



Vassilieva O.S., Avetian A.M.

Empirical studies of the development of the senior schoolchildren's interpersonal relations in the multi-ethnic educational environment

In the conditions of the fragility of the international relations the address to the problem of the development of the interpersonal relations of the senior schoolchildren in the polycultural educational environment seems to be very hot. The article represents the results of the empirical research, there are some conclusions made after data processing with the help of methods of the mathematical statistics.

Key words: *interpersonal relations, poly ethnic educational environment.*

The decision to choose the development in some social, professional and personal spheres falls on the senior school age. Deep down these choices there is a comprehension of the mental resources, building the system of values, the choice of the most «well-deserved» priorities of the vital function. Besides senior schoolchildren face a number of the difficulties, connected to the insufficient knowledge of their abilities, the narrow-mindedness about different sides of the “adult” life, the little experience of planning and forecasting their actions, the unpreparedness to the self-sustained decisive actions and etc.

The significant help in overcoming difficulties can make the enlarging of the interpersonal relations, acquiring at this age the particular value. In the context of the interpersonal relations the senior schoolchildren try not only to enrich their life representations, but to learn how to interact with different people, to get to know themselves. Comparing their own and other people's world outlook, they build more adequate picture of happening and the future at the account of their own experience. In this regard the special opportunities are given to the student by the multi-ethnic educational environment. The knowledge of the other people's culture, customs and traditions let them perceive other culture, unusual mentality, traditions, norms, strategies and forms of the behavior, attitudes and positions.

However the strict division of the surrounding people to friend-or-foe kept from the adolescence, the influence of the parents, peers and those people, the person is contact with, blocks up the development of the experience. Finally, the practice of building the process of the positive interpersonal relations in the multi-ethnic educational environment is replaced by the process of building the small groups, which are the fertile ground for the conflict and tension among the senior school children.

The attempts of the teachers and psychologists to solve the problem of the development of the interpersonal relations of the senior schoolchildren in the polycultural environment are restrained by some difficulties, associated with a number of the contradictions between the necessity of the relation development and the absence of the theoretical and empirical preliminary studies, which let adequately to reconsider



the context of these processes and states, and by the absence of the scientifically described psychological technologies.

The action of the ethno-cultural factor, creating the special environment for building interpersonal relations, was studied by the number of national and foreign psychologists (Aroutunov S.A., Belinskaya E.P., Bromlei U.V., Goumilev L.N., Lebedeva N.M., Stephanenko T.G., Sousokolov A.A., Freud Zh., Fromm E. and others). The data related to the influence of the ethnic characteristics of the subjects upon their interpersonal relations (Leontiev M.G., Smirnov A.A., Shomonbaeva A.O.) aren't enough to build the unique representation about this process.

The interpersonal relations are considered as subjectively survived links between people producing mutual influence in the process of the mutual activity and communication [4, 6]. They differ by a number of the parameters: according to the origin, stability, length, openness of the sides and etc. The process of initiating, developing, and ending interpersonal relations is determined by a number of the facts. They are individual and psychological, typological features of the subject of the interaction, and also conditions of the organization of the desirable interaction by the different sides.

The ethnic factor is rather important for the interpersonal relations. The researchers point out, that the ethnic environment includes a lot of modifications of the surrounding reality, accumulated by the members of the ethnos in the course of its historical development. The ethnic factor sets the context of the interpersonal relations, determines the behavior demonstrations of the subjects, readiness to maintain relations with the partner of another ethnos. At the personality level the ethnicity demonstrates itself at the level of the ethnic identity of the subject, creating his ethnic conscious, acquiring the ethnic attitudes, stereotypes, prejudices and etc. (Aroutunov S.A., Belinskaya E.P., Bromlei U.V., Goumilev L.N., Lebedeva N.M., Stephanenko T.G., Soldatova G. U., Freud Zh., Fromm E., Khots M.N. and others). The formation of the ethnicity is almost finished at the period of the early youth (or senior school age). At this age the ethnic factor begins to influence the interpersonal relations.

