

ETHNIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN USA

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Abstract. The article discusses the issues of ethnic and cultural diversity in the United States. It is shown that culture is also perceived as a set of principles that mediate communication and regulates social relations, and cultural diversity directly influences people's attitudes and behavior.

Keywords: race, ethnicity, immigrants, cultural diversity.

ABŞ-da ETNİK VƏ MƏDƏNİ MÜXTƏLİFLİK

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Xülasə. Məqalədə ABŞ-da etnik və mədəni müxtəliflik məsələləri araşdırılmışdır. Göstərilir ki, mədəniyyət də ünsiyyətə vasitəçilik edən və insanların sosial münasibətlərini tənzimləyən prinsiplər toplusu kimi qəbul edilir və mədəni müxtəliflik insanların cəmiyyətdə rəftarına və davranış tərzinə birbaşa təsir edir.

Açar sözlər: irq, etnik mənsubiyyət, mühacirlər, mədəni müxtəliflik.

ЭТНИЧЕСКОЕ И КУЛЬТУРНОЕ РАЗНООБРАЗИЕ В США

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Резюме. В статье рассматриваются вопросы этнического и культурного разнообразия в США. Показывается, что культура также воспринимается как набор принципов, которые являются посредником общения и регулируют социальные отношения, а культурное разнообразие непосредственно влияет на отношение и поведение людей в обществе.

Ключевые слова: раса, этническая принадлежность, иммигранты, культурное разнообразие.

1. Introduction

Diversity can be analysed from different viewpoints. It is also considered to be a difference from the majority. Investigations of cultures demand that in any cultural environment there is a majority and lots of different minorities. Diversity includes in itself varieties of different types, as well as, race, sex, physical capability, age, religion, education, beliefs, values, traditions and attributes of various types. Cultural diversity helps us to make our life more interesting and challenging. There are a lot of people living around us and representing different cultures which are apart from us in the ways of thinking and realizing most of the skills.

As it is a widespread fact that there exist multiple cultures and cultural differences as a result within a big community and these different cultural groups make up a whole society. The existence of cultural diversity is valuable as any country consists of different cultural, racial, and ethnic unities. Learning various cultures and subcultures gives anybody a chance to understand the world around. As for the differences arising out of these cultures, everybody

can give his distribution to the community he lives in. At the same time, these types of diversities help us to recognize and respect what are not considered to belong to our native culture [7, p.83-85].

Cultural groups within one society differing in small characteristic features are named subcultures. In this point different ethnic groups living in the U.S., as African Americans, Mexican Americans, Asian Americans can also be defined as subcultures. As the United States is recognized as being a “melting pot” or “salad bowl”, it means that this country absorbs various cultural, subcultural, ethnic and racial groups. Being a mixture of different and similar people from various cultures America can enrich its cultural stock and encourage coexistence of these similarities and variability [6].

2. Ethnic and racial identity

Here we need to give an explanation of what is considered while speaking about ethnic identity. Ethnic identity is referred to people who are associated with having nearly close relation through culture, language, beliefs, religion and some other cultural characteristics. While speaking about ethnic groups in the U.S. we are obliged to mention that most of these ethnic groups have had their own contribution to the U.S.’s cultural inheritance. Sometimes cultural diversity is substituted with the concept of “multiculturalism”. Multiculturalism is a system of beliefs and behaviors that respect the presence of all diverse groups in any society [1].

One of the main reasons of influencing the population in the United States is that the number of immigrants flowing to this country is getting higher day-by-day. In general, the vast majority of US population is immigrants because the ancestors of these immigrants “flocked” from Europe to the New Continent centuries ago. The local population of the United States, called "Native Americans", i.e. Indian tribes, is only 1% of the total US population.

In 1670, the number of American-born populations reached 100,000. A century later, this figure was increased to 1/3 of the total population. At the same time, we can say that the first mass flow of immigrants to the United States occurred in the nineteenth century. After a couple of decades, more than 50 million immigrants from France, Germany, Italy and other countries to the New Continent are considered to be unsatisfactory in Europe's political situation. In the first decade of the 21st century, 90 million people from different countries have settled in the United States. The vast majority of these people are from Mexico, China, the Philippines and India, as well as from Russia [5].

