

# INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN THE CONTINUING TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR TEACHERS

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## **Abstract**

*Cultural diversity is not a prejudice anymore, but a reality that needs to be capitalized in the school environment. Intercultural communication can be developed through professional development programmes. These programmes meet the communication needs of the teachers who work with children from disadvantaged areas. The continuing training programme proposed by us offers an interaction based on respect for alterity and promotes situations where individual values intersect with group values. Individuals from different cultural backgrounds can find themselves confronted with another system of perceiving reality, with a system of different cultural visions on space and time, with a different way of relating. In order to develop intercultural communication, we propose specific methods and tools that can be used successfully in the instructive-educational activity. In this sense, the following will be pursued: identifying individual and group values, recognizing different lifestyles in different environments, interacting with others, analyzing the symbolic representations to which we relate in our understanding of the world we live in.*

**Keywords:** *training; communication; values; interculturality.*

## **Introduction**

The intercultural perspective opens up the way for asserting liberties, individualities, multiple identities. Our perspective on communication is a complex concept that implies a comprehensive socio-linguistic competence. It is increasingly clear that lifestyles, social representations, value systems, codes of conduct, social relations (inter-generational, between men and women, etc.), cognitive processes, artistic expressions, notions of public and private space (with particular reference to urban planning and the living environment), forms of learning and expression, modes of communication and even systems of thought, can no longer be reduced to a single model or conceived in terms of fixed representations.

Intercultural communication is obviously based on the concept of interpersonal communication. In our view, communication is an instrument which, if used carefully and consciously, may bring personal, relational, and organisational

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benefits. This does not mean, however, that communication automatically resolves all personal, interpersonal, or organisational problems. But it can undoubtedly help come to a resolution, especially with vulnerable groups. In this sense, training in communication represents professional and intercultural enrichment.

Vulnerable groups refer to any group or sector of society that is at higher risk of being subjected to discriminatory practices, violence, natural or environmental disasters, or economic hardships than other groups within the state. A vulnerable group is any group or sector of society (such as women, children or the elderly) that is at higher risk in periods of conflict and crisis. The school should help children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds integrate into the community and respond appropriately to society's demands. This requires well-trained teachers who know strategies and ways to develop interpersonal communication. There are a number of training programmes that address teachers working in disadvantaged environments. Their objective is to form and develop professional skills, including intercultural communication.

The purpose of this study is to identify some aspects of intercultural communication and to use them in a continuing training programme for teachers in the Oltenia region. The tools and methods proposed are selected according to their ability to stimulate communication between participants, and the contents are adapted to the cultural specificity of the area or social environment in which teachers work.

### **1. Aspects of intercultural communication**

The metaphor of the existence of certain cultural “baggage” refers to attitudes, patterns, judgments or expectations “packed” in our home cultures, that we carry with us. The pioneers in this field, such as E.T Hall and L.R. Kohls, designed specific activities in order to help people examine their so-called cultural baggage. As Hall said, “culture hides much more than it reveals, and, strangely enough, what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own participants. Years of study have convinced me that the ultimate goal of the study of culture is not so much the meaning of foreign cultures as the light that the study pours upon us” (Hall, 1998, p. 59). E. Hall, the founder of intercultural communication as a discipline, has made a distinction between two aspects of culture: manifested and tacitly acquired. Through the manifested culture, he designates “words and numbers”, and through the acquired one he understands the non-verbal aspects of communication, this being very situational and operating in accordance with unconscious rules that were not learned in the ordinary sense but were acquired in the process of growing or simply in different life situations. His statement that “culture is communication” is related to what is happening at the interface with the diversity of others.

The ultimate goal of intercultural learning is to transform our knowledge, skills and attitudes into competence and to develop flexibility and adaptability in intercultural communication. Continuing training programmes, which essentially aim at personal and professional development, invite participants to interaction and reflection, and they also facilitate the achievement of *the learning objectives*: to raise awareness and develop intercultural sensitivity, to analyze and solve problems from

the perspective of cultural differences, to cultivate intercultural attitudes that include tolerance, respect, curiosity and empathy towards other cultures, to acquire cultural knowledge, both general culture and specific culture, paying special attention to the invisible cultural elements, which are the hidden part of an iceberg.

