

The influence of multicultural environment on changes of the traditional game in Nitra region

Julia Ivanovičová, Nad'a Lohinova

Introduction

From multicultural aspect Nitra region represents the intersection of the two different cultures, which influence each other during several centuries. Historical data shows on the presence of Hungarian settlements at some localities from 10 century AD. Nowadays according to official statistics there are 30% inhabitants of Hungarian nationality in this region. In consequence of the globalization, young generation show less interest on regional cultural traditions what can cause weakening of regional or national cognizance. Apprehension of importance of regional cultural heritage to the forming relation to the region was the impulse for the collective of educators guided by Dr. Júlia Ivanovičová, PhD, to start realize in 2006 project KEGA 3/4233/06 named as *Educational process with developing and innovating aspects viewed on new model of regional education in relation to the globalization*. The team consisting of 12 educators deals with tasks of regional education from several aspects. In project draft we can find particular aims connected with museology, native sciences, social sciences, environmentology, art and multiculturality. One of the main research aims is the educational accent on the changing pupil's attitudes to the history and presence of Slovakia, vivification and observance of cultural heritage. The authors also appointed the aim to create the model of regional education for the compulsory schools. The fulfillment of these aims requires systematical approach and extended knowledge about regional characteristics. At the beginning phase were maid contacts and work meetings with headmasters from several primery schools in region and scholarly methodical seminar was realized. Authors elaborated introduction piece of studies to the project and prepared methodical materials for the regional education.

The multicultural aspects of regional education and the research methodology

He structure of inhabitant's nationality shows on need to pay attention to the tasks of multiculturality. The presence of schools with Hungarian language in the region confirms this assumption. In the process of solving introduced tasks we regarded the important to ascertain contemporary celebrating of particular cultural traditions and find out if there are present differences between pupils of both nationalities. For realization of research, which can be considered as survey, we deliberately choused less numerous sample of pupils from schools from the district Nove Zamky and Komarno. During gathering research data we collaborated with primary schools from villages Dvory nad Žitavou, Tvrdošovce, Maňa and town Kolárovo.

Village Dvory nad Žitavou has 5138 inhabitants according to official census from 2001. There are 25,7% inhabitants of Slovak nationality and 71,7% of Hungarian nationality. There are two schools in the village, one Slovak-language and other Hungarian- language. The second village Tvrdošovce has very similar number of inhabitants (5274) and two schools with both languages. Village Maňa has 2098 inhabitants mainly of Slovak nationality (98%). There is only Slovak language school there. Town Kolárovo has 10 756 inhabitants mostly of Hungarian

nationality (80,8%). Slovak nationality has only 17,4% inhabitants. In the town there are three Hungarian-language schools and one Slovak –language school.

Research data were obtained by created questionnaire which includes 18 questions. Succession of questions we constructed the way to find out which cultural traditions during calendar year are celebrated by pupils and what games are/were then played. The questionnaire was distributed to the Slovak-language schools, because pupils of both nationalities attend them. There are 194 pupils in our research sample. 132 of them are of Slovak nationality and 62 of Hungarian nationality. The nationality structure in our sample is the same like in the region. The gender structure of the sample is following.

	Boys		Girls	
Respondents SK nationality	N (68)	52.52%	N (64)	48.48%
Respondents HUN nationality	N (24)	38.7%	N (38)	61.3%
Together	N (92)	47.42%	N (102)	52.58%

The sample of respondents of Slovak nationality in comparison with respondents of Hungarian nationality is more equal. There are more boys, than girls in the sample of respondents of Slovak nationality in contrary to the sample of Hungarian nationality there are more girls, than boys. According to the numbers of boys and girls in both samples we regard our research sample as representative.

The questionnaire was distributed to the pupils of 5, 6 and 7 grades, in the age from 10 to 13 years. The following data shows on their statistics percentage.

	10. years	11. years	12. years	13. years
Respondents SK nationality	4.5%	37.1%	37.1%	21.3%
Respondents HUN nationality	3.23%	21%	45.2%	30.6%
Together	4.12%	33%	40%	22.88%

In both samples the less numerous is group of 10 years respondents with average close to 5%. The group of 11 years is more numerous in the sample of respondents with Slovak nationality. In both samples the numerous groups are 12 years pupils with percentage 45.2% for Slovakian and 37.1% for Hungarian. The oldest group is in comparison with 11 and 12 years less numerous.

