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VERBAL REPRESENTATION OF INCLUSION AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANTS

The *proposed research paper* addresses the problem of integration and social inclusion of first-generation undocumented immigrants in the United States. The emphasis is on student immigrant communities across the United States in New England, California, Arizona and Texas, where non-documented first-generation students of color are trying to find their way along the educational pipeline. The author explores methodologies that empower immigrant communities and how activists' initiatives increase educational outcomes for undocumented immigrants. As integration is accompanied by prejudices of the mainstream, the research also focuses on verbalization of social attitudes about these residents in discourse and specific vocabulary.

The core of the research is an exploration of integration, inclusion and career success of students (and graduates) enrolled in various degree programs, due to the influence of education, legalization of their status, civic support and social movements. It is investigated how assimilation, multiculturalism and civic support stipulate integration and social inclusion; the linguistic and discursive indicators of the degree of social inclusion are traced through the rhetoric and discourse of supporters and opponents (social attitudes) of immigration. Since the new Republican Party leaders denounced the DACA and DREAM Act programs (multi-phase procedure leading to permanent residency in the U.S.) as an abuse to executive power some University campuses have been made sanctuaries for the undocumented students of color by the activists. The author explores the relationship between language, social movements and culture, and aims to contribute to international conversations about immigration, cultural identity, and assimilation.

The article brings out the issue of Latinx immigration in certain New England's areas, foundation of the Hispanic Heritage Committee and the most state-of-the-art information on the vibrant Rhode Island's Latinx community. It is stated that empowerment of people of color in the transforming immigration regime can be possible due to the Universities that remain committed to supporting the undocumented students.

Key words: undocumented immigrants, gender roles, clash of cultures, intercultural communication, integration, social inclusion, assimilation, verbal representation.

Юнацька А. Б. Вербальна репрезентація інклюзивності та соціальної інтеграції іммігрантів. Стаття присвячена проблемі інтеграції та соціальної інклюзивності нелегальних іммігрантів у США. Автор досліджує студентські іммігрантські спільноти у США, зокрема, іммігрантів першого покоління з країн Латинської Америки, що намагаються набути легального статусу та громадянства США через отримання вищої освіти та права на роботу. У статті розглядаються, як студентські спільноти Нової Англії (зокрема, Род-Айленда) на півночі та сході країни, так і університети західної частини (Каліфорнія) та південно-західної (Аризона) й південної частини США (Техас).

Особливу увагу приділено поточним змінам в імміграційній політиці Сполучених Штатів, що пов'язано з рішенням республіканського уряду анулювати програми на підтримку дітей нелегальних іммігрантів першого покоління (DREAM Act та DACA) через надання їм права на навчання на рівнях середньої та вищої освіти, а також участі у програмі інтеграції задля подальшої натуралізації. Уряд кваліфікував зазначені програми, як такі, що зневажають діючу виконавчу владу США. Деякі університети свідомо надають іммігрантам притулок та рівні можливості навчання, проте їхні дії не завжди сприймаються позитивно на регіональному та місцевому рівнях; мешканців та студентів, що представляють етнічні меншини, продовжують переслідувати та принижувати.

Специфіка підтримки нелегальних іммігрантів, що навчаються в американських університетах, активістами, як і зневажливе ставлення до них, мають лінгвальні та мовленнєві маркери у риториці своїх суб'єктів. Розглядається зв'язок між мовою, соціальними рухами та культурою; робота є внеском у міжнародні дискусії та дослідження з питань імміграції, культурної ідентичності та асиміляції.

У статті сфокусовано увагу на новітній інформації щодо латиноамериканської імміграції у Новій Англії (Род-Айленд, Коннектикут), а саме, на суспільно-культурних організаціях та фундаціях, що представляють культурну спадщину цих етносів. Автор розглядає вербальну репрезентацію соціальної інтеграції іммігрантів у риториці активістів та їх опонентів. Наголошується, що рівні права та повноваження нелегальних іммігрантів (резидентів та студентів, представників етнічних меншин) нерідко реалізуються завдяки підтримці університетів, до яких вони належать.

Ключові слова: нелегальні іммігранти, зіткнення культур, міжкультурна комунікація, інтеграція, соціальна інклюзивність, асиміляція, вербальна репрезентація.

Today international migration typically concerns workers as well as political and economic refugees who leave their home countries (usually developing and relatively poor) and settle in wealthier countries searching for safety, improved economic conditions, and better education options. Today co-existence of different ethnic groups in the same territory is becoming a more controversial and complicated issue, because of the great inflow of recent refugees who are viewed as undesirable by numerous opponents of continuous immigration.

