

SUMMARY

Dissertation title: *Diagnosing the level of school education language proficiency of Ukrainian children with migration experience in Polish primary schools at the second stage of education*

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The dissertation is part of the field of glottodidactic research and intercultural education, and contributes to the understanding of complex educational processes taking place in a migratory, multilingual and multicultural context. Its **subject** is the functioning of Ukrainian children with migration experience in the Polish education system at the second stage of education, with particular emphasis on their basic need to master the Polish language. A lack of knowledge or incomplete knowledge of Polish in a broader sense than just communication translates into problems in everyday interaction with teachers and other pupils, adaptation difficulties and a feeling of alienation, and above all, great challenges in fully integrating the pupil into the learning and teaching process and in achieving educational success.

In a relatively short period of time, Polish, which is a foreign language for young migrants, must become their second language and then, functionally, their first language. The process of gradually changing the language status of a foreign child is completed when they learn the language of school education (JSE). This is a special variety of language which, for teachers, is a means of transferring knowledge, and for pupils, a tool for acquiring it, enabling both to verbalise the content being conveyed/assimilated. In the case of students, it supports the process of self-realisation, promotes integration with peer groups and helps them to accept their own identity. In addition, linguistic phenomena are the subject of teaching. JSE is characterised by a high degree of abstraction and objectivity, the use of precise vocabulary and educational terms, logical and orderly composition of statements, and developed syntactic structures.

The **aim** of the dissertation is to present the possibilities of standardising the process of admitting pupils with migration experience to schools. It includes assessing the legal and family situation of a specific pupil, their educational and linguistic experience, determining their

communication skills and evaluating their level of proficiency in the JSE. Conducting such a multifaceted diagnosis will enable the child to be placed in the appropriate class and individualise teaching, monitor progress and select appropriate forms of assistance. Due to the key role of JSE, the main objective of the dissertation is to develop a tool for diagnosing JSE proficiency. Its creation was preceded by an analysis of the most important aspects of the functioning of migrant children in the Polish education system, with particular emphasis on identifying the difficulties faced by both pupils and their teachers.

The **first chapter** contains a description of the phenomenon of migration to Poland, an overview of key terminology and an analysis of the socio-demographic changes that have led to Poland's transformation into a country of emigration and immigration. Particular attention is paid to the latest wave of immigrants in 2022, which, compared to earlier migrations from Ukraine to our country, is unique not only in terms of scale but also in terms of demographic structure, as it is dominated by children and young people. These findings provide a reference point for further reflection aimed at characterising the situation of young migrants, their abilities, needs and limitations in the learning and teaching process.

The **second chapter** is entirely devoted to the situation of Ukrainian students in the Polish education system. It covers the legal acts regulating their education in Poland, the procedure for admission to schools and the organisation of additional forms of support. In order to identify the systemic sources of difficulties faced by young newcomers from across our eastern border, similarities and differences between the Ukrainian and Polish education systems have been compared, including the school life order, curriculum assumptions and the culture of education.

The **third chapter** presents in more detail the factors that contribute to the complex process of learning Polish. It describes the gradual changes in the language status of migrant students and the distinction between the language of communication (JK) and JSE, which is important for the course of education. The specificity of JSE is explained in two aspects – lexical and syntactic. To this end, Polish and Ukrainian curriculum documents in the fields of language education, biology and mathematics, as well as Polish textbooks for these subjects, were analysed. On this basis, the requirements for students from both countries and the scope of the curriculum content, with particular emphasis on educational terminology, were established, making it possible to describe JSE as a specific type of specialised language. The accessibility of tasks, instructions and authorial texts in Polish textbooks, which continue to be the primary teaching aid in Poland, was also verified.

The **chapter four**, based on the findings made in the previous parts of the work, presents arguments in favour of the need to diagnose the level of knowledge of JSE. It focuses in particular on the insufficient competences of teachers who are unprepared for the sudden transformation of the school community into a culturally and linguistically diverse environment. The vast majority of teachers have no training in language teaching and are therefore unable to identify the characteristics of the Polish language (especially JSE) acquired by foreign students. Therefore, this part of the thesis presents a proposal for an original test to diagnose the level of proficiency in JSE. The test reflects the real educational requirements for pupils in the second stage of education in Polish (language education), biology and mathematics. Its individual parts focus on vocabulary and syntax, the two areas most distinctive for JSE. In addition to the test sheet, the chapter includes a discussion of the structure and tasks of the test, an answer key, as well as the rules for assessing and interpreting the results.

The **chapter five** is the empirical part of the dissertation. It justifies the choice of case study as the most appropriate research strategy for presenting an individualised approach to each migrant child. It includes the results of research conducted using a diagnostic test, supplemented with information gathered during informal interviews with pupils and their parents. The case studies reveal the complexity of the students' situations and illustrate the practical application of the proposed test.

The final part of this dissertation contains **recommendations for educational and organisational measures**. The main one is the top-down introduction of a unified system for integrating migrant children into Polish schools. This system should include the collection of information about the student's legal and family situation and their linguistic biography, as well as their educational path in their home country. In addition, it should be enriched with a special package prepared at the ministerial level containing reliable and verified information on the Ukrainian education system and the scope of teaching content covered in individual school subjects, together with a list of curriculum differences.

An integral part of the system for integrating migrant students into educational institutions in Poland should be the assessment of cognitive competences and the level of proficiency in JSE. An example of a tool that could be used for this purpose is the diagnostic test presented in this dissertation. Verification of the level of proficiency in JSE will allow to identify specific abilities and needs of students and determine their strengths and weaknesses in using the school variety of Polish. In this way, teachers of all subjects will receive specific guidelines relevant to planning the education process and ways of supporting young migrants.

Information obtained at each stage of the procedure of integrating migrant children into the Polish school system needs to be properly organised. This dissertation proposes a solution consisting in the creation of a document – an ‘individual educational profile of a child with migration experience’. In this way, the information gathered when the child first encounters the Polish education system could be used by all teachers working with such students, not only at the initial stage of attending a Polish school, but also later on to compare their progress. The pupil's educational profile could also help migrant pupils who change their place of residence and school, as it would provide important information to their new teachers.

The presented system is inclusive in its character, which manifests itself in the effort to overcome the language barrier, which is the main difficulty in the functioning of migrant children in Polish schools. Furthermore, it makes teachers aware of the difficult path to mastering JSE and the consequences of not knowing it, which promotes sensitivity to the situation of foreign students and at the same time strengthens the social competences of educators.