Results of the research

The celebrating of cultural traditions by children is connected with games, which are part of the partial ceremonies and were provided for entertainment. The ceremonies also have educational dimension. The richest assortment of games is known from the period of spring and summer, when children have more spare time and better weather conditions. The piece of study refers that on contrary to the development of ICT and wide spread of computer games the traditional games, which were played at least by last generation, are still popular among children population. Our research is not orientated explicitly on the children game. We tried to ascertain which traditions connected with different games are nowadays celebrated by children. Therefore presented results can be useful not only for educators engaged in this project.

The first thematic circle connected with children games is Carnival. In Slovakia is known as Fašiangy and in Hungary as Farsang. The Carnival lasts from the 6 of January till the Ash Wednesday. During last years carnivals were organized also after Ash Wednesday. Children carnivals are typical fancy-dress balls which are organized mostly by schools or cultural centers. Besides of attends we asked respondents about the meaning of the Carnival.

	Exact meaning		Less exact/any meaning	
Respondents SK nationality	N (99)	75%	N (33)	25%
Respondents HUN nationality	N(48)	77.4%	N (14)	22.6%

According to summary sheet three quarters of respondents know the meaning of Carnival. However the analysis of answers shows the opposite. The great part of respondents doesn't know accurate meaning of the concept. The respondents mostly described the concept by mentioning the beginning or the end of the Carnival like as *it's the period before Easter, after Carnival starts 6 weeks long fast, it's connected with celebrations, entertainment and starts after 6 of January*. The answers like it is period from 6 of January till Ash Wednesday were rare. Relatively great number of respondents described the concept without religious aspect. Mostly they wrote what Carnival is *the period of dances, entertainment, period of carnival, we wear masques, the celebrations of the beginning the spring, people wear masques and go to other villages* etc. We also noticed wrong answers like *it is the end of the winter and the greeting of the spring*. Besides respondents which wrote what they don't know the meaning of the concept we included into this category the respondents with answers like *it's the period before Easter, we are baking doughnuts, it's time for entertainment*. It's surprising that all respondents from village Mana wrote less exact answer. Every one of them described the concept as the period before Easter. From the multicultural aspect there are not significant differences between respondents of both nationalities.

As we have mentioned before children are preparing for fancy-dress balls. Usually they make masques and parents procure costumes for them. In the next question respondent were asked to describe the way of preparing for carnival.

	I prepare the masque		Any preparation/answer	
Respondents SK nationality	N (120)	90.9%	N (12)	9.1%
Respondents HUN nationality	N (56)	90.3%	N (6)	9.7%

Almost 90% respondents prepare for fancy-dress balls masques and specific dresses. Rarely we noticed answer like we decorate classrooms or the school corridors. More frequently respondents wrote about baking doughnuts and cakes by mothers. Nearly all respondents take part at the ball organized by school. Approximately 10% respondents don't take part or don't prepare for the ball probably of the older age. The summary sheet confirms the influence of the school in the observance of cultural tradition. If schools didn't pay adequate attention to these after school activities, the number of engaged pupils would not be so numerous.

The spring, especially its beginning is connected with different traditions and customs. Their observance is nowadays very weak. Schools are mostly not interested on continuing these

traditions. The only exceptions are folklore groups which exist at schools. One of the special spring traditions is burning or throwing the dressed straw ball to the river. In Slovak language is known as Morena or Marmorena. In our questionnaire we asked respondents if they know when Morena is throwing away and which games can be played when.

	In spring		Wrong/any answer	
Respondents SK nationality	N (116)	87.9%	N (16)	12.1%
Respondents HUN nationality	N (47)	75.8%	N (15)	24.2%

During valuating research data we recognized the same situation like with describing the concept Carnival. Because of the same reasons we include into the category of right answers less exact answers. This increased the number of respondents with right answers. The burning of Morena symbolizes the end of the winter and the beginning of the spring. According to folk traditions Morena is also connected with expelling all diseases. Mostly Morena is thrown into the river on Black or Death Sunday what is two weeks before Easter. There are some counties where it happens one week before. Exact answer wrote only respondents from Mana. Pupils which attend this school have modified curriculum which is extended in regional education. The folklore group is also present there. The repertory of that group includes vocal and chorographical script Morena.

Respondents from other villages wrote that Morena is thrown into river in the spring. This is also the right answer, but less exact. As it is shown at summary sheet there are significant differences between respondents of both nationalities. This means what respondents of Hungarian nationality haven't rich experience with this tradition.