The world is becoming especially intolerant to first-generation undocumented immigrants and the United States of America is not an exception. Paradoxically, the country that was built due to

immigration does not abide *recent* immigrants, who according to the Republican segment of the country are more identifiably different from the mainstream, do not assimilate and embrace American values. The population of undocumented immigrants in the United States is approximately 11.3 million [Fazel-Zarandi 2018]. In his infamous speech (2018) President Trump used the “*racist language*” and called African countries “*shithole countries*” [BBC News 2018].

In the United States of America about 25 % of low-wage workers are foreign-born. Latinx Americans are an increasingly significant portion of its population. Legal immigrants primarily enter the U.S. to be united with their families; undocumented immigrants enter for work purposes. However, they bring their children and naturally want them to obtain education and pursue careers in the U.S.

Latinx (gender neutral term for people with Latin American and Spanish-speaking background) issue should be also studied from the area perspective. Correspondingly there is a need to undertake an area study of the problem. For example, if we take a look at the demographic profile of Hispanics in Rhode Island, we will find the total number of 148,000 Latinx people. Rhode Island has been one of major destinations for immigrant settlements.

The **topicality** of the proposed paper is determined by the number of undocumented immigrants currently entering the U.S. and clandestine immigration (mostly from South America) which arouses conflicts and prejudices, and leads to the immense influence of immigrant cultures on America.

Non-documented immigrant communities in the U.S. serve as an **object** of the present research; **subject** is the verbal representation of the processes of integration and inclusion of immigrants.

The **purpose** of the paper is to identify the specificity of integration and inclusion of undocumented immigrants and the verbal indicators of these processes.

The research is **aimed at** the following:

- elaborating a theoretical background for immigration, assimilation, civic integration, multiculturalism and use of politically correct language;
- bringing out the progress of the activists in protecting undocumented students in the context of changing political regimes;
- exploring the typical social attitudes about undocumented immigrants in the U.S.;
- finding out the *language* and *discursive* implications for social inclusion through the study of verbalized social attitudes;
- investigating methodologies that empower immigrant communities and studying how activists' initiatives increase educational outcomes for undocumented immigrants.

There are certainly proponents and opponents of immigration and there have been fundamental research works on the U.S. immigration. Surprisingly, not only Republicans oppose Latinx immigration. A classic opponent of Mexican immigration, who supported the Democratic Party, was a political scientist Samuel P. Huntington (1927-2008), chairman of the Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies. Huntington claimed that “the single most immediate and most serious challenge to America’s traditional identity comes from the immense and continuing immigration from Latin America, especially Mexico”.

In his last book entitled *Who Are We? The Challenges to American National Identity*, Huntington gives arguments against the large-scale Latinx immigration, pointing out that Mexican immigration is unique and contradicts the tradition of assimilation. He summarizes his argument by stating that “previous ethnic groups arrived in waves that began and ended, giving time for the immigrants to be assimilated, whereas the Mexican wave is continuous”. Mexicans, he argues, do not assimilate and become truly American, because they do not embrace American values and ideals: they do not share the work ethic inherited from America’s Anglo-Protestant culture; they do not have the same *hunger for education*, fewer have high incomes; fewer hold managerial positions.

Huntington regards the persistent inflow of Latinx immigrants as a threat and thinks that it may cause an undesirable division of the United States “into two peoples, two cultures, and two

languages”. His message is that the United States ignores this challenge at its peril [Huntington 2004]. There are opponents of the Huntington's controversial point of view. One of them is David Brooks, a columnist in the *New York Times*. He wrote that the most persuasive evidence is against Huntington, because Mexicans are assimilating.

Although there are some border neighborhoods where immigrants are slow to learn English, Mexicans nation-wide know they must learn it to get ahead. By the third generation, 60% of Mexican American children speak only English at home [Cran 2005, p. 90-100]. According to the National Science Foundation around 30 % of graduate students in science, engineering, and health are foreign (NSF 2013). Contrary to Huntington's statement, many undocumented first-generation low-income immigrants certainly set great hopes on education, strive for becoming professionals and succeed in their careers.

While previous waves of immigrants were entitled to shape the American Nation, more recent immigrants have to acquire the necessary cultural competences and embrace the values of the U.S. society. Thus, Latinx immigration and assimilation have been studied from a socio-historical perspective [Balestra, Martinez, Moyna 2008], through the language contact approach, the prism of value orientation, politics of house-work, domestic violence [Alvarez 2007, Galanti 2003, Mayo 1996].

Apart from that, research of immigration has normally covered the border southern and south-western states [e.g. Martinez 2008], although such regions as New England have also historically had large concentration of immigrants. It is common knowledge that New England is an area where immigration began, right after the first puritan settlement in Jamestown, Virginia.