At this age the relations with the young people of the same age acquire new in comparison with adolescence, particularities. We can relate to them the following ones: 1) the bases for them are intellectual and spiritual needs; 2) they are oriented to confessional, confidential character; 3) the increased selection in the choice of the subject of the trust.

The hypothesis of the research is based upon the suggestion about the fact, that the interpersonal relations of the senior school represent the particular complicated entity, determined by the ethnic type of the educational environment and characterized by the number of the particularities, determining quantitative and qualitative parameters. Between mono and multi-ethnic educational environments we can see the differences in the interpersonal relations.

156 senior schoolchildren of the 10th form took part in our research, 50 teachers and psychologist were the experts.



The hypotheses' testing was accomplished while solving a number of the theoretical, methodic and empirical tasks. The last mentioned were directed to: compare the particularities of the distribution of the status positions of the members of the mono and multi-ethnic educational groups of the senior school children; to reveal the level of the proneness to conflict in their relations; study the display of the phenomena of the empathy and trust in the educational mono and multi-ethnic environment; establish the character of links with the ethnic identity and strategies of the reaction in the conflict situations (compromise, cooperation).

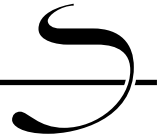
Solving of these problems was made with the help of the research methods. Among them: the method of diagnostics of the interpersonal and intergroup relations («sociometry») G. Moreno, «Scale of the interpersonal trust» by J.B. Rotter, test of the level of the empathic abilities by V.V. Boiko, «Types of the ethnic identity» by G.U. Soldatova, «Level of conflicts» by A.M. Ganeeva and L.S. Tronova, «Studies of the particularities of the reaction in the conflict situation» by Kilman- Tomas. To process the research data we used the methods of the mathematical procedures of reliability of estimate of different indices, the statistic correlations.

In the process of the empirical research it was found out, that the senior school children in the mono-ethnic educational environments more often ($p < 0,01$) come in contact with each other, then senior schoolchildren in multi-ethnic educational environment. The contacts of the senior schoolchildren belonging to different ethnoses are numerically insignificant, limited, at the utmost, by business questions arising in the process of the learning.

The senior schoolchildren from the mono-ethnic environment have interpersonal contacts which are longer in comparison with the school-children from the multi-ethnic educational environment ($p < 0,05$). The interpersonal relations of the senior schoolchildren in mono-ethnic groups are saturated by the contacts with peers, which are dynamic enough according to their organization and time length. The significant time if the interpersonal contacts of the senior school children in mono-ethnic educational environment is the reflection of the diversity of the reasons and bases to support relations, of their interest to each other and the desire to communicate, the openness of the interaction.

Between the senior schoolchildren of the two samples there is a difference (at the statistically significant level $p < 0,01$) in the modality of the interpersonal relations, which they have with their peers. The senior schoolchildren who study at the mono-ethnic environment demonstrate more positive relations than senior school children who study at multi-ethnic environments. The results of the observation testify that in the multi-ethnic educational environments in the interpersonal relations of the senior schoolchildren of the different ethnoses there is some tensivity, closeness of the contacts. Besides they are more sensitive in the questions concerning the ethnic hidden reasons, that's why they join the debates more often while communicating.

The average distribution in classes of the senior school children having the average status in the mono-ethnic and multi-ethnic environments approximately corre-



sponds (accordingly 75,9 % and 70,4 %). We have found the discrepancy in the distribution of the senior schoolchildren, having the high and low socio-metric status, in dependence of the mono or multi-ethnic educational environment, where they study. The distribution of the senior schoolchildren in mono and multi-ethnic educational environments, having high status, is, correspondingly, 19,1 % and 11,7 % ($p < 0,05$). More significant differences were found in the subgroups of the senior schoolchildren having low status in the mono- and multi-ethnic educational environments (correspondingly 5,0 % and 17,9 %). The differences in percents are characterized by statistic reliability ($p < 0,01$), it means that in the multi-ethnic environments the part of the senior school children having low socio-metric status is much higher then in the mono-ethnic environments.