As we have mentioned before the respondents were asked to name the games, which were played by them at this occasion. Half of respondents didn't fulfill this direction so we couldn't evaluate the question like we planned. Therefore the games are evaluated according to special questionnaire question. Besides of games respondents from Mana wrote two following rhymes. *Morena is drown, Morena is streaming down, so new spring has come. Morena, Morena, where we burry you? There, near Žitava's mill we drown you.*

Summer is rich on traditions amongst which is celebration of solstice. In Nitra region solstice celebrations were connected with bonfires of St. John Day (24 of June). Nowadays St. Johns bonfires are less popular. But in the past they had magic significance - the victory of the sun above the dark. People believed what who jump above bonfire will not die that year. Because of this bonfire was jumped not only by young men or women but also by ones older. During St. John Day people were used to search the bloom of the fern or to prepare flower's wreaths and throw them into the river.

According to our sample 175 of 194 respondents what is 91.2% lives at villages. Because of this we wanted to know if respondents have experience with St. Johns bonfires. As we have presumed respondents have never jump such bonfires before. Only four respondents make exception. One boy of Slovak nationality from Tvrdošovce wrote what he has jumped bonfire but not at such occasion. Other three respondents (two boys of Hungarian nationality from Tvrdošovce and a girl of Slovak nationality from Dvory nad Žitavou) didn't comment the occasion. We don't know if they took part at such or other occasion. Therefore our research shows that in Nitra region this tradition is under extinction.

Other famous tradition is connected with work and devoted to the end of the harvest. Not too long ago celebrations of the end of harvest were popular among the people. Therefore we asked respondents if they ever take part at such celebrations.

	Yes, I have		No, I haven't	
Respondents SK nationality	N (8)	6.1%	N (124)	93.9%
Respondents HUN nationality	N (6)	9.7%	N (56)	90.3%

More than 90% of respondents have never taken part at harvest celebrations. This also can mean that celebrations are not provided at all. From our point of view the main reason is the decrease of interest of the people in the providing such kind of celebrations. There are can be other reasons also. All respondents which have taken part at celebrations come from the Dvory nad Žitavou. Amongst all analyzed summery sheets this one is the first there are respondents of Hungarian nationality have higher percentage. Therefore the harvest celebrations are not popular as they were before. The same tendencies are noticeable at other Slovak counties.

Respondents were asked to write verses, rhymes or songs connected with harvest. Amongst all respondents only pupils from Mana know harvest rhymes. One of them is *We have nothing to do; we have done all, so we will roll down to the home*. As we have mentioned before this is because of extended curriculum and presence of the folklore group there.

Harvest wreath is the main harvest symbol. It is prepared from the spikes of wheat, meadow flowers and decorated with ribbons. Harvest wreath can't be absent at the harvest celebrations. It is not usual for everyone to prepare it. Therefore we asked respondents if they prepared it before.

	Yes, I do		No, I don't	
Respondents SK nationality	N(5)	3.8%	N(127)	96.2%
Respondents HUN nationality	N(4)	6.5%	N(58)	93.5%

Nearly 95% of respondents haven't experience with preparing of harvest wreath. As we have mentioned before this is connected with decline of the tradition. Therefore only small number of respondents has tried to prepare it. As it is shown at summary sheet the percentage of respondents of Hungarian nationality is higher. Respondents which prepared the wreath live in every mentioned village except Tvrdošovce from where only one boy saw the procedure of preparation.

Decorating pumpkins is other autumn custom. There are a great number of people who connect it with Halloween. It is obviously that this holiday became very popular in Slovakia during last years. However at least more than one previous generation were decorating pumpkins at Nitra region. According to this respondents were asked if they use to decorate the pumpkins.

	Yes, I do		No, I don't	
Respondents SK nationality	N (124)	93.9%	N (8)	6.1%
Respondents HUN nationality	N (58)	93.5%	N (4)	6.5%

More than 90% respondents are used to decorate pumpkins. The percentages of both nationalities are nearly the same. From our point of view there are two reasons for great interest in decorating

pumpkins. The Halloween fest became very popular in our country because of its intensive propagation. Interesting presentations served as an impulse not only for children but also for leisure time educators. Therefore the providers of after school programs and educators of centers for leisure time started to realize such kind of entertainment. Here we can notice the same situation like at Carnival. If school provides them children attends them. Other reason lay in the conditions. Children can decorate pumpkins alone or with somebody at home, what is mostly impossible at above mentioned traditions. In addition, it is essential to notice, what suitable propagation is the best way of prevention the custom from the extinction.

The main aim of the research is connected with the observance of cultural traditions in Nitra region. According to results we analyzed observance of partial traditions amongst the respondents of Slovak and Hungarian nationalities. Analyzed traditions are connected with children games and from the aspect of regional education can't be segregated from each other. The next summary sheet shows on traditional games which are played by children.