Associated with the idea of communication, culture is a subtle form of sociability. A process of symbolic interaction, this can be defined as all the representations and practices related to various identities. Identities can be personal, social and cultural. As individuals with multiple facets related to the different “arenas”, roles, etc., the identity list of each person is made up of all three. Sometimes we use cultural identities to form stereotypes about our own cultural groups and about others. Stereotypes influence attitudes that can become prejudices. If we act on the line of a prejudice, we can easily reach discrimination. The stereotype is “the caricature of a social representation” (Preiswerk and Perrot, 1975, p. 239). It is stated that “in school, the numerous stereotypes spread about children who do not come from the dominant group spoil the relationship between the teacher and the student, and between the teacher and the family. For example, the prior assertion that some children belonging to certain socio-economic environments and certain groups do not even speak their language fluently and that they will have difficulties in learning the language they learn in, is a widespread and put forth stereotype, among other things, to justify some school difficulties” (Dasen, Perregaux and Rey, 1999, p. 89).

Focusing on cultural identity, we need to be aware of the fact that it can be over-generalized and it can lead to the following forms and symptoms:

*a) Stereotypes* (the perceptual level) – our generalized visions towards a certain group of people sharing similar identities;

*b) Prejudice* (the level of attitude) – our preconceived views (usually not based on real experiences or logical reasons) and related judgments about others;

*c) Discrimination* (the behavioural level) – our unfair, exclusive or deliberate treatment which intentionally tries to harm different categories of people, usually based on perceptions of race, age, sex or other social and life style markers.

For each of these forms, the saying “It’s not wrong, just different!” can help us try to understand the cultural logic behind the visible differences of certain cultural groups. Students bring to school different cultural experiences and practices that do not always coincide with the culture proposed by the school. It is suitable to “see culture as a formation that is built, among others, according to the environmental challenges, as a set of dispositions intended to respond to them” (Camillieri, apud Dasen, Perregaux and Rey, 1999, p. 85). As a result of the contacts between cultures there appear cultural practices, which bear their own meanings. Between the culture of the teachers and the culture of the pupils, of the rural and urban, of the advanced and underdeveloped, there are sometimes gaps, stereotypes and prejudices are enhanced. Some communities are preoccupied with maintaining their power and territory and therefore they are closing themselves within their own limits. Others open out and create communication bridges.

Among the many areas of culture, E.T. Hall and other scholars notice behaviours related to how people use or respond to *time* and *space* in communication. The term “cronemic” was first used by E.T. Hall to designate the study of perception and use of time. Cultures differ significantly in relation to their attitude towards time and their ideas about its importance in human interactions. If time can be measured objectively by clocks, the importance of time in everyday life is subject to interpretation. Cultural preferences for monochromatic (linear, sequential, analogic) and polychronic (simultaneous, multi-tasking, digital) temporal contrast differ from one culture to another. The same author also launched the term “proxemics”, concerning the study of the social space as bio-communication. Proxemics investigates how the individual unconsciously structures space, interpersonal distances in daily transactions, organizing spaces in homes and buildings, and last but not least in configuring cities.

## **2. Vulnerable groups**

The influence of culture on the development of children is achieved in different ways. Educational practices vary greatly from one culture to another, but it is precisely the ability of the school to shape the behaviour of individuals that makes us believe that it is a factor of progress and attenuation of social imbalances.

### *a) Gender discrimination in the educational system*

School culture is largely focused on conformism, converging discipline. In primary and secondary school a “comfortable female” environment is created, focused on values specific to female culture. It is noticed that the “intuitive-emotional and empathetic aspects of knowledge and experience, aesthetic, moral education (considered as feminine, possibly soft aspects – Ștefănescu, 2003, our translation) are strongly discriminated in favour of the informative-rational aspects of scientific education (...). Maintaining conservatism in its sexist version of education affects at least two equally important aspects: it makes women with professional aspirations inferior to males’ and with a poor capacity for private emancipation and public affirmation; it continues to be a subversive factor for the modernization of the Romanian society, because it educates towards the underuse of over half of the development potential” (Neagu, 2006, pp. 56-58, our translation). As a social institution, the school must be plural and must apply intercultural communication strategies that reduce cultural shocks.

