

Otherness of Roma in Inclusive Education of Roma Pupils in Slovakia

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Abstract : The Slovak Republic is a democratic and plural society consisting of people differing in language and culture, and its citizens should already be well prepared for the coexistence of multiple nations, nationalities or ethnic groups. Reflection on culture, art and literature of the Roma minority has taken on a new dimension in Slovakia in the past two decades when it comes to social, cultural and arts integration of this ethnic group with the plural society. Non-Roma view Roma as a specific ethnic group with their own culture, language, customs and traditions, social norms and coexistence that has retained archetypal qualities of Roma identity (romipen) in their real lives as well as in the literary world. Roma characters in works of art are specific and distinguishable from other literary characters simply by being Roma, that is, of a different origin and social status, they represent a different way of life, a distinctive hierarchy of values. The portrayal of Roma and the life of Roma ethnic group in the most dominant genre of Roma literature for children and youth, a Roma fairy tale (paramisi), can work as a suitable means to learn about, accept and tolerate the otherness of Roma in the conditions of school inclusion of students coming from the Roma ethnic group, and to support their identification with their own ethnic group and its cultural traditions. The paper aims to point out not only the specific nature of Roma identity (romipen) through the selected Roma fairy tale (paramisa) – Children of the Sun, but also the diversity of its uses in the educational process within primary education of pupils at elementary schools, advocating the philosophy of inclusive education. Through the suggestions of multi-cultural, emotional, and language and communication education of pupils through the work with the selected Roma fairy tale (paramisa), the author is exploring ways to overcome the issues stemming from the coexistence of Roma and Non-Roma pupils, which are burdened with prejudice, intolerance, aggression and racism on both sides, in the education process.

Keywords : inclusive education, otherness, Roma, Roma fairy tale, Roma identity

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