The name of the game	Respondents nationality	SK	Respondents nationality	HUN
The golden gate	N (33)	25%	N (27)	43.5%
A King, a King, give us a soldier	N (34)	25.8%	N (20)	32.3%
A walker	N (38)	28.8%	N (22)	35.5%
A blind hag	N (38)	28.8%	N (9)	14.5%
A Wheel, wheel of the mill	N (31)	23.5%	N (17)	27.4%
Gooses, gooses	N(24)	18.2%	N (4)	6.5%
The chase	N (25)	18.9%	N (7)	11.3%
The hide-and-see	N (18)	13.6%	N (5)	8.1%
I don't know any games	N (22)	16.7%	N (19)	30.6%
Like soldiers	N (16)	12.1%		
Heličky	N (11)	8.3%		
The pumpkins	N (10)	7.6%		
The weaving of stockings	N (10)	7.6%		
The bilberry	N (9)	6.8%		
...				

According to results the traditional games are still popular amongst the children. The whole number of named games is surprising and higher than is shown in the summary sheet. As we have presumed there are some differences between respondents of both nationalities. The most favourite game among respondents of Hungarian nationality is Golden gate. This is kind of chasing game with rhyme in Slovak language. According to respondents of Slovak nationality the most played game is also kind of chase game A blind hag and A walker - kind of round sitting game. The dramatic games as Like soldiers, The weaving of stockings or The bilberry are among the respondents less popular and named by respondents of Slovak nationality only. Other dramatic games as The statues, Like policemen and thieves, Humpasta, Grandmother, what time is it now were named by respondents of Hungarian nationality only.

One of the oldest games Gooses, gooses, go home is more numerous amongst respondents of Slovak nationality. The number of respondents which didn't name any game is astonishing. The

higher percentage of respondents of Hungarian nationality is probably determined by their connection with town Kolarovo where several respondents live.

The respondents of Hungarian nationality named 13 games on contrary to the respondents of Slovak nationality which named 30 games but 17 of them in very small accounts. Besides mentioned games respondents named the following ones- Behind high hemp, Enci benci, To grow potatoes, How to made the bread, The rook is flying, The harvest, The mouse and cat, The stupid cook, The bird, The watchman, The forks, We are making wreaths, Oli, oli, John, The policemen and The wolf and the ram.

The comparison of our results with ones from the 80ies shows decrease trend of traditional games. According to the publication from the 1988 the collective of researches accounted at the villages near the Up Hron from 37 to 131 games. We accounted nearly 10 games at every village. Therefore considering the contemporary situation we can reckon traditional games as still popular.

Conclusion

The regional education can play the significant role for the forming of national cognizance. It is important to show the next generation how to observe partial traditions. The piece of research shows on the extinction and decrease trend of some traditions. According to nationality structure of the Nitra region in the relation to the cultural traditions there are some differences between pupils of Slovak and Hungarian nationality. The main distinctions were shown at the traditional children games. Less significant differences were found in the other traditions. It is obvious, that some of above mentioned traditions can't be vivid in large measures. Therefore according to the regional education is important not to forget them.

The piece of research shows the lack of attention which is paid to the observance of some cultural traditions. Therefore the outputs of presented project KEGA can be very useful for educators which intent to enrich the educational process in the regional education.

References


- Ivanovičová, J. 2006. *Edukačný proces s rozvojovým a inovatívnym aspektom so zreteľom na nový model regionálnej výchovy vo vzťahu ku globalizácii*. Nitra: PF UKF, s. 5-11, ISBN 80-8094-043-6
- Lohinová, N. 2006. *Možnosti využitia multikultúrnej výchovy pri tvorbe voľnočasových aktivít*. In: *Edukačný proces s rozvojovým a inovatívnym aspektom so zreteľom na nový model regionálnej výchovy vo vzťahu ku globalizácii*. Nitra: PF UKF, s.38-42, ISBN 80-8094-043-6
- Gašparíková, V. edit. 1988. *Horehronie. Folklorne prejavy v živote ľudu*. Bratislava: VEDA

Contact

PaedDr. Julia Ivanovičová, PhD.
The University of Constantine the Philosopher
Department of Education

Drážovska 4, 949 01 Nitra
e-mail: jivanovicova@ukf.sk

PaedDr. Nadja Lohinova, PhD.
The Trnavian University
Department of educational studies
Priemyselna 4, 918 43 Trnava
e-mail: nlohinova@ukf.sk



The influence of the multicultural environment on the changes of the traditional game in Nitra region

PaedDr. Júlia Ivanovičová, PhD.

