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**MIGRANT CHILDRENS' SOCIAL AND PEDAGOGICAL  
LOCALIZATION. EXPERIENCE OF EDUCATIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS OF FRANCE**

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***Abstract***

Due to the steady growth of immigration flow to Russia in the last few years, the problem of social and pedagogical integration of migrant children becomes increasingly important for our country. Research and implementation of this experience is not only practical, but a question of necessity. An immense experience in the sphere of social localization is accumulated in France, as this country hosts the largest number of immigrants in the whole history of immigration to Europe.

Under the term 'localization of migrants', we mean their preparedness to accept the official language, local culture, and behavioural rules, and full integration of migrants into the society including being demanded by the labour market.

The aim of this research is to study the experience of France in solving the problem of localization of migrant children in the secondary educational institution 'Cité scolaire Jean Moulin, Académie de Nancy-Metz' (Forbach, France). Special pedagogical structures for migrant children were founded in secondary educational institutions. The main line of their activity is teaching French to the 'newcomers' for a faster integration into normal classes.

As a result, after concluding educational institutions and after the localization period, migrant children speak the national language, know the particular cultural features of the host country, its traditions and ethics.

Thus, a well-targeted social and pedagogical system of working with migrant children in secondary educational institutions and learning the national language as a top priority, lead to the gradual assimilation and localization of migrant children.

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**Keywords:** Immigration, migrant, localization, integration, pedagogical, educational institution.



## **I. Introduction**

In the modern multinational society, migration is a global phenomenon caused by numerous military conflicts in different parts of the world, low living standards of hundreds of millions of people, and other factors.

‘If migrants are effectively integrated, the nation as a whole benefits. Failed integration, by contrast, results in social and political unrest, economic strain, pressure on service delivery and an overall decline in the quality of life’ (Gross, 2010). Migration processes play an important role in the socio-economic development of the Russian Federation. The influx of migrants to a large extent makes it possible to compensate the decline of the population and to solve the problems of the labour force (Methodical recommendations..., 2015).

The educational institutions are sometimes not ready to create favourable conditions for the adaptation of migrant children. The problem is aggravated by ethnic prejudice of other students and even teachers. This shows the insufficient level of general tolerance of the population and unpreparedness of teachers to change traditional teaching methods and approaches. These factors influence the slow learning progress of migrant children.

Some other negative factors are: misunderstanding of Russian cultural norms and basic moral values of the society; ignorance of everyday life and interpersonal communication; insufficient quantity of specialists teaching Russian as a second language because of the lack of proper educational and methodological components in the educational environment; unwillingness of some parents to interact with teachers (Artemyeva, 2014).

It should be noted that these problems are wide-scale, and thus, should be solved at the country level. One of the priority tasks of the Russian migration policy approved by Putin for the period up to 2025, is the creation of conditions for the adaptation and integration of migrants. The concept includes the education of migrants based on Russian language, legal education, information on cultural traditions and norms of behavior through the formation of appropriate institutions in the regions of the Russian Federation and also through the active usage of media and opportunities of cultural and adaptation centres in the countries of migrants’ origin (Methodical recommendations..., 2015).

France accumulates a rich experience in this field. Centres for orientation and education of migrant children were established in the 1970s and still operate in France. The main direction of their activity is school integration of newly arrived children with poor or insufficient knowledge of French and other school disciplines by providing practical assistance to teachers and educators.

In the context of the active migration processes in Russia, the study and introduction of foreign experience is not only expedient, but also necessary.

## **2. Problem Statement**

Most migrants come to Russia from less developed post-Soviet countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus. The Republic of Tatarstan, being a federation member, has faced an increase in the number of migrants in recent years. The high level of economic development and the multinationality of the republic attract migrants. According to the Federal State Statistics Service of the Republic of Tatarstan, hundreds of thousands of foreigners come to the republic every year. They are mainly representatives of

Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Azerbaijan. Many of them have a very low level of education, qualification, and language skills. Their children do not speak Russian or have a bad command of it, but they go to schools together with Russian speaking children as there are no other options for them.

Due to popularization of transnational education and constantly growing mobility of the population, the problem of social and pedagogical integration of migrant children is today one of the most discussed in the academic community. Issues of socio-cultural adaptation of migrant children have been the subject of numerous studies both in Russia and abroad in recent years. For the first time in national science, the comprehension of the adaptation of migrant children in the educational environment was carried out by the scientific school on migration pedagogy of Bondarevskaya (2006). Interethnic tolerance and multicultural education are considered in the works of Soldatova, Stefanenko. A significant contribution to the study of regional features of migrants' adaptation was made by Makarov (2010), Pogrebitskaya (2015), Zborovsky. According to the specifics of this research, we were particularly interested in the authors studying the experience of France in solving the problems of adaptation of migrant children: Dudko, Prenko, Pechatnikova (2014); Demintseva. Among French authors analyzing the problems of integration of migrants and their children into the socio-cultural space of France. the works of Moro et al. (2012), Buisson-Fene, Nathanson, Duryu-Bella should be mentioned.