Meanwhile, recent changes of political regimes and immigration policies have seriously influenced undocumented immigrants. While President Obama introduced significant changes into the country's immigration policies through announcing a set of progressive actions and later expanding DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) in order to cover additional undocumented immigrants, the new Republican party leaders denounced the DACA program as an abuse to executive power. Likewise DREAM Act (Development, Relief, and Education), DACA is a multi-phase procedure leading to permanent residency in the U.S. It aimed at young undocumented immigrants brought to the U.S. by their parents; the vast majority of them are from Mexico.

At the University of Arizona, an activist, M. Dominguez, calls to action (in support of the DACA students) all higher education faculty and staff. She worked out recommendations to support DACA students on campus, creating a safe and welcoming environment, including support for mental health and empathy. The activist argues that “along with *social stigmas* and *discrimination* come the feelings of *shame* and *guilt*” [Dominguez 2018].

Denea Joseph, an undocumented immigrant from Belize to California calls the uncertainty of her condition *daunting*, while Janet Napolitano, President of the University of California, remained committed to supporting Joseph and other students of color. A movement of American Universities has been organized fighting back against Trump by forming sanctuary campuses; for example the University of California helps the undocumented immigrants access healthcare, driver's licenses and student loans [Levin 2016].

As Rhode Island has a large Hispanic community, but the existing state social services were unable to meet their needs, Marta V. Martínez founded the Hispanic Heritage Committee of Rhode Island (Providence) in 1988, which later transformed into Rhode Island Latina(o) Arts (RILA). In addition to RILA there are Rhode Island Pro Latinos Association (Providence), Progreso Latina(o) (Central Falls) and other Latina(o) organizations. A special project entitled “History of Rhode Island” is supposed to document and collect the history of the Latino community through the voices of residents and business owners in Providence.

Apparently existing ethnic slurs directly correspond to the illegal immigrant and seasonal worker status: *border bunny* (*border hopper*, *border jumper*, *border nigger*) is a highly offensive term which implies that illegal immigrants hop the border to get into America. The derogatory slur *berry-picker* (*fruit-picker*, *orange-picker*, *tomato-picker*) refers to Hispanics that work in the

agriculture industry in California. Popular Mexican American snacks are mocked at in such Spanish-based slurs as: *burrito* (*burrito-brain*, *burrito-head*, *bean burrito*) [Yunatska 2017, p. 17].

Brown University activists (students and faculty) express concern for young undocumented students whom they see as marginalized after the divisive decisions of the Republican government. Activists are trying to make Brown a sanctuary campus, because they believe it to be undisputable that undocumented students of color are unprotected on campus. Students of color “face harassment for their identities both online and on the streets of Providence” and modern activists do not support the idea of “danger of recent immigration”. They are convinced that the University cannot stay neutral.

Due to the activists and their protests Brown University launched the *Undocumented Student Program* in order to support undocumented students and DACA and consider them as domestic applicants. Activists have a great commitment to increase support to students as they believe that “Brown University exists today because of its settler colonial displacement of Narragansett people (American Indian tribe) and occupation of Narragansett territory, the enslavement of African peoples and the continuous gentrification and displacement of Rhode Island locals” [Brown University 2016]. “Everyone in this country, except for Native Americans, came from a different place” a Latina student said, “At the end of the day, we’re all immigrants” [Podugu 2017]. Undocumented students also find support at Texas A& M University in Texas [Texas A&M University].

Activists believe that Brown is in debt to students of color and residents of color. *Fli Center* (First-Generation College and Low-Income Student Center) at Brown handles specific cases of undocumented first-generation – college and/or low-income students. The activists also founded the *Brown Immigrant Right Coalition (BIRC)*; however, they consider that the University does not provide resources for all students “to feel *safe, included, welcomed, and ultimately able to succeed*” [Brown University 2016].

Conclusion.

1. The exploration of the educational outcomes for undocumented immigrants supported by the Universities proved to significantly empower immigrant communities as well as multicultural environment in education.

2. Verbal representation of social attitudes regarding undocumented immigrants is reflected either in ethnic slurs (opponents of immigration) or in inclusive and supportive language of immigration advocates (*safe, included, welcomed, able to succeed, sanctuary campus, empathy, revolutionary love*); *prejudiced vs. inclusive* vocabulary; *supportive vs. hostile* discourse.

Apart from using nationally representative data, in **future** research it would be expedient to collect personal oral histories of individual undocumented immigrants, focusing on education, identity, language-related problems, and various aspects of inclusion.

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