First of all, to investigate the characteristics of ethnicity, race and culture in the modern discourse, and then to define the meaning in the above mentioned cases for more effective sociological analyzes, and finally determine the appropriate options for solving problems arising from these issues more efficiently is one of the main goals.

If we try to clarify the meaning of race from the historical point of view, it will be understood that this word is related to ancestry and genealogy. In this way, we understand that we are dealing with the genetics of human race. For that reason, we can now say that the word "race" has two meanings contradicting each other. In the first sense, it refers to an understanding of the general genetic features characteristic for all human beings. The first definition embraces all humanity, but in the second definition, it is emphasized that people differ from each other in certain ways. Disputes over racism as it always exists, and are now leading to substantial social conflicts[2].

If we talk about ethnicity in the U.S. it is rather advisable to mention a chart below to indicate how an ethnic stock has changed through half a century and what is predicted to expect from its future variation.

In 1960	In 2011	In 2050 (prediction)
White – 86 %	White – 64 %	White – 46 %
Hispanic – 3.5 %	Hispanic – 16 %	Hispanic – 30 %
Afro American – 10 %	Afro American – 12 %	Afro American – 13 %
Asian – 0.5 %	Asian – 4.5 %	Asian – 8 % [3].

Here we observe that some ethnic groups tend to enhance its number accordingly and it gives us hope for the bright future of growth of cultural heritage in the U.S.

At the end of the analyzes carried out in 2015, the US population has been consolidated into six main groups on ethnic and race grounds. Three of these groups are white and black people living in 39 states. The vast majority of these states cover the territories of the Middle East and New England and the first residential area of European immigrants. In the other three groups, we can talk about more complicated and uncommon race characteristics. We are dealing with representatives of peoples living in Alaska, South Dakota, Oklaoma [3].

A number of immigrants travelling to the United States have been native residents of Canada and Mexico. Many Americans have expressed their desire to change the course of history by supporting cross-border policies with Canada. But the attitude toward Mexican people has never been adequate. Indeed, some indigenous residents believe that Mexico is "corollary" against the Americans' policy. Others believe that the influx of Mexicans from southwestern USA to the United States will help to create a cheap labor market in agriculture and other areas.

3. Cultural variability

As each term has its own advantages and disadvantages, any term is first propagated in its geographical location within a certain time interval. On the one hand the terms are interculturalism, multiculturalism and transculturalism. The latter terms refer to interconnection within one culture, the mutual influence of different cultures existing in the

same social environment, or the mutual integration of cultural boundaries. On the other hand the other group includes metaphorical analogues - melting pot, salad bowl, the Canadian mosaic, and so on. At the same time it is possible to note that some critics do not see the difference between the terms "multiculturalism" and "interculturalism" that express ethnic diversity. Of course, in this case, prefixes "multi-" and "inter-" also have a meaningful effect. Interculturalism has been widely used internationally, but multiculturalism has often been applied to different nationalities.

Sometimes the prefix "poly-" is also commonly used instead of "multi-". Multiculturalism centers on the existence of different cultures within the same society, and polyculturalism explores the mutual integration of all world cultures.

For this reason, North America has always been using more than just the expressions of "melting pot", "salad bowl", "the Canadian mosaic" to describe the immigrant map. "The Melting pot" metaphor is used to describe the "young people" among the American. Through this expression it is necessary to integrate new immigrants into this country. Some critics consider this word combination unlucky, as individual culture of different people loses its sustainability.

The term "salad bowl" can be considered to be improved, because in this case, all the different cultures mix together in an entity, and are animated in front of our eyes like a full unified image. The meaning that this phrase implies is that a nation has to be a vivid example of the American identity that has a common characteristic of the nation, which maintains its own distinctive features.

As culture has a cognitive structure, it mediates communication and therefore is regarded as a collection of values and principles that govern the social relationships of people. Culture can also be called the foundation of the notions created by a person as a language. But these concepts are not of a personal character and contain separate cultural codes. Therefore, anyone who is not a carrier of that code may have difficulty in understanding what happened.

Is cultural diversity a good thing or not? People usually rely on their own cultural heritage as the system of standards to "condemn" different people from other cultures. But at the same time learning about other cultures can provide us to have a wide background of the world we live in. In addition, it also supports us to respect different "ways of living" which do not usually coincide with our own and to build "bridges of truth" between various cultures. In the case of the U.S., a diverse population ensures innovation and creativity [1, p.127].

