STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

Strategies to improve the quality of education is the special issue of Journal of the Institute for Pedagogy and Andragogy (Zbornik Instituta za pedagogiju i andragogiju) that seeks an updated and new knowledge on strategies for improving the quality of education – knowledge that is based on various studies and researches of different aspects of education and that reflects the complexity of the concept of education quality (in terms of different education levels, types of education, domains and important actors in education). In order for education system to be of high quality, it needs to be *inclusive,* i.e., capable of including all relevant stakeholders in the educational process and responding to their actual needs and *decentralised, effective* and *transparent.* Competent system engages *educated, reflective, creative* and *motivated professionals*, offers a *high–quality curriculum* and promotes a culture of *evaluation/self–evaluation* and continual organisation development. It should foster *equity, tolerance* and *constructive communication* in order to satisfy *special educational needs* as well as those of minority and marginalised groups. Finally, competent system needs to include a perspective of *life-long learning* (MoE, 2004).

In this issue the quality of education is discussed through four main topics: a) reconceptualization of the quality of education, b) strategies to improve quality of education and learning, c) evaluation and assessment and d) affirmation of the importance of quality of education for different aspects of personal and societal development.

Reconceptualization of education could be understood in two (complementary) ways, both of which are transformative: a) approach based on the analysis of research findings on evaluation of application of different models that allow development of the new quality of education constructs, b) approach based on critical reflection and analysis of dominant theoretical paradigms and their implications for the contemporary education.

Reconceptualization of the quality in preschool education through reflective practice model is presented in the paper *Building quality in preschool practice through the transformation of preschool culture.* The authors perceive quality as a dynamic, socially and culturally constructed, contextualized, multi-dimensional, multi-perspective and a value-based concept. They offer the model of reflective practice through which preschool culture might be transformed in key contextual dimensions: organizational structure, preschool space, peer community, relationships with families and the local community and joint participation.

Since inclusiveness and equity are inseparable aspects of the quality of education, reconceptualization of education should be perceived through development of interculturally competent system that engages interculturally competent professionals. Focus of the paper *Competent individuals in competent system: Intercultural curriculum and teachers' competencies* is on intercultural curriculum that enables deconstruction of the dominant oppressive practices and empowers students to acknowledge and initiate social change, and interculturally competent teachers who are able to recognise biases and inequities, respond to them, and redress them in order to cultivate and sustain oppression–free communities. Special attention is given to the concept of teacher leadership, i.e. the idea of teacher as a reflective practitioner/leader who is able to create own practice and initiate changes where they are needed.

The role of intercultural curriculum and teachers' intercultural competencies is particularly important when it comes to education of vulnerable children – such as children refugees. Paper *Systemic foundation for good–quality, inclusive preschool education of refugees in Slovenia*, examines the systemic solutions of integrating children refugees in preschool education. The author argues that quality preschool education is only possible if all children are given the same opportunities for participation, and that preschool attendance is especially important for the children from vulnerable groups. In order for those children to get the quality education, systemic support need to be developed.

Strategies to improve quality of education and learning are discussed through several papers in this journal. In the paper *How to educate teacher: What can we learn from research insights on teaching and teacher education in Serbia and from contemporary understanding of teaching*, authors discuss some strategies that could be efficient in improvement of education quality. Inspired by the fact that teacher education is often seen as the cause of low quality of teaching, but also as a potential solution to this problem, they look for recommendations on how to educate teachers in Serbia. They offer possible solutions both on the systemic level (initial teacher education; programs for teacher induction and professional development; status of teacher profession on the state level) and on the level of curriculum (competence–based curriculum, teaching through dialogue and reflection, cooperation, secure learning context).

Article *A breakthrough in the enhancement of teacher professionality: the HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning* introduces an innovative, part–time master's degree programme as a way of mobilization the massive untapped potential of teachers as leaders of innovation, closely linked to the conceptualisation of teacher leadership as a key dimension of teacher professionality. The article clarifies the distinctive features of the programme focusing on it being designed, developed, managed and taught by a team of 'scholar practitioners' rather than university lecturers. The second half of the article is devoted to an evaluation of the programme using its own pedagogic principles as an analytical framework.

Paper *Strategies to Improve Quality of Adult Learning in an Organizational Context* is focused on strategies that serve both as transmitters of knowledge and important stimulant for transformation of the organization. The author presents few distinctive perspectives (individual, organizational, supportive and holistic) on learning strategies of employees, and critically compare these perspectives, having in focus their potential to improve quality of adult learning in an organizational context.

Improving the quality of education through implementing innovative methodology that will help students to learn more efficiently is the focus of two papers in this journal. One is focused on problem based teaching and learning and the other is focused on content and language integrated learning – CLIL. Paper *Characteristics of problem based teaching and learning* discusses problem–oriented education and its multiple benefits for the quality of teaching and learning, as well as for the students' development (improvement of certain cognitive abilities and skills, intrinsic motivation and sense of achievement). The implications of using methodological approach known as CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) is discussed in the paper *CLIL in the Early Foreign Language Teaching and Learning: Foreign Language Teacher's Perspective*. Author presents challenges in introducing CLIL method in schools in Slovenia, of which the most dominant is lack of professional trainings that leads to insecurity of teachers with the implementation of CLIL methodology.

Quality evaluation and assessment is discussed through paper *Characteristics of national and international examinations of the pupils' educational achievements in the context of quality assessment of the education system* in which authors advocate for the importance of examinations for the education quality insurance. Since the comparison between national and international examination in terms of objectives, preparation procedure and implementation, as well as relationship between the national curriculum and the contents included in the achievement tests, showed that results of these examinations are mutually complementary, their parallel application for the purpose of evaluating the same education system can be considered as justified and desirable.

Affirmation of the importance of quality of education for individual and socio–economic development, for development in the context of European integrations and foundation of education in the lifelong education concept is focus of the four papers in this journal. Paper on the *Missions of University as The Framework for Lifelong Learning* discusses significant qualitative changes in the work of the university stem from the tendencies to revive the concept of lifelong learning in higher education institutions based on expanding their missions: from the educational, scientific and research, to the social mission and the mission that is oriented towards sustainable development. Authors' analyses of learning opportunities in higher education institutions through the prism of the four missions of the university, led them to the conclusion that there is mutual

connection between the four missions of the university and life–long learning opportunities. Four missions represent an important framework for developing the context for lifelong learning opportunities and at the same time, creation of these opportunities contributes to the development of all four missions.

In the article *Professionalization and Quality Management: Struggles, Boundaries and Bridges Between Two Approaches* authors discussed professionalization and quality management as an important aspect of the agenda of European educational policy and the scientific community in Europe. Through comparison of two different perspectives (professional and organizational), i.e. two distinctive approaches (professionalization and quality management) authors delineated boundaries between them and offered their combination as possible way to reach quality in the domain of adult learning. Professionalization of the fields of pedagogy and andragogy have been in the focus of the paper *Hundred and Twenty-Five Years of the Chair for Pedagogy at Belgrade University*. The author presents detailed historical development of the Department for Pedagogy and Andragogy and establishment of the Institute for Pedagogy and Andragogy at the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Belgrade.

The role of education in the process of combating mobbing and increasing the quality of life at work is discussed in the paper *Education and quality of life at work – towards the prevention and overcoming of mobbing*. Authors discuss various tools, measures and strategies to combat mobbing and they emphasize the power of education in this process: by providing relevant information, awareness raising, counselling and training of all employees to recognize mobbing and to protect themselves as well as other co–workers.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF PROBLEM BASED TEACHING AND LEARNING[1]

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Abstract

Research of problem solving process, and theoretical foundation and practice of problem based teaching, point to the possibilities enabled by problem–oriented education, within the whole of intellectual education process. Some characteristics of problem based teaching indicate the presence of a significantly higher level of student learning activities in this model of teaching, which makes it an effective way of achieving basic goals of intellectual education in teaching practice. Students' cognitive activities take place through the usage of different approaches and procedures for solving problems, as well as by practicing a wide range of thought operations, such as analysis, comparison, concluding, and others. An inseparable part of the process of solving any problematic task in teaching is the complex activity of discovering, i.e. learning by discovery. Each student particular discovery in problem based teaching, by overcoming cognitive obstacles, has multiple significance in the process of intellectual education, which is reflected by the improvement of certain cognitive abilities and skills, as well as the development of intrinsic motivation and competitiveness. The outcomes of problem based teaching are reflected through significant improvement of the competences of discovery thinking, which is one of the key characteristics of problem–oriented education and problem based teaching.

Keywords: intellectual education, problem based teaching, learning by discovery, cognitive obstacle.

Introduction

Complex cognitive processes that are activated in problem situations are considered as the most complex of all intellectual functions, especially when the

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processes are dealing with complex problems. In Vygotskian psychology, these processes are defined as cognitive processes of higher order, which require modification (specific use) and control of simpler abilities and basic thinking skills.

Research in the area of problem solving began with the German gestaltists in the twenties of the last century, and research in this area continued in the 60s and 70s. In these laboratory research, simple problematic tasks dominated, and these researches were aimed at discovering the basic characteristics of the problem solving process (Mayer, 1992). The most famous of the tasks that were then applied were the Dunkerian X-ray problem and Evert's and Lambert's disc problem, later called the Hanoi Tower problem. The characteristics of the process of solving both of these tasks were studied in the respondents for whom these problems were presented as new and unknown problem situations.

There are certain characteristics of the research of problem solving process in laboratory conditions, in which a high level of control of different factors' impact on the problem solving process is realized, which differ in relation to non–laboratory research in this field. Despite the significance of the results obtained in this way, there are also attitudes that the results of laboratory experimental investigations of the problem solving process can not be completely generalized to non–laboratory conditions (Sternberg, 1995). This led to an emphasis on the study of the real–world problem solving process, in which a generalization to non–laboratory conditions can be achieved with a greater level of reliability, as opposed to solving abstract problems in laboratory, in which the generalization is less reliable than non–laboratory conditions.

Different aspects are studied in the problem solving process, and a different significance is attached to the research of these particular aspects. Thus, in one of the studies, a distinction is made between the cognitive, motivational and social aspects of problem solving (Dörner & Wearing, 1995). Moreover, emphasis is placed on the interconnectedness and conditionality of these particular aspects of problem solving.

Common characteristics of problem situations

Solving problems in teaching and learning process depends on several different factors related to the characteristics of problematic tasks, as well as to certain cognitive and other relevant characteristics of students. It is possible to notice the existence of two contexts in the problem solving process, both *objective context of problem solving* and the *subjective (intersubjective) context of problem solving*. For the most problematic tasks, a solution model is known, as well as the smallest number of steps necessary to get to the correct solution, i.e. the so–called *task solving algorithm*, through the optimal procedure of solving. However, in real cases of solving problematic tasks, it is usually not always possible

nor necessary to solve the task through the minimal number of steps. All these features represent the objective context of problem solving. The problem solving process also depends on characteristics of student who solves it. How the student will solve the problem, how he/she will accomplish the task, the way he/she will try to solve it, how the process of reaching a solution actually goes, depends on several different factors. Some of these factors relate to the cognitive abilities and skills of the student, previous knowledge and experience in solving similar problems, as well as of form and level of motivation, etc.

Success in solving a problematic task depends on the extent to which the adequacy of objective and subjective contexts of problem solving is achieved, that is, the objective characteristics of the task and the potentials for solving that student possesses, and their mutual connections. This kind of adequacy is not something that can be previously set and assigned, but rather a state that changes and adjusts in the process of solving the problem. The basic elements of the harmonization of these two contexts relate to the previous assessment of students' capabilities, as well as of the design of an assistance to students in the problem solving process. Assessment of students' opportunities, made from teacher, takes place in the process of problem solving, but also outside of this process. This assessment allows to set the level of requirements that are posed in problem assignment, with the student's capabilities, current and potential.

Analyzing some of the key characteristics of any problem situation, *incompleteness of data*, *nonobviousness in connections*, and *incomplete clarity of the situation* appear as important characteristics. These characteristics are present in all problem situations, and represent their common and general characteristics and are explained by the use of different terms. For each problematic task can be assumed that some basic properties are presence and used as a base for starting the solving, but those important properties (connections and relationships) are initially often unclear and unknown to student who solves the task. On the other hand, the connections and relationships that exist between individual elements are not self–evident, and they are usually indirectly given. In order to make to student understandable and concrete in a cognitive sense, it is essential that he/she makes a cognitive effort which is directed to discovery in a problem situation. All this determines that the initial situation contains elements of incomplete clarity.

Funke (1995) also emphasizes the lack of clarity in problem situation. Addressing the complex problems and situations that arise from them, he explains *non-transparency* (absence of clarity of the situation) as one of the four key characteristics of complex problems, which refers to "initial ambiguity" and "extended ambiguity" in the process of problem solving. He also cites the following characteristics of complex problems: *multidimensionality* (the presence of a multiple goal), *complexity* (presence of a large number of elements, interrelations and decisions), and *dynamics* (time dimension of the problem).

It can be accepted that a problematic task in the area of any school subject is a form of *didactically designed cognitive obstacle*, for which it is necessary that student needs to make cognitive effort, in order to solve the problem (Antonijević, 2008a, 2016). A key concept here is the "didactically designed obstacle", that is, the cognitive obstacle chosen in accordance with the expectations related to the quality and outcomes of the learning process in teaching. This means that any problem situation and any obstacle cannot be equally valuable for the process of developing students' cognitive abilities and skills in teaching and learning process. In the process of "seeking a solution" for a set problematic task in the teaching it is necessary that the obstacle faced by student needs to be individualized, in accordance with his capability to adequately respond to the given obstacle.

Students encounter various "tasks" and "obstacles" in teaching process. The questions that arise are: in what depends on the extent to which an obstacle itself will attract the attention of students, and what will be the motives that will move them to action, as response to an obstacle. That is, what are the problematic tasks and situations that are more attractive for students, whose characteristics make it possible to more attract students' attention and increase their desire to solve them. The attractiveness of problematic tasks is largely determined the model of motivation for solving them in teaching process.

A particularly important moment in the problem solving process is the *discovery of problem solution*. The "discovering of problem solution" in its etymological meaning points to the process nature of problem solving activities, while the "discovery of problem solution" is outcome of discovering process, the moment of coming to an idea or conception of what might be a solution to the problem (Antonijević, 2009). The discovery of the problem solution has more significance in the process of solving a problematic task. The basic question is what can be considered as a "discovery" in the process of solving the task, and whether the discovery can only reffer to the solution of the problem. In some cases, the discovery of the solution can in fact mean the *discovery of the way* how to get the solution. This is the moment when understanding of an inner essential connection in a problem situation is achieved, an understanding that enables the final solution of the task to be reached. This type of discovery in the process of solving the problematic task can be identified as a *previous discovery*. However, in some elementary form, the understanding of an inner connection or relationship in a problem situation is also a kind of discovery. It is noticeable that in the process of problem solving there are "discoveries" that are different in their scope, range, nature, significance and purpose.

The process of solving the problematic task is accompanied with a kind of cognitive restlessness, which can be characterized as a kind of *cognitive tension*, as a cognitive aspect of problem solving, as well as a kind of *emotional tension*, as an affective aspect of problem solving (Andrews, Ainley & Frydenberg, 2010). Both of them represent significant motivational elements in the process. They

are tracked by a certain level of student curiosity that arises in the process of problem solving. If they are present in a natural way, they can contribute to the enhancement of curiosity and the quality of motivation.

The problem solving process is accompanied with specific goals, desires, expectations, needs and efforts of the subject of problem solving, and all is directed towards the outcome of the solving. Set of these elements of the problem solving process also determines whether and to what extent the solving of a problematic task will present some kind of challenge for the student, whether the student and to what extent will solve the problematic task "with satisfaction", or the task will be solved only on the basis of an external imposed obligation, which often happens in teaching. An element that can certainly contribute to the efficiency of problem based teaching work is precisely to enable the emergence of a series of cognitive challenges, through solving various problematic tasks.

When it comes to the students' wishes and interests in the process of problem solving, the role of teachers is to initialize the formation of internal motivation for solving problematic tasks, by assingment of adequate problematic tasks, using an individualized approach. In this sense, it is necessary that each problematic task in the teaching should be an individualized cognitive obstacle, which will be an incentive in an optimal way for the making of cognitive effort and for the starting of a series of cognitive activities necessary to overcome the set obstacle, that is, to arrive at the task solution. This is especially evident in situations of learning complex theoretical concepts (Antonijević, 2008b), when it is necessary that a student with adequate cognitive efforts directed to solving problem situation, by finding the essence that forms the content of theoretical concepts.

What internal cognitive needs students satisfy in the process of problem solving? There are at least two general needs, one of which is caused from the outside, from the sociopsychological context in which the problem is solved, while the other needs arises from the characteristics of students' personality. These are the *need to proving before others*, in front of teachers and other students, and the *need for self-proving*. Each student sees the opportunity in every situation where can be showed "on the job" some cognitive ability and skill. On the other hand, each student have an important internal need and desire for self-expression, for "providing the opportunity" for himself to confirm himself on the internal plane that he/she has some ability or skill to do/perform something. Dealing with activities that meet these needs largely contribute directly to the strengthening of students' self-esteem.

Students' expectations regarding problem solving can be cognitive, which means that a student can have certain ideas and anticipations about what can be a solution to a problem and how the solution can be reached. These expectations, if the students "convinced" that they have chosen the right procedure in solving, can act to strengthen the will by engaging more effort to solve the problem, which implies that the cognitive effort is increased. However, solving problems

through attempts and mistakes can act inhibitively to success in solving, if a student feels "wandering" in the solving process, does not find a proper "direction" in his attempts, which also follows lower expectations, in terms of anticipation of the solution. Expectations in the process of solving problems also have their emotional and conative dimension (Andrews, Ainley & Frydenberg, 2010). The problem solving process has its goal set by the subject and the sense and purpose of the solving that follows them. The nature of the goal depends on several different emotional–conative elements in the process of solving the problem, as well as the nature of expectations in an emotional sense. Expectations are strengthened and weakened according to the meaning and achievability of the set goal in the problem solving process. In the beginning, the goal can be strong, it can have a certain importance and "weight". Such an evaluation of a goal can sustain the expectation that a solution will come. However, just as the cognitive dimension of expectation can be inhibited and weakened, both the emotional–conative dimension can weaken, due to the weakening of the student's vision of the target's value.

Development of cognitive capacity of students in problem based teaching and learning

The thinking activity of students is one of the essential characteristics of problem based teaching and problem solving processes. Intellectual education of students in problem based teaching takes place through the use of thinking operations, which the use of certain cognitive abilities and skills of students is based on. There are other aspects of problem teaching that are important for the cognitive development of students, which can not be ignored as the general context for intellectual education of students.

Cognitive abilities and skills represent the basic means of problem solving. It is necessary to clarify what are the abilities and skills, and what are the operations of thought, and how they are interconnected. Cognitive ability is a kind capacity of the intellect to react in certain situations, in a way that allows solution of a particular situation. This reaction is realized as a related pragmatic set of miscellaneous thought operations that represent means of manifesting certain abilities in a situation. Under certain conditions, training of certain abilities occurs, in cases where the level of demand and effort in the use of skills goes beyond previous cases. For example, when a student is able to solve a much more difficult problematic task than some of the previous ones, it can be expected that the way in which certain thought operations will be used, will enable the development and improvement of some existing cognitive abilities and skills (Antonijević, 2016). On the other hand, it is necessary to distinguish between cognitive abilities and cognitive skills. This difference is essential for a better understanding of the problem solving process and its pedagogical significance,

based on the fact that a student uses both skills and abilities in this process, so that the developmental influence to ones and others can be achieved.

The questions arise: what kind of role does critical thinking play in the process of problem solving and whether the application of critical thinking, the realization of a critical attitude and approach to the problem allows for better management in problem situations and more efficient problem solving. There is a perception that critical thinking can have its full manifestation and development in problem based teaching, and that any problem solving necessarily involves (or should include) critical thinking (Pavlović–Babić et al., 2001). It is point of view that this form of thinking, in addition to creative thinking, runs through all stages of problem solving. If a student points to the importance of a critical attitude and approach in thinking that should be expressed in relation to all elements of the problem solving process, this allows creation of a more efficient problem solving concept and enables the problem solving process to be significantly more effective. In that sense, there is a specific question as to whether and at what stage of the problem solving critical thinking is crucial. It can be assumed that critical thinking plays a particularly important role in solving complex problematic tasks, which require students to penetrate deeper and reveal connections and relationships, possibly by splitting the task into smaller parts, observing the problem from different points of view, and the like. Critical thinking also allows to overcome one-sided access, fixation to one solution of the problem.

Abilities and skills of creative thinking also play an important role in the process of problem solving. Access to problem solving in a creative way, creative problem solving, developing abilities and skills of creative thinking in problem based teaching, and so on, are some of the key topics that are being considered, when it comes to the relationship between creative thinking and problem solving. Creative problem solving always involves a particular approach to the problem, although creativity does not always take place solely through problem solving (Fobes, 1993). Also, creativity is always considered to be a novelty (a new idea, an approach) as a characteristic of what is a product of creativity, but creativity does not necessarily imply that what has been "created" has or is judged to be right and value. This leads to the conclusion that creative thinking is desirable in the process of problem solving, as it is also pedagogically important to enable crucialy development of creative thinking in problem based teaching. However, in the process of solving problem, it is not expected that every product of creative thinking must necessarily be confirmed and accepted as a correct (exact) solution.

There are various techniques of creative thinking that are applied in the process of problem solving. These techniques should facilitate the thought process of getting solution of a problem and it is advisable for teachers to help their students in mastering of these kind of cognitive skills. One of the characteristic products of creative thinking, which is crucial for problem solving, is the production of new ideas (Sutman, Schmuckler, & Woodfield, 2008). There is an assumption

that the production of a large number of high-quality new ideas increases the ability to solve a problem more efficiently, with the choice of an optimal problem solving strategy. In the process of solving "new ideas" often facilitate the process of solving the problem at any stage of the resolution. New ideas allow for better observing and understanding of the problem, as well as the choice of an adequate strategy for solving and finding solutions. Creative thinking techniques allow comparison of different new ideas and "verification" of their applicability, which is necessary for successful solving.

Creative thinking is applicable to all types of problems solved in the classroom, regardless of which areas they belong to and according to the structure and level of complexity. Even in the cases of simplest problematic task, students can be encouraged to identify and apply different ways of solving them, and in some cases they can be encouraged to find out unusual ways of solving tasks, seeking and discovering connections and relationships within the subject basis of the problematic task that are not common. On the other hand, the area of influence on the development of creative thinking in problem based teaching is also enabling students to formulate problematic situations themselves, i.e. problematic tasks and questions. In this way, students' creative activities can be expressed in problem based teaching, and a significant contribution can be made to the development of their creative thinking.

Despite the fact that most problematic tasks have one exact solution, the process of solving a task can in many cases take place through different strategies, approaches and ways of solving the problem. It is precisely the ability to come up with solutions in different ways, enables creativity and creative thinking to be expressed at the stage of choosing a problem solving strategy. When a student seeks an adequate way to solve a problem, his/her *inventiveness* can come to expression, which in some situations can facilitate the choice of the optimal way of solving the problem, thus facilitating the discovery of problem solution. These are the characteristics of the process of creative thinking that are functioning in problem situations.

Optimizing of problem solving process

One of the key issues of problem base teaching refers to the need to apply the principles and procedures of individualization in the teaching process, so that each student can progress in accordance with his individual abilities and potentials. However, pedagogy has largely been overlooked that educational requirements should be "adapted" to the current age-appropriate abilities of students. On the contrary, prevailing attitude is that learning should be placed in the *zone of proximal development* for some cognitive abilities and skils in students.

If solving problems in teaching were conceived using the conception of the zone of proximal development formulated by Vigotski, then teachers need to apply the individualized approach in teaching process. This means that the adjust-

ment of activities in teaching is not done in relation to the current possibilities of students, in relation to the area of actual development, which consists of students' cognitive abilities and skills that have already reached their full development. On the contrary, this would imply that each student gets problematic tasks in accordance with the need to improve the development of those cognitive abilities and skills that are only at the beginning of their development (Wertsch, 1984). In other words, the demands that students face in problem teaching should be by their weight slightly above the actual cognitive possibilities of each individual student.

The problematic tasks can be exposed in two general options in teaching process. One option involves students' individual work, which means that this option implies that the student does not receive help from the others (teacher or from the other student). Such an option implies that the tasks that students solving are by weight slightly above their current possibilities, in order to be able to solve them individually. The second option involves assigning tasks in which a student will work with the help of teacher or another student (Antonijevic, 2016). This option enables the establishment of an intentional interaction between teachers and students in the problem solving process, which allows the teacher to guide the students in the problem solving process, by the elements of assistance that will be given to a student, which contribute to the progress of the student in the process of solving the task. However, the student needs to make an adequate own cognitive effort to reach the goal, that is to solve the problem.

How does the implementation of the conception of the zone of proximal development in problem based teaching apear in teaching practice? Are there some difficulties in applying this concept and how to overcome them? First of all, it is necessary for teacher to know capabilities of each student, the characteristics of their actual cognitive possibilities, as well as the possibilities of thinking, of abilities and skills that are just in the beginning of their development. In order to respond efficiently to the requirements related to the intellectual education of students, it is necessary to enable the development of these cognitive abilities and skills. This also can be applied to problem based teaching, but also to each other teaching model. The difference is, first of all, that significantly better results can be achieved in the field of intellectual education through activities of problem based teaching and learning.

Conclusion:
Effects of problem based teaching and learning

Problem based teaching represents the place of appliing of the key elements of problem solving, a process which is psychologically by its nature, while in teaching situations it is a didactically designed and guided process. The appliing implies enabling students to deal with various problem situations, within the

context of teaching content, designed through certain problematic tasks. The basic questions in this field concern the pedagogical design of the problem solving process in an organized and relatively well-controlled situation such as teaching, starting from the positive effects of the problem solving process on the development of cognitive abilities, skills and knowledge in students.

We can talk about the effects of problem oriented education by looking at the key characteristics of problem based teaching. Certain characteristics of problem based teaching enable its greater efficiency, in comparison to other models of teaching work. These are the following characteristics (Antonijević, 2008a): (1) the active and productive position of students in the process of solving problematic tasks and problematic questions, (2) specific and non-specific transfer of cognitive skills and knowledge, (3) improvement of the different cognitive interests in students, 4) formation and improvement of the internal motivation in students, (5) strengthening of students' awareness of their own abilities, (6) self-actualization of students, (7) development of positive and stimulating competitiveness among students, and (8) development of different personality traits of students (such as persistence, flexibility in thinking, and the others).

Problem teaching enables a productive and active position of students in the teaching process, unlike the classical teaching model in which knowledge is transferred, which is one of the key features of the frontal work model of teachnig. There are many different factors that allow students to create a kind of new knowledge in problem teaching. This depends to a great extent on the nature of teaching subjects, as well as on the characteristics of problematic tasks in particular areas of teaching.

