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Prejudice reduction in an educational setting. Practical outcomes from theoretical approaches

Abstract:

Our paper reviews research studies that have investigated interventions aimed at prejudice reduction. The theories and research results are summarized in the following categories: intergroup contact, social identity, and categorization. The intergroup contact approach inspired such techniques as contact hypothesis, jigsaw classroom, Pettigrew's model, contact with transgression, and imagined intergroup contact hypothesis; while social identity gave the ground for common ingroup identity and crossed categorization theories. We place special emphasis on methods applicable for a school setting, and try to answer the questions: when, why and under which condition will a given method work.

Keywords:

intervention, prejudice reduction, decategorization, recategorization, intergroup contact

Streszczenie:

Artykuł jest próbą przeglądu teorii oraz badań dotyczących skuteczności interwencji zmniejszających uprzedzenia wobec członków stereotypizowanych grup. Przedstawione metody i techniki oddziaływania wywodzą się z teorii kontaktu międzygrupowego oraz teorii tożsamości społecznej i kategoryzacji. W artykule opisane są następujące techniki zmiany uprzedzeń: hipoteza kontaktu, klasa mieszana, model Pettigrew, kontakt z transgresją oraz hipoteza wyobrażonego kontaktu wywodzące się z teorii kontaktu międzygrupowego, a także teoria wspólnej tożsamości grupowej i skrzyżowanych kategoryzacji społecznych, które mają swoje korzenie w teorii tożsamości społecznej i kategoryzacji. Szczególny nacisk położony jest na te metody, które można zastosować podczas zajęć szkolnych. Artykuł jest także próbą odpowiedzi na pytania które techniki, w jakich warunkach i kontekstach edukacyjno-społecznych przynoszą najlepsze efekty.

Słowa kluczowe:

interwencja, redukcja uprzedzeń, dekategoryzacja, rekategoryzacja, kontakt międzygrupowy

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Introduction

Psychological literature on prejudice and stereotypes is rich and comprehensive when it comes to theories and measurement strategies or assessment tools. But practical applications are less far-reaching. The study of prejudice, as we would have thought, attracts special attention as researchers try to find the remedy for problems existing in every society, such as discrimination, violence, exclusion, and inequality. This goal is shared by policymakers, non-governmental organizations and educators who try to introduce interventions aimed at prejudice reduction in troublesome regions, multi-ethnic workplaces, schools or neighbourhoods. With this objective in mind, having another look at effective ways to reduce prejudice seems natural and practical. Our review is one of many to raise this question. Earlier works have presented reviews within a particular context, for instance, in age groups (Abond, Levy 2000); in a laboratory (Wilder, 1986); as a specific theory concerning models of extended contact; as crossed categorizations (Mullen, Migdal, Hewstone 2001); as cognitive, motivation processes (Piper-Dąbrowska, Sędek, 2006); or concerning common intergroup identity (Gaertner et al., 1993). Our review differs from previous ones as it embraces a hypothesis and findings on prejudice reduction which may be practically and effectively implemented in a natural educational context. It also assumes that there are certain factors and conditions which reduce prejudice concerning outgroup members (Kofta, 2004). We are going to have a closer look at studies and interventions which may, if properly implemented, contribute to positive changes in attitudes towards outgroup members. We will also analyse interventions aimed at related social phenomena as stereotyping, intolerance or discrimination. All these will be referred to as "*prejudice*" for the sake of clarity. By prejudice reduction we mean a causal outcome of intervention (laboratory or natural setting) which reduces the prejudice level.

Intergroup approach

Prejudice-reduction techniques that use the intergroup approach are grounded in the idea that people have a strong, automatic tendency to divide the social world into "we" and "they". This tendency evokes perceptions and behaviours that favour the ingroup "we" relative to others. Two major lines of thinking connected with the ingroup-outgroup approach have inspired techniques which by manipulating within social categorization are aimed at diminishing prejudice. One line presents techniques derived from the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954), the other from social identity and categorization theories (Tajfel, Turner 1979; Park, Rothbart, 1982; Turner, 1985). It is important to note that both lines share such common notions as personalization or decategorization. Other,

