?

2. Which dimensions of multicultural education to what extent would you consider desirable and feasible in your school/teaching practice?

3. Choose one good practice. What strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats can you see in the programme?

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