The basis of productively oriented learning in problem based teaching is the process of discovering solution in the process of problem solving. The knowledge that a student achieves through discovery, by individual or interactive learning, is usually knowledge that is more lasting in relation to the knowledge acquired by teacher' transfer, or from the textbooks and other sources of knowledge acquisition.

Transfer of developed cognitive abilities, skills and knowledge (concepts, rules, principles, etc.), as well as the possibility of connecting knowledge from different fields, is one of the important characteristics of problem based teaching (Antonijević, 2016). All these elements are developed and acquired in a particular field of teaching, are also transferred to other similar areas of students' learning activities in teaching. Some kind of general transfer of developed cognitive skills and knowledge also can be considered. The basic questions that arise regarding the transfer of cognitive abilities and skills, as well as the possibilities of applying knowledge in other fields, relate to the factors that enable transfer from problem based teaching.

In problem teaching, the influence on development and improvement of internal (primary) motivation of students for learning activiteis is achieving,

and it is an important factor that contributes to greater efficiency of this teaching model.

The development of general personality traits, such as persistence, flexibility in thinking, and others, is one of the important opportunities that arise in problem based teaching. Each student's facing with a problem situation gives the student a kind of opportunity to advance in persistence as a personality trait. Consistency can develop in a more general sense in students, that is, when the students form the view that properly oriented persistance is a significant factor of success in any everyday activity.

Based on the previous arguments, it can be concluded that teaching and learning should be significantly problem based and that the form of problem based teaching should be applied in teaching practise as much as possible.

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BUILDING QUALITY IN PRESCHOOL PRACTICE THROUGH THE TRANSFORMATION OF PRESCHOOL CULTURE[1]

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Abstract

We have based proposed strategies for building quality in preschool practice on perceiving quality as a dynamic, socially and culturally constructed, contextualized, multi-dimensional, multi-perspective and a value-based concept. This paper begins with the analysis of two approaches to preschool practice: evidence-based practice and reflective practice that we further elaborate on its three features: 1) building shared knowledge and values, 2) collaboration and shared leadership and 3) practitioner enquery. Through reflective practice, preschool culture is transformed in key contextual dimensions: organizational structure; preschool space; peer community; relationships with families and the local community and joint participation. The strategy of transformation of preschool culture is concretized through guidelines for transforming each of the above-mentioned dimensions.

Keywords: early childhood education, reculturation, reflective practice, quality building, guidelines

Introduction

Unlike within the dominant discourse of quality assurance, where quality is seen as objectively existing, measurable, independent of our values and a

matter of regulation and control, we've based our approach within the discourse of building quality, where quality is seen as a dynamic, socially and culturally conditioned, contextual, pluralistic, multi-perspective and value-based concept. Therefore, our extensive work with the question of preschool education quality was aimed at critical re-thinking of the different perspectives of quality: the theoretical perspective, the educational policy perspective and the perspectives of different actors of the educational practice – children, practitioners and parents (Krnjaja & Pavlović Breneseselović, 2013; Pavlović Breneselović 2015; Krnjaja, 2016). Researching each of these perspectives has allowed us to extricate dimensions for understanding the concept of quality on a theoretical and policy level and guidelines for building quality at the level of educational policy, including curriculum framework, and at the level of preschool practice (Krnjaja & Pavlović Breneseselović, 2013; Pavlović Breneselović 2015; Krnjaja, 2016). In this paper we will approach the question of quality in immediate preschool practice and provide guidelines for the transformation of preschool culture through reflective practice.

Preschool practice as reflective practice

The answer to the question of how to build quality preschool practice greatly depends on how we understand that very practice. Approach to practice as an *evidence based practice*, stem from a mechanistic interpretation of the very nature of practice as a system of human activity. This approach stems from the assumption that the quality of practice is regulated through the application of scientific research and knowledge (Buysse & Wesley, 2006; Rubin, 2008). At the basis of this approach are the following presumptions: scientific research creates objectively established data on which one derives implications for the practice, which are then implemented and standardized as criteria for "correctness" of the practice. Scientific-based practice aims to draw a "correct portrait of educational practice", created on scientifically determined data, which practitioners should not question. Practice develops "from the top down" and therefore its improvement and change rely less on the experiences and insights of practitioners, and more on outer scientific/expert assessment. Through a "generalized approach", practice is simplified and reduced to measurable cause–and–effect relationships despite its complexity, which deepens the division between theory and practice (Hargreaves, 2003; Kincheloe, 2008; MacNaughton, 2005). The data based approach corresponds to a quality insurance discourse where quality can be regulated, measured and controlled.

On the opposite side of the evidence based practice is the *reflective practice*, approach to practice as complex, dynamic and unpredictable. The emphasis is on ethical values and practical wisdom of practitioners as a base of the educational practice, without bringing into question the significance of scientific evidence (Hallet, 2013; Hargreaves, 2003; Kincheloe, 2008; MacNaughton, 2005). Practical

wisdom is understood in accordance with Artistotel's interpretation of *phronesis*, as an intellectual virtue that implies ethics. "It involves deliberation that is based on values, concerned with practical judgement and informed by reflection. It is pragmatic, variable, context–dependent, and oriented toward action" (Kinsella & Pitman, 2012: 2).

Practical wisdom integrates theory and practice, it is always contextual, pragmatic, action-oriented and value–based (Kinsella & Pitman, 2012; Miljak, 2009; Pavlović Breneselović, 2015). "Individual *phronesis*" cannot develop unless there isn't a "collective *phronesis*" (Kemmis & Smith, 2008: 6) because practical wisdom is not only in the "head of the practitioner" but outside in the "social, cultural, political, economic, discoursive dimensions of practice" (Kemmis & Smith, 2008: 4).

Reflective practice is understend as *praxis* (Kincheloe, 2003). *Praxis* implies the indivisibility of theory and practice that is developed through reflective, critical, emancipated action, purposeful, action which isn't defined by success or failure but by the principles and values it resides on (Apple, 2012; Hargreaves, 2006). Reflective practice seen as *praxis* consists of critical assessment, taking responsibility and reconstructing practice in accordance with understanding of the participants of that particular practice. The practitioner is expected to build a critical and enquery–based relationship *towards* and *in* practice, developing a consciousness that scientific work is important but not "superior" to practice, so that changes in practice emerge from a complex interaction of the "scientific" and "practical", where theory and practice mutually support and develop each other. Reflective practice in preschool is achieved through a continual process of transformation of practice, critical re-thinking and changing of knowledge and assumptions of practitioners and their approach to practice (MacNaughton, 2005; Miller, 2011). It is through reflective practice that preschool practitioners develop a critical understanding of practice and construct knowledge and as-sumptionst that they can change their own practice and rethink the wider social context of preschool education. Because of this, reflective practice is seen at the same time as a goal (the highest form of thinking and understanding of oneself and one's own practice), as a tool that changes the nature and form of education (democratize education and emancipate participants in the education process) and as a methodological tool for the practitioner (Radulović, 2012). The paths to develop reflective practice in preschools can vary, but they all have similar features such as: 1) constructing shared knowledge, 2) collaboration and sharing lidership and 3) practitioner enquiry.

1) Constructing shared professional knowledge and values. Through constructing shared professional knowledge and values, preschool practitioners crate a common basis that guides their learning and gives meanings to their actions, based on which a joint identity is built, and their intentions and values are affirmed. Through building shared professional knowledge, practitioners re-

think preschool practice and thus strengthen their understanding of practice and change their approach to practice. This is why shared professional knowledge that practitioners develop do not stay on the level of "informative" knowledge but become "transformative" and have the potential to change the practice (Miljak, 2009: 166). Shared professional knowledge and values are self-initiating for practitioners – as they are constructed by practitioners themselves and not by the others form them, they are more apt to question them and open up new perspectives. Through development of shared professional knowledge and values in the preschool, an environment is built for the emancipation of all participants and their mutual support, as well as the emancipation of the relation between theory and practice (Kemmis & Smith, 2008; Pešić, 2004).

2) Collaboration and sharing leadership. Collaboration reflects the quality of relationships between all participants in preschool, where they listen to each other and build relations of trust, share their ideas and take risks, learn together and from each other, work together on accomplishing jointly set goals and share leadership. The relationships built through collaboration and shared leadership between all participants (children and adults) in the preschool are spontaneous, voluntary, authentic, mutually supportive. Collaboration and shared leadership surpasses cooperation that is reduced to giving and receiving help and advice, discussion witout action or to any sort of "administrated and controlled" cooperation. They integrate different activites that engage all participants in achieving mutually set goals, in formal and informal ways of leadership (pedagogical leadership, organized guidance, social organization) toward "mutual development" (Rinaldi, 2005:39).

3) Practitioner enquiry. Practitioner enquery is usually defined as intentional, purposeful, systematic research led by practitioners to better understand and change their own practice (Carr & Kemmis, 2000; Cochran–Smit, Lytle, 2009; Krnjaja, 2016; Krnjaja, Pavlović Breneselović, 2011; Pešić, 2004). The purpose of practitioner's enquery is transformation of everyday practice into a research context in which research questions/problems emerge and are identified by practitioners themselves. From an "insider" position, practitioners determine the research problem in the context of their own practice, determine the type and manner of research, systematically follow and analyze patterns and build insights based on which they change their own practice. In this type of research, the practitioners connect theory and practice. They re-think questions that are opened up in the research which allows them to consider those questions in the framework of certain theoretical orientations and their own assumptions, to re-think them *in* practice and to change their practice accordingly. Joint development and re-thining of knowledge among practitioners lead to the transformation not only of knowledge within the practice, but also of theoretical knowledge that is origin of such transformation. A cyclic, interdependent relationship of

theory and practice in practitioner enquery makes it so that the practitioners develop their own practical theory and their professional identity as "theoreticians in action" or "practical theoreticians" (Pešić, 2004; Miljak, 2009). This is why the desemination of the change of practice is approached as a transfer of the best transformation process, instead of transfer of the best practice. Practitioner enquery contributes to the spreading and structuring of professional dialogue, not only between practitioners, but also between practitioners and other participants in the education system. In this process, practitioners also collaborate with other institutions, which reflects a connecting and widening of a community of practice outside the boundaries of the preschool.

The concept of reflective practice corresponds to the quality building discourse where quality is contexualized, dynamic and multi-perspective and derives from the process of the re-thinking and transformation of practice.

Transforming preschool culture through reflective practice

Vujičić proposes a definition of preschool culture as "transferable, common and learned pattern of meanings expressed explicitly through symbols and implicitly through the assumptions of the institution members" (Vujičić, 2011: 34). Assumptions are reflection of implicit pedagogy, mental models and images (Senge, 2003), personal theories about the child, education and learning. They set the ways how participants of preschool practice think, feel and act. These assumptions are the most hidden and least available for an observer, and often even for the participants of preschool practice themselves. Therefore, they are the hardest to change. The culture is manifested through existing explicit and implicit norms and expectations, written and unwritten rules, tradition, rituals, ceremonies, routines, through the meanings inbuilt in architecture, used artefacts and symbols (Peterson & Deal, 2009; Stoll & Fink, 2000).

The culture determines the position of the preschool participants – what is expected, allowed and possible, what is considered as desirable and valued. It shapes the quality of the relationships and modes of participation and action of all participants, or in other word the quality of preschool practice. Unlike the first-order changes that are aimed at increasing the quality of one segment of the existing practice, true change comes only within second order – changes of values, beliefs and assumption and creation of a common sense and purpose (Senge, 2003). Second-order changes lead to the transform of preschool culture (reculturation).

In line with the quote "Since we are what we do, if we want to change, we must begin with changing what we do" (Donahoe, 1993, In Pavlović Breneselović,

2012a), preschool transformation doesn't take place by raising the question of culture (values and assumptions) on its own, but through a reflective thinking and transformation of the key dimensions of the context of preschool practice: the ways children are grouped, the structure of space and time, support to the peer community, relationships with the family and local community and the ways children and adults jointly participate in the preschool practice.

The existing preschool practice is transformed in these dimensions through joint enquery and re-thining, building knowledge and values and transformation of the preschool culture. Figure 1 presents the guidelines for building quality through the transformation of preschool culture.

Figure 1. Guidelines for building quality through
the transformation of preschool culture
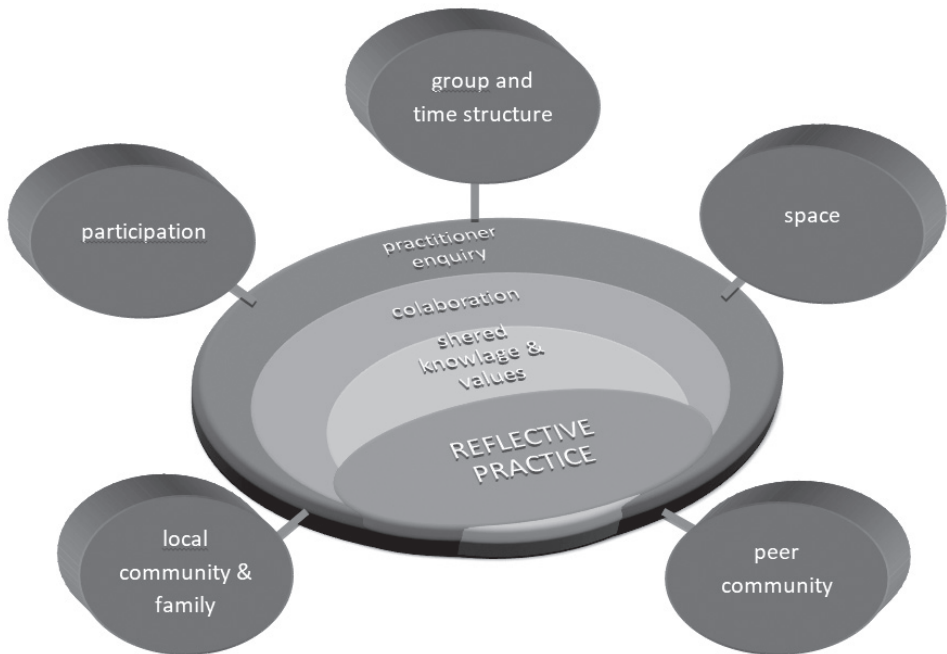
Reconstructing the organizational structure (organization of time and grouping)

As Newman writes, "culture affects how structures are used, and structure gives possibilities, boundaries, incentives and sanctions that shape culture" (Newman & Wehlage 1995: I–3). The organizational structure (the size and ways of forming groups; adult to child ratio; time and space organization) shape the

position of the child and teacher and modes of their participation. Research show that group size and ratio affect the quality of relationships within a group and quality of the working conditions for the teacher – smaller groups and a higher ratio open up the possilibty for a higher quality of group interactions; they enable the adult to pay more attention to each child and give the children adequate support; provide more possibilities for working in small groups and offer more choices to the children; create possibilities to develop dialogue and negotiations with children in contrast to restrictive and routined communication; they contribute to a safer environment for the children and a less stressful environment for the teacher (Huntsman, 2008). On the other hand, a large number of children in the group imposes teacher-centred methods, control and regulation which are aimed at the successful functioning of the institution, rather than wellbeing of the child (Pavlović Breneselović, 2015).

The organizational structure of the preschool should be transformed in the direction of:

- Greater sensitivity to the group size and adult to child ratio; advocacy for following the normative for group size defined by legal acts; organized and well-argumented actualization of the problem of oversized groups within the preschool institution, local community and on the level of educational policy
- Re-thinking the ways groups are structured – from age homogenous to mixed age group structuring
- Re-thinking the organizational segregation of groups within the framework of working rooms (classrooms), toward creating situations of gathering, joint participation and common activities
- Re-thinking time structure of the day where a rigid institutional regime (including time for "gathering children", "preparing for a meal", the routine of having a meal and taking rest, free and guided activities) dictates the mode of participation of children and teachers and reduces the education practice to isolated, planned sequences
- Re-thinking the possibility of organizing different programs in the preschool in accordance to the needs of families and children

Restructuring space

The question of preschool space is usually approached as a question of the physical surrounding that is created *for* the children. The accent is on the health–hygenic–safety dimensions of the space (the question of size, illumination, adequate aero-thermic conditions, equipment that is adapted to and safe for children) and on the pedagogical-didactic dimensions (the equipment being

age appropriate, including diverse materials in sufficient number/amont, available to children). Such reduction has the consequence that space is taken as a given and independent of the curriculum. It is not recognized that space shapes the curriculum with its organization, way of structuring and equipment.

In the development of preschool culture, the focus moves from physical aspects of the space to the ideological plane – the meaning the space has. This does not neglect the important question of the health–hygene–safety conditions, but they are seen through the prism of the pedagogic meaning. This means:

1) Architecture and artefacts (equipment and materials) represent elements of the physical space that manifest cultural and curriculum values, norms and assumptions about the preschool education, the child, learning and the role of the adult (Peterson and Deal, 2009). Understanding the nature and purpose of childhood shapes the way space is constructed for children and by the children. Since the spacial organization reflects the "generally accepted" understanding of order that is set by adults in each society, it aims to position the child in a certain way by giving the structure and maintaining control by which the child is led to what is considered to be the normal pattern of being (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988, In Lester & Russell, 2010: 42). Such a "Generally accepted" understanding reproduces itself through the expectations of behaviours in the space (Lefebvre, 1991, In Lester & Russell, 2010). Space is not just a physical; it expresses the expectations towards the people in that particular space, as well as towards their mutual relationships, creating the conditions for formation of identity.

2) The learning environment isn't only the immediate physical space; it creates a whole with its social, cultural, discoursive and physical characteristics that shape the interactions of the participants in preschool practice – the children, teachers, parents and community. According to Henry Leffevre, space is not a "thing", it rather represents a set of relationships – it presumes, contains and conceals social relationships (Lefebvre, 1991, In Rutanen, 2014: 18). Space has three dialectically mutually connected dimensions: experiential space (spacial practice as an observed, concrete and physical place that is produced and reproduced through our everyday agency in the space), imagined space (the representation of space – normative space as a mental construct, imagined space that is planned and manifested through design, institutional rules and symbols) and the living space (the representation of space as an immediate experience of social space that is subjectively and concretely lived experience that includes a "more or less coherent systems of signs and symbols" (Lefebvre, 1991, In Rutanen, 2014: 18). The living space is the result of a dialectic relationsip of the imagined and experienced space.

Thornton and Brunton (Thornton & Brunton, 2009) discuss the characteristics that space ought to have for the children and adults. For children, it's a space that allows them to express themselves, to explore and question, think and rethink, take part in projects – a space that supports the building of identity, communication and belonging, where they are respected and accepted. For teachers, it's a space that gives possibilities to exchange their experiences and observations, where they can lead, support and help, provoke and resolve situations, learn, explore and have autonomy.

- The existing preschool facilities would have to be transformed through:
- Reducing the social isolation of children, opening up to the family and community, increasing the learning spaces and participation in various spaces in the community, reflecting the life of the community and children's life experiences within the preschool space (Marjanović, 1987);
- Reducing the spacial isolation and age segregation by opening up the preschool space to support different encounters and joint participation of children of varying ages and adults;
- Deconstructing the power patterns by abolishing taboo spaces, forbidden zones and the unavailability of equipment and materials in the direction to enable children to participate and affect;
- Questioning the rules on the use of space, equipment and materials, time and routines toward enhancing child's agency and participation;
- Deconstructing the relationship towards the space and the manner of realizing routines, such as feeding, hygene and sleeping in the direction of joint participation of children and adults in such activities as opportunities to build social closeness and pleasure;
- Altering the space structure of working rooms based on fixed centers that limits and controls possible activities and learning situations by offering a limited specter of possibilities and constraining potential development of certain situations or events through adaptation of the space and providing equipment and materials;
- Deconstructing the spatial division between learning and play area toward integrated use of different spaces;
- Reducing the number of industrial and commertial toys and equipment that perpetuate gender stereotyping and stereotypical play, by bringing in equipment and materials such as real cultural artefacts (different tools, means ans resources, including digital technologies), semi–structured and non–structured materials from nature and products of human culture that support children's exploration, imagination, wonder and an aesthetic relationship with the world;
- Changing the orientation from uniformed and typical furnishing of the space toward personalization of the space that reflects unique personal

identity of each group member, his/her belonging to the group and also the group identity;

- Changing the use of space where it's considered as an area to be decorated with the most "successful" works and the teachers works into one that enables visibility of the learning process and continuity of children's activities;

- Changing the approach towards children staying outdoors and the non–adequate concept and equipping of the outdoor yard towards a maximal daily utilizing the outdoor space (during all weather conditions, except the extreme ones) for different activities, play and explorations. The yard space should be challenging, based upon natural materials, and children should be adequately equipped to use such a space. The outdoor space should allow the children to construct it, change it and build it. The children should feel safe in the space, but it should also provide challenges, be mysterious, giving them opportunities to hide and to seclude themselves. It ought to be non–structured and semi–structured, demanding a real or imaginative adaptation of the space within the play, allowing for different kinaesthetic possibilities and sensory experiences, manipulations and activities (Lester & Russell, 2010);

- Changing the approach toward the space as given, which teacher occasionally and appropriately adapts, into an area that is continuously built as learning environment through teachers' and children's re–examination and construction of both physical space and social relationships with teacher's thoughtful support, modeling and participation.

Peer community suport

Joint peer participation is a presumption for the development of children's social capital. Social capital includes building of relationships, friendhsips and social networks through which an individual receives support and group belonging and solidarity is being developed. Children enter preschool with different cultural capital that is built in the family habitus and it shapes their relationship to the world and determines how successful their inclusion and participation in new environments such as the preschool or school would be (Bourdieu, 1993). Cultural capital is transformed and developed precisely through the development of the social capital.

Peers are a source of support and challanges in learning and development and the child needs to learn to integrate his/her belonging to a peer group (to follow, accept and cooperate with peers) with other aspects of peer relationships such as competition, taking the lead and resolving conflicts. Through joint participation with peers, children learn from each other how to share, how to take

part in reciprocal interactions (e.g. in giving and taking, waiting for their turn), how to understand and take into account the needs and expectations of others and respect anothers' opinions; to control their own impulses and resolve conflicts; to re–think their own identity, consider the strengths and weaknesses in themselves and others; to take new roles and responsibilities, to gain experience in taking different roles – from leader to follower; to try different things and take risks, make mistakes and face them; to explore their theories about the world, build the consciousness of the existence of different perspectives; take part in discussions and dialogue, learn to understand and respect someone else's opinions, to use argumentation and negotiation; to set hypothesis, questions and develop common ideas, to go beyond what's given and generate new questions, re–think those questions, articulate their ideas, opinions and views, to plan and create a purposeful communication; to develop a sense of belonging and acceptance; to develop a sense of empathy and morality; to develop friendships and receive emotional support in new situations and when facing problems (Pavlović Breneselović, 2012b).

Friendship, as relationship of trust, closeness and security, is an important dimension of a child's relationships with peers through which they develop a positive identity, sense of their own value as well as relational ethics. Friendships give an experience of a "cohesive community of equals" and at the same time a "participation in differentness" (Corsaro, 2003; Thompson et al., 2001).

Preschool practice should be planned and organized to offer and support peer interactions, development of friendships, belonging to the peer community and building peer culture. This can not be achieved by verbal demands and setting rules by the teachers on how children should treat their peers, but instead through:

- Organizational structure (less number of children and a higher ratio) that creates precondition for quality interactions;
- Teachers' perceptions that they are an important source of support to the development of peer comunity and culture and friendships among the children – the aspects on which the real curriculum, for the child, is constructed foremost;
- Awareness and critical rethinking of how teachers, by the space and time organization and expecially by their actions and rules, are supporting gender stereotypes, unequal participation, the invisibility and exclusion of some children, rivalry and priviledge, non–appreciation of friendship and denying a space of negotiations/discussions between the children;
- Building learning environment that supports the interaction between children and constructs a positive peer community culture: through the space–time organization that encourages interactions, collaboration and equal participation; joit participation that promote community and give chances to children, along with the adults, to reassess and build the culture of their community and their group identity.

Local community and family participation

Social community is a preschool surrounding that encompasses both the immediate physical and social environment (different institutions, organisations, different social groups – the family, neighbourhood), as well as the wider social and cultural milieu in which the preschool functions. The local community directly and indirectly, through the familiy and teachers, shapes the conditions and ways of functioning of the preschool and ways of young children's growing up. The culture of the local community in a wider sense affects the practice of the preschool with an established value system and beliefs that form the framework of expectations. The culture of the local community also creates a context for children's experiences and mechanisms for translating everyday life experiences, through cultural transmitters such as language, styles of communication, beliefs, social and family values, customs, rituals, food prefferences, taboos, etc. The culture to a large degree also shapes the implicit pedagogy of the teacher, as a system of more or less articulated assuptions about what a child is, how s/he learns, what are the goals of education and what pedagogical approaches are effective.

Children are interested in their social surroundings and different kinds of experiences that these news surroundings offer them. This is how they build new knowledge, a sense of belonging and joint social participation, and with that sense of their own value. Children are interested in the world of grown ups and their activities, for the life of the local community and through their participation in the local community children build their identity, sense of belonging and agency.

The family is the primary and most important teacher of the child. It is involved in the child's learning and development since his/her birth. A partnership relation with the family are built in the preschool through mutual respect and trust, sensitivity for the other's perspective, continual open communication and dialogue, recognition and respect for the unique contributions and strengths of the other side, making decisions together and readiness for compromise and change (Pavlović Breneselović, 2012a).

The transformation of the preschool culture toward partnership with the family and local comunity implies:

- Critical re–thinking of social and cultural patterns that affect the preschool practice, the practices of the family and the implicit pedagogy of the teacher;
- The use of different spaces within the local community as spaces to widen childrens' experiences and learning;
- The participation of the preschool and children in various manifestations, activities and events in the local community;

- Offering in the preschool real–world experiences, local knowledge and events that are meaningful for the child, connecting preschool activities to life experiences, needs and interests of the children;
- Engaging members of the local community (along with the children) in manifestations, events and activitites in the preschool;
- Developing a partnership with the families based on trust, mutual exchange and deconstruction of the power patterns through re–thinking of basic assumptions in establishing relationships with the family (Pavlović Breneselović, 2012a);
- Promoting preschool education and the preschool program in the local community and raising awareness on the importance of the early years, play, children socialization with each other and the ways they learn;
- Cooperation with other institutions of education, culture, health, sports and different services and ministration, as well as economic and non–government organizations within the local community.