more integrated techniques take a lot from both areas. Looking at multiple conflicts around the world, in our own country or even within school classes, we can notice a common link and trace the immediate reasons for intergroup differences: in race, ethnicity, nationality or other countless bases for group distinctions. It is significant to understand and follow the way we classify ourselves and others along social criteria as it has a great importance when it comes to social contact within intergroup contexts. Since Allport's (1954) writings, categorization has become an important part in exploring people's perceptions of social reality and in finding explanations for stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. Such understanding may facilitate alleviating social conflicts as it gives the possibility for modifying some aspects of categorization. Important questions arise: Could this knowledge be used in practice as an attempt to improve intergroup relations? Could it curtail violent conflicts, and decrease the exclusion of ethnic minorities or underprivileged social groups? Some approaches in social categorization research may offer a potential for reducing prejudice, especially those focusing on "ingroups" and "outgroups" in real, complex social contexts, of increasingly multicultural world. Categorization involves sorting similarities and differences instinctively, spontaneously and reflexively so that individuals can effectively process great amounts of information and reach generalizations (Bruner, 1957). The need to simplify the life's challenges forces people to constantly and reflexively categorize others according to salient categories such as gender, race and age (Brewer, 1979). Automatic evaluation linked with categorization uses information connected with current categories rather than any personal characteristics. This is caused by a lifetime of exposure to stereotypes and prejudices which provide us with deep associations (Van Bavel, Cunningham, 2009). These associations are activated while meeting members of outgroups (Devine, 1989) and influence behaviour even when people declare openness and tolerance (Gaertner, Dovidio, 2000). Research on prejudice shows that cognitive processes activate automatic racial and ethnic biases despite egalitarian values. Race and ethnicity prove to be salient and difficult to overcome (Park, Rothbart, 1982) while other social categories as occupation or appearance may be easier, but not so easily, to suppress (Hewstone et al., 1991). Our disposition to divide the world into *us* and *them* even when distinctions are unimportant and arbitrary and to favour ingroup members was shown in a series of classic studies where participants randomly assigned to groups allocated more money to fellow ingroup than outgroup members (Tajfel et al., 1971). The troubling picture which emerges from those studies is that automatic intergroup bias can occur even in the absence of socially acquired stereotypes and prejudice. Clarification of those processes which link categorization with ingroup favouritism and outgroup discrimination comes from two theoretical frameworks: social identity theory (Tajfel, Turner, 1979) and Doise's theory (Doise,

1978). The first states that individuals want to achieve a positive self-concept which could come from positive evaluation of their own group. This positive evaluation can be gained after having compared their own group with relevant outgroups. When this comparison is favourable for their own group, it brings a positive self-concept for the individual, but as a consequence discriminates against other groups. Doise's theory points out that intergroup categorization accentuates perceived differences between the groups and similarities within the groups. Categorization has a double effect on our perception: it can trigger social evaluation, even if there are no stereotypic characteristics assigned to the evaluated object or group membership, or it can make cognitive structures (stereotypes) accessible by encoding characteristics linked to the category in our memory (Hamilton, 1981). As Zarate and Smith (1990) indicate, there is a gap in the theoretical picture of social categorization. Multiple social categorizations are possible for any individual target and all are correct from a certain viewpoint, but the determinants of which classification is being used in a specific social context and situation are largely unknown. The numerous ways for categorizing people determine which stereotype will be applied, and influence both emotional and behavioural reactions towards the categorized object. Some research has shown that perceivers categorize ingroup and outgroup members differently, which strongly suggests that the chosen category depends on the perceiver's attention, attitude and mood (Park, Rorhbart, 1982). That explains the tendency to view ingroup members as more diverse than the outgroup's. Social identity theory (Turner, 1985) states the significance of the perceiver's own category membership as mediator of the categorized effects on interpersonal evaluation. Zarate and Smith (1990) in their studies looked at the initial hypothesis about the determinants of social categorization, based on target and perceiver characteristics. The findings confirmed that female targets were categorized more quickly by sex and males by race. The subject's gender category influenced the way categorization was performed as same-sex targets went more quickly than opposite-sex targets. Thus social categorization depends clearly on the target's characteristics and on ingroup-outgroup dynamics, which includes the perceiver's self-categorization. Furthermore it was confirmed that social categorization predicts stereotyping, measured by the attribution of stereotypic characteristics to the targets. More recent experiments (Kurzban et al., 2001) used a memory confusion paradigm to investigate a category where race is unrelated to group membership. When group membership (other than race) was made visually salient, participants used it more than race to categorize individuals. Although exposure to this salient group coalition was only brief, it became more powerful and decreased race-based encoding. This research emphasized the dynamic nature of social categorization and offered a method for stereotype reduction and biases in the outgroup member's evaluations. It was confirmed by research