### **3. Research Questions**

The main research question is to analyze the experience of France in the field of migrant children social and pedagogical localization and its applicability in Russian educational system.

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this research is to study the experience of France in solving the problems of migrant children adaptation through the example of the secondary educational institution "Jean Moulin school city, Academy of Nancy-Metz" (Forbach, France). The authors attempted to systematize the main components of the migrant localization process in France on the basis of the materials of the above-mentioned educational institution.

### **5. Research Methods**

The main research methods are the following: the study and analysis of domestic and foreign pedagogical literature on research problems; comparative analysis of official and pedagogical documentation of the countries; synthesis of France's pedagogical experience in the education and upbringing of migrant children; interviewing teachers, migrant children and their parents; pedagogical observation.

### **6. Findings**

During the research work it was revealed that the process of integration of migrant children in France is based on some key principles and components.

### **6.1. Principle of Accessibility of education**

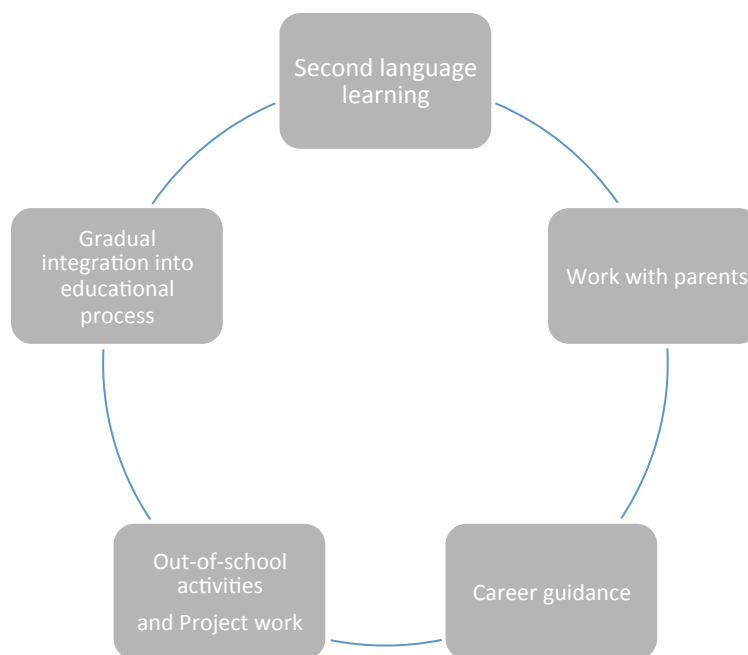
It should be noted that the current legislation of France prescribes access to education without any distinction between children of French nationality and migrant children. Every child has the right to study in school irrespective of the status of his or her parents, even if they live in France illegally. The policy of French institutions remains steady and education is compulsory and available for all migrants up to the age of 16. Migrant Children of primary school age not speaking French are integrated into special 'UPE2A' classes (Pedagogical Union for newly arrived allophone pupils; French: Unités pédagogiques pour élèves allophones arrivants) created in the colleges. The main activity of these classes is teaching children who do not have sufficient knowledge of French and sufficient level of school preparation for faster integration into ordinary classes. Gradual integration of migrant children into educational process through learning the national language of the host country is of top priority for the educational institutions, as it facilitates further gradual integration of migrant children into the educational process.

### **6.2. Principle of Secular education**

Secular education is the key concept of the national education system. The main reason for prohibiting the demonstration of national and religious differences in educational institutions, which often comes under strong criticism from other countries, is to avoid national and ethnic hatred. Any religious and national signs are absolutely inadmissible and it is forbidden to wear hijabs. Teachers must work with pupils and not with representatives of different religions and nations. Migrants from conflicting states must often study in the same class sitting side by side and, of course, there is some hostility between such children at the beginning of their education. One of the tasks of this education is to develop tolerant relations, intercultural communication and respect towards the representatives of different nationalities and cultures.

### **6.3. Components of migrant children social and pedagogical localization**

On the basis of the research results, the model of the interconnectedness of all key components of social and pedagogical localization of migrant children was made.



**Figure 01.** Model of social and pedagogical localization activities in educational institutions of France.

#### **6.4. Preparatory work and first meeting**

The process of social and pedagogical integration begins even before the child arrives in the educational institution. The school administration receives the dossier of ‘EANA’ or so called ‘Newly Arrived Allophone Foreigner’ – (the abbreviation used in the official pre-school documents of migrant children and their dossiers), which contains brief information about child, his or her personal data, family information, the exact date of the arrival at France, as well as the test results that children pass in the center of the CIO (Centers of information and orientation) and the formal decision of this centre. Thus, the school administration and teachers have a clear “picture” of the future pupil, his or her features, level of his or her preparedness, and biographical data before the arrival to school (<http://eduscol.education.fr>, 1).