Joint participation

As a community of adults and children, the preschool "has common areas of activity, common reasons and opportunities for learning, common problems and ideas that have the function of gaining knowledge and competencies" (Marjanović, 1987: 52). Joint participation reflects the participation of children and adults in a collaborative way in mutual activities but with different and coordinated responsibilities (Bartlett et al., 2001). Children learn participation in common activities with adults and other children. To participate means to be actively involved, being an agent, affecting the world around you, and not to be a passive participant of activities and events that others have organized. The child has the need to actively participate in everything that happens around her/him, with her/his evolving competencies, needs, interests and preferences. Through participation, children strengthen the feeling of personal well–being and self–respect; they develop metacognitive capacities for reasoning, reflection, planning and predicting; they learn how to reproduce cultural practice through play and to transform it over time; they learn to express themselves, to understand others and how to relate with others; they learn mutual dependency, to share, make choices and take their place in the world; they learn how to solve problems and take responsibility; they build a meaning and purpose of the world and their participation in it (Berthelsen et al., 2009).

Children's participation is not a question of allowing children the possibility of making choice in certain periods of time and within an already set space and equipment or choosing what and with whom they will play. Such choices only

create the illusion of freedom and choice because they don't raise the essential questions of deconstruction of power and the real choices and participation of children (Berthelsen et al., 2009; Langford, 2010). For children to participate, there needs to be a relationship between children and adults that is based on openness and the possibility to freely express one's opinions; where children and adults participate in common activities that are mutually dependant and recipro-cal; that children have the possibility to make independant decisions, where by they affirm themselves as competent participants in the practice (Tomanović, 2003, In Pavlović Breneselović, 2015). Children's participation implies that the teacher is also truly engaged with the children and actively present in the situa-tions and events in the preschool. If the role of the teacher is reduced to an ob-server of the children with the use of observation methods as a source of docu-menting children's developmental stages and needs and to the one who teaches children in so called "guided activities", even when he aims "to teach, but in a way that doesn't look like teaching" (McArdle & McWilliam, 2005, In Langford, 2010), then the relationship of exchange between the adult and the child are not authentic and mutual. In this approach, adults are positioned *in relation to* the children and they see their participation as a way to realize already set edu-cational program and plan, and not as a mutual participation of children and adults in situations and events that are purposeful and equally challanging for the adult and the child.

Joint participation is achieved through:

- Authentic situations that are meaningful for the children and that cre-ate a space for a joint experience of the children and adults. These are situations that integrate what the children experience, ponder and fan-tasize about and what they do. They allow them to have authentic ex-periences in the preschool and in the local community. In authentic, meaningful situations, children and adults together engage themselves based on their own ideas; they discover, explore and creatively process their experience and insights instead of reproducing the regular and known ones.

- Situations that imply both ensuring the possibility and willingness of children and adults to participate in joint activities and to transform them (Hitlin and Elder, 2007; Hofmann and Rainio, 2007; Bartlett et al., 2001). Willingness in this context isn't interpreted as an innate or devel-opmental ability but is seen in relation to the child's and parent's position in the preschool, personal experiences and resources that they have and that instigate their agency (Rainio, 2008). In these situations, children and adults learn and develop mututally, so the agency is not accepted as possessed nor ever fully developed, but as "incomplete and extended, borrowed and dependent" (Prout, 2005: 143).

- Consultations with children, with the purpose of seeking the opinion of children as a guide for further action (Pavlović Breneselović, 2015), through which adults express that what children think and how they see joint life in the preschool is important to them and try to addapt their participation with children's perspectives. Understanding the child's perspective helps the adult to see the dominant patterns of preschool practice that shape the actual position of the child. Consultation with the children is the basis of a common transformation of culture, mutual planning and engagement of children and adults in joint activities.

- The quality of the established relationships with the child and that the child establishes are the basis of learning, develoment and wellbeing of the child (Pavlović Breneselović, 2012b). The question of relationship quality is not a question of individual activities that children and adults participate in, but the overall quality of the relationships *with* and *within* the environment in which these individual activities and interactions take place. In joint participation, children need adults to see them as competent beings whose interests, wishes and needs are taken into account. The child's competencies aren't an achieved finished state, they are evolving (Lansdown, 2005) and as such they are not something a child owns per se, but they manifest through the interactions of the child within the context that supports these competencies. In other words, the competencies of the child are part of the child–context system and whether and how they will manifest depends on the quality of this relationship – how encouraging and supportive it is.

- Supporting play and introducing a play pattern into all other activities in the preschool. Play is the highest form of expression of the capacity of flexibility – the creative potential of the human being (Marjanović, 1987), as well as the highest form of participation of the child where s/he percieves herself/himself as a powerful, competent participant, ready to listen to others, to reach an agreement, to connect real experiences and fantasy, to create and respect rules, to lead and to be led, to take care of others and solve problems, decide what is ethically correct, to explore different identities, to be dedicated and focused on imagining what's possible and to adapt her/himself in accordance with that idea. Within joint participation, adults build their creative potential and create a space of mutual creation with children based on sharing power, respecting ideas, trying out different possibilities. As a way of impeting creative potential in education, it is neccessary to bring in a play pattern into all activites of joint participation that are not play itself, as a pattern of inclusion and engagement based on openness, initiative, unpredictability, dinamism, good will and negotiation.

Instead of the conclusion

Developing quality in the preschool practice is a continual process of transformation of the preschool culture through reflective re–thinking of the key dimensions of its context. Leading such a process requires practitiners' empowerment for reflective practice; connecting practitioners with researchers; transforming the initial education and professional training of practitioners; agreement upon educational policy mechanisms that are focused on support, and not on the regulation of the quality of preschool practice.

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PROFESSIONALIZATION AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT: STRUGGLES, BOUNDARIES AND BRIDGES BETWEEN TWO APPROACHES[1]

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Abstract

The quality of adult educators is on the agenda of European educational policy and the scientific community in Europe. In these contexts, professionalization and quality management are often conflated. This paper is based on the hypothesis that quality management and professionalization follow two different approaches. The paper outlines the two approaches with a focus on their two different logics. After a brief comparison of the two approaches, the paper examines the conflation of these two approaches in the expertise Key competences for adult learning professionals (Research voor Beleid, 2010). The paper ends with a plea for acknowledging the boundaries between professionalization and quality management and shows ways of building bridges between them without neglecting their essential differences.

Keywords: professionalisation; professionals; quality management; standards; key competencies

Introduction

In European Union (EU) documents, adult education and learning was for a long time only included in general discussion of lifelong learning. Adult education and learning in its own right has only been addressed in EU documents

since 2006. Two documents in particular – Adult learning: It is never too late to learn (European Commission, 2006) and Action Plan on Adult learning. It is always a good time to learn (European Commission, 2007) – focus specifically on adult education and learning. In both documents, the question of how to ensure quality in adult education can be found (European Commission, 2006; European Commission, 2007). The 2006 document draws a broad picture of quality in adult education, including teaching methods, staff, providers and delivery as aspects of quality in adult education. The 2007 document identifies the staff involved in delivery as 'the key factor' for the quality of adult education. It announces the developments of standards for adult learning professionals as well as for providers and for the accreditation of providers. The idea is to develop quality in adult education by setting standards.[2]

In 2010 the study Key competences for adult learning professionals was published by the European Commission (Research voor Beleid, 2010). It proposed a framework of competencies for adult learning professionals. Within this framework, seven so–called 'generic' competencies and 12 specific competencies were described. These competencies should be fulfilled in a summative way by the staff of each adult education provider. The study set out competencies which adult education providers should fulfil at an organizational level and competencies which individuals should fulfil personally. With this study the EU is fostering its plan of formulating competencies as standards for adult learning professionals (European Commission, 2007).

Taking into consideration the discussion on adult education professionalization and on quality management in adult education, this paper is based on the argument that there are two different logics: the logic of professionalization; and the logic of quality management. Professionalization focuses primarily on the development of people and specific groups of people working in a field of action; quality management focuses on the development of an organization and its processes, often with the goal of a certain standardization. In the present European discourse, we see a danger of the quality management approach dominating the professionalization approach. In order to improve adult education significantly in daily practice beyond an inflation of quality certificates as proof of performance, we propose to consider and discuss seriously the advantages and limitations of both approaches. Therefore, our paper follows the core questions: what is the logic behind the approach of professionalization on the one hand and quality management on the other? How can both of them contribute to an improvement in adult education?

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2   The inaugural meeting of the 'ESREA Research Network on Adult Educators, Trainers and their Professional Development in Thessaloniki in 2009' also focused on the question of quality provision and assessment in the context of the education of adult educators. The starting point of this paper was a discussion in Workshop 10 on 'In-service training of adult trainers: The role of the enterprise and the role of the individual'.

Therefore, we elaborate firstly on the logic of the approach of professionalization in adult education. Secondly, we outline the logic of the approach of quality management. Thirdly, we outline differences, struggles and boundaries between these two approaches. Finally, we try to build bridges between professionalization and quality management.

Professionalization in adult education

The term 'professionalization' can be understood in various different ways (Gieseke, 2010). In this paper it should be discussed as a process. In the discussion of professionalization in the educational context, this process is focused on two different perspectives: one perspective refers to professionalization as the process for developing a profession (e.g. adult education); and the other perspective understands professionalization as a process of developing professionalism for people working in a specific field (e.g. adult education). These two processes do not contradict each other. Nonetheless, their primary focus is different, as will be explained in the following section.

Professionalization as a process towards developing a profession

The term 'profession' has its roots in the early modern age in continental Europe. According to Stichweh (1996), the development of professions is embedded in the transition of the society of the Middle Ages to a functionally differentiated society. The universities of the Middle Ages had four faculties: the faculty of philosophy offered the degree of 'magister', which gave access to the three other faculties – law, medicine and theology. Graduates of these three faculties belong to one of the three original professions. A profession implies several privileges for its members. In the twentieth century, characteristics of several professions were researched by sociologists studying various professions. From the perspective of power, the universities and their established professions brought a new, independent power into the context of the state and society.

According to Mieg (2003, 2005), the Anglo–American discussion uses the term 'profession' for professionally organized groups. This means that the way a qualification is acquired and the access to the market, as well as the standards for its performance, are clearly defined. In Anglo–American contexts, professions are normally developed by the initiative of groups (bottom up), whereas the development of professions in continental European contexts is seen traditionally in a top–down way by the state. Observing professions in central Europe, there are several hints that the top– down ways are dissolving and that bottom–up ways are becoming stronger nowadays (e.g. the strength of professional associations).

In a classical way, a profession is described by several characteristics. There are lists which name up to 28 characteristics (Perks, 1993: 12–14). The most common characteristics are:

- scientifically based specialist knowledge with a specific subject terminology,
- theory–based academic qualification pathways,
- specific norms and codes of ethics,
- professional autonomy,
- client–based and social interactions,
- self–control by professional associations,
- supporting public welfare.

Professions are researched from several theoretical approaches. Depending on the theoretical perspective, some characteristics are more prominent than others. From a system–theoretical view, Stichweh (1996) focuses on client orientation. Oevermann (1996) develops a perspective of an ideal type of professional action, so professional autonomy, academic qualification and professional socialization are at the centre of his approach. Freidson (2004) understands professionalism as the third logic beside the logic of the market and the logic of hierarchical administration. The characteristic for professions is that their logic is based on the specific, complex professional action of a professional group. Because of this, professionals are characterized by their self– organization and by the self–regulation of a professional group. Based on this sociological discussion, professionalization would mean to develop a joint framework of adult education as a classical profession. Looking, for example, at Germany, one of the first countries with an institutionalized education for adult educators, we will show some efforts that have been made to develop adult education as a profession.

In Germany, adult education has been understood more as a mission than as a profession for a long time (Nittel, 2000). First discussions and activities in the 1920s intended to qualify people for teaching adults (in the so–called 'Deutsche Schule für Volksforschung'). During this time, adult educators were normally people who already had another qualification. For example, school teachers, priests or university professors were engaged in teaching adults. So, until the 1950s the idea that adult educators did not need a specific vocational training or even an academic qualification was prevalent. Life experience was considered to be more important than an educational qualification (e.g. Weniger, 1952). This was strongly rejected by Schulenberg (1972) and theoretical reasons for this rejection were given in detail.

During the 1960s and especially in the 1970s, initiatives to enhance professionalization multiplied in Germany. At university level, a framework for a diploma program in educational sciences with an emphasis on adult education was developed. This was introduced in several German universities during the 1970s

after the decision of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the German Länder (Kultusministerkonferenz, 1969). These developments secured a basis for understanding adult education in the context of education as a science, whereas in the Anglo–Saxon countries it is understood more as technique or art. During the 1960s and 1970s in Germany introductory seminars and self–study material were developed by the Educational Institute of the German Volkshochschule for people working in adult education (Gieseke, 2010; Heuer, 2010). Through the expansion of adult education in the 1970s there was a goal to develop a profession of adult education for staff of the Volkshochschule (which was described by the term 'Verberuflichung'). During that time, adult education providers started to develop programs to qualify their teachers. Even today, adult education trainers still normally come from professions other than education or adult education. Nowadays, there are around 50 universities in Germany offering adult education as an academic subject. These developments in professionalization can be understood as initiatives to develop adult education as a classical profession.

According to the characteristics of professions, Gieseke (2002) shows through extensive empirical research that adult education cannot be understood as a typical profession; a one–to–one client relationship is not usual. Normally, adult educators are acting with groups of learners and hence the working context is much more complex and less oriented towards the individual. Individuals are responsible for their own learning, and this aspect makes them less dependent on the adult educator. Therefore, the logic of a client–orientation, which implies a hierarchical situation between a professional and a client, does not apply to adult education. Even the aspect of professional autonomy is only relative: there is a conflict between the professional group orientation on the one hand and the market orientation on the other. Adult educators are mostly acting in and for institutions. Nonetheless, they are also depending on an adult education market promoted and framed by new forms of governance which introduce voucher systems and similar instruments of well–controlled liberalism (Käpplinger, 2009).

According to the inner logic of adult education, it has to be asked whether the development of a profession is advantageous. It seems more promising to discuss professionalization as the development of professionalism.

Professionalization as a process towards professionalism

One of the first definitions of professionalism in the context of German adult education comes from Tietgens (1988: 38). He understands professionalism as 'situative competence' and defines professionalism as 'the ability to use broad, scientifically deepened and diverse abstract knowledge adequate in concrete situations. Or contrariwise: to acknowledge in just these situations which

parts of the knowledge could be relevant.'[3] Gieseke (2010) developed this perspective through extensive empirical qualitative research and defines professionalism as 'differentiated handling with research results of the discipline, together with interdisciplinary knowledge for the interpretation of an actor's situations in a specific practical field.'[4]

It is also interesting to focus on paradoxical and contradictory situations that professionals have to deal with (Dewe, 1988; Nittel, 2000). They have to act professionally in situations where no concrete, applicable professional knowledge is available. Other authors focus on competence–oriented ways of professionalism. For example, Peters (2004) describes the knowledge, abilities, identity and autonomy which a professional should display.

What does this mean for the (academic) development of professionalism for people working in adult education? According to Gieseke (2010), professionals in adult education are characterized by their interpretation patterns, which enable them to interpret situations from the perspective of adult education. Based on these interpretation patterns, professionals are able to act adequately in practical situations. In other words, professionals are able to put on professional glasses through which they can see situations clearly from the perspective of adult education. Therefore, a professional action always needs to be an interpretation of the situation by a person with scientific knowledge. Professional action is characterized by an adequate (not a predetermined) way of acting in a specific situation.

Professionalism in this sense means understanding the situation in which professional acting is taking place. It means a holistic understanding of professionals who have to act on the basis of their combined knowledge, skills and attitudes. So, professionalization means educating people working in adult education. The goal of professionalization is to support the professionalism of the people working in adult education. With this professionalism a further improvement of adult education can be achieved by the professionals. Where the term 'professionalization' is used below, it means a process towards professionalism.

Quality management in adult education

The concept of quality and its various summative and formative components (quality assurance, quality development, quality management, etc.) have become very prominent in educational discussion in recent years (Hartz, 2008;

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3   Translated by the authors. Original in German: 'Professionalität heißt, auf die Kurzformel gebracht, die Fähigkeit nutzen zu können, breit gelagerte, wissenschaftlich vertiefte und damit vielfältig abstrahierte Kenntnisse in konkreten Situationen angemessen anwenden zu können' (Tietgens, 1988, p. 38).

4   Translated by the authors. Original in German: '...sondern den differenzierten Umgang mit Forschungsbefunden aus der Disziplin und mit interdisziplinärem Wissen zur Deutung von Handlungssituationen mit Handlungsanspruch in einem bestimmten Praxisfeld' (Gieseke, 2010, p. 386).

Veltjens, 2009). When concentrating here on quality management [5], quality is seen as something like a guiding concept with a universal meaning when talking about adult education (Hartz & Meisel, 2006). This is rather surprising when considering that the term 'quality' does not originate within the educational field, but stems from the field of economics (Law, 2010; Hartz, 2008). However, the predominance of quality and management even within the educational debate is a good example of the increasing predominance of economic perspectives in the perception of a 'market' of adult education nowadays. It outlines to a certain degree the failure of adult education to develop its own terminology and to use quality management in an economic sense.

Turning to the generic meaning of quality, it is interesting to note that the roots of quality management can be found in American and Japanese industry (especially the car–making industry). Starting with external quality control concepts with rather summative functions used by Frederick Taylor for the Ford enterprise at the beginning of the twentieth century, the quality idea extended to all areas of enterprise after the 1960s. This was due to the success of Japanese enterprises and their rather formative quality management with a focus on participative processes after rigorous planning by powerful white–collar expert technicians. Nonetheless, it is important to note that quality management means only that the product has the quality that was intended. For example, even enterprises with an ISO certification can produce cheap mass products with low sustainability. The goals of management are achieved here; nevertheless, consumers might be dissatisfied with the limited performance of a product. Quality management does not have to lead to a good or better product, but to a product as it is meant to be.

Thus, for organizations, quality management is often a process of internal standardization and external image–building. Both are crucial for the existence of organizations coping with internal and external pressures. These pressures originate partly from political decisions in favor of increased competition between organizations and partly from political decisions in favor of a labor force with often flexible, precarious working conditions (Sennett, 1998). New forms of governance are closely related to the present prominence of the term 'quality management' (Forneck & Wrana, 2005). The introduction of the quality concept into adult education is a relatively recent development, which started in many countries in the 1990s and was connected to an economic shift in adult education (Arnold, 2010). Concepts of market– and customer– orientation from business economics were transferred to adult education. Norms such as ISO–9000 (and later standards) are used in many organizations as a means of standardization and should apply to almost any business processes, regardless of the products being produced by the organizations. In general, educational organizations started being treated

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5   Interestingly, the term 'management' has also taken on a universal meaning. Field characteristics here are often hidden. It is assumed that a manager could manage different organisations – an assumption which is challenged even in economics (Mintzberg, 1989), but is still mainstream thinking of MBA business schools.

as enterprises and learners started to be seen mainly as customers or consumers in the market of adult education. This perception is very influential, but is also heavily criticized (Forneck & Wrana, 2005). 'The common approach of quality assessment ... has been considered by many researchers (e.g. Dill 2007, Harvey & Newton 2007) as having largely failed to address the essence of educational quality' (Law, 2010, p. 65). Education and formation are not seen by critics as products, and learners are not seen as consumers, but as 'prosumers', who contribute actively and jointly in the emergence of education and formation (Arnold, 2010: 252). Learners do not pay for a final product but pay for learning arrangements in which trainers and learners are jointly developing something which can finally result in education and formation. Thus, the concept of quality is enshrined in new forms of governance, which are primarily led by accountability and only secondarily led by improvement (Forneck & Wrana, 2005; Heinrich, Jähner & Rein, 2011).

Overall, 'quality management' is a term which is very much focused on processes, products and controls by standardization. These processes and products are defined formally according to criteria or norms standards. Thus, quality seems to be a rather neutral term, which can be used in very different ways depending on the context. The central characteristic of quality assurance or quality development is a formalization of organizational processes. Individual actions should be guided by formal procedures or formal structures, which are often laid down by written guidelines, mission statements or fixed goals. People, interests, professional passion or individual objectives are not apparent, and the individual factor is regulated by this formalism. The negative consequences of quality management that is too rigorous can be self–referentiality, homogeneity, hierarchism and bureaucratism (Heinrich et al., 2011), which stifle innovations. In principle, quality assurance or quality development should help in the organizational execution of tasks regardless of individuals' subjective influence. It is not accidental that discourses about quality are mainly organization–oriented, rather than person–oriented. This sometimes makes the quality discourse difficult to understand and often rather socio–technical and very self–referential.

'Quality' is an overall buzzword, although it is also an 'omnibus term' or a 'container term', which means that the term is often used very differently. The term 'quality' is originally a neutral term which has to be defined, but nowadays quality is often a simple synonym for the 'good' without discussing what is good or bad (Hartz & Meisel, 2006). Particularly lacking is a discussion about whom quality is meant for and what are the real objectives in daily practices. Is quality meant for the government? Or for learners? Or for enterprises? Are the needs of these different stakeholders in adult education identical? How should we deal with different interests? Is there a hierarchy of needs, meaning that some needs are more important than others? Nowadays there is a high level of vagueness in the usage of the term 'quality', which makes it easy to hide the interests of some stakeholders. Surprisingly, there is only little discussion taking place about what

is really meant by 'educational quality'. In particular, the objectives and the content of adult education are not reflected in their meaning.

Differences between professionalization and quality management

The integration of adult educators into organizations shows the necessity of distinguishing between organizational development and professionalism, as Gieseke (2002), Harney (1998) and Nittel (2000) stress. The logics of organizational development and professionalism are different. Which logic leads and improves the day–to–day actions of practitioners? Is it, on the one hand, the logic of professionalism or is it, on the other hand, the logic of organizational development? In this respect we are lacking updated empirical research apart from interviewing directors or quality managers, who often tell legitimizing narratives about the success of quality management (Behrmann, 2010; Heinrich et al., 2011). For example, it would be interesting to research real educational processes and the consequences for different stakeholders before and after the introduction of a quality management system.

Professionalization versus quality management

Based on the explanation above, the logic of professionalization and the logic of quality management can be distinguished, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Differences between professionalisation and quality management

	Professionalization as a process towards professionalism	Quality management as a process towards standards
Roots	humanities/universities	economy
Focus	people	organizations
Basis of action	patterns of personal interpretation, based on unique cases	defined organizational processes, based on defined standards
Field of acting	social fields	technical fields
Perspective	holistically oriented	oriented towards individual parts
Action orientation	a good way of acting in unique situations	one way/right way

Source: Authors' own design

Table 1 makes clear that both approaches have very different focuses in many respects. Professionalization originates in the academic area and is person–oriented, while quality management is process–oriented and comes from an economics background. Professionalism as the goal of professionalization can be developed through a scientific qualification, by professional associations and through a code of ethics. Professionalization is understood as an ongoing process of a person in social interaction. The personal bases of action are patterns of individual interpretation, which are focused on unique cases. Quality based on quality management concepts is developed through documentation, assessment, objective standards, evaluation and quality assessors. It is characterized by defined and standardized organizational processes. The context of quality management is less complex and is oriented towards individual parts, and processes can be defined by one right way. In contrast, professionalization is needed for complex situations in which individuals have to interpret the context in a holistic way in order to be able to act adequately. Depending on the situation, different actions can all be adequate solutions.

The approaches of professionalization and quality management are far from identical and cannot easily be integrated. But instead of discussing which approach is superior, the most valuable approach should be to appreciate both perspectives and to benefit from the different potential of both. A conflation of both approaches implies the danger of a strengthening of organizations (managers) and a weakening of professionals, as standardization is often a very powerful tool. An introduction of quality management often results in the organizational demand that professionals have to justify their individual actions (Harney, 1998). This is even true when it is claimed that a strengthening of organizations would enhance professional culture (Heinrich et al., 2011). Normally, the opposite is true (Nittel, 2000) – a rather hegemonic quality culture is established, by merging the professional and the organizational perspective (e.g. Ehlers, 2009).

A critical approach towards conflating the organizational and the professional perspectives

Hartz (2008) and Veltjens (2009) describe a development since the 1990s, at least for Germany, in which the discussion of quality has stimulated a turning of the focus away from the professionals and towards the organizations. Quality is connected with the organization and not the profession as a starting point. Because of this, it is valuable to analyze precisely the expertise in Key competences for adult learning professionals (Research voor Beleid, 2010, for the European Commission), which seems to be becoming a basis for the European Commission in defining adult learning professionalism. In analyzing the Key competences for adult learning professionals expertise, a conflation of organizational and professional perspectives can be found. This is shown by the fact that the

study describes competencies of a person as well as competencies which should be shown by an organization. The sum of the personal and the organizational competencies are defined as 'Key competences for adult learning professionals'.

Furthermore, the term 'professional' is used for improving organizational aspects in adult education, while the term 'quality management' is used for improving professionalism in adult education:

> The 2006 joint report on progress with the Education and Training 2010 work program expressed regret at the fact that the professional development of vocational teachers and trainers continues to pose a real challenge in most countries. This coincides with other quality measures such as organizational development. The report could justifiably have extended the expression of disappointment to the professional development of teachers active in the field of non–vocational adult learning. (Research voor Beleid, 2010: 18)

> Quality assurance and management within adult learning institutes is indispensable for the professionalization of the sector. Several national country studies illustrate a demand for more measurements in this field. The study shows that continuous professional development (CPD) and external evaluation only play a relatively small role in quality enhancement policies for adult learning providers. This indicates a need for change. It is necessary to increase external evaluation and pay more attention to the career prospects of practitioners. These strategies support processes of professional development in the sector. They stress the need for practitioners to have professional autonomy in determining their career paths and, at the same time, to be accountable through external evaluation. (Research voor Beleid, 2010: 20)

The assumption is that quality assurance and quality management would improve the professionalization of adult educators. In this way, the organizational and the professional perspectives are conflated. This assumption is rather questionable. So far, there is no solid empirical proof that the introduction of quality assurance and quality management has led to a professionalization of educators – or even to an improvement in educational quality. Empirical studies focusing solely on the perspectives of management and quality assessors (Behrmann, 2010; Heinrich et al., 2011) are interesting, but deliver mainly self–referential assumptions about the value of quality management.