### *b) Street children*

Homeless people are more and more visible not only in the far and poor neighborhoods of the cities, but also in central areas. We meet them on the streets, in transport, in railway stations and bus stations, in churchyards or on the stairs inside blocks of flats. Sometimes homeless people also include children. The street children’s profile aggregates a series of features: they have family problems, they have problems with their identity papers, they have behavioural problems, and they are in the charge of two or more charities. Sometimes they use drugs and are among the economically disadvantaged, with physical or mental disabilities; at other times,

they leave school and they violate the law, or they are the victims of their parents' authoritative style.

*c) Children in poor communities*

Most of the cases include children with parents who have left abroad. There are places, especially in poor areas, where only the elderly and children are left behind, whereas the labour force are gone abroad. Unfortunately, if the income grows, many problems arise inside the couple and with the children. It is stated that “developmental or poverty phenomena are different according to historical provinces, counties, territorial communities, and within them according to households, age of the inhabitants, state of health, level of education, mentalities, aspirations, etc.” (Ionescu, 2006, p. 32, our translation).

*d) The Gypsy minority*

The specific nature of the social exclusion in the Roma population in Romania is the existence of certain sources of exclusion of both individual and cultural nature. Because many do not have their identity papers properly taken care of (they do not have birth certificates and/or identity cards), they do not enjoy the other rights derived from citizenship: social assistance, social security, political participation rights, legal employment. Considered to be the poorest social category, the Roma population adds to the Western immigrants.

By enjoying the individual-universal, private-general game, closing-opening, intercultural communication leads to an understanding of the social dynamics, being a solution to the problems of disadvantaged groups and a meeting point for identity and alterity.

### **3. An example of a Teacher's Continuing Training Programme**

The need to train teachers from disadvantaged schools is to improve the skills of the teaching staff in pre-university education in order to promote quality education services focused on the students' needs, and an inclusive school that exploits the intercultural communication valences.

This is achieved by:

- Knowledge and implementation of strategies to increase children's participation in pre-school and pre-school education (especially early-school leaving groups with an emphasis on Roma and rural minority children);
- Identifying and using integrated measures to reduce early school leaving;
- Ensuring equal opportunities for pupils belonging to vulnerable groups.

In order to attract children to school, help them prevent school dropout and early school leaving and help them achieve better results, teachers are asked for quality training, and this can be done by capitalizing on good practice in the teaching activity (eg through continuing training to develop intercultural skills).

In order to develop a continuing training programme for teachers working in disadvantaged environments (*Resources in the School for All: Activism, Respect, Tolerance – Re-Start* Continuing Training Programme, Training provider: University of Craiova – Department of Teacher Training), in 2016 a questionnaire was administered to a number of 124 teachers. The teachers who filled in the

questionnaire had the following residence: Dolj County (47), Mehedinți County (29), Olt County (21), Vâlcea County (15) and Gorj County (12).

The items of the questionnaire were targeted at knowing the opinion of the teachers concerning the necessity and usefulness of carrying out continuing training programmes aimed at optimizing the educational act in the schools from the disadvantaged environments. They were also meant to establish the level of trust in the role of these programmes to enrich their experience, to develop their cross-cutting skills necessary for working with children/pupils from disadvantaged areas, respectively, knowing their expectations and collecting possible curricular proposals of the subjects.

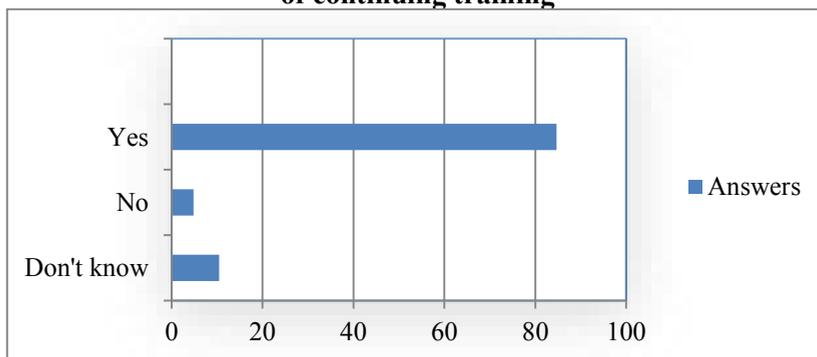
Item 1. *Do you consider that continuing training has a positive impact on career development?*

This item informs about the perception the learners have regarding the role of continuing training and improvement in their teaching career.