In the mono-ethnic groups with low level of the proneness to conflict there are a bit more senior schoolchildren (18,1 %), then in multi-ethnic educational environments (13,1 %). Such a tendency can be traced with the percent proportion of the number of the senior schoolchildren, characterized by the average level of the proneness to conflict: in the mono-ethnic groups there are a bit more of students (68,2 %), then in the multi-ethnic groups (61,9 %). The level of the statistic meaning of $p < 0,05$, points out to the existence of some differences between samples, it doesn't allow to suggest their stability.

According to the received results the senior schoolchildren, who study in the multi-ethnic educational environments, show the bigger level of the proneness to the conflict, then the senior schoolchildren in the mono-ethnic educational environments. The reason of this we see in the fact that the multi-ethnic environment creates for the senior schoolchildren the additional tasks for life priorities. Distinct from the senior schoolchildren from the mono-ethnic environments, they face the tasks of the personal self-assertion, professional and life choice, senior schoolchildren from the multi-ethnic environment are in need to find a place in their own ethnic environment, to compare their own personal, professional, in whole, the life priorities with the ethnic attitudes, norms and customs. Besides they choose the positions of the interaction with the representatives of other ethos, with the foreign culture, norms and customs. The difficulty and different aspects of the tasks, which arise before the senior schoolchildren from the multi-ethnic educational environments, brings tension, makes them aggressive and conflict in the interpersonal interaction. At the greatest degree it is related to the relations with the young people of the same age, who will belong to other ethnoses.

Among the senior schoolchildren from the mono and multi-ethnic educational environments there are statistically reliable differences ($p < 0,01$) according to high and low level of the interpersonal trust. In the subgroups of the senior school children there is a significant excess of the number of the senior schoolchildren with high level of the interpersonal trust (the average meaning– 27,0 %) over the number of the senior schoolchildren with the low level of the interpersonal trust (14,0 %). In the subgroups of the senior schoolchildren, studying in the multi-ethnic environments, it



was statistically registered the excess of people with the low level of the interpersonal trust (27,6 %) over the number of the senior schoolchildren with the high level of the interpersonal trust (13,3 %). In the sample of the senior schoolchildren, studying in the mono-ethnic environment, the average variable of the interpersonal trust is 6,5, in the sampling from the multi-ethnic educational environment – 4,3 units. The received A good deal of the discrepancy testimonies about the statistically significant differences of its display in dependence with educational environment where the senior schoolchildren are studying (mono or multi-ethnic). In the multi-ethnic environment the interpersonal trust between senior school children seems to be less expressed then among senior schoolchildren studying in the mono-ethnic educational environment.

In the sample of the senior schoolchildren from the multi-ethnic educational environment we can find the tendency of the domination of the people with the low level of the empathy. Besides, the differences in the level of the empathy turn to be smoother. This may be explained by the specifics of functioning of the considered phenomena. Obviously, that the empathy has more possibilities for the development in dependence from the ethnic particularities of the surrounding peers. The trust is based upon the knowledge of a very large area of circumstances, characterizing the subject of the potential interaction. Correspondingly, the senior schoolchild may demonstrate the empathy easier, then the interpersonal trust. Together with the interpersonal trust, it influences most of all the quality and the intensity of building the interpersonal relations in the educational environment.

In the multi-ethnic educational environments in all subgroups with the help of the method «Types of the ethnic identity» by G.U. Soldatova it was discovered the dominance of the proportion of the senior schoolchildren characterized by the ethnic egoism, which can be expressed in the innocent form or in the uncooperative attitude. In the first case there is a perception of surrounding world through the context prism «my people». In the second case, senior schoolchildren demonstrate a lot of tension in the interpersonal relations with the youths of the same age, who belong to other ethnic groups. Maybe, in the dominance of this type of the ethnic identity we can reveal the cause of the increased proneness to conflict and low level of the empathy, interpersonal trust of the senior school children, studying in the multi-ethnic environments.

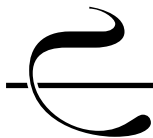
The studies of the types of the reaction to the conflict situation allowed to find out, that in sample of the senior school children, who study at the mono ethnic environments, the strategy which is most of all expressed in the conflict situation is the cooperation (27,5 %). This type of the behavior demonstrates itself in taking such a decision which will completely satisfy the interests of both parties. The highly expressed form of the behavior in the conflict situation of the senior schoolchildren studying in the mono-ethnic educational environment is finding the compromise (23,6 %). The behavior of the senior school children who prefer this type of the behavior shows itself in establishing the agreement between the participants of the conflict. The highly expressed form of the behavior in the conflict situation is the competition (22,2 %).