(Crisp et al., 2006) which indicated that automatic categorization and evaluation are sensitive to social contexts, including a salient social category. It is important to notice that the salient social category for multicategorizable targets moderates the activation on attitudes. The series of experiments carried by Mitchell, Nosek and Banaji (2003) found that categorizing Black athletes and White politicians according to race activated preferences for White politicians, while categorizing the same targets according to their occupation activated preferences for Black athletes. Van Bavel and Cunningham (2009) obtained interesting results which suggest that automatic evaluations were highly sensitive to social contexts, reflecting existing intergroup configurations even when there were no visual differences between ingroup and outgroup members (i.e. race, ethnic features). These results show the possibility that categorizing with a fairly unimportant group may overrule an automatic evaluation based on race or other visually salient categories – those that usually are associated with stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination. Taken together, these results raise the possibility that a shared group identity, even minimal and temporary, may lead people to have positive feelings about individuated ingroup members – who were outgroup members according to other categorizations. Although these results seem promising for the idea of manipulating categories in order to diminish the readiness to stereotype, the nature of categorizing multicategorizable targets in social contexts still remains unclear.

Intergroup Contact Approach

Contact hypothesis

Allport (1954) postulated that intergroup contact reduces prejudice only if it is qualified by four conditions: equal status within the contact situation, common goals, intergroup cooperation, and visible support from the authorities. The intergroup contact hypothesis has been tested with different participants, methods and targets and has received much support. Among those most convincing and worth mentioning are Cook's (1978) railroad studies. Cook stimulated the interracial workplace (under the optimal contact hypothesis) by hiring racially prejudiced, white adults to work with black "co-workers" who were research confederates. At the end of the study and several months later participants rated their black co-worker highly in attractiveness and competence. It is important to note that this research was conducted in the American South in the 1960s; a place and time with very strong racial discrimination.

Jigsaw classroom

Not much later in 1971 the newly desegregated schools of Austin, Texas, faced a crisis of violence between ethnic groups. African-American youngsters and Hispanic youngsters

found themselves in the same classrooms for the first time. This led Eliot Aronson (1978) to develop a classroom technique called the jigsaw classroom. It was based on the contact hypothesis with the overall aim being to defuse inter-group tensions and promote self-esteem. The idea was to create an interdependent atmosphere that made each student in the class an important source of information so that success depended on every child's contribution (Aronson, Patnoe, 2011). In this way children learned to value and respect each other. Such an activity must be carefully designed; it is not enough to instruct the students to sit together, share work and be nice to each other. A lose situation will not make the jigsaw classroom work but must follow the rules of contact hypothesis and take under consideration potential obstacles such as dominant or slow students, bright students working faster and becoming bored, and students who have been trained to compete. Authors in social psychology have repeatedly pointed at the jigsaw classroom (Aronson et al., 1978) as a potential method for lessening prejudice at school. However, the suggested effect of jigsaw on prejudice is not well documented, or rather the presented effects of multiple experiments are ambiguous. Evidence from American studies (Aronson, Blaney, Stephin, Sikes, & Snapp, 1978) reveals that students from jigsaw classrooms show decreased prejudice and stereotyping, in comparison with children in traditional classroom settings. They also come to like other students both within and across groups. In an Australian study (Walker, Crogan, 1998) the subjects were 103 children in grades four to six, in two separate schools. The experiment investigated the influence of jigsaw classroom conditions on cooperation, interdependence and attitude. The results revealed that the jigsaw classroom produced improvements in academic performance, peer friendliness, and racial prejudice. Two quasi-experiments conducted in Norway (Bratt, 2008) investigated effects of the Jigsaw classroom on intergroup relations with 11 year-olds and 13–15 year-olds. Both studies explored the development of attitudes, intergroup friendships and empathy in the majority members' outgroup but could not confirm that the jigsaw classroom affected intergroup relations.