The answers were as follows:

- a) Yes – 105 (84.68%)
- b) No – 6 (4.84 %)
- c) Don't know – 13 (10.48 %)

**Figure no. 1. The perception of learners in relation to the role of continuing training**



In a large proportion (over 80%), the students positively appreciate the continuing training and, implicitly, the programmes developed for teaching improvement.

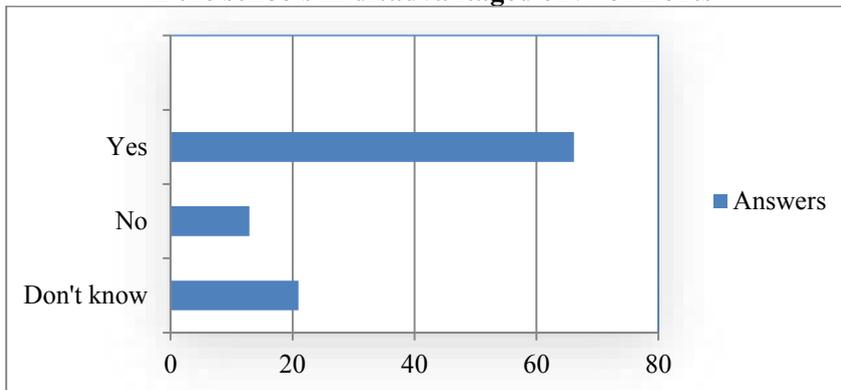
Item 2. *Do you consider that continuing training programmes for teachers optimize the educational activity in the schools in disadvantaged areas?*

This item targets the opinion of the subjects regarding the contribution of the continuing training programmes to the optimization of the educational process in disadvantaged areas.

The answers of the subjects (Diagram 2) were distributed as follows:

- a) Yes – 82 (66.13%)
- b) No – 16 (12.90 %)
- c) Don't know – 26 (20.97 %)

**Figure no. 2. The opinion of the subjects on the contribution of continuing learning programmes to the optimization of the educational act in the schools in disadvantaged environments**



It is observed that a large number of subjects (over 50%) recognize the contribution of continuing training programmes to the optimization of the learning process in disadvantaged environments.

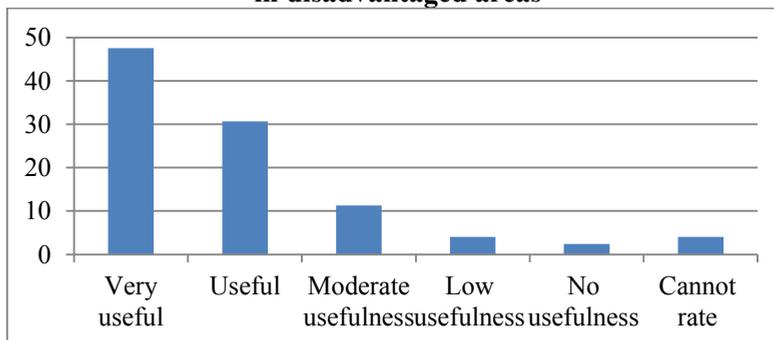
Item 3. *Do you consider useful the continuing training programs for pre-university teachers who work in disadvantaged environments?*

This item is intended to find out the opinion of teachers about the usefulness of continuing training programmes that address especially teachers in the pre-university educational system from underprivileged areas.

The answers of the subjects were as follows:

- Very useful – 59 (47.58 %)
- Useful – 38 (30.65 %)
- Moderate usefulness – 14 (11.29 %)
- Low usefulness – 5 (4.03 %)
- No usefulness – 3 (2.42 %)
- Cannot rate – 5 (4.03 %)

**Figure no. 3. The opinion of the subjects on the usefulness of continuing training programmes for pre-university teachers in disadvantaged areas**



The responses given by the subjects to this item favour organizing and conducting continuing training programmes for pre-university teachers in disadvantaged areas.