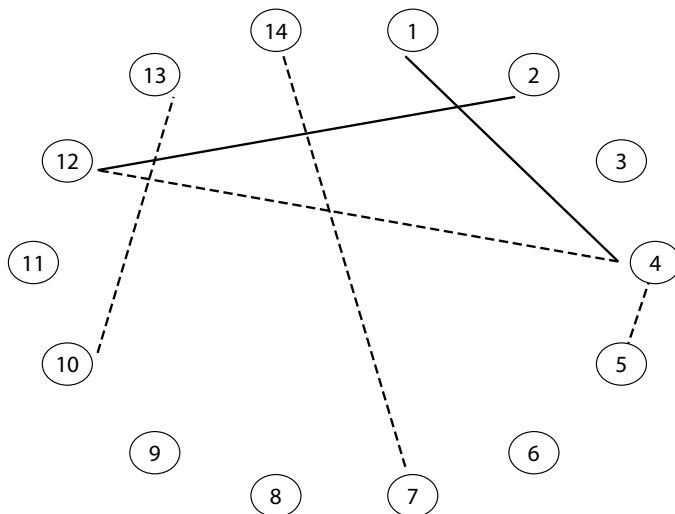
Having this type of the behavior in the conflict situation demonstrates itself in the inclination of the senior school children to achieve the satisfaction of their interests causing damage to the partners' interests. The next places in our samples are occupied by the adjustment (14,4 %) and avoidance (12,3 %). These strategies of the behavior in the conflict situation are chosen by about $\frac{1}{10}$ of the whole sample of the senior schoolchildren, who study at the mono-ethnic environment.

The other strategies of the behavior in the conflict situation were discovered at the sample of senior schoolchildren who study in the multi-ethnic environments. Together with it, we would like to underline, that in this case, the distribution of the favorite types of the behavior in the sampling is more uniform. The most expressed type of the behavior in the senior schoolchildren's sample, studying in the multi-ethnic environment, is the avoidance (23,8 %). Correspondingly, we can speak about the fact that about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the senior school children, in this case, are oriented to avoid the conflict situation. Besides they do not demonstrate the inclination to provide the cooperation with the subject of the interaction and they aren't oriented to achieve their goals in the conflict situation. Approximately the same part of sampling of the senior schoolchildren studying in the multi-ethnic environment formed people oriented to the strategy of the competition in the conflict situation (23,1 %). This type of the behavior connected to the proneness to achieve the satisfaction of their interests to the detriment of the partner's interests, was observed at about $\frac{1}{4}$ of all the senior schoolchildren studying at the multi-ethnic educational environment. The well-expressed strategy of the adjustment to the existing situation was found in the multi-ethnic educational environment. This type of behavior was chosen by 21,6 % of the senior schoolchildren, it means about $\frac{1}{5}$ of all the sampling. This choice corresponds to the orientation of making a sacrifice their own interests for the sake of the interests of the interaction partner. This behavior is absolutely opposite to the competition in the conflict situation, which occupied the second place according to the occurrence. The significant meaning according to the specific gravity of students in the multi-ethnic environment turned to be the strategy of the cooperation (20,6 %). This type of the behavior in the situation turned to be the priority about for $\frac{1}{5}$ of the senior schoolchildren of the sample under review. This point to the fact, that the significant part of senior schoolchildren in multi-ethnic educational environment is ready to accept this alternative, which completely satisfies the interest of the both parties in the interpersonal relations.

The most expressed differences between senior schoolchildren, studying in the mono- and multi-ethnic environments, was established over the two types of the behavior in the conflict situation – the occurrence of the compromise and avoidance. The senior school children studying at the mono-ethnic educational environment are inclined to the first one, the senior schoolchildren studying in the multi-ethnic environment are inclined to the second one. There is a small difference –at the level of the behavior to adapt to the situation and choose the cooperation. The first type of the behavior is typical for the senior schoolchildren, studying in the multi-ethnic environment; the second one to the senior schoolchildren, studying in the mono-ethnic environment.