Pettigrew's reformulated model of contact hypothesis

Some researchers (Pettigrew, 1998) pointed out the imperfections of the contact hypothesis technique arguing that the list of conditions become incoherent, that the causal direction between contact and prejudice reduction is rather equivocal, and that the contact effects may not last over time due as other social influences mitigate prejudice reduction and generalizations from individuals to the outgroup as a whole. Aiming to overcome those flaws Pettigrew (1998) modified the contact hypothesis by incorporating three contact models: decategorization (Brewer, Miller, 1984), salient categorization (Hewstone, Brown, 1986) and recategorization (Gaertner et al., 1989). Pettigrew pointed out that decategorization should be introduced at the beginning of intergroup contact; people

should interact as individuals without paying attention to group membership. Later, categorization should be made salient with interactants aware that they belong to different categories so they can learn to appreciate differences. As a final point, recategorization should be initiated along with a superordinate level of categorization in which interactants share a group membership. According to Pettigrew the superordinate level is supposed to cause a maximum reduction in stereotypes. Eller and Abrams (2004) designed longitudinal field studies to test Pettigrew's reformulated model. The results point to the importance of intergroup friendship and emphasize the mediating role played by acquiring information about the outgroup and generating affective ties. A recent meta-analysis of 515 contact hypothesis studies has confirmed the principle proposition: there is a strong, highly significant, negative relationship between contact and prejudice (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Although successful, contact theories, even those reformulated and improved, have been criticised for their practical limitations as they still seem too restricted by too many conditions and guidelines.

Temporal categorization as conditions of effective intergroup contact

A possible alternative to the approaches presented above, which are based on perspective-taking, is a technique for intergroup contact introduced by Bilewicz (2006). He suggested basing contact on intergroup transgressions by convincing participants to consider the perspective of an outgroup member before or during contact. The imagined membership in the outgroup should bring about outgroup member personalisation (perceived similarity), common group identity, and salient group boundaries. Bilewicz's participants were young Jewish students who came to Poland for *"The March of the Living"*. The students were asked to engage in contact with Polish students and talk about becoming Polish and moving to Poland (conditions with transgression) or about Jewish cemeteries (conditions without transgression).The control group did not talk with Polish students. The results were very promising: contact with transgression caused reduced prejudice in comparison to the contact without transgression and control conditions. Although successful and quite feasible in an educational setting, this method has one serious limitation. It can be used only when actual, positive contact between group members is impossible. There are, unfortunately, situations when for different reasons chances for contact do not exist, but strong prejudice does. This happens when groups are highly segregated – physically or socially, or when there is no motivation or possibility to cooperate, or meet.

Imagined intergroup contact hypothesis

We do not lack examples where group members cannot interact positively with one another - Green Line in Cyprus, West Bank Wall in Israel, multicultural communities with little opportunity for meaningful contact, homogeneous countries like Poland with its

Roma minorities living excluded and distant from society. This was the motivation behind the development of an indirect intergroup contact form: an imagined intergroup contact hypothesis. This approach is considered by some researchers (Crisp, Turner, 2009) as a simple and effective instrument for intergroup attitude change. Imagined intergroup contact is a mental interaction simulation with a member or members of an outgroup. Positive contact experience triggers notions associated with successful interactions with other group members and leads to improved outgroup attitudes and reduced stereotyping (Allport, 1954). Imagination is a powerful and accessible tool. People can imagine almost every social situation and context; so it seems tempting for psychologists, educators and teachers to use this power to encourage prejudice reduction. The value of imagined contact is its ability to encourage people to develop more positive feelings towards outgroup members and to seek out (or stop avoiding) contact in real life. Studies (Turner et al., 2007) show that young participants who imagined a scenario in which they participated in a short positive interaction with an older person revealed less ingroup bias in evaluations. In the second study, researchers focused on heterosexual men's attitudes toward homosexual men. Heterosexuals who imagined talking to a homosexual on a train subsequently evaluated homosexuals in general more positively and stereotyped them less than participants who imagined a neutral scene. Research has also shown that positive imagined contact leads to projecting positive traits to the target outgroup (Stathi, Crisp, 2008). Nonetheless, this technique has certain limitations. As it is less direct than face to face contact, its effect on attitudes is weaker and more temporary. But it might be said that if real contact is impossible, the results brought by imaginary contact are "better than nothing." It is also crucial to note that imaginary contact may have an impact on future interactions and encourages people to seek contact with outgroup members. In that way a vicious circle of negative attitudes can be broken. It could be very useful for schools as teachers could develop and apply teaching techniques that encourage contact imagery to bring students from different groups closer together. Imagined contact is believed, on the basis of experimental results, to be able to provide a simple and practical means of introducing social psychological content into educational interventions. It can be used either alone or in combination with other methods and techniques.