Quality assurance and quality management are targeted at the organizational level. To assume that improvements on this level might spill over to the individual professional level is far from obvious. In fact, standardization on the organizational level might even inhibit individual professional development, since standardization must logically lead to a loss of individual, professional freedom in action, which might be needed in specific situations in complex societies. Even from the perspective of economics this is questionable, as W Edwards Deming outlines in the introduction of his book *The new Economics. For Industry, Government, Education*:

> This book is for people who are living under the tyranny of the prevailing style of management. The huge, long–range losses caused by this style of manage-

ment have led us into decline. Most people imagine that the present style of management has always existed, and is a fixture. Actually, it is a modern invention – a prison created by the way in which people interact. This interaction afflicts all aspects of our lives – government, industry, education, healthcare. We have grown up in a climate of competition between people, teams, departments, divisions, pupils, schools, universities. We have been taught by economists that competition will solve our problems. Actually, competition, we see now, is destructive. What we need is cooperation and transformation to a new style of management. (Deming, 1994, p. XV)

This fundamental critique does not derive from a pedagogue or a critic of capitalism, but from the prominent American management consultant W Edwards Deming at the end of his life (1900–93). Deming worked for decades with enterprises in Japan and the USA. It is also a comment on our present situation of economic and ecological crisis, but it was rather prophetic, considering that he wrote it in the 1990s. Although Deming was the 'father' of the Japanese quality revolution and of total quality management (TQM), he was very critical about standardized ways in organizing quality and leaving out the individual perspective. He found that knowledge about the variation of people was missing, and he saw a general lack of theory in leading organizations and individuals in organizations. He opposed strongly numerical goals without a theoretical foundation (such as the theoretically weak Lisbon goals (Behringer, 2010)) and considered popular management tools, such as merit pay, as the best way of inhibiting motivation and collaboration of individuals in organizations (Deming, 1994). When reading his almost 20–year–old books nowadays, it is challenging that almost all his descriptions of aberration in organizational life seem to have become frequent daily practice in many organizations. It is even more ironic that public organizations often start to use methods of management that were once popular in commercial organizations, when the methods have already become unpopular in business life (e.g. merit pay), or that scientific knowledge is ignored (e.g. the Hawthorne studies in sociology of the 1920s (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1966)).

The developed set of key competencies also shows further indices that the organizational perspective is understood as the leading one:

This set of key competences is applicable for all professionals working in the adult learning sector, by abstracting from the specific context in which professionals work. Moreover, it attempts to include all competences needed to support the activities carried out on an institutional level. This means that not only the teaching activities, but also other activities (for example management activities and program development activities) are supported by the set of key competences. It also means that each professional is expected to acquire all the given competences, but that ideally all competences are available among the entire staff of an adult learning institute. (Research voor Beleid, 2010: 10)

The study assumes that the organization is the reference point for professionalization of adult education, not the individual professional. Furthermore,

anybody who works in the adult learning sector is called 'professional'. Another example of the mixing of the logic of quality management and the logic of professionalization within the expertise is the assumption that adult education professionalism can be broken up into single pieces of competencies:

> ...to abstract the core competences that have been indentified in other studies and in different contexts that could be applicable for everyone working in the adult learning sector. (Research voor Beleid: 23)

Figure 1. Set of key competencies of adult learning professionals

Generic competences:

A1 Personal competence: being a fully autonomous lifelong learner

A2 Interpersonal competences: being a communicator and team player

A3 Professional competence: being responsible for the further development of adult learning

A4 Expertise (theoretical/practical knowledge)*

A5 Didactical competence**

A6 Competence in empowering adult learners

A7 Competences in dealing with diversity and groups

Source: Research voor Beleid (2010: 11)

The Research voor Beleid study uses the following as its initial sources in its expertise upon which Figure 1 is based: 'academic and policy–related documents on competences for working in the adult learning sector'; 'Job descriptions, vacancy texts and competency profiles on providers level'; and 'learning outcomes of education programs designed at delivering competent professionals in the adult learning sector' (Research voor Beleid, 2010: 28). In this way, the study uses single tasks of adult learning professionals as a starting point from which the set of competencies are described. However, this rather technical approach creates several problems: it assumes that a profession can be defined by listing single tasks; and it assumes that a summative fulfilling of the competencies that are needed to fulfil these tasks would lead to professionalism. This approach can

also be found in the Australian competencies approach: Flowers (2009) shows that in Australia this approach leads to a homogenization of professional development and to ways of learning that focus primarily on the defined standards and competencies.

Looking back at what has been worked out in this paper as being the differences between professionalization and quality management, the separation into different parts is a typical way of developing and improving organizational structures but not professionalism. The leitmotifs for all these competencies are missing in the area of expertise. Such leitmotifs can be the formulation of a common societal responsibility or the fostering of the learning individual according to his/her own needs. This common societal responsibility can, as a consequence, act as a reference point towards the formulation of adult learning competencies. Because of this, the sum of single competencies does not lead to professionalism. Furthermore, single competencies can be understood as synergetic contributions to professionalism in adult education.

Overall, like other educational fields, adult education has to deal with new forms of governance. Quality management is considered as a governmental mode in order to steer quasi–markets by standardization. Thus, the dominant perspective is actually accountability–led and not improvement–led. The resulting trend is that: learners turn into consumers; competition is the new mantra; competency tests flourish like weeds; organizations have to be certified in order to get access to public co–funding; and adult educators have to meet new standards, while simultaneously being branded as being deficient and struggling with rather scarce public resources. The precarious working conditions in adult education and the public responsibility in this precariousness are not missing here by chance but are hidden in this new governance mode. All in all, this shows that the logic of professionalism is sacrificed for the logic of standardization.

Acknowledging boundaries and building bridges

In conclusion, professionalization and quality management contain different logics and have different focuses. It is a fundamental, categorical and logical mistake to assume explicitly or implicitly that the perspectives of organizations and professions are identical. The same is true of the assumption that quality management is an objective expression for 'good education'. Keeping differences and acknowledging boundaries is important in order to be able to see differing interests (e.g. quality of education might be viewed differently by a politician, a citizen, a manager or an auditor) and to mediate between emerging conflicts because of different interests.

The new modes of accountability–led governance in adult education and other educational fields are often characterized by a rather militaristic language,

like 'calibre' or 'mobilization' (e.g. 'it is essential to ensure that teachers and school leaders are of the highest calibre', Research voor Beleid, 2010: 18), which asks for general mobilization towards one joint goal. On the contrary, we should remain open–minded about the multiple differences – especially in our post-modern societies – and the value and richness of these differences. The consumer model has serious limitations, and the free space of professionalism beyond organizational chains is precious.

Nonetheless, it would not be advisable to build new frontiers between professionalization and standardization through quality management. It is important to keep the differences in mind, but also to see the two different tasks of professionalization and quality management in their contribution to an improvement of adult education. Both approaches have disadvantages and advantages as well as limitations and possibilities. Thus, we have to look for bridges and benefits, by combining both approaches at some points without losing the indispensable value of the perspective of each individual approach. Professionalization as a process towards professionalism in adult education focuses on the development of people working as professionals in adult education. By contrast, quality management in adult education focuses on adult education providers and their organizational development. Both approaches have different objectives in improving adult education. Adult learning professionals are normally working in organizations. For this reason, it is necessary to decide in which situation the logic of the organization should be the guiding logic and in which situation the logic of the professional should be the guiding logic. To identify this, the following questions could be used:

- Which actions follow a right/wrong logic and can be standardized by quality management? Which actions follow an adequate/inadequate logic and therefore need professionalization without standardization?
- For which actions is it sufficient to follow routines, and can they be standardized by quality management? Which actions need a holistic interpretation of a complex situation beyond routines and have to be professionalized?
- For which actions is it necessary to have academic expertise and therefore qualified staff (professionalization)? For which actions is this unnecessary?

Based on this differentiation, it may be valuable to evaluate which part of the Key competences for adult learning professionals (Research voor Beleid, 2010) expertise contributes to professionalism of people working in adult education, and which part contributes to the organizational development of adult education providers.

To reach quality in the adult learning sector, both perspectives should be acknowledged in their own respect. Therefore, it is necessary to think in which

situations professional autonomy is needed and in which situations standardized processes lead to an improvement. In this way, a distinction between the two approaches can be made, thereby avoiding a dominant definition of professionalization solely on the logic of quality management.

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SYSTEMIC FOUNDATION FOR GOOD-QUALITY, INCLUSIVE PRESCHOOL EDUCATION OF REFUGEES IN SLOVENIA

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Abstract

The article examines the systemic solutions of integrating children who are not Slovenian citizens in preschools. It focuses on the solutions that (do not) support the participation of children of international protection applicants and refugees in preschools in Slovenia. The author argues that quality preschool education is only possible if all children are given the same opportunities for participation, regardless of their status in the Republic of Slovenia. Preschool attendance is especially important for the population under discussion, because these children may suffer emotionally in multiple ways because of the experience of war and refugeeism. Moreover, in the host country they may be faced with further difficulties regarding different environments, language problems, adjustment and integration problems. The article demonstrates that not all children have to same starting opportunities for attending preschool due to unsupportive systemic solutions. The author concludes by providing recommendations for such systemic solutions which would lead to high-quality preschool education in Slovenian preschools.

Keywords: preschools, children of international protection applicants, refugees, systemic solutions

Introduction

In the Republic of Slovenia (hereafter referred to as RS) there has been a discernible growth in the period from 2011 to 2016 in the number of foreigners living in Slovenia for a variety of different reasons (Poročilo iz delovnega področja ... 2016). Nevertheless, the RS remains an EU member state with one of the smallest shares of foreign citizens among its residents (Eurostat 2016).

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On 31 December 2016 there were 135,536 foreigners living in the RS (Poročilo iz delovnega področja ... 2017), which is approximately 6.5% of all the residents of the RS (SURS 2017). Among them, most of them came from Bosnia and Herzegovina (58,355), Kosovo (16,580), Serbia (13,088), Macedonia (12,038) and significantly fewer from the Russian Federation (2,728), Ukraine (2,197), China (1,173), Montenegro (911), the USA (470) and Thailand (284). On the same day the most citizens from the European Economic Area came from The Republic of Croatia (10,855), Bulgaria (4,147), Italy (2,804), Germany (1,135) and significantly fewer from Slovakia (742), Hungary (724), Romania (609), the United Kingdom (576), Austria (511) and Poland (415) (Poročilo iz delovnega področja ... 2017).

The data on how many of these were children are not available at the moment of writing. However, the data for 2015 show that there were 7,505 children aged 0 to (incl.) 6 years among foreign citizens, 5,570 of whom were aged between 0 and 4 years (SURS 2016b). In the school year 2015/16, 87,400 children attended preschools in the RS (SURS 2016a), 905 of whom were foreign citizens, which means that their share in preschools was only 1.04%. Only 12.05% of the children who were foreign citizens aged between 0 and 6 years living in Slovenia in 2015 were in preschools. The data on the countries of origin for foreign children attending preschools are not available. We only have the data on the countries of origin for all children aged between 0 and 4 years (SURS 2016b)[1]. They indicate that foreign nationals attending preschools come from different countries. Unfortunately, the data on foreign children attending preschools lack information on the status of these children in the RS. The label "children who are foreign nationals" conceals the diversity of the children whose starting positions and living circumstances in Slovenia differ substantially due to a variety of reasons (e.g. parents' employment in Slovenia, war in their country of origin, etc.). This may have different consequences. The children may include children applying for international protection and children under international protection, and as research on participation in the educational system demonstrates they usually face more barriers than children from other groups of foreigners (Crul et al. 2017: 62).

Between 1995 and 2016 a total of 393 persons were granted international protection in the RS, 170 of them in 2016 (138 persons were given refugee status

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1   On 1 January 2016 the residents of the RS included children aged between 0 and 4 years from the following countries: 2,143 children from Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1,232 children from Kosovo, 272 children from Serbia, 631 children from Macedonia, 86 children from the Russian Federation, 29 from Ukraine, 92 from China, 43 from Montenegro, 17 from the USA, 16 from Moldova, 128 from Croatia, 44 from Bulgaria, 41 from Italy, 8 from Germany, 12 from Slovakia. 2 children were from each Syria, Pakistan and India, 7 from Kazakhstan, 11 from Albania. 5 children were from Africa, 4 from the Caribbean, Central or South America and 113 children from different Asian coutries. The figures do not include children from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Congo and Yemen, that is, the countries whose citizens were granted international protection in the RS (SURS 2016b).

and 32 persons were granted subsidiary protection). The majority of the foreigners who acquired international protection were from Syria (88), followed by Iraq (29), Eritrea (22), Afghanistan (14), Iran (12) and Kazakhstan (5) (Poročilo iz delovnega področja ... 2017: 37).

The age structure of persons under international protection in the RS is not available, so we cannot know whether they include children aged between 0 and 6 years, that is, preschool children. We do assume, however, that since there are few people under international protection in the RS and since only 40 children under international protection attended school in the school year 2016/17, they include only few children. Nevertheless, experts in education are unanimous in stating that Slovenian society is becoming increasingly diverse, and the area of education must respond to the diversity. But it is a question whether the systemic framework that regulates non–Slovenian nationals' participation in educational institutions enables the participation at all. It is also a question whether foreign children are accepted in the institutions, whether the educational process is adapted to them, whether educators are qualified to work with children from different cultures, etc. This text cannot address all the questions adequately. Hence, we will outline the systemic regulation and some recommended expert solutions regarding the participation of children of international protection applicants and children under international protection (refugee status and subsidiary protection status) in preschools in the RS. We intend to focus on this population because the participation of children with refugee experience in preschool education can benefit their processing of possible traumas, contribute to the normalisation of the everyday life of children and parents (mainly their integration in the new environment) and influence the acceptance of the children (and their parents) in the society. Due to the specific nature of their experience of war, flight, possible (at least temporary) life in refugee camps, asylum centres, etc. these children are a particularly vulnerable social group and as such they must benefit from extra social support. According to UNHCR, preschool education of refugees must pursue three goals: "increase access, improve quality and enhance protection" (UNHCR ... 2011: 5).

Supporting Preschool Accessibility to the Refugee Population in the EU

Many research studies confirm that the accessibility of good–quality preschool education is important to every child, but especially to refugee children. Here we will quote the study done by the OECD (2010), Closing the Gap for Immigrant Students: Policies, Practices and Performance, which found that first–generation immigrant children are less likely to attend preschool compared to

second–generation immigrants and children with the citizenship (OECD, 2010: 33). Similar conclusions are emphasised in the report ECEC for Children from Disadvantage Backgrounds: Findings from a European Literature Review and Two Case Studies (European Commission ... 2012) commissioned by the European Commission's Directorate–General for Education and Culture.

The European Commission included preschool education of refugees and migrants among the priorities in the area in its Action Plan on the Integration of Third–Country Nationals (European Commission ... 2016, hereafter referred to as the Action Plan)[2]. The Action Plan (2016) maintains that preschool education is fundamental to the integration of families and children from third countries in society. It plays a crucial role in learning to live together in heterogeneous societies and in acquiring key competences. Investing in preschool education has proven effective in tackling poverty and social exclusion, and in making sure that all children are given the chance to realise their full potential (The Action Plan, 2016: 7–8). Refugee children may not have attended preschool or school or have had a break in their education; therefore, some of them may require special support. Teachers and preschool teachers need special skills and knowledge to work in increasingly diverse classrooms, and also to prevent school failure and educational segregation (The Action Plan, 2016: 7). As a result, the European Commission wants to remove barriers to the participation of third–country national children in preschool education and help preschool educators in their responses to the specific situations of refugee families (The Action Plan, 2016: 8). It also encourages member states to promote the recruitment of preschool teachers with a migrant background and promote and support the participation of refugee children in preschools (The Action Plan, 2016: 7).

Examining the Accessibility of Preschool Education to Children Applying for international Protection and Children Under International Protection at the Systemic and Actual Levels in the Republic of Slovenia

Although a child's migration status should never be a barrier to accessing education (UNICEF 2016: 5), this is not always the case. The RS is no exception. We will support the statement with a look into the legal and formal framework that regulates the participation of children with different statuses in preschools in Slovenia.

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2   This Action Plan addresses the integration of migrants, including refugees, who are nationals of non-EU countries (third counties) and who are in the EU legally. It does not the concern the nationals of EU member states who have a third-country migrant background through their parents or grandparents or the EU nationals who have exercised their right to free movement or their family members (The Action Plan, 2016: 2).

The Legal and Formal Framework – the Systemic Level

In the RS the area of the education of the children and adolescents who are not Slovenian citizens is regulated by different acts and implementing regulations from the field of interior affairs (e.g. Zakon o tujcih 2017, Zakon o mednarodni zaščiti 2016), which makes it hard for practitioners to approach this population with different statuses systematically and comprehensively (for more on that, see Hočevar and Skubic Ermenc 2013). A child's participation in preschool is not obligatory in Slovenia (just as it is not in other EU member states). The Preschool Education Act (Zakon o vrtcih, 2005) does not specify the participation of children without Slovenian citizenship who are residents in Slovenia for different reasons, but it does state that the parents who are not liable to pay income tax in the RS pay the full price of the programme their child attends (Zakon o vrtcih, 2005: Article 32). Consequently, the full price of public preschools is generally paid by all the foreign parents who are employed but do not pay income tax in the RS. The Preschool Education Act (Zakon o vrtcih 2005) does not define the integration of children applying for international protection and children under international protection in preschools. However, the International Protection Act (Zakon o mednarodni zaščiti, 2016) grants international protection applicants, among others, the right to education (Zakon o mednarodni zaščiti, 2016: Article 78), and the right to education is also given to persons under international protection (Zakon o mednarodni zaščiti, 2016: Article 90). Article 88, which regulates the education of international protection applicants, does not mention preschool education (Zakon o mednarodni zaščiti, 2016). However, Article 101 of the act stipulates that persons with recognised international protection have the same rights in the area of preschool education, primary– and secondary–school school, higher and university education and adult education as the citizens of the RS. It means that a child under international protection (a refugee or a child under subsidiary protection) can attend preschool under the same conditions as the children who are Slovenian citizens, that is, if the preschool has a free place. The legal and formal framework does not regulate the preschool attendance of the most vulnerable group,[3] that is, the children applying for international protection. So, it fails to follow the recommendations from the introduction which define among the tasks of host countries the accessibility of preschool education to children applying for international protection. The RS is among the countries in Europe in which, according to UNICEF, "early child-

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3   As emphasised by Mikuš Kos (2017), living in the asylum country brings with it stress, for instance, uncertainty about the outcome of the asylum application process, pain and feelings of guilt because of those left behind in the terrors of war or miserable refugee camps (Mikuš Kos, 2017). To this we could add social isolation that is the consequence of life in Asylum Centre Houses, where living conditions are not ideal – children live with their parents in small rooms. Asylum Centre House do organise different activities for children, but they depend on the presence of volunteers, and as such they have no continuity.

hood development opportunities for young migrant and refugee children [...] are particularly limited" (UNICEF 2016: 97). In the RS preschool education is not available to this population.

A Lack of Systemic and Professional Support for Refugees Accessing Preschool Education

The statement that preschool education is not available to refugee children is confirmed by the website "Information for Foreigners" on the Ministry of the Interior (hereafter referred to as MoI) homepage. On it the MoI publishes basic information for foreigners, including information on education in the RS, in English, Spanish, French, Romanian, Bosnian and Albanian (Ministrstvo za notranje zadeve, 2017). It is perhaps interesting that the information is not available in, for instance, Farsi, Pashto or Arabic, although a great share of the population of international protection applicants and persons under international protection comes from the countries where these languages are spoken. It is even more "interesting" that the information on education for foreigners does not include information on preschool education or its availability to foreign children regardless of their status in the RS. Nor does the information on financial support that foreigners can receive in the RS include information on subsidies for preschool fees. And this despite the fact that the children who were granted refugee status have the same rights as the children who are Slovenian citizens, including their right to health and social care, access to information on rights and duties, and education and training (Zakon o mednarodni zaščiti, 2016). The MoI simply withholds the information on the possibility of a reduced preschool fee.

This leads us to the conclusion that the actual accessibility of preschool education to foreign children (with various statuses) is limited, also due to a lack of information available to the people who are not Slovenian citizens on the possibility of their children's preschool attendance.

The Recommendations of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport on the Preschool Attendance of Children of International Protection Applicants and Children Under International Protection

In the school year 2015/16 the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (Ministrstvo za izobraževanje, znanost in šport, 2017, hereafter referred to as MESS) set up a very welcome website "Integration of Immigrants in the Slovenian Educational System", which provides parents, teachers, preschool teachers

and head teachers with information and recommendations on how to integrate refugee children. The materials that preschool educators can find on the website include various materials they can adjust for preschool use and materials that deal with general issues also concerning preschools (e.g. children's bilingualism, prejudices and stereotypes, intercultural education, creating inclusive environments, etc.).

Due to space restrictions we will only comment on some concrete ideas published on the website.

Among the activities on the website that concern informing parents about including immigrant children and their families there is the recommendation stating that preschools should prepare for a possible participation of new immigrant children (legal, formal and pedagogical aspects). Yet this website (just like the MESS website in general) does not provide an answer to the question about the legal and formal accessibility of preschool education to children of international protection applicants and children under international protection. How do preschools present the legal and formal aspects of including children in preschools, since there is no legal foundation for the inclusion of children of international protection applicants? And how do preschools respond to possible enquiries by parents of children applying for international protection about including them in preschools? It seems that preschools are left to their own resourcefulness.

The MESS recommends that "in the first year, when they are still adapting to the new learning environment, immigrant children have a protector/friend among the preschool's educators (educators – volunteers) in addition to the preschool teacher" (MESS, 2017). In itself this solution is not problematic, but why are the children's peers not listed among their protectors/friends? Moreover, can the children's preschool teachers and/or preschool teacher's assistants or other preschool educators (e.g. the pedagogue) not be the children's confidants? We believe that – at least at the beginning, the child, preschool teachers and parents would welcome the help of a person who speaks the child's mother tongue as well as Slovenian. It would also be sensible to consider encouraging the participation of preschool teachers with a migrant background, as recommended by the UNHCR and the EU. These individuals, too, could take on the role of the child's "protector/friend". Needless to say, such a solution should have a legal basis.

The recommendations on the MESS website on assisting the parents of immigrant children include a note that preschools must "guarantee respectful relationships with parents and children and a positive attitude towards the situation" (MESS, 2017) – but it is not clear what the "situation" is and what a positive attitude towards it means. They also advise that preschools provide "understanding, support and empathy for the child and parents", "encourage parents to tackle problems actively" – but it is not clear what "problems" they have in mind –, "sup-

ply various information and advise parents" and "provide assistance in accessing psychosocial and health services" (MESS, 2017). The statements originate in the assumption that all the parents of immigrant children are helpless and in need of help. We could presume that, due to their specific circumstances, refugee parents are more vulnerable, but the first task of the preschool must remain establishing conditions for the normalisation of their life through participation in the life and work of the preschool and building relationships with other parents of refugees as well as other parents whose children attend the preschool. Or, in the words of Mikuš–Kos (2017): "Ensuring the quality and normalisation of life encompasses ensuring a safe and accepting environment, as normal a life course as possible in the asylum country, school attendance or participation in other forms of education, support for parents and other general psychosocial goods. This relies heavily on the human support of the people working in institutions (e.g. teachers, social workers, officials or health–care workers)" (Mikuš–Kos, 2017) We believe the observation should be applied to both preschool children and their parents, and the MESS recommendations should follow this conceptual framework.

Conclusion and Recommendations

We have shown that in the RS preschool education is not available to children applying for international protection either legally and formally or actually. However, it is available legally and formally to children under international protection (refugees and subsidiary protection) under the same conditions as to the children who are Slovenian citizens. The data available to us do not indicate how many of the children actually attend preschools. We believe that the RS should follow the recommendations by the UNHCR and the European Commission which refer to the integration of the population in preschools. It should also develop systemic solutions to enable and encourage accessibility to preschool education for all the children who are living in Slovenia, regardless of their status (this includes the children who are Slovenian citizens).[4]

Such a solution would offer refugee children a normalisation of everyday life, facilitate integration in their environments and improve their starting positions in further education, regardless of the country in which they will participate in it. At the same time, the state must develop systemic mechanisms to encourage the preschool attendance of immigrant children (regardless of their status). This should be followed by the introduction of a personal integration plan for preschool refugee children. At least for the children who have been granted refugee status in the RS. Article 101 of the International Protection Act (Zakon o mednarodni zaščiti, 2016) gives persons under international protec-

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[4] In Sweden all children, regardless of their status, have the right to attend preschool (Niemeyer, 2014).

tion the right to assistance with integration in the environment: "A person under international protection has the right to assistance with integration in the environment for the period of three years after the status is granted. (2) Assistance with integration in the environment follows the personal integration plan that is devised and implemented on the basis of the individual's needs, knowledge, skills and abilities, and it includes the activity plan to facilitate integration in the environment." (Zakon o mednarodni zaščiti, 2016) However, refugee counsellors prepare personal integration plans only for persons older than 15 years. School–age children must attend obligatory primary school, and if they are over 15 years of age an education plan is prepared for them. Preschool children under international protection may attend preschool, but the MoI does not keep a record of the children applying for international protection and children under international protection who are attending preschool or who their parents wish to enrol in preschool.[5]

We believe it would be sensible to develop a systemic solution to enable the preparation of personal integration plans for preschool children under international protection with an emphasis on preschool attendance, or a solution which would include the preparation of personal integration plans for preschool children as part of personal integration plans for their parents. Refugee consultants at the MoI should inform parents about the possibility of their children's preschool attendance, since they may need the support of preschools – at the very least when they attend courses on the Slovenian language, history, culture and constitution. We should also consider a solution that would enable preschool educators to cooperate in the implementation of personal integration plans for preschool children under international protection and their parents.

Furthermore, we should develop and adopt a systemic solution encouraging the participation of preschool teachers with a migrant background in preschools. It was already some years ago that we wrote that at the beginning of the child's integration in the educational institution (as long as it is thought necessary, taking the views of the family into account) we should guarantee support for the child, for instance, with an arrangement of a peer help system and, if necessary, with the participation of preschool teachers / assistant teachers (Hočevar and Skubic Ermenc, 2013). Preschool teachers (assistants) with a migrant background would very likely be a welcome solution for all preschool children, but especially for immigrants. But this would call for an adequate systemic change, which would require additional funds from the owner of the preschool.

To make preschool education more accessible to children applying for international protection and children under international protection we propose that the responsible ministries (the MoI and the MESS) prepare comprehensive

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5   A telephone conversation with a consultant on refugee integration at the MoI on 22 August 2016 and a telephone conversation with a spokesperson of Slovene Philanthropy on 13 January 2017.

information for parents on children's preschool attendance in the languages of the countries they and their children come from. Parents should also be informed about the possibility of paying reduced preschool fees for the children attending public preschools, private preschools subsidised by the state and private preschools financed by the local community budget and about how to apply for the reduction.

The systemic measures should be complemented with content measures contributing to better preschool education quality at the process level. We should realise the solutions regarding immigrant children (regardless of their status in the RS) in preschools which were proposed in the White Paper on Education in the Republic of Slovenia (Marjanovič Umek et. al, 2011). In the preschool curriculum we should emphasise the activities of encouraging children's language development and learning and the activities of pre–literacy/emerging literacy. We should update the curriculum supplements relating to the children whose mother tongue is not Slovenian (Marjanovič Umek et. al, 2011) and the teaching of Slovenian as a foreign language and mother tongue to the children whose mother tongue is not Slovenian in the form of extra classes that preschools would offer during the children's stay at preschool and that would be given by trained experts (Marjanovič Umek et. al, 2011).