Another consulting institution is CASNAV (Academic centers for newly arrived allophone pupils’ school integration; French: Centres académiques pour la scolarisation des élèves allophones nouvellement arrivés). The centres make pedagogical expertise and consult the institutions on migrant children integration into the educational process. Teachers regularly have advanced one-day training courses, where specialists explain the specifics of working with migrant children, consult teachers, and give advice. Colleagues exchange experiences, discuss common problems, and find solutions (<http://eduscol.education.fr>, 2)

A significant importance in French schools is attached to the so-called first meeting with migrant children (French: premier accueil). Children make acquaintance with the school, teachers and administration. Children and their parents are given brochures in different languages, describing the rules of school life and the principles of the education system in France.

Educational institutions and the regional council help children with social issues. Pupils get the opportunity to use public transport to get to their colleges and to have school lunches free of charge. Each school has a social worker and a nurse. They help children with serious diseases, for example, diabetes.

The nurse keeps medical records of all children and if a child is ill, she knows what medications he or she takes and can help them.

After the full integration of a pupil into regular classes, the pupil can change his/her school. In this case, a document called ‘fiche de liaison’ is sent to the other school indicating all the details (what the child has learned, what his level is, etc). Thus, colleagues of the new school can analyze the situation in advance and provide the right “first meeting”.

### **6.5. Work with parents**

One of the main components of social and pedagogical integration of migrant children in France is the active interaction of teachers with parents. Parents meetings are held regularly. Unlike the formal meetings in Russian schools, in France, teachers talk to each parent individually. Sometimes, they use informal means of communication with parents and children, when they gather together to have a cup of tea with local and pupil’s national snacks. This is an opportunity for parents to see and hear what their children have learned. Children perform and sing in different languages. It can be, for example, the French folk song Frere Jacques, performed in 7 different languages. Active work of the teacher with parents helps to prevent ethnic, racial, and religious enmity, which can lead to self-isolation of the ethnic group and its ghettoization.

### **6.6. Gradual integration**

A distinctive feature of the education of migrant children is their gradual integration into the educational process. The main goal in teaching of this group of pupils is learning French as a second language for faster integration into a regular class. This is a top priority for educational institutions, as the process of integration of children into the educational process is thus significantly facilitated and accelerated. The teacher's task is to teach not only everyday language, but also French school language (français-langue de scolarisation). Interdisciplinary links are important. Students learn various terms in mathematics, geography, as they often face the problem of not understanding special terminology at the lessons in ordinary classes. At the beginning pupils have three or four lessons: French, physical education, music, drawing. Later, subjects are added depending on the skills of a particular child, his school base. Each pupil has an individual schedule. The educational institution allows to study native languages on a correspondence basis.

The process of learning French is based on the formation of four basic competencies: understanding of oral speech, written language, speaking and writing. These competencies form the basis of the annual language exam DELF (French: Diplôme d'études en langue française). The diploma of passing this exam is necessary for employment in France. The French Ministry of Education provides an opportunity to pass the exam for all migrant children free of charge. On the basis of colleges, examination centers are organized for the admission of these examinations.

### **6.7. Project Activities**

Great attention is paid to modern methods of studying French, games, theatrical performances which can be used to study grammar, vocabulary, and the development of communication skills. Project activities are very popular. Each school, class and teacher must have their own projects for the academic

year (For example, a project on intercultural communication). Within each topic, pupils are given tasks to tell about their country, city, music, culture, kitchen, etc. Thus, children do not only develop respect for the culture, traditions and standards of behavior of the host country, but they are also given an opportunity to share their culture and moral values with representatives of other nationalities. At the end of the year, a holiday with parents is held. Children sing, read poems in different languages. Parents are very proud to hear the songs in their native language and see that their language and culture also have some significance even in France.

### **6.8. Out-of-school activities**

The variety of forms of out-of-school work is aimed at deeper integration of migrant children in the ethics and culture of the host country and their social assimilation. In this context, great attention is paid to cultural events and creative projects, which help children to make acquaintance with culture and customs of the host country. There are guided tours of the city (sorties scolaires), trips to the cinema, theatres, the mayor and city administration offices, library, post office, parks, museums, exhibitions. Acquaintance with the realities of the host country in an informal environment promotes full integration, awareness of social norms of the 'alien' culture, broadens the worldview and creates conditions for successful localization. Together with social development, pupils learn vocabularies about the city, streets, nature and plants in the park. They develop their communication skills: pupils learn to send letters to the post office, to behave properly in any public places, to use public transport. For a child from a remote village in Iraq, living in a large city with a developed infrastructure is a very complex psychological challenge. Such out-of-school activities allow a coalescing study of the host language with social development.