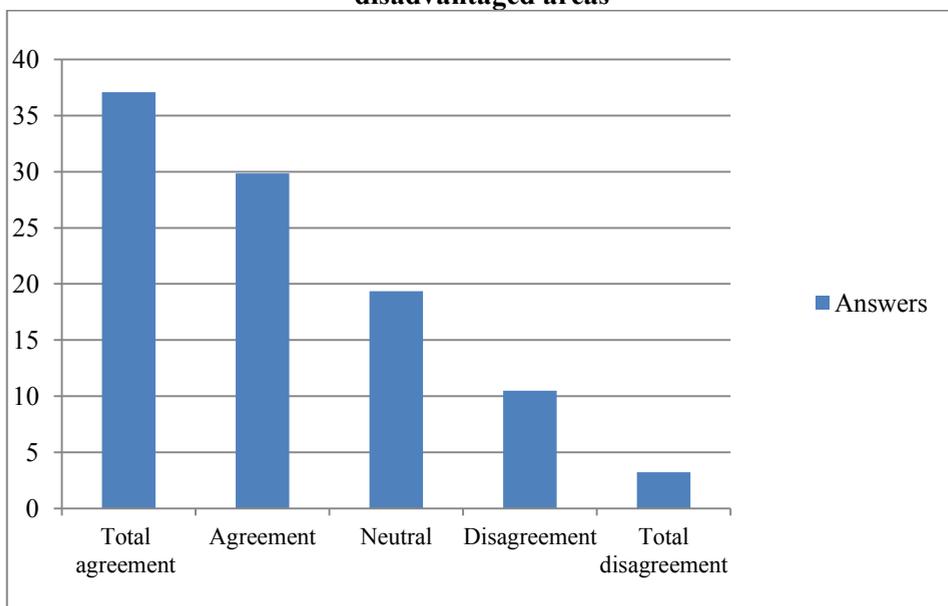
Item 4. *Do you appreciate that continuing training programmes contribute to the development of cross-cutting skills needed to work with children / pupils in disadvantaged areas?*

- a) Total agreement – 46 (37.10 %)
- b) Agreement – 37 (29.84 %)
- c) Neutral – 24 (19.35 %)
- d) Disagreement – 13 (10.48 %)
- e) Total disagreement – 4 (3.23 %)

The answers to this item provide information on the (favourable or unfavourable) attitude shown by teachers in relation to the impact of training programmes on their professional development. This implies the enrichment of the professional experience, i.e. the development of transversal competences necessary for the activity with children/ pupils from disadvantaged areas.

As a refiguration of behaviour, attitude is a psychic variable that determines behaviour. That is why they are particularly interested in the way the subjects relate to the contribution of training programmes that aim to exercising competences in the field of education (in general), in educational activities with children/ pupils from disadvantaged areas (in particular).

**Figure no. 4. The opinion of the subjects on the usefulness of continuing training programmes for teachers in pre-university education from disadvantaged areas**



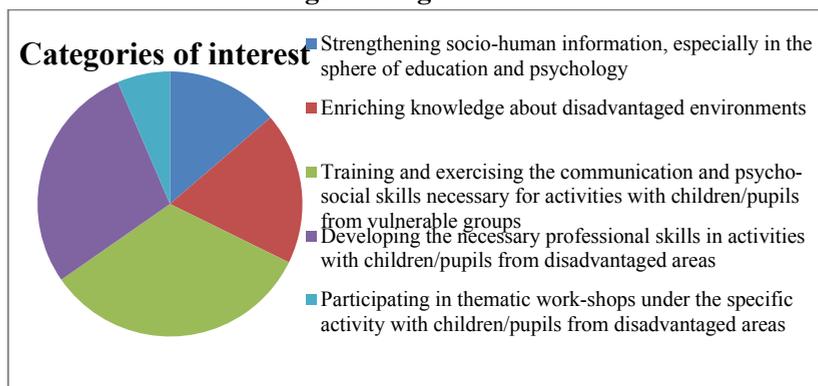
The attitude of the respondents is positive, taking into account that there is a large number of teachers who totally agree or agree with the usefulness of these programmes.