The White Paper (Marjanovič Umek et. al, 2011) states that in order for the changes to take effect, systemic solutions should guarantee the formation of children's groups (they can be age–heterogeneous or made up of more preschool units or preschools in the case of Slovenian and mother tongue teaching) (Marjanovič Umek et. al, 2011: 89) and extra classes of Slovenian as a foreign language and mother tongue for children whose mother tongue is not Slovenian for children of all ages but given in the school year when they first start attending preschool. Preschools with a specific social and demographic structure of children should receive additional funds so that they can provide extra language classes for a more intensive work of encouraging the development and learning of less able children. Extra classes and activities should be provided during children's stay at preschool, that is, during the time the preschool programme is being carried out. The funds for all the extra language classes should be provided by the state (Marjanovič Umek et. al, 2011). Furthermore, the extra lessons for children under international protection could be part of their personal integration plans.

Additionally, preschool educators should be trained in cultures where the children come from and in treating the children who have been emotionally hurt because of war and refugeeism. We should never forget that these children have experienced a number of losses, "of loved ones, friends, home, community, safety, trust, often also belief in a better future [...]." In the asylum country they are then faced with difficulties understanding a different environment, language problems, adjustment and integration problems. Immigrant children are hurt in

multiple ways. Mental trauma and mourning are combined with other emotional problems." (Mikuš–Kos, 2017) Of course, children (and their parents) differ in their problems or may not suffer from them at all. Nevertheless, preschool educators should have the knowledge about how to recognise a child's (or their parents') problem and how to deal with it professionally.

We can conclude by noting that in the RS we possess expert and systemic solutions regarding the treatment of children from different language environments in preschools, but so far political stakeholders have demonstrated no willingness to adopt systemic measures to implement those solutions. In the years after the White Paper (Marjanovič Umek et al., 2011) was published, suitable learning materials have been developed to be used in teaching Slovenian as a second language to preliterate preschool children. During their continuing in–service training preschool educators can gain qualifications to teach children Slovenian as a second language. All over the RS there are many projects aimed at the integration of immigrants, regardless of their status, in the educational system. But the efforts lack systemic support.

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HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF THE CHAIR FOR PEDAGOGY AT BELGRADE UNIVERSITY[1]

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The teaching of pedagogy in form of the academic course first started at the Lyceum (founded in 1838), continued at the Great School (founded in 1863) and the University (founded in 1905) but the especially important year for its development as the scientific and research discipline was 1892, when Professor Vojislav Bakić became elected for a Chairman of the Department of Pedagogy and Methodology. Thanks to Professor Bakić's determination, in 1900 Pedagogy became a part of the study group along with Philosophy, and since 1927 it existed as the individual study group. Later on, in 1962, the Pedagogy Study Group became promoted into the Pedagogy Department, within which two study groups were initiated in 1979 – Pedagogy Study Group and Andragogy Study Group.

From 1853, pedagogy was taught in the Liceum as an optional subject for students intending to become the teachers. When the Liceum transformed into the Great School, in 1863, pedagogy was not on the list of subjects of this institution. However, in 1873, with the Amendments to the Law on the Great School, it was introduced as a compulsory subject for all students of the Faculty of Philosophy. Since of the key tasks of this faculty was to the educate secondary school teachers, pedagogy was introduced as a compulsory subject. In practice, however, it was not easy to provide teaching in this subject. From 1876 to 1882, professor of aesthetics Milan Kujundzić, was teaching of this subject, and after his retirement, the Department of Pedagogy had no pedagogy teachers for ten years.

Professor Bakić and his successors worked from 1905 to the Second World War, in very dynamic circumstances. Serious reforms have been continuously undertaken with the aim of improving the faculties of the Great School (later the University). During these processes pedagogy had altered its statuses in the structure of study plans. So, in 1873, pedagogy was compulsory for all students of the Faculty of Philosophy. From 1896 to 1927, it was closely linked to the disciplines of practical philosophy and its scope was narrowed down to the limits of teaching methodology for secondary schools. In 1927, the Faculty of Philosophy was reorganized into 28 study units and in that division, the 27th group being the Chair of Pedagogy.

Let's also mention that the pedagogy group of subjects were mainly attended by students who were preparing for work at teachers' colleges and for the position of school supervisors. By the Decree of the Faculty of Philosophy, which was adopted in 1932, each study group (department), besides the number, received the label according to its main science, so that students of the Faculty of Philosophy who enrolled in the 27th group were the students of pedagogy. The development of Department of Pedagogy was closely related with professor Bakić, but as well with the names of professors like Stevan Okanović, Vicentije Rakić and Milan Šević.

Professor Vojislav Bakić worked at the Faculty of Philosophy for 12 years and his work is considered pioneering in the full sense of the word. In 1874, he defended his doctoral dissertation in Leipzig and thus became the first Serb with a PhD degree in pedagogy. At the moment of his arrival at the Faculty of Philosophy, his bibliography contained about 50 titles; he had experience in teaching at the teachers' training school and carried on several public functions in the field of education. At the Faculty of Philosophy, he taught pedagogy for students of the third and fourth year. As an improvement of the effects of teaching, he introduced a pedagogy seminar in 1894, with the aim to discuss with students various pedagogical topics. It should also be mentioned that these seminars were prescribed as "scientific workshops" by the Decree of the Faculty of Philosophy in 1896 – when the Pedagogy Seminar has already been in function for two years. The activities of the seminars were expanded in 1897 with students' practicums for which professor Bakić provided special schools for practice. In 1897, professor Bakić published the *General Pedagogy* as a textbook for his students, and in 1901, the *Special Pedagogy* as an extension of the former one. For the first time in the Serbian language this book elaborates the topic of teaching methodology for high school education.

Professor Bakić was a Rector of the Grand School for two school years and he actively participated in the work of the commissions that prepared the Draft Law on the University. Though, when the 1905 the Law on the University was published, his name was not on the list of full professors. Convinced that this

degrades the position of pedagogy as a university discipline, he retires at his own request and withdraws from all public functions.

With the retirement of prof. Vojislav Bakić's, the position of pedagogy teacher remains vacant until 1909, when doctor Stevan Okanović was elected as honorary professor of pedagogy and ethics. He will work until the arrival of doctor Vicentije Rakić, who was elected in 1912 as a permanent docent for teaching methodology for high school education. Professor Rakić's arrival initiated a qualitatively new period in the development of pedagogy studies.

During 17 years of teaching, professor Rakić led lectures and students' practicum in various fields such as the Foundations of the Theory of Education, Didactics, Sociology of Education, or Adult Education. In the period between the two world wars there were no separate programs for certain scientific disciplines that professors taught, but they held a series of courses within a thematic unit that covered the subject matter according to the general plan of studies. When professor Rakić left the Faculty of Philosophy, in 1936, and retired in 1938, one important chapter in the development of the Pedagogy Department was closed.

In 1919, yet another person with PhD in pedagogy becomes a lecturer at the Faculty of Philosophy. It was professor Milan Šević, who worked as a part-time professor at the General Pedagogy Seminar – instructing students prepared to become subject teachers in secondary schools. In the period from 1933 to 1941some other professors – Dimitrije Kirilović, Artur Libert, who taught in French and German, Dimitrije Kirilović and Vladimir Spasić also joined the lecturers staff. Immediately after the end of the Second World War, the Department of Pedagogy was under the direct administration of the Department of Philosophy. The generations of students who began their studies in pedagogy, in 1946 and 1947, studied under the so called double-course orientation, which means they were also obliged to follow lectures and take the exams from one secondary school subject. The first post-war lecturers at the Department of Pedagogy were Milan Janušević and Radivoje Milovanović, gradually followed by election of other lecturers: Bosiljka Gligorijević, Ruža Oljača and Tihomir Vulović.

By the reorganization of the Faculty of Philosophy in 1950, the chairs became the basic working units. At that time, an independent pedagogy chair was established. In 1963, during another reorganization, the chairs were transformed into the departments as basic organizational units, and thus the Chair of Pedagogy has been organized as the Department of Pedagogy.

In this period, more precisely from the school year 1961/62. a more significant reconstruction of the pedagogy studies took place. From the fifth semester students had to choose among three study options: preschool pedagogy, teaching methodology for elementary school subjects, and the theory and methodology of adult education. This system was maintained until 1977, when all the teaching subjects were categorized into four groups: the main subjects, supplementary subjects, joint subjects, and the diploma course subjects.

In 1979, two teaching groups were established at the Department of Pedagogy: the group for pedagogy and the group for andragogy. In the decades that followed, some more or less profound changes of study programs and the organizational structure of the Department took place in terms of internal diversification of the core pedagogy discipline. Special merits belong to a group of teachers elected during the period from 1950 to 1959. Immediately after their graduation in 1950, they were firstly appointed as high school professors, and then as teaching assistants: Nikola Potkonjak for General Pedagogy, Vladeta Tešić for the History of Pedagogy, and Darinka Ranitović Mitrović for General Pedagogy at the General pedagogy seminar. Then, in 1952, Tihomir Prodanović was appointed as an assistant for teaching methodology for elementary school subjects, and after him, Jovan Djordjević as a teaching assistant for General pedagogy. Dušan Savićević was appointed as an assistant to the Teaching methodology for primary education, and shortly afterwards he was appointed as an assistant for the Adult Education. Aleksandra Sanda Marjanović was appointed as assistant for the Pre-school education in 1959.

This group of employees contributed to the substantial and long-lasting reinforcement of the department, because they substantially advanced the main courses in pedagogy in the next decades. Professor Jovan Djordjević worked at the Department until October 1987, professor Vladeta Tešić until 1988, professor Nikola Potkonjak until 1989, professor Dušan Savićević until 1991. Professor Aleksandra Sanda Marjanović, unfortunately, passed away in 1986. From 1892 until today, there were 90 employees at the Pedagogy Department, and the Pedagogy and Andragogy Department.

As a section of the Department of Pedagogy, the Institute for Pedagogy and Andragogy was established in 1983. Significant changes in the system of studies at the Faculty of Philosophy, and consequently at the Pedagogy Department, were introduced in 2006, in line with the Law on Higher Education, which was adopted in 2005.

EDUCATION AND QUALITY OF LIFE AT WORK – TOWARDS THE PREVENTION AND OVERCOMING OF MOBBING[1]

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Abstract

The paper defines the current phenomenon of mobbing at work, who are primary and secondary victims, who are mobbers and what is the nature of their relationship. Also, through the description of the types of mobbing, you get an insight into the conditions, relationships, and the organizational environment in which mobbing is occured, how it manifests and conducts. An integral part of this work is summarizing the causes of mobbing, drawing attention to the organization's responsibility for its occurrence and upkeep. In order to point out the importance of solving this problem, special area is devoted to summarize the direct and indirect consequences that mobbing leaves on employee, his/her family, friends, colleagues, superiors, the organization, but also the state and society. In this way, the insight into the complexity of this phenomenon is obtained, how and to what extent it can affect the quality of life of the victim, both at work and in private life. The worrying fact is that mobbing happens very often, at all hierarchical levels, among employees of different personality, status and power profiles, so it is difficult to prove it and therefore sanction it. There are various organizations and authors who point out the significance of this problem, its prevention, ways of overcoming and sanctioning it. This paper discusses various tools, measures and strategies to combat mobbing. It highlights and emphasizes the power of education, various types of information, awareness raising, counseling, training of all employees,

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primarily in the prevention, but also overcoming mobbing, and thus improving the quality of life at work.

Introduction

Mobbing has deep roots and a long history, but in the past thirty years Western society has begun to recognize harassment in the workplace as unacceptable, considering it as a cause of stress, illness and reduced productivity since its became an important topic of research throughout the Europe. This phenomenon becomes an actuel topic. There are various governmental and nongovernmental organizations, laws are passed regulating mobbing, other negative forms of behavior and violation of workers' rights. Also, there are various laws, European and international documents, institutions, strategies and action plans, researches, various actions and projects created with a purpose to prevent and solve mobbing at workplace. So far this problem has been observed from the medical, psychological and economic point of view, but we see the importance of observation from the andragogical perspective as well.

We focus on the educational measures and emphasize the power of education in helping individuals and organization in prevent and overcome mobbing. These are measures that include writing plans, programs, trainings of employees and managers, writing guides, counseling, creating an adequate job design, monitoring, evaluation, and the like.

Mobing is a traumatic experience for an employee that leaves deep, serious and far-reaching consequences on the victim and the people in their environment by affecting the quality on their private and professional life. Work organization influences emergence and development of mobbing by fostering a culture and climate through the way of communication, cooperation and way of treatment of employees. As the organization is responsible for the emergence and maintenance of mobbing, we believe that it also can create mechanisms and find a systemic solution for prevention of mobbing through adequate and timely education and with the help of a consistent, equitable sanctions and support after mobbing.

Definition of mobbing

The roots of researching harassment in the workplace, on the way we are doing that today, are found in the research of the theme of sexual abuse. Psychologist Brodsky in 1976. pointed out that sexual abuse was "only one of the

forms of harassment in the workplace" (Einarsen, 2000, In Čizmić, Vukelić, 2010: 64). After that, Saunders et al. (Saunders et al., 2007, In Čizmić, Vukelić, 2010: 64) stated in 2000. that employees are not exposed to sexual abuse and discrimination of race as much as to harassment in the broader sense. These findings significantly changed the image of the comprehensiveness and complexity of harassment in the workplace, expanding the field of interest and the way of researching this problem.

Although negative behaviors and harassment at work are phenomena that have existed for a long time, they have been intensively studied and explored in the last decade. Researchers, depending on the criteria they use, country and culture they come from, define and resaearch this phenomenon differently, creating additional confusion for practitioners, institutions and the scientific world using different terminology for the same or similar phenomena.

At the beginning, term mobbing is used to describe the form of group behavior of animals, where a group of animals usually attacks the lonely animal. This term is then used to describe behavior of school children and after that, a well-known Swedish psychologist of German origin, Heinz Leymann (Čizmić, Vukelić, 2010), one of the first researchers of this phenomenon, transferred it from the school context to the field of research.

We are using the term mobbing having in mind that it is most commonly used in the scientific works of researchers in European (e.g. Germany, Italy, Poland, France, Spain), especially in the Scandinavian countries, while the term bullying is characteristic term in United Kingdom and America. In addition to these terms, also used are: harassment, psychological harassment, abusive behaviour, emotional abuse, workplace aggression, work or employee abuse, mistreatment, bossing, victimisation, intimidation, psychological terror or terrorisation, psycho-terror, psychological violence, inappropriate treatment, unwanted behaviour, harassment, workplace trauma, perry tirany, work-related violence, workplace violence. (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, EU-OSHA, 2010; Čizmić, Vukelić, 2010; Kecap, 2013; Finneman, 2003; Duffy, Sperry, 2014; Tehrani, 2012; Leymann, 1990; Einarsen, and Hoel, 2008; Einarsen et al., 2003; Chappel, and Di Martino, 2006).

There are different terms in use, but most frequently used terms are mobbing and bullying. Some authors equate these terms, but some makes a distinction between them. Duffy and Sperry (Duffy, Sperry, 2014) as the main criteria for distinguishing these terms quote involvement of the organization itself. Workplace mobbing is "destructive social process in which individuals, groups, or organizations target a person for ridicule, humiliation, and removal from the workplace" (Duffy, Sperry, 2014: 1), which is much worse than the workplace bullying which poses "subjecting of a targeted individual to hostile and abusive acts by one or more individuals without the presence of organizational involvement." (Duffy, Sperry, 2014: 8). But, we use the term mobbing as a synonym

term for bullying and agree with the claim of Chappel and Di Martino (Chappel, and Di Martino, 2006) because there is no "conceptual distinction between bullying (primarily referring to situations of individual harassment) and mobbing (primarily covering situations of collective harassment)" [...] and [...] "most researchers now make no distinction between bullying and mobbing with regard to the number of perpetrators or targets involved." (Chappel, and Di Martino, 2006: 22).

We agree with the most cited definition bearing in mind all the important aspect it covered. The leading modern researcher on bullying/mobbing at work, Einarsen, and his colleagues, defined mobbing as "harassing, offending, socially excluding someone or negatively affecting someone's work tasks. In order for the label bullying (or mobbing) to be applied to a particular activity, interaction or process it has to occur repeatedly and regularly (e.g. weekly) and over a period of time (e.g. about six months). Bullying is an escalating process in the course of which the person confronted ends up in an inferior position and becomes the target of systematic negative social acts. A conflict cannot be called bullying if the incident is an isolated event or if two parties of approximately equal 'strength' are in conflict" (Einarsen et al., 2003: 15). As the definition says there is an imbalance in strength, which means, imbalance in power, not only in formal, but also in fluid power among employees "who have ganged up in order to drive someone out of the organization, whether the target is of lower rank, the same, or higher rank" (Duffy, Sperry, 2014: 9).

Drawing on the above criteria, we come to the conclusion that mobbing can happened to everyone and is rooted in an organization that either supports or prevents it by its way of doing business, culture and climate. This means that the primary responsibility is within the organization (not the individual) which influences the way of communication and collaboration, prevents, treats, ignores or encourages mobbing and other forms of negative behaviors between victims and mobbers.

Victims, mobbers and types of mobbing

The mobbing victim can be any employee, of any gender, age, level of education, occupation or position in the organization. According to their testimonies, this is an experience that can not be compared to any other. Victims of mobbing are employees and those who love the victim and/or depend on it. This phenomenon, where indirect consequences of mobbing are felt by members of the family, partners, spouses, children, friends, colleagues, and the organization itself, some authors (Duffy, Sperry, 2014: 95) call secondary victimization.

Previous researches, realized with the intention to determine the psychological profile of the victim of mobbing, failed in that, since data shows that vic-

tims of mobbing are people of different types of personality. Analyzing various works and researches (Duffy, Sperry, 2014; Einarsen, and Hoel, 2008; Čizmić, Vukelić, 2010; Finneman, 2003; EU-OSHA, 2010), we quote some characteristics and personality traits of employees who have been shown to be more often mobbed: those who openly speak for the public interest, criticize organizational policies and procedures, reveal corruption and errors in work; work to change organization and make changes; outsiders of different cultural norms, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, handicap, status, sexual preferences, etc.; immigrants with a different style of communication and practice from the dominant in the organization; persons with psychological problems; submissive, neurotic, confined and highly conscientious; workaholics; those with extremes in work performance; persons with unrealistic assessment of their potential and abilities and demands imposed on them by a certain situation; more traditional, rigid and moralistic; over-achievers who tend to have an unrealistic view of themselves and their situation; more anxious, suspicious, submissive and non-controversial; more introverted; conventional; organised; rule-bound; lower self-esteem; social anxiety; lower social competency; worse conflict managers than their colleagues, the non-victims.

Bearing in mind the results of various surveys, the diversity of possible participants and situations, and the context in which mobbing can take place, we can conclude that certain characteristics of the personality and the lack of certain skills can contribute to the person being a suitable target for mobbing, and that any diversity can give a motive to the mobber and draw his attention, but we certainly can not and must not conclude that there is a certain type of person who appears as a target or victim. This would mean that we blame the individual and his/her personal traits for mobbing, and not the mobbers or the organization who allowed such behavior to develop and maintain using formal and informal channels. They do effort to discredit and humiliate targets/victims, destroy their reputation, influence, respect, attack and deny their personality, character, way, style, and quality of work.

Therefore, it is not surprising that the victims of mobbing describe mobbers by terms such as evil, bully, tyrant and oppressor because of the way of their agressive, harshly or unfairly behaviour. But Tehrani claims that "more useful approach would be to see their behaviour as an aberration caused by an absence of positive attributes and an arrested state of development" (Esselmont, 1980, In Tehrani, 2012: 2). If we observe this behavior as a problem and a matter of attitude and development, we leave space for the possibility of further development, changing attitudes and behavior, where education plays a major role in the prevention and suppression of mobbing.

Also, it is not possible to draw a conclusion about a certain type of personality of the mobber. Attitudes on the characteristics of the mobbers were mostly pronounced by victims of mobbing, they highlighted the motives and

the difficult personality of mobber (EU-OSHA, 2010), and there is very little researches in which mobbers are respondents. Einarsen & Hoel (2008: 164) cited research findings describing ones who consider themselves as abusers. Findings show that mainly men, managers, or superiors are declared as abusers, and they consider themselves to be aggressive with a lack of social competences. The results of the second study (Duffy, Sperry, 2014) partially confirm these allegations, where bosses appear as a abusers in 72% of cases. Such findings support the assumption that between the victim and the abuser there is a difference in power and status. However, we will see that this relation is not the only one in the relationship of the victim – mobber. It happens that those with higher status and power are mobbed by employees with a lower status and power with the help of coalitions and alliances that they form with employees of the same, lower, hierarchical level (Duffy, Sperry, 2014). This phenomenon, which is much less common in practice, Lubarda (2008) calls reverse mobbing.

Depending on who appears as a victim and who as a mobber, Lubarda (2008), lists two basic types of mobbing – horizontal and vertical. Horizontal mobbing occurs at the same hierarchical level, between employees at the same or similar jobs, where there is no relationship of subordination. He says that research shows that women are more often mobbed by women, and men by men. This type of mobbing can manifest itself in a milder form (e.g., constant jokes, laughs at the expense of speaking, walking, dressing, private life) and more difficult form (e.g., the spread of slandering in terms of professional and private life, constant interruption in speech, social life exclusion, not inviting to entertainment events, avoiding hanging out in pauses of work). It often occurs as a result of unfair competition, and "followed by envy, jealousy and similar human weaknesses" (Lubarda, 2008: 135). In the case of vertical mobbing, the initiative comes from an employer (superior, manager or director) who involves other employees in order to achieve their intentions (when vertical mobbing can be hidden behind the horizontal). It comes out in two forms, where the first form of manifestation, the "empty table", consists of denying work or assigning jobs below the level of expertise of the victim with the intent of violating his professional dignity. In the case of a "full table" there is: excessive workload, overtime that leads to excessive fatigue; enhanced employee control; constant criticism and downplay of his/her professionalism and morality; interruptions in speech; isolation; provoking reactions or conflicts. It turned out that mobbing is more subtle, when victim is of a greater expertise, or is more qualified. Bearing in mind the subtle mobbing procedures, we would say that it is more difficult to detect it, and it is even more difficult to prove it.

If the criteria of the classification is motive of mobbing, Lubarda (2008) distinguishes strategic and emotional abuse. In the case of strategic abuse, the employer makes a list of her/his victims, with the goal of terminating employment due to unfavorable working conditions, whereby the employer manages to avoid

the payment of severance pay and other obligations. This type of mobbing is also called transitional mobbing, since it is characteristic for countries in transition. When it comes to emotional mobbing, the causes of his appearance are the characteristics of the personality of the victim and the mobber. Mobbers are often persons with a personality disorder – psychopaths who perform mobbing "because of feelings of envy, jealousy, or desire for power", while convincing others "that the chosen victim of abuse is detrimental to the employer (institution, company, etc.)" (Lubarda, 2008: 137).

In the workplace, in addition to the psychological, there may also be physical violence that is rarely encountered. It often occurs in the form of physical intimidation (Einarsen et al., 2009, In Čizmić, Vukelić, 2010) which implies disturbing personal space (e.g., finger-pointing, pushing, blocking the path by which the individual moves). Mechanisms and methods that mobbers use, with the help of their "accomplices", among others, are: gossip, lies, rumors, innuendo, ridicule, belittlement, disparagement, humiliation, false information, dissemination of such information, leaks of personal and confidential information, not providing information necessary for a employee to complete the requirements of hir or her job, isolating a worker, ignoring an employee, giving an employee the "cold shoulder", excessive "writting up" of a employee by a supervisor or manager, disciplinary action and reprimands without obtaining information from all parties, inaccurate or abusive performance evaluations, withholding of job references needed by a worker to obtain other work. (Duffy, Sperry, 2014: 20).

Different motives are responsible for this behavior, as well as the ways of unethical verbal and non-verbal communication in a work environment that contributes to the maintenance of mobbing and in general to the quality of life in the workplace. Regardless of the status, position, level of education, and any other characteristic of the victim or mobber, it is evident that there is an establishment and development of unhealthy relationships and an impaired quality of the work environment. Below we will summarize the causes and consequences of this behavior.

Causes and consequences of mobbing

With the help of the aforementioned definitions, manifestations, types and relations in which mobbing occurs, it is clear that the organization carries the bulk of responsibility for its appearance and maintenance. In order to specify the educational measures and strategies through which the organization can prevent or overcome mobbing, we have to summarize the causes and consequences of its occurrence in the organization.

As causes of mobbing, the authors (EU-OSHA, 2010; Salin, 2008, In Čizmić, Vukelić, 2010; Einarsen, and Hoel, 2008) state inadequate work design (e.g. role

conflicts); incompetent management and negative forms of leadership; negative or hostile social climate in organization; culture that permits or rewards harassment in an organisation; values and norms of the organization. Duffy and Sperry (2014) emphasize that the mobbing is caused by individual, group and organizational dynamics. Also, they summarize the causes of the emergence and maintenance of mobbing by highlighting the significance of the organization and its subsystems that comprise the structure, culture, strategies, leaders, its employees and the external environment in the form of regulations, laws and the like.

If we look at the causes it will become clear why the consequences, for all direct and indirect participants in mobbing, are so numerous, far-reaching and complex. Also, it will be clear why is priority to preventing and solving this problem. Negative effects of mobbing, according to research and analysis of the work of various authors (Einarsen, and Hoel, 2008; Finneman, 2003; Duffy, Sperry, 2014), can be: perceiving the working environment as a dangerous and insecure; loss of sense of identity and belonging; observing the world as an unjust place; serious physical, psychological, emotional and health difficulties such as anxiety, fear, depression, helplessness, insomnia, melancholy, nervousness, apathy, lack of concentration, fear of social groups, psychosomatic complaints; post-traumatic stress disorder; a deeply shocking experience; violence, suicide, even murder.

Whether the reason for that state are personality traits, level of education, the current life situation, the culture from which the person comes, the importance of keeping the job, it is evident that the victims respond in different ways to mobbing. But, mobbers often count on the inability of a helpless victim to respond in a timely and adequate manner, since it takes time for them to understand and see themselves as a victim of mobbing, and by then the problem has already gone too far. If something is not done, not only individuals, but indirectly his family, social environment, employers, society and the state suffer from the long-term consequences.

European Agency for Safety and Health at Work – EU-OSHA (2010) summarise the possible consequences of bullying in the report by ILO:

- *for the family and social network*:
  "Avoiding social meetings; complaints of physical discomfort and sickness; desertion of social engagements; detachment from family ties; difficulties in qualifying for other jobs; disengagement from father, spouse, son/daughter roles and responsibilities; intolerance of family problems; litigation; loosening of friendship relations; loss of income; loss of shared projects; marital problems and divorce; medical expenses; outbursts of rage; violence; worsening of children's performance at school" (2010: 20).