For example, pupils of UPE2A class 'Cité scolaire Jean Moulin' participated in the project 'Asylum is a hard work' (L'asile est un dur métier), organized by teachers together with an art gallery. Children imitated the work of the artist-photographer. The essence consisted in putting up posters on the walls of the educational institution in the courtyard and writing this key phrase in different languages. A cry from the heart and self-expression in the native language, the ability to work in a team, combined with the acquisition of skills in brushing and mixing colors. And also together with the teacher of music, voices in different languages and songs of different peoples were recorded. Lyceum students made a musical collage and all this was presented at a major school event.

### **6.9. Career guidance**

Great attention in French secondary schools is given to the early career guidance of pupils. The goal is to help everyone to find their place in the professional world. It is the teacher's responsibility to send pupils to further vocational schools. The teachers conduct explanatory discussions with parents of the pupils on the advantages of each profession and its further prospects for the child. Preference is given to blue-collar jobs such as cook, mechanic, and locksmith. Early career guidance policy in the educational institutions helps to avoid potential serious inequality problems in the labour market.

As a result, after finishing educational institutions and after the integration period, migrant children speak the national language, know the particular cultural features of the receiving country, its

traditions and ethics. According to their age children can continue education in the ordinary classes or in the technical schools.

The long experience of France in the socialization, integration and localization of migrant children is of exceptional interest for Russia as migration processes become more and more intensive. The problems and difficulties faced by Russian teachers in the process of education of migrant children are the same as in other European countries, and particularly in France. At the same time, we consider it necessary to emphasize that the full applicability of the French system into Russian reality is not acceptable for some objective reasons.

First of all, the flow of migrants is much higher in France than in Russia, where the migrant families make up about 10% of the total population of the country. According to the Ministry of Immigration, the Integration and National Consent of France in 2010, shows that about 18.1% of all children under the age of 18 were migrant children (Dudko, 2013). Therefore, the creation of special classes in each educational institution in France justifies itself. The level of migration is lower in Russia. The border regions, such as the Republic of Karelia, the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug, face higher rate of migration. In the Republic of Tatarstan, the influx of migrants is lower. Nevertheless, there is obvious need in some measures in the sphere of socialization of migrant children.

Secondly, according to Russian legislation, any special, separate reservation (enclave) trainings are not desirable (Methodical recommendations..., 2015). Nevertheless, modern society needs to create viable mechanisms for the linguistic and cultural adaptation of migrants. In some migrant-intensive regions of Russia, the so-called adaptation classes have already commenced their functioning. Thus, in the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug-Ugra, experimental classes consisting entirely of migrant children were organized. But the attitude of teachers towards them is very skeptical. According to them, a kind of enclave of migrant children is formed in the class, which, on the one hand, the children can be stigmatized, and on the other hand be antagonized -by representatives of the local population. They say that after studying in such classes, children are less prepared for the Russian-speaking environment (Zborovsky, Shuklina, 2013 ).

But all these arguments are relevant for France. The problem of localization of migrant children is solved thanks to an integrated, thorough system of work at the state level: A) developed legislative base; B) the involvement of most ministries and the divisions and departments under their jurisdiction in the solution of this problem; C) the creation of an extensive system of associations - school partners, as well as centres for the education and information of migrants at the regional and national levels; D) the embeddedness of the intercultural component in curricula, programs and instructions; E) training of specialists of various profiles for working with migrant children and their parents (Bolotnina, 2014).

Thirdly, another argument against formation of special classes is that, according to teachers, such classes are unstable, students are included in the educational process not from the first class and they may appear in the middle of the academic year and leave the educational institution at any time due to a change of the residence of migrant families (Zborovsky, & Shuklina, 2013).

Nevertheless, we consider that the experience of France can be included into the educational system of the Republic of Tatarstan. The main priorities for educational institutions in the process of social and pedagogical localization of migrant children should be compulsory study of Russian as a



language of instruction, and the gradual integration of foreign-speaking children into the society together with pedagogical and methodical trainings of teachers working with migrant children.

## **7. Conclusion**

Strategies of isolation, avoidance and confrontation do not lead to constructive solution of the issues. In this connection, it becomes necessary to learn ways to dialogue and cooperate with all the participants of the society. School is understood as a model of social structure and relations.

The well-thought-out pedagogical and social system of working with migrants children on the basis of special pedagogical structures at schools and the obligatory study of the national language make it possible to achieve the most complete and comprehensive assimilation, integration, and localization of migrant children, taking into account the ethical and cultural characteristics of the host country.

This experience can be used on the basis of secondary schools.

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