Item 5. *What are your expectations from a continuing training programmes for teachers working with disadvantaged students?*

The answers of the subjects can be divided into several categories of interest:

- a) Strengthening socio-human information, especially in the sphere of education and psychology – 17 (13.71%);
- b) Enriching knowledge about disadvantaged environments – 23 (18.55%);
- c) Training and using the communication and psycho-social skills necessary for activities with children / pupils from vulnerable groups – 41 (33.06%);
- d) Developing the necessary professional skills in activities with children/pupils from disadvantaged areas – 35 (28.23%);
- e) Participating in thematic workshops under the specific activity with children/ pupils from disadvantaged areas – 8 (6.45%).

**Figure no. 5. Categories of interest in which the answers related to the existing expectations in the work with children/pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are framed**

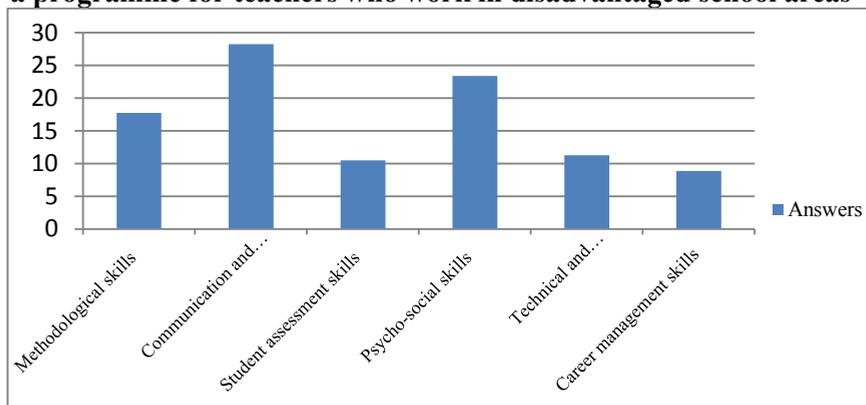


From these answers, we can see the interest of the respondents in training and exercising communication and psychosocial skills necessary for activities with children/pupils from vulnerable groups (33.06%) and for the development of transversal skills in activities with children/ pupils from disadvantaged areas (28.23%).

Item 6. *What kind of general skills would you like to be specifically practiced in a training programmes addressing teachers working in disadvantaged school areas?*

- a) Methodological skills – 22 (17.74%)
- b) Communication and relating skills – 35 (28.23%)
- c) Student assessment skills – 13 (10.48%)
- d) Psycho-social skills – 29 (23.39%)
- e) Technical and technological skills – 14 (11.29%)
- f) Career management skills – 11 (8.87%)

**Figure no 6. The opinion of the subjects in relation to the types of skills used in a programme for teachers who work in disadvantaged school areas**



The choice of the subjects for a category or another of general competences reflects some training needs. It also provides information on the categories of specific competences and activities that are considered necessary in the educational process in the disadvantaged school areas.

Item 7. *What are the benefits of developing a pre-university education teacher training programme in disadvantaged environments?*

The advantages mentioned by the subjects surveyed were as follows:

- *Synthesization* of ideas, theories, paradigms of the sciences of education, psychology, sociology and teaching methodology;
- Using the cross-cutting skills specific to the activity with children/ pupils from disadvantaged areas;
- Developing educational partnerships aimed at identifying solutions to the problems specific for children/ pupils from disadvantaged areas;
- Stimulating the experience sharing with respect to the pedagogical practice;
- Providing the necessary support and advice in working with children/pupils from disadvantaged areas;
- Exchange of good practices in the field of education;
- Others.

Analyzing the answers to this item, we can see that the interest of the subjects in the development of knowledge and practice of professional skills, as well as the preoccupation to take part in courses, programmes that use their own experience, and sharing best practices in the educational approach aimed especially at those who teach in schools from disadvantaged areas.

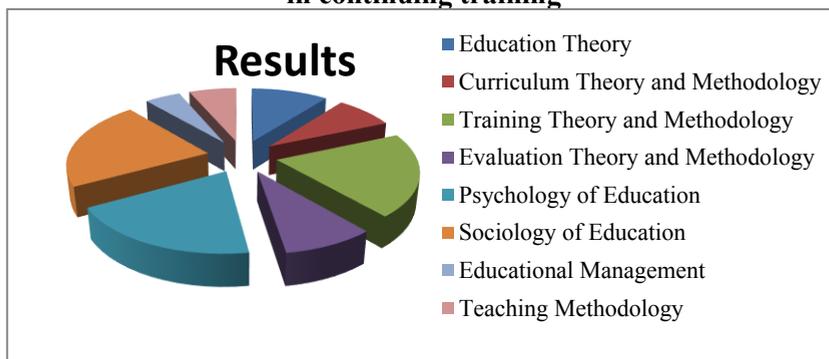
Item 8. *Can you specify which are the curricular areas you are most interested in continuing training, in the context of performing educational activities with children/ students from a disadvantaged area?*