Social identity and social categorization

Being aware of the battle line between different groups, researchers use different approaches in order to temporarily erase that line, change its course, cross it with other lines or draw it in another place so that it becomes less significant. Decategorization, recategorization, or crossed categorization can be used as separate strategies for prejudice reduction (Crisp, Hewstone, 2007) or as integrative models (Gaertner, Dovidio, 2000). In the decategorization approach, a participant's individual identity is stressed

over group membership. It can be achieved through instruction from the teacher or researcher. For example, in quite a successful anti-prejudice intervention (Popiołek, Wójcik, 2012), we instructed our students to concentrate on personal contact with different outgroup members by imagining and describing everyday activities with them. Participants in a study by Bettencourt et al. (1992) were less likely to favour their own, temporary group after working cooperatively with temporary outgroup members and focusing on individuals. Conditions promoting an interpersonal orientation during contact reduced prejudice between experimentally created categories more than contact under task oriented conditions. Recategorization strategy encourages participants to favour outgroup members the same as ingroup members as they think of people from a different group as part of one superordinate group. In their experiment Gaertner and Dovidio (2000) used shirts of the same colour or shared prizes as an integrated setting. In an educational context designing an incorporated situation as either real or imagined is relatively easy and can be designed as an interactive activity during history, geography or language lessons.

Crossed categorization techniques

As mentioned before an impressive number of experiments support the claim that the merely categorizing people into two distinct groups is sufficient to weaken intergroup discrimination, for example, in favouring the ingroup at the expense of the outgroup (Brewer, 1979; Rabbie,1982). The modern theory of crossed categorization is based on the assumption that if category boundaries are not convergent, but cross each other, the position of outgroup member will divert from "out" to "in". (Vanbeselaere, 1987; Crisp & Hewstone, 2001). Crisscrossing category memberships form new sub-groups with ingroup and outgroup members changes who is "in" and who is "out". This may lead to decategorization – reducing earlier categorization scheme and emphasizing similarities and perceiving outgroup members as individuals. According to Vanbeselaere (1987) crossed categorization may lead to convergence between categories and divergence within categories. Doise (1978) states that this process may reduce or eliminate discrimination, but it hasn't been proven so far. Research exploring the effect of crossed categorization on inter-group bias hasn't provided conclusive answers whether it could be an effective way to reduce intergroup bias. Some results are promising (Diehl, 1990; Crisp, Hewston& Rubin, 2001) and show that if categorization is performed within five or more categories, decategorization, convergence and divergence are possible to be achieved. Quite a few different studies have examined crossed categorization effects on intregroup bias (Mullen et al., 2001). In most cases crossed categorization crosses two dichotomous dimensions, resulting in four groups: the double-ingroup, the double-outgroup and two mixed groups. The double ingroup refers to people who share membership

