

Main problems of education in the university in multicultural society

1. The first problem is one of principles of the university's activity as a promoter of intercultural dialogue in multicultural society. The process of education aimed at the fostering of cultural diversity as well as social cohesion, civil equality and democratic participation should be preceded by the *choice of the policy* related to the role of the university in multicultural social environment. According to the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue of the Council of Europe *multiculturalism* is understood as a *specific policy approach*, whereas the terms *cultural diversity* and *multiculturality* denote the empirical fact that different cultures exist and may interact within a given space and social organisation.
2. There is a problem of the necessity to rest both on the universal and specifically national factors in the process of formation of multicultural society. Cultural diversity is really present in every more or less large scale society in contemporary world. But the university's policy as a promoter of intercultural dialogue in multicultural society may be effective only if it would take account of specific conditions of given social space and historical time. Quite evident and justified proposition that European society during last decades is becoming more and more multicultural while Russian state's sociopolitical space is somewhat primordially marked with multiethnic character validly denotes not only similarities but also deeply ingrained differences between them.
3. More than that, multiculturalism and its problems throughout Russia's sociopolitical space vary greatly in the centre and periphery, in its eastern and southern regions. Strongly pronounced peculiarity and mostly conflict manifestations are inherent to multiculturalism in the North Caucasus region. That's why so urgent is the problem of organically connecting research and education in the university which is located in such specific environment. Participants of our seminar from Stavropol, Pyatigorsk and Maykop indeed can present examples of advanced experience in related spheres of their activities. In my presentation I shall try to systematize characteristics of multiculturalism most essential for the university to serve as a promoter of intercultural dialogue in multicultural society.
4. There is a problem how in the process of education to unite both function of maintenance of individual and collective identities and function of forming abilities necessary for the persons, social and cultural groups to participate fruitfully in intercultural dialogue. Some of pedagogical attitudes to solving of this problem would be discussed in this presentation.
5. The main message of the above mentioned *White Paper* is that intercultural dialogue is impossible without a clear reference to universal values – democracy, human rights and the rule of law. These problems are by now beyond academic or public consideration although the topic of intercultural dialogue is one of broadly circulating in public discourse. In this presentation I am intended to put related questions while in preliminary mode.