- a) Education Theory – 13 (10.48%)
- b) Curriculum Theory and Methodology – 10 (8.07%)
- c) Training Theory and Methodology – 25 (20.16%)
- d) Evaluation Theory and Methodology – 11 (8.87%)

- e) Psychology of Education – 24 (19.35%)
- f) Sociology of Education – 27 (21.77%)
- g) Educational Management – 6 (4.84%)
- h) Teaching Methodology – 8 (6.46%)

In relation to this item, the percentage of education sociology (21.77%), theory and methodology of education (20.16%) and psychology of education (19.35%) are higher.

**Figure no. 7. Preferences of the subjects for different areas in continuing training**



Item 9. *What proposals do you have in relation to the curricular content you would like to go through in a continuing training programmes aimed at educating children/ students from disadvantaged areas?*

The most frequent answers include the following:

- Equal opportunities in education;
- Educational partnership;
- Active-participative strategies in the class of students;
- Student-centered training;
- Counseling children/ students from disadvantaged areas;
- Violence in schools;
- Communication with students from disadvantaged areas.

The interest shown by the subjects questioned for these curricular contents justifies the choice of the thematic units, the disciplines on which the proposed training programme will be carried out. Following the suggestions made by the questioned subjects, we can synthesize the main themes on which to build the curricular training offer addressed to pre-university teachers from disadvantaged areas.

Coupled, the themes represent the following training issues, which are reflected in thematic units (disciplines) and specific contents and which aim at developing intercultural communication: “Motivational active-participative strategies”, “Elements of pro-inclusion school psychology”, “Communication and relating in disadvantaged environments”.

Item 10. *How much do you think a continuing training programme that aims at developing and expanding the transversal skills of teachers working in disadvantaged environments will help you?*

- a) Very much – 86 (69.35%)
- b) Much – 18 (14.52%)
- c) Little – 17 (13.71%)
- d) Very little – 3 (2.42%)

The answers to this item emphasize the need for a cross-curricular development and expansion programme of the transversal skills on interaction and communication with the social and pedagogical environment, assuming responsibilities for organizing, managing and improving the strategic performance of professional groups, self-control and reflexive analysis of their own activities, etc.

The items of the questionnaire underpinned three *variables*: identifying the teachers' opinion on the role (necessity and usefulness) of continuing training programmes aimed at optimizing the educational act in the schools in disadvantaged areas, establishing the level of confidence in the role of these programmes in terms of development in their careers, the inventory of their expectations and the curricular proposals on the basis of which we can formulate the thematic training units and their associated content. The teachers questioned consider it necessary and useful to attend a continuing training programmes aimed at optimizing the educational act in the schools in disadvantaged areas. The attitudes of the subjects to the impact of the training programmes on the development in their teaching career are positive.

The transversal competences are given an important place, and the expectations of the respondents aim, in particular, at the exploitation of their own experience and sharing of good practices in the educational approach. It is appreciated that continuing training programmes can contribute to the development of skills necessary for working with children/ pupils from disadvantaged areas.

Among the general competences chosen to be trained specially in a training programme addressing teachers working in schools in disadvantaged areas include communication and relating skills, too.

Equal opportunities in education, educational partnership, active-participative strategies in the classroom, counseling of disadvantaged children/pupils, and intercultural communication can be tackled from the perspective of the latest educational theories and paradigms.