PaedDr. Nadja Lohinová, PhD.

Department of Education

University of Constantine the Philosopher

Slovak republic



Multicultural aspects of Nitra region

- The intersection of two different cultures (the presence of Hungarian settlements from 10. century AD)
- One third of inhabitants of Hungarian nationality (according to official census 2001)



The project KEGA 3/4233/06

The reasons for starting the project:

- the consequences of the process of globalization
- the decrease trend of cultural tradition
- weakening of the regional/national cognizance

The name of the project:

Educational process with developing and innovating aspects viewed on new model of regional education in relation to the globalization.



The aims of the project

- the educational accent on the changing pupil's attitudes to the history and presence of Slovakia
- vivification and observance of cultural heritage
- to create the model of regional education for the primary schools



The aims of the research

- to ascertain which traditions connected with children games are nowadays celebrated by children
- to find out which regional traditions are under extinction



The research methodology

- research data were obtained by created questionnaire which includes 18 questions
- research data were gathered at may 2007
- the questionnaire was distributed to the 4 primary schools at the district Nove Zamky and Kolarovo



The research sample

- 132 respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 62 respondents of Hungarian nationality
- Boys together – 47,42%
- Girls together – 52,58%

The age of respondents

10. years – 4.12%

11. years – 33%

12. years – 40%

13. years – 22,88%



Results of research

are thematically divided up:

- Christmas celebrations
- Carnival
- Spring traditions
- Solstice celebrations
- Harvest
- Autumn traditions



Christmas celebrations

Knowledge of carols

- 80% respondents of both nationalities know only one carol and one Christmas verse
- any carol or verse don't know:
 - 10,6% respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 18,1% respondents of Hungarian nationality
- total number of named carols and verses:
 - 12 by respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 5 by respondents of Hungarian nationality



Singing carols

- Don't use to go to sing carols:
 - 89,4% respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 95,2% respondents of Hungarian nationality
- Use to go to sing carols from home to home:
 - 10,6% respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 4,8% respondents of Hungarian nationality



The Carnival

- accurate meaning of the concept:
 - 75% respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 77,4% respondents of Hungarian nationality
- less accurate explanation or don't know the meaning of the concept:
 - 25% respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 22,6% respondents of Hungarian nationality



Preparations for Carnival

- preparing of masques, fancy dresses:
90,9% respondents of Slovak nationality
90,3% respondents of Hungarian nationality
- any kind of preparations or any answer:
9,1% respondents of Slovak nationality
9,7% respondents of Hungarian nationality



Spring traditions - Morena

- approximation to the date
 - 87,9% respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 75,8% respondents of Hungarian nationality
- wrong dating or any answer
 - 12,1% respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 24,2% respondents of Hungarian nationality



Solstice celebrations – St. Johns Day

- 4 of 194 respondents have experience with jumping the bonfire
- one boy of Slovak nationality has jumped bonfire, but not at such occasion
- others (two boys of Hungarian nationality and one girl of Slovak nationality) didn't comment the answer, so it is impossible to specify the occasion



Harvest celebrations

- have took part:
 - 6,1% respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 9,7% respondents of Hungarian nationality
- haven't took part:
 - 93,9% respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 90,3% respondents of Hungarian nationality



Harvest wreath

- have experience with preparing:
 - 3,8% respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 6,5% respondents of Hungarian nationality
- never tried to prepare it:
 - 96,2% respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 93,5% respondents of Hungarian nationality



Autumn traditions – decorating of pumpkins

- are used to decorate the pumpkins:
 - 93,9% respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 93,5% respondents of Hungarian nationality
- aren't used to decorate the pumpkins:
 - 6,1% respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 6,5% respondents of Hungarian nationality



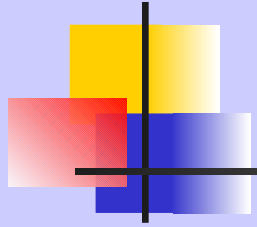
Playing of traditional games

- about 70% respondents of both nationalities named three traditional children games
- don't know any game
 - 16,7% respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 30,6% respondents of Hungarian nationality
- total number of named games:
 - 30 by respondents of Slovak nationality
 - 13 by respondents of Hungarian nationality



Conclusion

- the school and intensive propagation have an influence on the observing of the regional cultural traditions
- there are less significant differences in observing of the cultural traditions among pupils of Slovak and Hungarian nationality
- traditional children games are still popular among the children, but shows decrease trend



Thanks for attention!