- *for employers*:
  "Additional retirement costs; damage to the company image; decrease of competitiveness; decrease of product quality; disability; increase of

persons unfit for work; increased staff turnover; interpersonal climate deterioration; litigation costs; loss of qualified staff; reduced individual and group productivity; reduced motivation, satisfaction and creativity; reduction in the number of clients; repeated transfers; replacement costs; sickness absenteeism; training new staff; loss of public goodwill and reputation" (2010: 21.

- *for society (at societal level)*:
  "Consequences depend upon the national health system and the available social services" (2010: 22.

- *on society*:
  Benefits and welfare costs due to premature retirement; high costs of disability; high costs of unemployment; loss of human resources; medical costs and possible hospitalisation; potential loss of productive workers (2010: 21).

Also, *individual consequences* can be minor stress reactions, long-term sick leave, displacement from work life and suicides, while *organisational consequences* of mobbing are lower job satisfaction and productivity of the victims and other employees, increased sickness absence, higher turnover, substantial economic losses (2010: 85).

All the stated consequences and reactions on mobbing significantly affect the quality of life of an individual in the work environment. However, we see that the victim is not the only one affected by the consequences, in different spheres of life, but there are also secondary victims, those who are indirectly affected by the effects of mobbing. Therefore, in addition to financial costs, we can talk about human costs, bearing in mind the health, psychological and consequences in social relations that can not be paid or compensated, which is the reason more to deal with measures and strategies of prevention and overcoming of mobbing in the next section of this work.

Educational measures and strategies of prevention and overcoming mobbing

Different organizations have all been active in the field of work-related violence, harassment, bullying/mobbing with aim to provide information and framework to promote policy and practice of prevention and overcoming this problems through various campaigns, projects, action plans at national and enterprise level. Among others, there are the World Health Organisation, the European Parliament, the International Labour Organisation, The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA), the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, etc.

Chappel and Di Martino (2006: 192–219) suggested several strategies, by ILO, to tackle violence at work, such as:

- Involvement and participation of all stakeholders and written policy;
- Selection and identifying the right individuals for the job by the selection tools like tests and interviews;
- Training: to preventing, identifying and dealing with some threatening situations and individuals by interpersonal and communication skills;
- Available information and open communication among colleagues to reduce the risk of mobbing, sexual harassment and violence at work, defuse tension by meetings, discussions, sessions, problem-solving groups, development programmes, etc.;
- Physical environment and layout have an important role (e.g. noise level, light, ventilation, thermal control; protective systems, security screens, seating, etc.);
- Job design and work organisation: appropriate staffing levels; clearly defined tasks and assigning tasks according to experience and competence; adequate working hours; etc.;
- Preparing employees to avoid and dealing with violent incidents;
- Defusing aggression by guidelines to minimising the risk of a violent incident taking place;
- Immediate action after violent incidents: that means to record and report workplace violence, to provide trauma-crisis counseling through qualified staff or outside specialists, long-term support for some victims, rehabilitation, help in redeployment and legal assistance with compensation procedures; rehabilitation;
- Monitoring and evaluation of preventive measures taken to check their effectiveness. (Chappel and Di Martino, 2006: 192–219).

Most of the aforementioned strategies for prevention and overcoming mobbing, written by the ILO, involve some kind of education, training, informing, counseling, evaluation, assessment and monitoring. Also, the World Health Organization (WHO, 2003) proposes following prevention methods at primary, secondary, and tertiary level:

Primary prevention refers to adopted ways of informing, educating and training managers and other employees on mobbing and its consequences, by methods such as educate managers to resolve the conflict, implement awareness campaign, develop anti-mobbing policy; provide guidelines with information on the nature and extent of the problem and its effects on health and quality of life; encouraging the ethical behaviour by code of ethics and discouraging the improper behaviour, unethical acts and discrimination; creating a climate of trust, tolerance and freedom; this should be included in the contracts, regulating the

matter and applying sanctions for any breach of the rules. (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work – EU-OSHA, 2010: 26)

Secondary prevention. It is very important to recognize the person's problem and to take timely and effective measures. WHO proposes the following methods/persons in such situations:

1. A confidant/e — an employee or someone outside the company who is listening to the victim of mobbing, because it can break the denial, make a distance from the situation and take the initiative.
2. A mediator — mediation is a process in which an impartial third party offers people in conflict the opportunity to meet and find a solution by confrontation of viewpoints, to try understand each other, analyse what has happened, and "establish the terms of an arrangement in order to continue to work together or separately in a climate of greater mutual respect" (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work – EU-OSHA, 2010: 27).

Tertiary prevention includes the following measures:

1. Gathering group of people who have suffered from mobbing to raising awareness, sharing experiences allowing the targets to realise they are not the ones responsible; to recognise the aggression, or modify their own behaviour.

Legislation – the law should address the following points while taking into account local habits and cultures when devising strategies: encourage preventive measures; protect workers who engage in self-help; provide proper relief to targets of severe mobbing, including compensatory damages and reinstatement to his or her position; punish bullies and the employers who allow them to abuse their co-workers (Yamand, 2003, In WHO, 2003: 28).

Also, there is a policy-level European initiative, developed by several European institutes, the European framework for psychosocial risk management (PRIMA-EF) who emphasised a training as a primary element of an organisation's strategy against work-related violence (bullying). In order to prevent and reduce mobbing, training is used to empower employees to manage relationships at workplace, to give them a common understanding of how to cope with aggression and violent behaviour, to increase awareness and knowledge of the phenomenon, of the work-related antecedents and health consequences of bullying. On the other hand, in order to prevent and reduce mobbing, managers and supervisors are given training "to investigate and resolve bullying situations in the workplace", "policy communication training, stress management training and negative behaviour awareness training" (EU-OSHA: 90).

There is an *Employee assistance programme – EAP* as a support mechanism and a mental health-related intervention in the field of workplace wellbeing.

EAP, by recognizing standards, helps organizations identify and manage problems such as work-related stress, illness, workplace improvement, mobbing, human resources management, etc., by informing, counseling, training, by early intervention strategy through mediation (Winwood, and Beer, 2008: 184–193). Also, authors propose measures of prevention like: *General Prevention Programe* (Einarsen, and Hoel, 2008: 168); *Resilience-Building* and *Stress Awareness*; written *Plan for Supporting the Organisation in the Aftermath of an Incident*; promoting and developing a *copying strategy* and *a culture of peer support* (Dunn, 2008: 138–139). In addition to the above-mentioned measures and strategies, there is career training and counselling. Also, it is essential to victim to socialize, participate in family activities, hobbies and creative activities. As a type of self-help, there are tutorials and applications created for tablets and mobile devices that are very useful information and first self-help tools in situation of stress or mobbing.

Quality of life at work, as Pejatović (2005: 35) states, depens on, among others, safe and healthy working conditions, social interaction in the work organization, satisfaction with the time spent at work, etc. This shows the importance of healthy communication and relationships in the workplace in order to raise the quality of working life and reduce the risk of mobbing. The degree to which the prevention or treatment of mobbing at work is possible depends on the legislation and state of awareness of a country. In addition to the law, it is necessary to conduct anti-mobbing policies within the company, but also to provide the right system and mechanism for reporting and sanctioning mobbing within companies and state institutions that are responsible for these issues. We do not see the purpose of assisting the victim of mobbing alone, because it would mean that he or she alone bears responsibility for such a situation. In this case, the context and responsibility of the organization in the conduct of mobbing would be ignored. Also, nothing will be achieved by providing assistance (medical, legal, psychological or educational) if the victim returns to the same destructive and dysfunctional working environment. So, in addition to assisting the victim, it is necessary to treat the root of the problem and act on the critical subsystems of the organization, to create a safe and healthy working environment, which is a very demanding and long process, and above all the obligation and responsibility of the employer.

Bearing in mind the cause of the problem and the consequences that the employee faces with, our focus is on promoting and implementing educational measures and strategies to prevent mobbing by informing, advising and educating all employees at all hierarchical levels in order to establish a culture of mutual respect, tolerance, respect of human rights and diversity, transparent communication and codes of conduct, in each segment and structure of the organization, which will not allow it to appear, nor develop any kind of unhealthy, unethical, inappropriate and negative form of behavior or relationship. Prevention of mobbing is a long-term process, a systemic approach is needed in solving this prob-

lem, starting with research and a good concept. It is an effort to raise awareness and give insight into this phenomenon, changing values, attitudes, communication and ways of interacting in organization.

Final remarks

Mobbing is phenomenon that has been intensively researched in the last decade. Researchers use different terms, but most frequently used are mobbing and bullying. Some authors make a distinction between them, but there is no conceptual distinction. We are using term mobbing because it is characteristic for European researchers. In mobbing employee becomes the target of systematic negative social acts, which are repeded over a period of time. There is an imbalance in formal or/and in fluid power among employees where victim is humiliated, tortured, ridiculed, isolated by mobber/s. Victim is employee directly affected by mobbing, and also secondary victims, indirectly affected by it (those who love the victim and/or depend on them, as family members, friend, colleagues, organization itself). There is not a certain type of person who appears as a target, victim or mobber, but data shows that workers with some characteristics and personality traits are mobbed more often. Also, any diversity and the lack of certain skills can contribute to the person being a suitable target or victim of mobbing.

Depending on the criteria of the classification, there are a different types of mobbing like: horizontal and vertical mobbing (criteria: who is the victim and who is the mobber); strategic or transitional and emotional mobbing (criteria: motive of the mobber); and reverse mobbing (when those with higher status and power are mobbed by employees with a lower status and power).

In this work, we summarized the causes and consequences of mobbing and came to the conclusion that the essence of the problem lie in the organization and its subsystems, bearing in mind that authors listed causes as: inadequate work design; negative forms of leadership; negative values, norms, dynamics, social climate and culture in organization; workers; regulations; etc. The consequences are various and long-term. There are financial and human costs as well. The victims life is affected by emotional, psychological, health, social, professional, financial problems. Also, affected by mobbing are the family of the victim, her/his social network, organization and society.

To solve the problem of mobbing, it is necessary to have and implement legislation at national and enterprise level, promote policy and practice of prevention by various campaigns and projects, and rise state of awareness on this problem to improve quality of the work environment and the culture and climate of the organization. To solve this problem, we need a systemic approach, starting with researches and a good concept. Different organizations suggested measures

and strategies of prevention to tackle mobbing at workplace. We presented and summarized those by ILO, WHO and various authors. They point out and focus on prevention at primary, secondary, and tertiary level by awareness campaign, informing, counseling, education of managers and other workers, training, monitoring, evaluation, mediation, job design, etc.

We consider it necessary to create a safe and healthy work environment in organization, foster culture and a climate that supports a positive attitude, encourages tolerance and the culture of human rights. Also, it is important to consistently condemn and punish any kind of employees' rights violation, by a fair and ethical way of handling complaints and applying rules and regulations. Every organization have to build a strong supporting system and mechanism of education and other types of support for employees and superiors.

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A BREAKTHROUGH IN THE ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHER PROFESSIONALITY: THE HERTSCAM MED IN LEADING TEACHING AND LEARNING

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The HertsCam Network, Great Britain

Abstract

This article introduces an innovative, part–time masters degree programme for serving teachers provided by the HertsCam Network, an independent charitable company based in England. The rationale for the programme is explained as the means to mobilise the massive untapped potential of teachers as leaders of innovation. This is linked to the conceptualisation of teacher leadership as a key dimension of teacher professionality rather than one limited to special roles and responsibilities in the organisational structures of schools. The article clarifies the distinctive features of the programme focusing on it being designed, developed, managed and taught by a team of 'scholar practitioners' rather than university lecturers. The second half of the article is devoted to an evaluation of the programme using its own pedagogic principles as an analytical framework. In relation to each of the seven principles, points are illuminated by feedback from a range of sources, including the participants themselves. Reports from visiting researchers and the university partner which awards the degree are drawn upon as data.

Key words: teacher leadership; innovation; continuing professional development; knowledge–building; masters programmes, agency, professionality.

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The focus of this article is an innovative masters programme – the HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning. We begin by clarifying the rationale for the creation of this programme together and discussing its distinctive features. This is followed by an account of an evaluation which draws on a range of data to illuminate and examine the quality of the programme as it has been experienced by the first two cohorts of participants.

The creation of a masters programme for teachers, taught entirely by teachers rather than university academics, is a bold innovation which addresses the question of teacher professionality in an age where teachers' agency is routinely diminished. The development of this masters programme, and the work of the HertsCam Network more generally, rests on the assumption that having agency is a defining characteristic of the human species (Frost, 2006). Our theoretical perspective is shaped by the intellectual and practical endeavours of David Frost over a thirty–year period. One of the key insights that emerged from the Carpe Vitam Leadership for Learning project (MacBeath & Dempster, 2009) of which David Frost was a co–director, was the way in which the concept of human agency is central to both learning and leadership. In an article to clarify this, Frost wrote:

> "...agency involves having a sense of self, encompassing particular values and a cultural identity, and being able to pursue self–determined purposes and goals through self–conscious strategic action" (Frost, 2006: 20)

While the literature from the field of psychology (e.g Bandura, 1995) indicates that agential flourishing is essential to the wellbeing of people in general, it is particularly important as the cornerstone of the kind of teacher professionality that supports the pursuit of quality in education. It is unfortunate therefore that current trends constitute a threat. Hökkä and Vähäsantanen (2014), citing Hargreaves & Shirley (2009) and Sahlberg (2011), argue that 'professional independence and a culture of trust are being replaced by ideals of efficacy, productivity and rapid service delivery' (p. 2) in a policy environment dominated by neo–liberalism, with all that implies about the rule of the market and standardisation. In this article we seek to explore the ways in which the HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning demonstrates that there exists, within the teaching profession itself, the potential to foster the kind of teacher professionality that is truly transformative at the levels of classrooms, schools and educational systems.

The HertsCam MEd is designed to support the development of practice in schools by enabling participants to become effective agents of change. Participants are enabled to initiate, design and lead development projects which result in improvements in aspects of professional practice and thus better learning outcomes for children in schools. The term 'project' here should not be construed as research or enquiry; the projects designed and led by participants in the HertsCam MEd constitute development work which we define as:

> "strategic, focused and deliberate action intended to bring about improvements in professional practice. It takes the form of collaborative processes featuring

activities such as consultation, negotiation, reflection, self–evaluation and delib-eration which take place in planned sequence" (Frost, Ball, Hill and Lightfoot, forthcoming).

The teacher–led development work methodology rests on the proposition that professional knowledge can be created and enriched through the leadership of a carefully designed and rigorously accounted for processes of practice devel-opment in educational settings (Frost, 2013). This challenges dominant assump-tions about how knowledge is created, which was explained in the first book in the LfL Teacher Leadership series as an alternative to university–based research:

> "...it is more like Mode 2 knowledge production, which is socially distributed, action–focused and subject to multiple accountabilities" (Anderson et al., 2014; Gibbons et al., 1994; Nowotny et al., 2003).

Because development projects are necessarily collaborative, they tend to have a transformative effect on the school's organisational structures and profes-sional culture (Frost, 2012). In addition, participation in the taught sessions and the leadership of development projects in schools enhances participants' moral purpose and leadership capacity.

Teachers teaching teachers

We use the term 'teachers' loosely here. The HertsCam MEd is designed to empower education professionals of all kinds including teachers, teaching as-sistants and others in auxiliary roles such as librarians. The roles and responsi-bilities of participants are many and varied but what they have in common is a willingness to take up the challenge of leading change. In publicising the pro-gramme, we use the term 'teacher leadership' because it has rhetorical power, but also because we wanted to locate our endeavours within the field of educational leadership. Advocacy for teacher leadership and academic study in this field is particularly well–established in the USA and Australia with key texts includ-ing Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson & Hann (2002), York–Barr and Duke (2004), Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) and Lieberman and Miller (2004). Although David Frost had begun to use the concept of teacher leadership at an earlier stage in his work (e.g. Frost & Durrant, 2003) he wanted, in the UK context at least, to transcend what he saw as the limitations of the entrenched British approach, which involves a complex array of formal roles of responsibility. Recently an American researcher who examined 'middle leadership' and 'senior leadership' in schools in England recommended it to the profession in US (Supovitz, 2015). However, Frost's argument is that a role focused approach does not necessarily enable teachers to exercise leadership and, in any case, where a minority of in-dividuals are assigned formal leadership roles, there is no impact on the profes-sionality of teachers as a whole (Frost, 2012). In HertsCam therefore, we adopt

a very inclusive approach which we refer to as 'non–positional teacher leadership' (Frost, 2014). This simply means that we are committed to enabling any adult working in an educational capacity to exercise leadership, regardless of the particular role they occupy or formal position in the organisation in which they work. Since the programme began in 2015, participants have included teachers in the primary, secondary and special school sectors as well as early years education practitioners, a sixth form centre manager and a Children's Centre manager.

Perhaps the most important and innovative feature of the HertsCam MEd is that it is entirely profession–led. Many masters programmes have contributors who are practicing teachers of course, but the HertsCam programme is designed and managed by a teacher–led organisation. The Teaching Team consists entirely of teachers who see themselves as 'scholar practitioners' (Herbert, 2010) who hold senior posts in secondary or primary schools, are passionate advocates of good educational practice and engage in postgraduate study, research and publication. Members of the team developed the necessary expertise over a ten–year period when they were employed as additional supervisors and contributors to a programme overseen by the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education. In 2012, HertsCam became an independent charitable company governed by headteachers and teachers. This opened up the possibility of independence from the university and later, when some administrators within the university questioned the legitimacy of practitioners being supervisors and assessors on the programme, the decision was taken to withdraw from Cambridge. We were then able to re–design the programme and seek a partnership with an alternative university; one which would respect our approach and award the masters degree. The validation of our degree programme was based on a rigorous quality assurance process in which European standards were applied (ENQA, 2009; QAA, 2015). The HertsCam Network entered into a legal agreement with the University of Hertfordshire, not simply because of its convenient location, but because that university had an explicit commitment to working in partnership with other organisations.

We were aware that the question of the identity and background of members of the Teaching Team was controversial, especially in academic circles. It was an issue that was examined closely as part of the process of validating the degree programme with the University of Hertfordshire. It was also a question that was raised when a visiting Research Fellow interviewed members of the first cohort of participants in the early stages of the course and the responses were very positive, for example:

> "I am glad that we are being taught by experienced practitioners. It means that it is relevant. They have empathy with what we struggle with in school" (Researcher's interview with participant, Sept. 2015).

This comment is typical and this positive view has been sustained over the last three years.

Programme content

The title of the HertsCam MEd is 'Leading Teaching and Learning'. Although the programme has a modular structure, the content is not neatly allocated to modules in the usual sequential and hierarchical way. Instead, our approach rests on Bruner's notion of the spiral curriculum (Bruner, 1960) in which learners revisit concepts in increasingly sophisticated ways, eventually achieving full understanding. The subject matter is specified in the form of a Topic Framework which underpins the programme. Sixteen topics are organised into four topic groups which are summarised below.

Leadership and professionality: This group of topics includes the consideration of teacher professionality and teacher leadership, the role of the teacher in leading change and building professional knowledge through the leadership of development work.

Organisations and change: This group of topics is concerned with schools as organisations especially in relation to the challenge of innovation and change. Included is consideration of the organisational structures and processes, the idea of professional learning community and factors such as governance and accountability.

Pedagogy: This group of topics includes exploration of the nature of learning and the variations that we encounter in learners. The contexts of curriculum policy and schools as learning communities are examined.

Project design: This group of topics supports the design of development projects. Here the focus is on project leadership, management and impact. There is also consideration of tools for practice development, including those which scaffold reflection and deliberation.

This topic framework is presented to programme participants on the very first day of the course, together with a 90 page 'Annotated Bibliography' which introduces fields of literature relevant to each topic and detailed reading lists.

Structure of the programme

The HertsCam MEd is a part–time programme completed in two years alongside participants' full–time employment. It is structured as four modules which build towards the undertaking of a development project, in keeping with the teacher–led development work methodology that underpins all HertsCam programmes (Frost, 2013) and, as such, the modules are not discrete but sequentially support participants to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in leading successfully and in a sustained manner.

Module 1 guides participants to analyse their familiar institutional contexts. They explore their school as an organisation through a process of consultation

and reflection on the opportunities and challenges their professional context offers for the development of practice. This analysis is augmented by study of relevant literatures and conceptual frameworks. Participants submit a five–thousand–word paper reflecting on their particular organisational context and identifying an outline focus for their proposed development work.

In Module 2 participants focus on pedagogy in order to deepen their understanding of their chosen project focus. Whatever a participant's context, their project will inevitably include aspects of teaching and learning necessitating an understanding of the barriers and obstacles in the learning process. Group sessions and supervisions help the participants to draw on relevant literatures and conceptual frameworks while using them to enrich dialogue and reflection at an individual and group level. Participants submit another five–thousand–word paper which explores the pedagogical implications of their proposed project focus.

Module 3 takes participants through the design and planning stages of their project. They clarify the focus of their development work in the light of their deeper understanding of pedagogy achieved in Module 2. The planning process is interweaved with discussions about the practice of leadership, placing considerable focus on strategies for achieving the collaboration of colleagues to ensure projects achieve impact. This process involves a range of activities designed to engage with colleagues' values and beliefs and utilise their skills as part of the collaborative process of reflection, evaluation and review. Participants are guided through consideration of the sequencing and timing of their projects in busy educational environments where most of the time for engaging in new practice is already accounted for. Participants make presentations within the HertsCam network gaining critical feedback and advice before taking the work into their own professional context. Participants submit a portfolio of evidence of the planning undertaken and include items such as an early visual presentation at the HertsCam Annual Conference and a paper reflecting on the process of consultation and the evolution of their thinking.

Module 4 supports participants to develop their understanding of leadership and the management of change whilst leading their individual development projects which have been honed over time to make a difference to the quality of teaching and learning in their professional setting. Discussions are structured to share and learn from the experience of using techniques and strategies to lead practical change and to reflect on both the current impact and potential legacy of their projects. Participants submit a ten–thousand–word report in the form of a critical narrative account of their leadership of their development work.

The following vignette captures a typical development project:

A vignette: Lyndsay's MEd development project

> Lyndsay's project inverted the traditional roles of teacher and students by inviting teachers to be taught by students to play a musical instrument. The aim was to use the learning of musical instruments as a basis for dialogue about learning.

Lyndsay invited all her colleagues and interested students to an informal lunch at which she outlined her vision. 33 colleagues joined the project. The students worked hard to prepare lessons. Teachers enjoyed the learning, sharing their triumphs and frustrations with colleagues and students. The project was a powerful tool through which teachers can reflect on, and examine, their own learning habits.

A small team of students carried out observations and interviews with teachers. Colleagues shared the progress of their learning with the wider school community through an Instagram account. They uploaded pictures and captions to capture their progress. There was a lot of interest from the community via the school's twitter account.

At the end of the academic year there was an ensemble performance at the school concert, but Lyndsey stressed that what was of most important was the journey rather than the end result. Her main expectation was that the learning arising from this project would be about learning itself and this would be shared within the school community (Gillot & Rose, forthcoming).

The narratives of participants' projects are the key to learning about leadership, but also to the process of knowledge building within the network. These narratives form the core of a report which is submitted as the final assignment.

A pedagogy for empowerment

The programme is designed to empower participants and enable them to make a difference in their schools. The approach to teaching and learning is therefore facilitative. The programme is evaluated according to a set of pedagogic principles. This idea runs counter to the prevailing discourse which focuses on the measurement of outcomes rather than the evaluation of the quality of learning processes (Biesta, 2009, 2010). This issue has been with us for many years and the writing was on the wall in the 1970s when Lawrence Stenhouse wrote about the tension between a process model and one based on behavioural objectives (1975). In a recent book about his work, Mary James says this:

Learning is not simply a case of getting from A to B. Viewed as the growth of understanding, learning is not a target to be hit but something to be broadened, deepened, enhanced, enriched – and it may take the learner in unexpected but important new directions. If this is the case then, according to Stenhouse, it is better to be led by 'principles of procedure' or 'pedagogical aims' than 'objectives'. (James, 2012)

When re–designing the HertsCam MEd in 2014, we consulted teachers who had participated in the previous programme taught by members of our team. We asked them about the kind of teaching strategies that enabled them to become effective agents of change, which led to the following statement of our pedagogical principles.

Principle 1: our approach must cultivate participants' moral purpose as a dimension of their professionality.

Principle 2: our approach must enable participants to design and lead development projects aimed at improvements in professional practice.

Principle 3: our approach should enable the development of a learning community in which enhanced social capital allows critical friendship to flourish.

Principle 4: our approach should enable participants to reflect on their experience and make sense of it through participation in structured dialogic activities.

Principle 5: our approach should build the capacity for critical reflection and narrative writing through which participants can apply their scholarship to illuminate problem solving in professional contexts.

Principle 6: our approach should feature the use of discursive and conceptual tools to deepen understanding of themes relevant to the development of educational practice.

Principle 7: our approach should include the organisation of networking and opportunities for international engagement in order to build professional knowledge and foster mutual inspiration.

Evaluating against our principles

Having an explicit statement about our pedagogical principles has enabled us to generate tools for self–evaluation and monitoring. These principles reflect our shared professional values which guides the evaluation and development of the programme. From the very beginning of its work with teachers, HertsCam has sought external evaluation from a wide variety of sources to ensure that it reviews, improves and develops its programmes and provides what participants want: academic rigour and practical outcomes in their own professional contexts. The continuous development of the programme is informed by external perspectives such as those of researchers and others who have a responsibility to monitor the quality of the masters programme. The discussion that follows is drawn from these external sources including:

- the Link Tutor – a member of the School of Education at the University of Hertfordshire who has a key monitoring and moderation role
- the External Examiner who is an academic from a different university appointed to examine a sample of assignments from our programme and comment on the standard of the work and the quality of the assessment process

- an EU funded Research Fellow based at the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education
- researchers working on the international EFFeCT project who produced a case studies of the HertsCam MEd based on documentary analysis and a series of interviews with key members of the Teaching Team (Woods, Roberts and Chivers, 2016)

It is also informed by feedback from the participants themselves, gathered as part of our continuous self–evaluation process and a record of regular observations and feedback from David Frost.

The following evaluative discussion is structured according to the seven pedagogical principles.

1. The cultivation of moral purpose as a dimension of extended professionality

The MEd course is taught on the basis of a shared understanding that improving the life chances of the young people in our schools is our central purpose. Enhanced moral purpose is a key dimension of the type of professionality the course promotes (Pedagogical Principles document, Sept., 2017).

We use the term 'moral purpose' in the way that Fullan used it in the early 1990s when he argued that teaching is essentially a moral enterprise and that moral purpose and change agentry are 'natural allies' (Fullan 1993a, 1993b). The idea of moral purpose is introduced when each candidate is interviewed for a place on the HertsCam MEd, and it is discussed continuously throughout the course.