The method of the correlative analysis let us establish the differences at the level of the density of the senior schoolchildren's characteristics, which are in the different types of the ethnic educational environments.



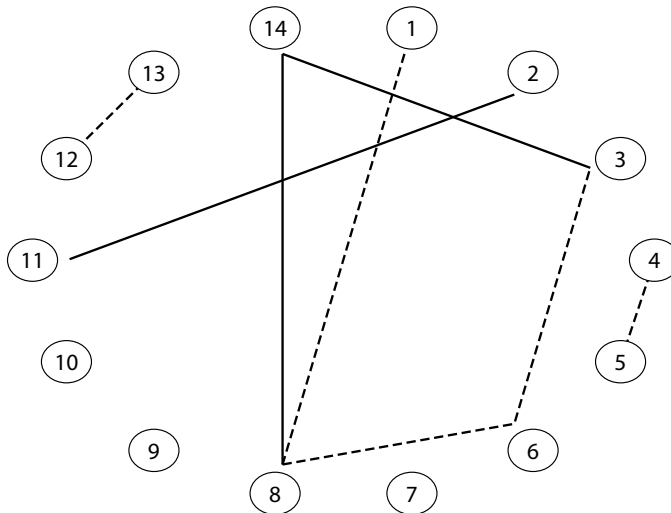
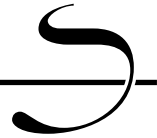
Drawing 1. Cross-correlation of the characteristics of the schoolchildren who study in the mono-ethnic environment

1 – proneness to conflict; 2 – trust; 3 – empathy; 4 – ethnic negativism; 5 – national fanaticism; 6 – ethnic isolation; 7 – ethnic indifference; 8 – positive ethnic identity; 9 – ethnic egoism; 10 – competition; 11 – adjustment; 12 – compromise; 13 – avoidance; 14 – cooperation.

The sampling of the senior schoolchildren from the mono-ethnic educational environment we could register some tendencies which characterize their interpersonal relations (drawing 1):

- trust is combined with the inclination to compromise;
- the ethnic negativism is directly combined with the proneness to conflict, one hand, on another with the proneness to compromise;
- the ethnic negativism– with the ethnic fanaticism (inverse correlation);
- the ethnic indifference with the inclination to cooperation (inverse correlation);
- the avoidance isn't compatible with the personality proneness to the competition in the conflict situation of the interpersonal interaction.

In the sampling of the senior schoolchildren from the multi-ethnic educational environment we can consider the most informative the positive ethnic identity of the personality. It demonstrates the biggest number of the correlations with other parameters of the behavior and personality. Such characteristics of the senior schoolchildren as the empathy and the proneness to the ethnic isolation gave also important information (drawing 2).



Drawing 2. Cross-correlation of the characteristics of the schoolchildren who study in the multi-ethnic environment

1 – proneness to conflict; 2 – trust; 3 – empathy; 4 – ethnic negilism; 5 – national fanaticism; 6 – ethnic isolation; 7 – ethnic indifference; 8 – positive ethnic identity; 9 – ethnic egoism; 10 – competition; 11 – adjustment; 12 – compromise; 13 – avoidance; 14 – cooperation.

Using the sampling of the senior schoolchildren from the multi-ethnic educational environment we have found the following correlations:

- between the positive ethnic identity and the proneness to cooperation (direct correlation), and also the disposition to the ethnic isolation and the proneness to conflict (inverse correlation);
- empathy and proneness of senior schoolchildren to cooperation (direct correlation) and ethnic isolation (inverse correlation);
- interpersonal trust and proneness for adjustment (direct correlation);
- compromise and avoidance (inverse correlation).

In the whole the sampling of the senior schoolchildren studying in the multi-ethnic environment in comparison with the senior schoolchildren from the mono-ethnic environment, we have found more statistically significant correlations between personal and behavior particularities. The development of the interpersonal interaction of the senior schoolchildren in multi-ethnic environment must be based upon the development of the essential characteristics of their personality and behavior in the considered context: the positive ethnic identity, empathy, interpersonal trust and skills of building the interpersonal interactions.