#### **4. Methods and tools used in continuing training programmes aimed at developing intercultural communication with teachers working in disadvantaged areas**

##### **a) *Value Orientation Method (VOM)* – a tool that helps understand cultural differences**

*The method of guiding value* is a method that helps people quickly understand cultural differences. For those readers familiar with the Myers-Briggs indicator and the way to describe the types of people, VOM offers a similar method for describing types of cultures. Thus, “the bases for VOM were developed in the 1940s and 1950s within the Harvard Value Project (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961). The project team has assumed that it is possible to distinguish cultures based on how we relate

to five common human concerns: human nature (what is the basic nature of humans?), the relationship man - nature (What is the right relationship with nature?), the meaning of time (How should we think best about time?), activity (What is the best way of activity?), social relations (What is the best form of social organization?)” (apud Gallager, 2001, p. 1).

As a scientific tool, VOM provides a way of measuring value differences, which can be later linked to other variables, such as participating in a training activity or preference for a professional development programme. For example, an individual in a group that prefers hierarchical relationships (powerful command chain) cannot choose a programme that involves extensive collateral discussions to reach a decision. Cultural differences can affect us even in short exchanges. What we consider to be important can appear in what we say or what we expect others to say or how to answer.

### **b) Rokeach Survey (RVS) – values classification instrument**

M. Rokeach has proposed a list of two sets of values: terminal and instrumental. The Rokeach Value Survey (RVS) is a classification system that has two sets of values, 18 individual value items in each set. *Terminal values* refer to the desired final states of existence, the goals that a person would like to achieve in his/her lifetime. They vary according to different groups of people in different cultures. *Instrumental values* refer to preferred behavioral modes or means of achieving terminal values.

**Table no. 1. Terminal values and instrument values in RVS**

(Rokeach, 1988, apud Maier, 1989)

<i>The terminal values in RVS</i>	<i>The Instrumental values in RVS</i>
a comfortable life, equality, an exciting life, family security, freedom, health, inner harmony, mature love, national security, pleasure, salvation, self-respect, a sense of accomplishment, social recognition, true friendship, wisdom, a world at peace, a world of beauty	ambitious, broad-minded, capable, clean, courageous, forgiving, helpful, honest, imaginative, independent, intellectual, logical, loving, loyal, obedient, polite, responsible, self-controlled

Depending on the rank the subjects gave to the eighteen values in each category, Rokeach showed the presence of different cultural value *patterns*.

### **c) Value identification method**

Not all of us fully subscribe to the cultural values around us. Some of us may consider ourselves a part of a distinct subculture (or of a co-culture), or just a circle of close friends, or we even want to be individually distinguished. Identifying the group we are part of helps us to consider what kind of values we represent under the influence of personal choices or directions.

The suggested method calls for the answer to the following questions: *Which of these types of values guides your relationships, decisions, or brings you satisfaction?, How do values influence the way you relate and communicate with others?, Which level is generally more important to you – group values or personal values?, Why?*

This task is divided into four parts with clear requirements:

- Identification of the demographic aspects and characteristics of the closest cultural group we consider being part of: *Demography and description of the cultural specificity;*
- Choosing an important cultural value specific to our group and an individual value: *cultural value and personal value;*
- Describing the content and specifying the implications of each aspect: *explanation for each selected value;*
- Creating your personal story: *The personal story.*

The practice of cultural assessment focuses on the determination of certain tools to facilitate the quantification of certain cultural variables. These methods, and also others, help to develop intercultural communication skills, and the teacher continuing training programmes are opportunities to use intercultural competence.

### **Conclusion**

Individuals are not born interculturally competent, but become competent through education and life experiences.

Twinning relationships between schools in different countries, student and teaching staff mobility are additional strategies to meet the demands of intercultural education. The current European societies, both ethnically and culturally diverse, and from the perspective of identities and interests, are the arena of cohabitation with more and more obvious alterities. Activity with pupils belonging to certain vulnerable groups falls within this category, with the specification that in addition to educational measures, economic and financial measures are needed.

The process of building and developing intercultural competences is in close connection with the attitudes, abilities and self-culture of the individual. Depending on the multitude of interactions with other cultures and the consistency of the accomplishment of the specific activities, the individual acquires more and more types of competences, both in the external environment and in the internal environment. Training programmes differ from one researcher to another and from one training center to another.

We have been focusing on building a set of methods and tools for teacher training that will capitalize on the cultural dimension. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds have some cultural specificities of ethnicity, access to resources, mentality, etc. All of this impact on their development, and that is why the school has to offer customized learning paths, taking into account the specific traits of each individual and the values to which they relate.

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