in both dimensions, the double-outgroup to those who do not share membership in any given dimension, while the mixed group shares only one dimension but remains the outgroup according to the remaining one. In experimental studies (Brown, Turner, 1981; Crisp, Hewstone, 2007; Vanbeselaere, 1987) the basic pattern of intergroup evaluation is that the double ingroup receives most favourable evaluations while the double outgroup is evaluated most negatively. Most commonly, prejudice against a novel group is diminished when it is crossed with another novel group category in minimal group paradigm experiments (Brown, Turner, 1981). The problematic point is that laboratory interventions – those considering changes in evaluation and prejudice reduction – are abstracted from a real-world context. In some experiments (Deschamps, Doise, 1978) it could be observed that crossed categorizations eliminated intergroup discrimination on evaluations and attitudes only directly related to an experimental task. Contrary to this experiment Vanbeseleare (1987) reduced intergroup discrimination in crossed categorization conditions not only for evaluating the experimental situation but also for the more general evaluative question. The Vescio and Judd (2004) study shows that intervention based on crossed categorization can change the perception of group boundaries but does not necessarily reduce out-group bias. More promising results were presented by Mullen et al. (2001), namely that crossed categorization hostility-reduction intervention may reduce or redirect, but not eliminate, the bias . This lends support to the suggestion that the salient social category and its strength are difficult to recapture in experimental conditions. Real life categories do not have an equal psychological power and are placed in a complex social context. Therefore mixed findings from the crossed categorization technique suggest that it could be used in education intervention only as a way to blur boundaries in order to prepare students for further prejudice reduction. Very few field experiments have been planned to implement and test crossed, integrated, recategorization, or decategorization strategies developed in laboratories. There are, however, some exceptions as Nier and others (2001) conducted a study carried on in the classroom. After intervention, the students were slightly more likely to favour drawings of cross-sex or cross-race children. This integrated approach was tested in a natural school setting during a program introduced in primary schools (Weigl, Łukaszewski, 1992). The program's aim was to change negative ethnic and national stereotypes during regular lessons. In the experiment various techniques as interaction, common goals, personalization, cross categorization, recategorization and decategorization were used in lesson scenarios. After the program the opinion about tested national groups improved and declared social distance shortened.

Common in-group identity model

An alternative approach – the common in-group identity model (Gaertner et al., 1993) – is rooted in the social categorization perspective of intergroup relations (Tajfel, Turner 1979; Park, Rothbart, 1982; Turner, 1985). It emphasizes the important social category perception role in creating and reducing intergroup attitudes (Doliński, 2001). It offers the possibility to reduce prejudice by influencing the ways in which members of different groups comprehend and think of group boundaries. Introduced recategorization establishes an alternative, superordinate social category to embrace both ingroup and outgroup members. If the two separate group members are encouraged to conceive of themselves as a single, superordinate group rather that separate groups, attitudes toward former outgroup members will be more positive through processes governing pro ingroup bias (Tajfel, Turner 1979). Inducing one group representation extends all motivational and cognitive processes toward the former outgroup member. It encourages open communication and self-disclosing interactions, which can lead to personalization and individualization (Stephan, 1985; Wilder, 1986). In the recategorized group, new members benefit in many ways. They receive more favourable evaluation and more generous awards. Moreover, information about former outgroup members are processed, stored and activated as if they were ingroup members (Deutsch, 1973). Bilewicz's research (2009) conducted in a high school in a borderland Polish-Czech community found that many forms of ingroup favourism disappeared when students were encouraged to take a broader perspective. Polish students were instructed to imagine becoming members of an outgroup, which increased their willingness to help outgroup members. Recategorization can be achieved by introducing factors that are perceived as shared in any way by members of two groups (e.g. a common goal, common tasks, beliefs or perspective taking); so a new subordinate identity is formed without abandoning former identities. Allport (1954) stated that concentric identities can enclose each other so that two groups are perceived within one superior group. A revised common identity may be generalized to outgroup members who are absent in contact situations. This generalization is most likely to occur if the salience of the initial group identities is maintained within the superordinate common group identity (Geartner, 1994). Such categorization within the ingroup has been demonstrated to produce more positive evaluations (Brewer, 1979) and a perception of greater belief similarity (Brown, 1984), improve memory for positive information about former outgroup members (Howard, Rothbart, 1980), and reduce ultimate attribution error in intergroup causal attributions (Hewstone, 1990). A very important contribution was made by Dovidio and colleagues (1998) in a study demonstrating further support for the common in-group identity model where the more inclusive group mediates the relationship between intergroup contact conditions and the reduction bias.