Participant evaluations show a high degree of satisfaction in feeling that this moral purpose is being developed and enhanced as an aspect of their professionality as the following comment illustrates.

> .. it allows me breathing space to consider my role and the moral purpose of my profession. Makes me realise that I'm not being self–indulgent when I want to 'stand and stare' and consider what I've just taught and how I can improve. We have busy lives as teachers but the course is teaching me the importance of pausing. (Participant feedback, Jan 2016)

Teachers often suffer a sense of being on a treadmill in their daily practice and the resulting stress can de–professionalise them and make them feel they do not have time to engage in more than what is required for 'survival' (Kell, 2018). However, the HertsCam MEd provides protected space for professional reflection and support for the sense that this is an entitlement.

Fullan warned that moral purpose, without the skills of change agentry, is likely to result in martyrdom (1993a). This is why it is so important to enable MEd participants to refine their project plans. When they present their plans to

the whole MEd community, a member of the Teaching Team carries out an observation. Below is an extract from one of the observer's written feedback:

> Your proposed project work is anchored in your moral purpose. Your desire to question, modify and affect change within your school community is obvious and commendable. (Observer's feedback to participant, Jan. 2016)

Participants' engagement with Network Events contributes powerfully to the enhancement of morale as noted in the following extract from the EFFeCT project case study.

> Events are conducted in ways which encourage collaboration that draws participants together with a sense of shared purpose – a collective sense of empowerment that is indicative of deep level collaboration (EFFeCT project case study, December 2016)

The key role of inspiration was also highlighted in the case study.

> Teacher leadership is enacted through teacher–led development work. Here, teachers focus on an issue which matters to them. They collaborate with colleagues to plan and lead change processes, gather and interpret evidence of the impact of what they have done, and share their enhanced understanding with others. In so doing, they inspire colleagues to also work to change things for the better. (EFFeCT project case study, December 2016)

In the case of the HertsCam programme, this sense of collective self–efficacy driven by a shared moral purpose becomes manifest in the form of the leadership of development projects which are designed to make a difference to the life chances of the young people in our school system. This leads on to the second principle.

2. Enabling the development of professional practice through the design and leadership of development projects

> The concept of development work is introduced and revisited throughout the programme. The concept is the antithesis of 'implementation' in that it assumes that such processes necessarily unfold over time and that they involve strategic planning, in order to enable professional reorientation to take place. Typical features include collaborative discussion, review, consultation, trialling, evaluation and joint planning. (Pedagogical Principles document, Sept. 2017)

The concept of development work set out in the early part of this article is critical, and we have to work hard to clarify this and distinguish it from more familiar ideas such as practitioner enquiry and the like. This became considerably easier for us when introducing the idea to the second cohort of the programme because, on the first day of the course, they constituted an audience for the Year 2 participants who made presentations about their development projects. For example, Nicola, a primary school teacher, planned to work with her colleagues to

develop the use of a range of different dolls each of which represented one of the 'learning powers'. These were to be used to build students' learning capacity by supporting reflection and a dialogue. A recently published account testifies to the success of this development project (Vicary & Lightfoot, 2018).

The conceptualisation of development work as a process avoids the temptation to try to find a quick fix or implement a blanket approach but to reflect, read and engage others in the project is echoed in the EFFeCT report which describes participants as:

> ...having more knowledge about school leadership, being able to develop others, having skills to plan whole school projects... Most projects support whole school development and the school improvement plan. They usually seek to have a direct impact on the quality and outcomes of students' learning. (EFFeCT project case study, Dec. 2016)

The over–arching principle of non–positional teacher leadership means that many of our participants lack the authority that may be assumed to flow from a formal leadposition. However, our philosophy assumes that authority of that kind is not the most valuable resource. Far more powerful is the capacity to organise and manage collaborative activities in which colleagues can be drawn into the process of reflection, evaluation, review and innovation on an invitational basis (Purkey & Novak, 1996; Frost, 2012).

3. Scaffolding the development of a learning community in which enhanced social capital allows critical friendship to flourish

> The development of the MEd group as a learning community involves building sufficient trust and interpersonal ease to allow for robust discussion in which each member of the group is able to offer challenge and critique. This facility depends on the rapid growth of familiarity and mutual acceptance. (Pedagogical Principles document, Sept., 2017)

The MEd programme begins with a two–day residential conference in a hotel. Schools have agreed to allow participants to be absent from school for the Friday. The conference begins with a convivial meeting over coffee with the Year 2 group and members of the Teaching Team. The workshop sessions that follow are intense, but the conference also features social time and meals together. Traditions of social interaction are established and an atmosphere of conviviality is promoted. Friendship and camaraderie are not accidental outcomes, they are part of the plan. Social capital, a major factor in supporting innovation, is explained by David Hargreaves as:

> the level of trust between people and the generation of norms of reciprocity (mutual favours) and collaboration.... (and).... The networks in which the people are embedded by strong ties. (Hargreaves, 2001: 490)

In HertsCam, the device for building social capital is community. The EF-FeCT case study highlights how the pedagogic principles support the growth of community:

> ...These crystallise the programme aim of creating a cohesive culture and a shared identity, systematically encouraging and facilitating mutual support and providing a framework for working together in creative ways. (EFFeCT project case study, 2016: 30)

Our Residential Conferences happen three times during the academic year and between these we have a series of what we call 'twilight sessions' – 3 hour workshops taking place at the end of the teaching day (4.40–7.30pm). The surroundings may be mundane – classrooms in a secondary school – but the provision of food and drink enables us to maintain a sense of community as we share a meal and engage in conversation half way through the session.

Enhanced social capital within a learning community creates the conditions in which participants can offer each other critical friendship (Costa & Kallick, 1993; MacBeath & Jardine, 1998) which involves reciprocal support and challenge.

4. Enabling reflection on experience and thinking, through participation in dialogic activities

> The HertsCam MEd is concerned with the development of professional knowledge in which the participants are knowledge creators. Their experience of practice is interrogated through reflection, comparison and analysis, which are scaffolded by the tools applied in the programme sessions and online. Conceptual frameworks and accounts of research derived from the literature are brought into the discussion in order to enhance participants' understanding. (Pedagogical Principles document, Sept. 2017)

On this programme, participants' professional experience, both accumulated and current, is treated as a precious resource for learning. If our goal is empowerment, it would be counter–productive, and actually insulting, to ignore what participants bring to the room and instead focus on the outcomes of university–based research. Participants' experience is brought into the seminar room through a continuous thread of dialogic workshop activities.

Participants are regularly guided to develop their thinking through dialogue in which they share their experience of teaching and of leading change. They offer each other critical friendship mentioned above, which involves reciprocal support and challenge. Listening, empathy and question–posing are key features of this dialogue (MacBeath, Dempster, Frost, Johnson & Swaffield, 2018).

The way the workshops are facilitated is an important variable as illustrated by the following extract from David Frost's observation record.

> Every few minutes in this session there is an opportunity for participants to discuss their ideas, their institutional contexts and their practice. This particular discussion is very dynamic and supported by the team members going round and supporting the discussion, responding to questions and offering guidance. (DF observation feedback, Nov. 2015)

The External Examiner noted how this dialogic approach is extended by participation in the wider HertsCam community.

> I noted that there were expectations to present assignment foci and essay structures to the Network Events, which were useful opportunities for feedback. (External Examiner's feedback, May 2016)

By presenting their ideas at these events and seeking feedback, participants are able to refine and develop their proposals and plans. Such mutual accountability improves rigour and ensures practicality. These benefits are also echoed by the participants

- The discussion was useful for my own work at my school
- Developing a professional learning culture – fascinating development programme with some excellent outcomes
- Getting everyone together and having the opportunity to talk and discuss things
- The workshop was delivered really well and has given me ideas to apply at my own school (Participants' feedback on Network Event, Oct 15)

Within workshop sessions, carefully designed tools are used to scaffold one–to–one dialogue and small group discussion focused on participants' concerns, proposals and plans for interventions.

5. Building the capacity for critical reflection and narrative writing in which scholarship illuminates problem solving in professional contexts

> In the HertsCam MEd the study of relevant literatures is used in the context of academic writing that is rigorous and critical, but the writing is purposeful in relation to professional problems arising from the individual participant's concerns and strategic action. Each participant's writing begins with their own professional identity and situation and develops along with their unfolding strategic action. (Pedagogical Principles document, Sept. 2017)

One of the things that participants have to unlearn when they first join the MEd programme is the fallacious idea that the purpose of academic writing is to test what you know or at least what you can recall. On the HertsCam MEd, writing is regarded as an essential element of the learning process. It is the means by which participants make sense of their professional experience and engage in rigorous, critical reflection on both their practice and their thinking.

Providing time and space for critical reflection is a challenge in all educational contexts, so the structure of the MEd actively supports participants in

achieving headspace away from a busy professional environment, as noted by the External Examiner who had visited us during one of the Residential Conferences to talk to participants about their experience of the MEd.

> The residentials (conferences) are evidently highly valued .... as key spaces to focus on their studies away from the busyness of school life, led by expert tutors and practitionersng being set within a residential. The networking and collaboration is facilitated by the teaching being set within a residential. (External Examiner's informal feedback, Feb. 2016)

The comments resonate with the feedback from the participants themselves after a residential conference. They had been asked to note aspects of the conference that they had found most helpful.

> Time to write was very useful this weekend. Good to get back to MEd thinking and to refocus following the Christmas break.
> Engaging with the literature, how to dip into and evaluate text.
> Time to work on our project plans/summary work/networking with others. (Participant feedback, Jan. 2017)

When contributing to MEd sessions, members of the Teaching Team show how scholarship informs their own practice. Jo Mylles, for example, has talked about how reading on the subject of 'servant leadership' (Greenleaf, 2002) was used to inform discussions at Senior Leadership Team meetings. She has also published an account of this scholarly approach to school leadership (Mylles, 2017).

This focus on critical reflection and high standards of academic writing are also seen in in the twilight workshop sessions. In their feedback, participants comment on the value of protected time to reflect and read to deepen their thinking and develop what, for some, is a daunting return to academic writing.

> Reading around leadership and school structures is helping the fog to clear. My school is in the middle of a massive culture change that is impacting on all members of the school community. It is great to read that this is inevitable and whilst it happens in every institution the uniqueness of each setting will bring its own particular challenges. (Participant feedback, Jan. 2016)

Supervisors contribute greatly to the development of participants' writing style and the quality of their work. The success of the drive to help participants develop, reflect upon and use their scholarship in their writing is confirmed in a comment from the Link Tutor's report.

> What comes across very clearly in all the assignments is a strong, reflective, professional voice. This is impressive relatively early in the programme; many students struggle to write reflectively, yet in this cohort all students wrote confidently in the first person and the teaching team should be commended on enabling their students to write in this way. (Link Tutor's moderation feedback, May 17)

Similarly, the process of writing is supported by clear guidance and tools to encourage both confidence and dialogue between participant and supervisor.

6. Facilitation and support through the use of discursive and conceptual tools that deepen understanding of themes relevant to the development of educational practice

> HertsCam MEd taught sessions typically feature reflection and discussion activities in which structure and focus are introduced through the use of tools devised for the specific subject matter. Such tools may be in the form, for example, of a list of categories or perhaps a set of procedural steps. (Pedagogical Principles document, Sept. 2017)

We use the term 'discursive tools' to refer to artefacts produced by members of the Teaching Team to structure participants' reflection and discussion. Sometimes these may be a list of questions and prompts with spaces to record ideas arising in the discussion. Sometimes the tool may be more complex and designed to enable a small group to engage in an activity that might be more like a game. The purpose of tools like these is to provide focus and a framework that makes reflection and discussion purposeful within a brief timescale.

The term 'conceptual tools' we use to refer to the frameworks of ideas that help us to make sense of our experience and challenge our assumptions. A typical example would be the categories that Michael Fullan and Andy Hargreaves offered in the early 1990s to help us think about professional cultures – individualised, balkanised and collaborative cultures (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992). Another example would be the concept of 'assessment for learning'. These are conceptual constructions which arise in the literature and can be introduced and explained as tools to help us analyse and explain our experience of practice.

A key document provided to each new MEd participant at the beginning of the course is the Annotated Bibliography. For each of the sixteen topics there is an explanation and a reading list. However, we do not assume that participants will simply discover the conceptual tools they need through their reading. Introducing conceptual tools and facilitating their use is part of the skill that members of the Teaching Team apply in the workshop sessions. The following extract from David Frost's observation record focuses on a workshop led by Jo Mylles, one of the members of the Teaching Team, who was building on the previous session led by Paul Rose, another member of the team,

> Jo then takes over and refers us to the idea of professional cultures. She makes detailed reference to the input in the previous session by Paul about the use of tools for analysing school culture ...She introduces a new tool for 'examining the culture in your school'. Participants are asked to use the tool to reflect on the professional cultures in their own schools and then share in pairs, then on the table. This is an essential feature of the programme: this opportunity to talk about their institutional realities is precious. (DF observation feedback, Nov. 2015)

> The experience of using a wide range of tools quickly rubs off on the participants who begin to design their own for their development work.

> You facilitated talk amongst your audience members appealing for their help with creating tools to gauge the impact of your project on teacher competence and confidence. (Teaching team observation feedback on a Yr 2 presentation, Sept. 2016)

> Splitting the audience into two to discuss two specific tools you have planned to use in your project generated a high level of discussion. (Teaching team observation feedback on a Yr 2 presentation, Sept. 2016)

Being able to create such tools is a key skill in the design and leadership of development work.

7. Building professional knowledge and fostering mutual inspiration through the organisation of networking and opportunities for international engagement

> Building professional knowledge through networking involves participants having opportunities to share narrative accounts of their development projects. Knowledge is built when narratives are subject to discussion, which leads to an enriched understanding of particular aspects of practice and the process of change. Alongside the development of technical know–how and insight is the building of collective self– efficacy and enhanced moral purpose. (Pedagogical Principles document, Sept. 2017)

The HertsCam MEd is at the centre of a wider teacher–led network which brings together MEd participants with others on the TLDW programme – a one year certificated experience – and others who will have participated in HertsCam programmes in the past. For us, networking is a means to build professional knowledge. We use the term 'knowledge building' to refer to a process which is not merely disseminating information about ways to teach or even ways to exercise leadership; it is a critical process in which participants' narratives are subject to scrutiny. In the ensuing dialogue, colleagues offer comparison with their own practice or experience which leads to a collective understanding and self–efficacy (Frost, 2012b). MEd participants will typically volunteer to lead a workshop focusing on their project or to display a poster as a stimulus for discussion.

> I did a poster presentation and was delighted to see how many colleagues were not only interested but also provided tangible ideas. (Participants' feedback on Network Event, Oct. 2015)

The importance of this wider network in cementing a sense of professional identity and putting down the roots of longevity is touched on by the EFFeCT case study.

> Relevant to the depth and sustaining of collaboration is the fact that the programme is embedded in the wider network of HertsCam. This is manifested in specific ways. Wearing's (2011: 31) evaluation observes that participation 'in the MEd gives a sense of belonging to a community in which goals, standards and values are shared'. (EFFeCT project case study, Dec. 2016)

The external examiner endorsed the impact of HertsCam network, not as an insular club but as something from which to build personal conviction and take out into their wider school and community contexts.

> Peer networks were already evident by January as an important element of the programme and students are encouraged to engage with one another in whatever format best suited them (including social media groups). (External examiner's report, July 2016)

Since 2008, HertsCam has worked internationally, helping to establish teacher leadership programmes in widely differing circumstances and sometimes where the concept of teacher leadership itself is alien. MEd participants are frequently invited to present their development work at international events across Europe, leading to an enhanced sense of professionality and agency for all involved (Flores & Santos–Richmond, 2017).

Academic quality

Our partnership with the University of Hertfordshire makes it possible for participants in the HertsCam MEd to be awarded a masters degree, one that is recognised nationally and internationally. However, perhaps of greater importance is the ongoing process of scrutiny which helps us to maintain high standards of scholarship while enabling participants to make a difference to practice in schools. As we have argued above, these two aspects are not mutually exclusive or in any way separate; at the core of our programme is the idea that scholarship, which includes reading, dialogue and critical narrative writing, fuels the leadership of development work. The assignments are therefore designed to enable participants to engage sequentially in: analysing their situation, setting an agenda, exploring the pedagogy inherent in that agenda, planning an intervention in the form of a plan for a development project and, finally, leading and reporting on the leadership of that development project.

The assessment of assignments is through double blind marking involving all members of the Teaching Team. All assignments and assessments are sent to our Link Tutor at the University for moderation. In addition, a sample of assignments is sent to the External Examiner who then reports to each of the Module Examination Boards. This rigorous process ensures that academic standards are not only consistent with our programme aims and the agreed learning outcomes but also are comparable with standards on other masters programmes. At the time of writing we have had seven Module Exam Boards and at each one our assessments have been validated. The following extract from our Link Tutor's report, highlights the quality of assessment feedback.

> Written feedback is very strong. It conveys both a sense of authority and a supportive agenda. It has a coaching tone which is wholly appropriate and will sup-

port student development well. It also shows a real engagement with the students as individuals. (UH Link Tutor moderation feedback, Feb. 2016)

Reports from the External Examiner are similarly supportive including the following:

I feel privileged to be involved in some small way with this innovative programme nationally. Everything seems securely in place for it to grow from strength to strength. This is the main message I will report to the University. (External Examiner's report, Feb. 2016)

As a team, which now includes twelve members, we keep the assessment process under review and discuss the feedback we receive from the University. Occasionally tensions arise when the particular nature of our programme seems to be at odds with established university systems and procedures, but we rely on the quality of the dialogue with our academic partners to enable us to address issues and find accommodations.

Conclusion

We started the re–designed programme in September 2015 and our first cohort of participants completed their final assignment in August 2017. The first Graduation Ceremony subsequently took place on 14th October 2017 with all of the sixteen members of that cohort receiving their degrees on that day. A one hundred per cent success rate is unusual. The ceremony was organised and managed by HertsCam with teachers undertaking every aspect of the event. A pro–vice chancellor from the University was invited to make a speech and hand out the degree certificates. After the degrees were conferred, David Frost made closing remarks in his role as a founding trustee of HertsCam in which he called upon policy makers to note the significance of this graduation. He closed with this:

Today, we have before us unassailable evidence that the potential for the transformation of educational provision that is desperately needed across the world actually lies within the teaching profession itself.

We are currently teaching our second and third cohorts and continuing to fine tune the programme. We strive to live up to our own pedagogical principles so that the MEd programme truly empowers rather than infantilises teachers; so that it enhances their professionality and their capacity to transform the lives of their students.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS OF THE PUPILS' EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM[1]

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Abstract

The paper addresses the issue of the need to realize both, national and international examinations of students' achievements within the same educational system. In the first part we discuss the similarities and differences between national and international examinations. Similarities between national and international examinations are explored from the standpoint of their objectives, of the procedures for their planning, and of implementation of the testing. The differences are analysed in terms of the relationship between the national curriculum and the contents included in the tests of student achievements, in terms of the contents of other types of instruments used in the survey, and of the manner of the sample formation. The second part of the paper captures the representation and the characteristics of national and international studies that have been implemented so far in Serbia. We conclude that the results of these examinations are mutually complementary, so that their parallel application for the purpose of evaluating the same education system can be considered as justified and desirable.

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Introduction

Educational achievements that students achieve in different fields and at different levels of education represent one of the indicators of the quality of education system. Different types of research are used for their assessment, and among them special place belongs to the national and international examinations of students' educational achievements.

As a method of evaluating of the quality of the education system, the above mentioned surveys have been used more extensively in the 90s of the 20th century, although they appeared several decades earlier (Greaney & Kellaghan, 2008). They have been initiated mostly due to the change of the approach to assessment of the quality of education system, which assumed shifting the focus from assessing the quality of inputs (organization of teaching, teacher education level, the class size, etc.) to assessing the quality of the achieved results (e.g. knowledge acquired by students, abilities and skills they established) (Wagner, Babson &Murphy, 2011). That change was largely built on the belief that the development of human resources, i.e. that knowledge, skills, capabilities that people possess are a key factor in the progress of each state, its competitiveness in the international market, but also a key factor for a better life of each individual (Kirsch et al., 2013).

The representation of national and international surveys differs from a country to a country. In some countries both the national and international examinations are commenced, in some none of them, while in some either only international or only national examinations are undertaken. For example, if both surveys are considered as an indicator of the country's development, the none should take into consideration the results of some analyses showing that national and international examinations are more commonly undertaken in industrialized countries than in the developing ones (Braun & Kanjee, 2006, as cited in Greaney & Kellaghan, 2008).

Whether and which of these examination will be taken as a part of evaluation of the quality of the education system in a particular country depends on a number of factors such as: the concept of the system which supports the quality and evaluation of the quality of education; the ways educational policy is implemented, including the necessary conditions (human, material) for implementation, and so on. In this paper we analyse the need to undertake national and international examinations as a part of the evaluation of the quality of the education system from the perspective of the specificities, advantages and limitations of these examinations. In the first part of the paper we discuss the similarities and differences between them, while in the second one we analyse the situation in Serbia: how are they implemented and what are their characteristics.

Similarities and Differences between National and International Examinations of Students' Educational Achievements

National and international investigations are essentially related, i.e. among them there are similarities in content, methodology, and the nature of the results they provide. Accordingly, some countries use the obtained data of international surveys for the arrangement of national reports (Greaney & Kellaghan, 2008).

Above all, national and international surveys have similar aims (Greaney & Kellaghan, 2008). Their main purpose is to determine the level and quality of educational achievements of students of a certain age in specific areas, and to describe the wider context in which they have been accomplished, which can contribute to the explanation of the achieved result. More specifically, their aims are to register students' achievements in specific areas, to identify good and weak aspects of the achievements, to compare the results among different groups of students (e.g. by sex, location), to examine connections and relationships that exist between students' achievements and individual elements which constitute the environment in which such achievements were realized (e.g. characteristics of family, school, wider community) (Greaney & Kellaghan, 2008).

National and international surveys have been designed so to enable the assessment of the achievement of a particular group, and not of a specific student (Kirsch et al., 2013). These tests are aimed at registering what a group of students knows and can do, rather than to measure individual differences among students. Groups may include a population of one or more countries, regions, but they may also be formed according to relevant features of a particular school, family, for example, or according to individual characteristics of students, such as their gender, etc.

In order to record the impact achieved at the group level, national and international tests use similar standardized procedures for the instruments' construction (construction of tests, questionnaires), for sample selection, administration of testing, determination of the scores, and for data analysis (Greaney & Kellaghan, 2008). During the 1980s, the methodology of these tests was intensively developed (Kirsch et al., 2013). For example, in their construction the Item Response Theory has been used instead of the Classical Test Theory, while the method of scheduling assignments and designing individual forms of tests has been changed by introduction of the Balanced Incomplete Block (BIB) spiralled test. The mentioned, but also many other novelties have contributed to the creation of comparable scales for multiple test forms, improved the coverage of the content of the examined construct, backed the elaboration of generalizations (now not limited to individual items but related to the parts of the constructs

that these entities represent), and reduced the number of items in a test that every student has to solve, etc. (Kirsch et al., 2013).

Though, national and international examinations represent different types of surveys, which means that each of them has specific characteristics. In terms of differences that exist between them, the number of participating countries is the first to register: national testing is realized within one state while international surveys include several states (Greaney & Kellaghan, 2008). Although seemingly formal, this distinction results with certain testing specifics.

One of such specifics refers to the relationship between the content of the national curriculum and the definition of the construct of the educational achievements of the pupils, i.e. its operational definition in national and international testing. It is not disputable that in both types of testing there is no full match with the content of national curricula. However, one can expect that the matching is higher in national examinations. Certain deviations are primarily a consequence of the need to include certain parts of the curriculum that are considered as of particularly important from the standpoint of continuing education, students' coping with everyday life situations, and the like (Baucal et al., 2006). This means that regardless of deviations, national surveys provide the opportunity to include what is specific to the national curriculum of a particular country.

By contrast, in international studies, the likelihood of such matching is lower, since the content of the tests used in them should reflect the essence of national curricula of greater number of countries. For example, when it comes to TIMSS examination (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) the test content relies upon a curricular framework defined by the participating countries. The given framework covers as many common elements from the curricula of the participating countries as possible (Gašić–Pavišić & Stanković, 2012). This, however, means that the test may include tasks related to materials that are not covered by the curriculum of some participating countries. It is important to emphasize that use of appropriate analyses can result in an assessment of the relevance of testing for the curriculum of a given country. Also, it is possible to establish how the students' achievement changes if only the tasks included in the curriculum of a participating country are taken into consideration (Gašić–Pavišić & Stanković, 2012). Although there are differences in the students' achievement that depend on the choice of particular tasks, past analyses have shown that the differences are not large. Therefore, the choice of tasks does not have a significant effect on the position that a specific country occupies in the final ranking list (Mullis, Martin & Foy, 2008).

Conception of tests used in the PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) examination also relies upon the content framework resulting as the consensus among the members of the expert teams. It was agreed to label the central concept in the PISA examination as "literacy". Although the concept of literacy also assumes the competencies acquired through regular teaching pro-

cess at school, in the PISA testing literacy also includes competences that can be acquired in the daily interaction of individuals with people outside of school, within a narrow and wider social environment. Therefore, the PISA's examination aim is not to monitor the realization of a curriculum; the main aim is to test the efficiency of educational systems in developing competences that are important for the personal and professional development of an individual, as well as for the functioning of the society as a whole (Pavlović–Babić & Baucal, 2013). For example, suggested are three possible relationships between the contents of the national curriculum and the PISA examination: the first implies correspondence to a great extent; the other that the content of the national curriculum is narrower than the content of the PISA examination, which results in students being partially tested on material they have not been studied; and the third, that the content of the national curriculum is broader than the content of PISA examination, which means that students are capable for more than checked with the test, i.e. that they have not enough opportunities to show all what they can do with the knowledge and skills they have acquired (Nardi, 2008, as cited in Hopfenbeck & Baird, 2014).

The level and quality of matching national curriculum content and the tests used in international examinations are not the same for all participating countries. It is due to the fact that the contents of national curricula of various countries, along with certain similarities, also have specificities in terms of what is being learned, what importance is attached to particular topics, when is something learned, etc. (Greaney & Kellaghan, 2008). In addition, it should be borne in mind that the stated features of the national curriculum are not equally reflected in all areas in which student achievement is examined. For example, the field of science stands out as particularly heterogeneous. Therefore, to test the achievements in that area, it is more difficult to conceive tests that cover the specificities of national curricula of different countries, than, for example, in mathematics that is considered to be more homogeneous in this sense (Greaney & Kellaghan, 2008).

From the perspective of the contents included interesting, it can be concluded that national examination relies heavily on a curriculum that is realised in schools. The greatest deviance exists in the case of PISA testing, precisely because PISA, conceptually, does not aim at examining the effects grasped through the realisation of the curriculum.