Although there is no consensus in linguistics regarding this issue, it has had common reasons of it. Since culture is variable and dynamic, any definition can only include its essential features. Many definitions have been made in this area, in many of which culture is regarded as the product of any country. Culture never stays constant, it always changes.

As we know, the official language of the U.S. is exceptionally English. But there are a lot of other languages spoken in the U.S., such as Spanish, French, German, Chinese and

others. As America is the place for lots of immigrants to live, it is inevitable that it has influenced the way how Americans express themselves. As we know a great deal of researchers have already spoken about the relations between language and culture. It is also the same way in the US. Notwithstanding any language is a part of the culture it can also influence any society's culture in its own way. Every society and language are mutually related. Different techniques of the usage of any language can be changed and adapted to various circumstances related to cultural diversity. Culture is a dynamic concept and can be altered from time to time through its historical development.

As in the sixteenth century, the Britons brought their language to America and they also borrowed from Native Americans some words to express different new strange notions. These words were: persimmon, raccoons, chimpanzees, gorilla, woodchuck, and others. These were the first "benefits" as a result of the correlation between these two cultures. This process was in progress through the development of American English and was thought to be inescapable.

Cultural systems are created by users and are constantly being modified by those users. Since such cultural systems are unstable, new discoveries and changes always contribute to the assimilation of cultural systems. However, we also owe it to the fact that every cultural system is formed as a response to existing conditions, and the interaction between this system and the situation is not determinative.

From 1915 to 5 years, the Federal Education Agency has organized a special "American Studies" program in schools. To this end, many evening schools were organized where immigrants seeking citizenship learned the English language and provided the necessary information about the US government. Excessive cultural variation has further deepened the "gap" between the educated high class and the immigrant low living standards. Researchers who analyzed the outcomes of the educational policy carried out at the beginning of the twentieth century have concluded that in the mid-40s of the last century, more than 60 percent of New York's ethnic minority representatives over the age of 25 had devoted only 7 years to education. This figure and other statistical figures show that education and other programs dedicated to Americanization policy have not been able to show the impact of the United States on ethnic minority populations [5].

For several centuries America could begin to realize partly a homogeneous nation at the beginning of the twentieth century, after exposure to immigrants representing different ethnicities. However, the policies of new Americans and the rules applied to immigrants still restrict the rights of foreign nationals and supported the promotion of racial equality.

Reforms that took place in the 60s and 70s of the last century led to the diversion of various immigrants and their predecessors from other ethnic minorities who are considered to be US populations. On the one hand, the Blacksea population and their liberal partners considered the whole Europeans as peoples who were closing their way of development.

In the middle of the last century immigrants representing various ethnic minorities and their descendants were rightly considered to be the part of the US population. In 1950, the number of foreigners did not exceed 10 million. In 1960, this figure dropped to 9 million, and, as a percentage of the total population, this figure began to decline from 6.6% to 5.2% [5, p.202-203].

Undoubtedly, immigration, ethnicity, racism and religious values are a hallmark of American history. These elements have important significance in political and social life, as well as the importance they have in the life of the country's inhabitants.

But what has the U.S. gained with this wide range of cultural variety? The Scandinavians and the Poles taught the natives how to get the benefit in the farmland. As well as, different traditions, holidays, religions and other values have also been introduced to the settlers of the New World. Christmas tree and orchestra were brought by the Germans; European cuisine, etiquette rules and ways of dancing were introduced by the French. The Dutch made the natives get introduced with different types of sport and of growing various flowers. The Italians introduced architecture, sculpture and other branches of art.

Conclusion. The United States is widely considered to be a rather multi-racial and diverse country where people from different countries have been immigrating for a great number of years. As for very early history, Native Americans and African Americans were distinguished as the two races in the U.S. But today we are witnesses of “mixing” different immigrants from all over the world, while racism here remains being one of the main problematic situations.

We can enlarge this list, but it is the fact that in most cases the immigrants try to hold to the rules and ways of living of their own native country. Though nowadays the U.S. tries to be very sensitive to ethnic and racial differences, a great deal of conflicts have occurred on this point through American history. But the new generation never rejects becoming Americanized. The U.S. has supplied immigrants from different countries with a sense of reliability and safety, in return most immigrants from different cultures have brought diversity and variability to the U.S. and its cultural background.

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