The results also show that conditions stated by the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954) are positively related to superordinate representations. As the research shows, the common ingroup identity model provides an integrative framework for practical and effective educational interventions to reduce prejudice. We have adopted this framework along with the imagined contact hypothesis and cross-categorization techniques to create an anti-prejudice educational intervention conducted during English language lessons (Popiołek, Wójcik, 2012). Participating in our study were 60 boys and girls aged 16/17, all students of the Secondary School of Fine Arts in Katowice. The idea behind conducting this intervention was its universal character and the ease with which it could be implemented into the foreign-language lesson curriculum. The intervention's overall goal was to emphasize the diversity of outgroup members and intergroup similarity by encouraging the students to transform the membership's cognitive representation from two groups into one group. In order to achieve this, we designed thirty lesson scenarios incorporating various English language activities. Crossed (multiple) categorization was applied as a baseline for the program's first part in order to weaken students' intergroup representation and to trigger reducing prejudice. In various language exercises, we asked students to imagine and visualise different social and national categories crossing each other; to place themselves in different categories according to the applied categorization scheme; and to describe every day activities of outgroup members (socially distant) in order to see how social categories overlap and how, in many cases, the same categories are shared. In several activities segmental participation in multiple groups was emphasized. The intervention program's second part was based on the premise that intergroup bias and conflicts could be diminished by employing lesson scenarios which would encourage students to transform their cognitive representation of membership from two groups to one group. We attempted to accomplish this by presenting positive cooperative interactions and designing tasks which brought out interdependence in pursuit of common goals and an appreciation of diversity. We asked students to imagine positive contact and interaction with outgroup members in order to design a detailed plan of cooperation aimed at achieving a common goal. The results of this study were promising as following the intervention students included more social groups to the "my group" (we) category and fewer social groups to the "outgroup" (they) category. What is significant is that more students declared reduced social distance to most of the evaluated groups, including Roma – the most heavily stereotyped and discriminated ethnic group in Poland. The intervention program cannot be regarded as a "one-step" solution for intergroup bias, since the changes in student group boundary perceptions and distance toward outgroup members were only declarative, which is an obvious limitation of this study. However, the results show that intervention clearly prompted positive intergroup changes;

so it can be regarded as one of the multilateral campaigns conducted in schools. It is also important to note that a language-course setting provides various possibilities for attitude-changing intervention as every activity requires a text or speech with some kind of content in order to practice language skills. If activities promoting social values, diversity or cooperation meet all methodological requirements, they can be very easy to implement; teachers do not require any additional training and the class setting remains unchanged. If positive change is triggered, it may have a positive impact on openness and contact-readiness with outgroup members, which is particularly important for young people in Poland. As Boski (2009) states, the positive experience that foreigners have in Poland is mainly based on interpersonal relations and entrance into a personalized context where hospitality, kindness and other positive values are activated.

Discussion

The review of theories, research and practice demonstrates the great variety of techniques which can be successfully introduced into an educational setting and act as a prejudice reduction intervention. Linking education, social psychology and teaching methodology can lead to developing easy-applicable, effective, school-class based interventions. The intervention techniques should be context-linked and must consider both social-cognitive constraints supporting prejudice and educational background. Several factors must be taken under consideration: the kind and strength of prejudice, possible interactions with outgroup members, the way prejudiced attitudes are manifested, opportunities for contact, and the educational system. Tailoring intervention to fit the context and turning techniques into methodologically correct class activities may enable us to build a more realistic and better integrated model of prejudice reduction. While planning an intervention it would be very rational to derive from already existing ones. Cultural competence training has been highly successful in promoting openness and preparing for intergroup contact. Such training (Boski, 2009) explores and teaches about cultural differences and focuses on those which influence separation of groups in order to open communication across the barriers. More traditional programs, embedded in school reality, attempt to improve attitudes by presenting students with interesting details about outgroup members. The multicultural educational program *"TAK"* (Weigl, 1999) is an example of a successful, integrated educational path which resulted in positive changes in opinions on ethnic groups, mainly those who suffer stigmatisation in Poland – Jewish and Roma. The great variety of techniques, methods, theories and practices clearly indicates that further work is needed to explore their practical implementation into a school setting.

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