While organizing the experiment we based upon the results, received after theoretical analysis of the problem. The aim of this stage was the examination of the psy-



chological conditions of the development of the interpersonal relations of the senior schoolchildren in the multi-ethnic educational environment. To achieve the aims of the development of the interpersonal relations in the multi-ethnic educational environment we have created the program of the same name, including the three directions of the activity: enlightening, developing and training.

The enlightening direction of the program suggested the enlarging of the representations about the diversity of the mentality and subjects' behavior in the ethnic space. In this purpose we have created the cognitive special course of study «We are different but we have some common traits», giving the initial representations in the sphere of the ethnic psychology.

The developing direction of the program suggested the creation of the conditions for supporting their ethnic identity, including cognitive, emotional and behavior compounds. To realize this direction we created the practical course «My ethos in the multi-colors of the different cultures».

The training direction of the program was directed to form practical skills in order to create the interpersonal relations from the point of view of the empathy and trust, to choose the positive strategies of solving the conflict situations with the peers without their belonging to some ethnos. In order to fulfill this direction of the program we have created the training of the communicative success, which let to train the skills necessary for the interpersonal relations.

As the control indices of the efficiency of the program of the development of the interpersonal relations we used such parameters of the interpersonal relations as frequency, length and modality. The assessment was made before (stating cut) and after (control cut) of the main part of the work. It suggested:

- 1) self- assessment of their interpersonal relations by the senior schoolchildren;
- 2) their expert assessment from the point of view of teachers and psychologists, having the possibility to observe the behavior of the senior school children in different communicative situations.

The participation in the empirical sampling lasted during the school year.

After that we made the control cut – finding out the parameters, characterizing the interpersonal relations of the senior school children of the experimental and control samplings.

The comparison of the levels of the assessment of the parameters of the interpersonal relations, got at the stage of the stating and control cuts, let us reveal the growth of their meanings (table 1).

Table 1

**Comparative characteristics of the average parameters
of the interpersonal relations of the sample according to two cuts**

Cut	Self-assessment			Expert assesment			Average
	Frequency	Length	Modality	Frequency	Length	Modality	
Stating	3,6	2,9	4,6	3,4	2,7	4,7	3,05
Control	4,8	5,1	7,4	5,2	4,6	7,9	5,03
P<	0,05	0,01	0,01	0,05	0,05	0,01	



In accordance with received results, the biggest growth in the characteristics of the interpersonal relations of the senior school happened with the parameter «modality». These changes were noticed by the senior schoolchildren as well as the experts assessing their interrelations. The additional qualitative assessment of the occurring changes comes to the fact that the relations with the peers of the senior schoolchildren in the multi-ethnic educational environment became warmer, friendlier, and more positive. They started to show more understanding, readiness to help, to render assistance in educational issues as well as questions which aren't connected to the educational activity.

Our own observations allowed confirming, that the improvement of the socio-psychological micro-climate happened in our classes. The cooperative activity went out of the limits of this rather narrow circle of the peers. They started to demonstrate more activity in the interrelations with the peers, belonging to other ethnoses. They started to support more joint activities.

The changes according to the parameter «length» decreased a bit, it means that without the intervention of psychologist the insignificant decrease of the period of the senior school children's interpersonal interaction in the multi-ethnic educational environment was registered.

Thus carrying out the experiment let us establish that the development of the positive interpersonal relations of the senior school children in polycultural educational environment isn't satisfactory and requires the professional intervention of the psychologist. The schoolchildren having difficulties in relations with youths of other ethnoses – senior schoolchildren, should be involved in the specially organized program destined to their development. This development of the interpersonal relations must be integrated according to its contents and include the three basic blocks: development of the representations of the senior school children about the diversity of the mentality and behavior of the subjects in the ethnic space, their ethnic identity, and also the skills to come out in the interpersonal relations from the point of view of the empathy and trust, to choose the positive strategies of solving the conflict situations.

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