As for the instruments used for data collection, there are some differences between national and international examination. The "paper and pen" test is most commonly used in testing the student's knowledge / competence. However, in contrast to international testing such as TIMSS and PISA, the implementation of national testing in some countries also assume the occasional use of oral tests and the tests of practical performance (National Testing of Pupils in Europe: Objectives, Organization and Use of Results, 2009).

As for the type and content of other instruments added to the tests for data collection, there are no significant differences between national and international examination. Examination of the context in which students achieve the appropriate accomplishments usually uses the instruments that include questionnaires and assessment scales; they are made for school principals, teachers, parents, students (Greaney & Kellaghan, 2008). Basically, the data provided by national surveys through these instruments coincide with the data that are sought in international examinations such as TIMSS and PISA: data on socio–economic position of the student's family, students' motivation for learning, professional experience of teachers and their training, teaching methods, material–technical working conditions in school, school climate and etc. (National Testing of Pupils in Europe: Objectives, Organization and Use of Results, 2009).

The main difference between national and international examinations in terms of the respondents included in the examination is that national examinations are realized on the population and on the sample, and international ones only on the sample (Greaney & Kellaghan, 2008; National and International Assessment of Student Achievement, 2011 National Testing of Pupils in Europe: Objectives, Organization and Use of Results, 2009). The decision regarding the enrolment of respondents in national examinations is based on the goal of that examination. For example, national surveys on the population (census–based national research) are undertaken with the aim to monitor and evaluate the work of all schools. In European countries, this type of testing is reported at the earliest age of 10 and 12, but can be repeated in later years of schooling (National Testing of Pupils in Europe: Objectives, Organization and Use of Results, 2009). On the contrary, the sample based national examinations can enable identification of problems at the system level, but are short of information on all particular schools.

Common to national and international sample based studies is the use of large, representative and usually multi–stratified students' samples. The selection procedure for respondents is mostly similar. The difference exists, first of all, in the first step, i.e. in national testing there is no definition of the international target population. This means that in national examination the selection of the sample is the beginning, and in the international one it follows the definition of the national target population and nationally defined population. The discrepancies between these two populations are possible in both national and international studies, as there is a possibility that certain schools or pupils are excluded from testing in accordance with the pre–defined criteria (Dumais & Gough, 2012; Martin, Mullis & Hooper, 2016; OECD, 2017). The potential exclusion criteria in the above studies are similar. At the school level, this may be: the geographical distance of school, the small number of pupils in them, the incompatibility of the school's structure and program with the schools of the regular system. The reasons for the exclusion of certain pupils within the school

could be: some intellectual or functional difficulties that prevent student's participation in testing or ignorance of the language in which the testing is administered. In international studies, for example, a nationally defined population comprises at least 95% of the national target population. After this type of exclusion, the effective target population is formed from which the sample is to be selected.

The students' ages included in the testing varies in both national and international studies. National examinations usually include students of primary and secondary schools (Greaney & Kellaghan, 2008). International examinations also include students of that age. However, the key difference in sample conception, for example, in TIMSS and PISA surveys, is reflected precisely in defining the criteria for selecting respondents. In the case of TIMSS, this is the number of years of schooling (four or eight), while in the case of PISA, basic criterion is students' calendar age. For example, in the TIMSS 2015 study, international target population included all students enrolled in the eighth grade, in the year of testing (Martin, Mullis & Hooper, 2016). At the same time, the sample of PISA 2015 survey included respondents who are over 15 years of age, regardless of what school they attend (primary, secondary, state, private, etc.) (OECD, 2017).

It is important to underline one more difference in the conception of the sample, which exists between the mentioned international surveys. In the TIMSS examination, the classes are selected after the school selection, while in the PISA study, the choice of students of the appropriate age follows the selection of the school (Martin, Mullis & Hooper, 2016; OECD, 2017). In other words, for the purposes of the TIMSS testing, all pupils of the selected classes are enrolled into the sample, and in the PISA testing, selected is a certain number of pupils of the appropriate age at the school level. Due to these differences in the methods of sample selection one can relate the results obtained in the TIMSS test with the data about teachers, the way they work, their initial education, professional development, etc., while in the PISA testing it is not possible (Hopfenbeck & Baird, 2014). Therefore, in the TIMSS examination, the sample includes teachers, while in the PISA, the school principals are included in the sample but not the teachers.

National and International Studies of Educational Achievements Realized in Serbia

Since the initial changes in education in 2002, there were two national examinations carried out in Serbia (Baucal et al., 2006; Čaprić, 2007). Both were undertaken by the Institute for the Evaluation of the Quality of Education, an institution established in 2003 by the Ministry of Education. The examination included achievements in two areas, Serbian language and mathematics. Both studies targeted pupils of lower grades of elementary school: the 2004 national

survey included students from the third grade, and the 2006 survey included students from the fourth grade.

Also, Serbia participated in two international examinations, PISA and TIMSS. Serbia participated in PISA examination since 2001, and has since been involved in four cycles: 2003, 2006, 2009 and 2012 (Pavlović–Babić & Baucal, 2013). The realization of PISA testing in Serbia was entrusted to the Institute for Psychology of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. In the TIMSS study, Serbia has been so far involved in four cycles: in 2003 and 2007, with participation of students from the eighth grade (Gašić–Pavišić & Stanković, 2012), and in 2011 and 2015, with participation of students from the fourth grade (Marušić Jablanović, 2017). The Institute for Pedagogical Research from Belgrade had the role of national centre for the TIMSS studies in Serbia.

Similarities and differences that exist between national and international surveys conducted in Serbia are multiple.

First of all, it is necessary to point out the differences in the contents of these examinations. While the national examinations in Serbia included the testing of educational achievements in the field of Serbian language and mathematics, the international examinations, TIMSS and PISA, included additional field of science.

As for the relation between the content of the national curriculum and the content of the tests used in the national examinations, and in line with the nature of that examination, one should point out that the curriculums for the Serbian language and mathematics for the third or fourth grade of the elementary school were the frameworks from which the tasks for the knowledge test have been extracted. However, the intention was not to fully cover the contents of the curriculum with the test. Consequently, the content of the test was not identical to the content that a student encounters during the classes or, for example, in a textbook, but still refers to it (Baucal et al., 2006). Even so, in the degree of matching between them gets higher when we analyse the relationship between the content of the national curriculum and the content of tasks in international tests as, for example, in the TIMSS testing. Namely, the estimated relevance of this testing and the mathematics' curriculum for the fourth grade of primary school in Serbia within the TIMSS 2011 trial was 78.8% (Gašić–Pavišić & Stanković, 2012), and in the TIMSS 2015 survey, it was 91% (Marušić Jablanović, 2017). The matching of the contents of the curriculum for natural sciences for the fourth grade in Serbia and the contents of the TIMSS 2011 assignments was 80.7% (Gašić–Pavišić & Stanković, 2012), and in the TIMSS 2015 survey, it was 84.4% (Ševkušić i Kartal, 2017).

As for the instruments that, in addition to tests, are used in the national and international testing that have been carried out in Serbia so far, common was the use of questionnaires for students and for school principals (Čaprić et al., 2007). A particular similarity between the national tests and the TIMSS test was the

inclusion of teachers in the survey process. The difference between national and international examination that has been carried out so far in Serbia is that they did not include parents' surveys. However, it should be noted that the tendency to include parents in TIMSS and PISA studies has been noted since 2009, that is, a couple of years after the last national survey in our country.

From the perspective of the conception of sampling in national and international testing in Serbia, namely the students' ages included in the samples, there is an evident discrepancy between these two types of examinations. National examinations included exclusively pupils of lower grades of elementary school, while in the international studies the students at the end of compulsory education were main participants. Although the current situation has somewhat changed by involving students in the fourth grade of elementary school in the TIMSS examination in 2011 and 2015, national examinations are still targeting exclusively students from the lower grades of primary school, while international examinations include mostly students at the end of compulsory education.

There are no significant differences in the sizes of the samples between national and international research carried out in Serbia. The first national testing of educational achievements in Serbia was conducted on a sample of 4887 students at the third grade of 119 elementary schools, from all the regions of Serbia (Baucal et al., 2006); and the second one included a total of 5120 fourth–grade students from 125 elementary schools and 13 school administrations (Čaprić et al., 2007). Both national surveys were carried out on representative samples of schools, with special attention given to proportional representation of urban and rural areas.

In the TIMSS 2011 survey in Serbia, the sample included 156 primary schools and 4379 students at the fourth grade (Gašić–Pavišić & Stanković, 2012), while the TIMSS 2015 survey in Serbia was carried out on the sample of 160 primary schools, but the total number of students covered by the study was lower than in the previous cycle and amounted to 4036 students at the fourth grade (Marušić Jablanović, 2017). Both cycles included all regions in the country, except Kosovo and Metohija (Gašić–Pavišić & Stanković, 2012; Marušić Jablanović, 2017).

PISA testing in Serbia, in the period from 2003 to 2012, encompassed between 4405 and 5523 students, or between 143 and 189 schools (OECD, 2009; OECD, 2012; OECD, 2014). So far, PISA surveys in Serbia have covered all regions of Serbia without Kosovo and Metohija.

The distinction between national and international examinations also exists in terms of the dynamics of their realization. It can be noted that international studies have a greater continuity in application, especially the PISA test, which has been successfully implemented four times to date, from 2003, ending in 2012. By contrast, during the same period, only two national surveys were carried out (2004 and 2006). Some obstacles broke up continuity of implementa-

tion of international examinations, and the gaps were as follows: after four successful PISA surveys, Serbia has missed the 2015 cycle; with the TIMSS testing the first two cycles enrolled the students of the eighth grade, and it was changed in the 2011 and 2015 cycle, when the students from the fourth grade were also enrolled.

There is a difference between national and international investigations regarding the institutions in charge of their implementation. Ministry of Education was in charge of national surveys, while certain scientific and research institutions are in charge of international surveys.

The national surveys which so far have been realized in our country have provided insight into what knowledge and skills Serbian students have in Serbian language and in mathematics after three or four years of schooling. They also contributed to increased understanding of the factors that determine the educational achievements of students. Additionally, one of the goals of the national survey conducted in 2003 was to define the appropriate age standards for Serbian language and mathematics, while the national survey carried out in 2006 put a special emphasis on the assessment of the conditions in which our schools function, and on the expertise of the educational staff (Čaprić et al., 2007).

By contrast, the results of TIMSS and PISA surveys provide information on the characteristics of the context in which the most successful students in the world are studying. The data obtained are particularly important from the point of view of the education policy of the countries whose students achieved weaker results. The significance of international examinations is also reflected in the fact that they rely on a comparison inspired by the pursuit of harmonized educational policies of different countries, harmonizing educational goals and the way of their realization (Maksimović, 2013). In that sense, with a good basis for comparing students' achievements from different countries, there are better chances to increase students' mobility within the wider educational area, namely, for wider social mobility.

Conclusion

National and international surveys of educational achievements of students by their nature are analogous, i.e. are similar in terms of the content and the methodology used to collect the data. However, specific for national examinations is that they provide better options for reflections upon the particular characteristic of the national curriculum of a given country. On the other hand, international examinations ensure that the achievement of students in each country is viewed in a wider context, i.e. in the context of the relative success achieved by students from other countries, which can contribute to a more realistic assessment of the current situation in a given country, to improved aware-

ness of necessary changes, of the appropriate dynamics with which to introduce changes, etc. Therefore, their uses as studies that provide complementary data allow a more comprehensive and fuller description of the practice, but also offer a better insight into the necessary measures for its improvement. In order to use the results of national and international examinations as a record of progress in students achievements in certain education domains, and not just to determine the current state of affairs, it is important to ensure continuity in their implementation and the comparability of results obtained in different cycles.

In Serbia, during the period after 2000, there was progress in creating conditions for implementation of national and international examinations. Given that certain issues related to their application are still open, it is necessary to continue working out the conception of use the obtained results for the purposes of evaluating the quality of the education system.

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STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF ADULT LEARNING IN AN ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT[1]

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Abstract

Although the literature in the strategic management in education and learning, and strategic human resource development have flourished in last few decades, while overall strategies of learning of employees and learning strategies for improvement of the quality of organizational performance represent substantial stream of research, absence of the critical reviews of the strategies aimed to improve the quality of adult learning in an organizational context is evident. Insight into the relevant literature showed that learning strategies are transmitters of knowledge and important stimulant for transformation of the organization. This review classified a few distinctive perspectives (individual, organizational, supportive and holistic) among authors who wrote about strategies of learning of employees, and critically compare these perspectives, having in focus their potential to improve quality of adult learning in an organizational context.

Keywords: adult learning, human resource development, learning strategies, quality of learning in an organizational context, strategies to improve quality of the learning of employees

Introduction

For contemporary organizations, strategic management is a dominant dynamic orientation for its future development, that include human resource development as a strategic link to all other relevant elements (organizational processes, structure, performance, management, culture, etc.). Strategic orientation

of employees' learning and development through growth and combination of different elements of knowledge enables optimal organizational performance and development of the critical capacities of the organization to cope with changes. There are many scholars (Brandi, Iannone, 2017; Conti, 2009; Davis, 2014; Garavan et al., 2016; Gilley et al., 2002; McCarthy and Garavan, 2006) who recognized the importance of strategic human resource development as the constitutive element of the process of shaping, protecting, and maintaining organizational competitive advantage. These processes are enabled through learning and development of valuable, rare, not easily imitable, in work engaged, and committed employees.

Strategic orientation of organization has an important effect on the implementation of the concepts of knowledge management and the learning organization. Shifting in research perception of organization from traditional system theory toward chaos and complexity theories of systems induced by accelerated changes in a modern, dynamic world are related to the organizational requirements to move from economy of scale to economy of scope, from busy employees to optimal performers, from procedural to knowledge and system tasks, from teams to flexible, even virtual networks. Therefore, the old paradigm of human resource development practice as a domain for realization of prescribed training processes, or for learning information and developing skills "just–in–case" that employees need them in the future require new strategies to improve quality of adult learning in an organizational context, that are performed "just–in–time" and based on actual, determinates learning needs.

Learning as an Integral Part of Organizational Strategy

In organizations without a clear mission and vision human resource development activities are reduced to development of procedural, conceptual or dispositional capacities (i.e. to development of capacities to accomplish work, to understand requests or information, and/or to share mutual organizational values and interests) through unplanned, fragmented and incidental sociocultural and cognitive processes that are usually result of engagement in work activities, observing and listening colleagues/peers, or presence of employees at the workplace (Billett, 2014). But in contrast, in organizations with clear strategic orientation, human resource development activities are considered as an essential part of the processes of change. Accordingly, Boonstra emphasized the application of theoretical (andragogical/human resource development) knowledge "to the planned development and reinforcement of organizational strategies, structures, and processes for improving an organization's effectiveness" (Boonstra, 2004: 72).

Importance of the learning and application of andragogical knowledge in the context of the organization is also indicated by Laitinen (2015). He claims

that "the lower the predictability of organizational activities and the greater the uncertainty about everything continuing unchanged, the more important it becomes to enhance continuous learning, i.e. lifelong learning" as a form of adaptation (Laitinen, 2015: 36).

In organizations with strategic orientation, the learning of employees is aimed at the achievement of optimal organizational performance and an adjustment to continuous internal and external changes. Correspondingly, employees need to obtain new knowledge, skill and information directed "more to adjust to changes than to react to them" whereby "learning to integrate with other members of the organization is the key activity" (Savićević, 2007: 193).

In such organizations, as many researchers found (Despotović, 2016; Jacobs & Washington, 2003, In Manuti et al., 2015; Noe, 2010; Swanson and Holton, 2001; Thorne & Pellant, 2007, In Manuti et al., 2015) learning is not only a strategic component for individual development and organizational competitiveness, or strategic component for optimal performance, but integral part of organizational strategic vision and mission, while learning strategies are means of learning that promotes the development of employees (Manuti et al., 2015).

The learning of employees consists of activities through which they could acquire, revise or relearn knowledge necessary for work performance, "that does not take place within the context of or follow from a formally organized learning program or event" and activities "in which the adult learner is involved in an interactive work situation" (Koopmans, et al, 2006: 137). Knowledge generated that way depends on how the employees understand the current situation in their organization and what they see as desirable solutions for the future of their organization (Boonstra, 2004). Poell (2014) consider learning of employees as participation in situated work activities, that includes on–the–job and off–the–job events. In the organization with strategic orientation "the new learning and development function is being identified by employees and company leaders [...] as learner–centered, agile, energized, holistic, humanistic, just–in–time, on–demand, commitment–focused, knowledge–led, organic, integrated, strategic, networked, and long–term" (Tkaczyk, 2017: 11).

Learning in the organization is derived from "creative tensions", that, if they are cultivated by HRD professionals, can move a whole organization forward. It is aimed "to contribute to the achievement of strategic objectives of the organization, to produce changes in behavior of individuals, group or organization, to help organization to obtain higher performance, and to enrich and develop employee's work–related potentials" (Ovesni et al, 2017: 39) through the learning activities and strategies. Three major phases of learning in the organization with strategic orientation are (1) shifting from single loop to double loop organizational learning, (2) fostering autonomous motivation of employees, and (3) development of self–directed learning capacity of employees (Ovesni, 2014).

Learning strategies in organizational context

Deeper critical insight into the literature about strategies to improve quality of the learning of employees revealed few distinctive perspectives among authors:

1. *individual perspective*, focused on learning strategies (tactics) for improvement of learning of employees and their performance,
2. *organizational perspective* focused on facilitation strategies for improvement of the quality of organizational performance and transformation into learning organization,
3. *supportive perspective* focused on tactics that could help implementation of learning strategies in organizational context, and
4. *holistic perspective* focused on strategies used by learning organization.

Individual Perspective. Learning strategies are spontaneous or learned choices, direct or indirect, conscious or unconscious patterns for processing information or requests of the learning activity. They may vary and develop in different ways. According to Weinstein and Meyer learning strategies, in general, could be defined as "thoughts and behaviors intended to influence how a person learns, thinks, and motivates himself or herself in order to carry out a learning task" (Weinstein and Meyer, 1986, In Gibson, 2000: 70). The learning strategies include learning styles, methods (memory strategies, emotional strategies, cognitive strategies, etc.), and various techniques: note–taking techniques, listening, questioning, talking, thinking, visioning or their combinations.

As stated by Gibson (2000) the most important methods associated with learning strategies in the organizational context are complex cognitive strategies that include:

(a) *selection strategies*, that are used to focus attention and to identify relevant information,
(b) *rehearsal strategies*, that help learners to remember information by repetition,
(c) *organizational strategies*, that are used to link information together, and
(d) *elaboration strategies*, that are used to make connections between new information and the learner's existing knowledge, experience, and interests.

He considers that "the quality of learning outcomes has been associated with the selection and use of learning strategies" and of cognitive strategies (Gibson, 2000: 70). In the formal learning settings (structured, planned indoor or outdoor activities in the organization) choices of organizational and elaboration strategies are designed by andragogues, while in informal and incidental learning employees could choose them independently, consciously or unconsciously.

Knowles, Swanson, and Holton (Knowles et al., 1998; Swanson and Holton 2001) found that to every learning style correspond complementary learning strategy. Thus, simulations, case studies, field trips, real experiences, demonstrations correspond to concrete experience; discussion, small groups, buzz groups, designated observers correspond to observation and reflection; sharing content correspond to formation of abstract concepts and generalization, while laboratory experiences, on–the–job experiences, internships, practice sessions correspond to active experimentation (testing implications of new concepts in new situations). They consider learning styles catalysts for discussion between management, andragogues, and employees about the best learning strategies.

Some authors (Conti, 2009; Haemer, et al., 2017) emphasized that difference between learning strategies and learning styles is related to the stability of pattern. While learning strategies could vary with the evolvement of organization strategy, or with the selection of specific learning tasks, learning styles are stable traits. Furthermore, Haemer and associates (2017) consider that learning dispositions related to the planning of structured, formal learning activities are different than learning strategies. While learning dispositions are personal and autogenic, learning strategies are derived from organizational context, they correspond to organizational strategy, vision and mission. Learning strategies are aimed to meet the organizational requirements and they may enhance organizational performance, although as the effects they also have improvement of individual knowledge and performance. However, it seems that employees have a tendency "to have a pattern for how they initiate a learning activity. These patterns are clear, easily identifiable, meaningfully different from each other, and impact the nature of the learning" (Conti, 2009: 895). They are, as Conti (2009) claims, related to metacognition strategies, meta–motivation strategies, and memory strategies.

- *Metacognition strategies* comprise planning, monitoring, and adjusting tactics. Planning tactics (as a part of metacognition strategies) include evoking of vision and mission, designing and managing learning process. Monitoring tactics remind learners of determination, resources, previous experience, their strengths, and weaknesses. Adjusting tactics provide learners support in self–evaluation and revision of performed learning activities.

- *Meta–motivation strategies* comprise attention, reward/enjoyment, and confidence tactics. Attention tactics are related to aiming employees' attention to learning material. Reward/enjoyment tactics are related to "anticipating or recognizing the personal value of learning the specific material and having fun or satisfaction with the learning activity" (Conti, 2009: 888). Confidence tactics are related to the self–confidence of learners and to purposefulness of the learning activity.

- *Memory strategies* comprise organization, use of external aids, and memory application tactics. Organization tactics are related to structuring or processing information. The use of external aids tactics helps learners to reinforce memory by using external support. Memory application tactics are related to usage of "remembrances, mental images, or other memories to facilitate planning and carrying out learning" (Conti, 2009: 888).

Birdthistle (2006) make a distinction between formal and informal learning related strategies. Formal learning strategies could be managed by different organizational or external actors. These strategies are structured, planned, have specified curriculum, goals, criteria for evaluation, and could be realized as seminars, lectures, workshops, etc. Although popular in small companies, these strategies have limited effect in comparison to informal learning strategies, that are "combination of cognitive and behavioral learning strategies" (Haemer, et al., 2017: 501).

Whereas other authors consider informal learning strategies common in the organization, Birdthistle wrote that "informal learning strategies are rather casual and incidental" (2006: 554). She associates them to the very limited spectrum of activities (i.e. learning from experience on the job, mentoring, discussions and journal reading). However, Noe and associates (2014), among other researchers, found that that informal learning "accounts for up to 75% of learning within organizations" (Noe et al., 2014: 247) and encompass very differentiated activities (learning through self–reflection, learning from others such as peers, supervisors, and mentors, learning from non–interpersonal sources, etc.) that "enables individuals to acquire knowledge and skills on the job, providing the potential for more meaningful learning experiences than formal training and development allow" (Noe et al., 2014: 248).

Organizational Perspective. In organizations with the strategic orientation, human resource development is an integral part of organizational strategy making and organizational strategy execution. Learning of employees have an important effect on shaping, formulation and implementation of the organizational strategy, and on the achievement of desired changes. Thus, human resource development in organizations has a strategy–shaping and strategy–supporting role that is results–driven and results–aligned, that require more transformational than transactional engagement of human resource development professionals in the organization (Gilley et al., 2002).

Gilley and associates (2002) consider that one of the important roles of strategic human resource development is to help, to organize and to maintain activity–based and results–driven learning programs. In activity–based, structured, formal, and usually external programs, learning strategy is simple and focused only on the improvement of individual performance of employees that participate in activity–based programs. Therefore, the connection of such learning

strategy with organizational strategy is very limited and could partially influence only overall organizational performance, to fragmentary improve organizational competitiveness, or to minimally raise up organizational efficiency. These "relatively short–term engagements" have little strategic value, they are based on non–empirical inquiry, and aimed to fulfill immediate and short–term learning needs, especially to improve skills, knowledge, attitudes, and abilities required to enhance individual performance (Gilley et al., 2002). Though, the learning strategy in results–driven programs is aimed to help the organization to accomplish its strategic goals and objectives, to help implementation of the strategy, to manage change, and to improve organizational performance. While activity–based programs are mostly associated to only one learning strategy (improvement of individual performance of employees through formal learning activities), in the results–driven programs (activities) several core strategies are commonly used:

- *setting strategic direction* – strategy aimed to help organizational units to set long–range strategic goals and to develop tactical plans;
- *linking learning and change initiatives to business strategy* – strategy aimed to assure harmonization of learning interventions and change initiatives with organizational mission and vision;
- *enhancing managers development* – strategy aimed to help managers to develop and to maintain necessary skills and competences, mainly through activities of action learning;
- *implementing performance–management systems* – strategy aimed to improve organizational performance through learning, feedback, and motivational tactics;
- *implementing transfer of learning processes* – strategy aimed to help human resource professionals to improve learning transfer;
- *assessing organizational effectiveness* – strategy aimed to help management to determine priority of organizational needs and services;
- *facilitating and managing change* – the strategy aimed to help management to make decisions and to plan how to cope with changes.

The learning strategies in results–driven programs are perceived by management as an investment, anticipated as means for organizational performance improvement, and means for successful realization of organizational vision and mission (Gilley et al., 2002).

While roles of human resource professionals in the activity–based programs are transactional, stylized, and mainly reduced to informing about and choosing appropriate external programs, andragogical roles related to results–driven programs are very complex and transformational. These roles encompass responsibilities: to build strategic partnerships in the organization as a means of facilitating organizational change, to establish management development and to

improve communication between different levels of management through learning activities, to develop responsibility of different groups in the organization to establish an/or to improve partnership focused on organizational strategy and performance. These professionals use learning strategies to improve competitive readiness and to develop problem–solving capacities of employees. They are focused on performance outputs, quality improvement processes, improvement of the organizational structure, job design, workflow, employee attitudes, on development and improvement of performance appraisal, performance criteria, and standards, review processes, etc.

Haemer and associates (2017) found that in two different studies five learning strategies at work have been systematically found: intrinsic and extrinsic reflection, mental repetition, seeking help from others or in written materials and trial and error behaviors.

Based on broader research findings, our critical analysis showed that there is no real congruence between authors who examined learning strategies from the organizational perspective. According to Koopmans and associates (Koopmans et al, 2006), the main types of learning strategies in the organizational context are related to the process of learning itself, to the application of the new knowledge, to the obtained information, to reflection, and to evaluation/feedback. The learning strategies in organizations, identified by Koopmans and associates (2006) are:

(1) *learning through regular job performance* – with corresponding tactics: performing an occupational task, answering a question, preparing for work–related activities;

(2) *application of new knowledge* – with corresponding tactics: experimentation, replication, holding on to personal vision;

(3) *information seeking* – with corresponding tactics: asking a specific question, checking information, acquiring knowledge in learning activities;

(4) *exchange of information* – main tactics are: discussion, brainstorming, and conversation.

(5) *thinking about work experiences* – corresponding tactics are: observation, reflection, and receiving feedback.

Gravenhorst and In 't Veld (Gravenhorst and In 't Veld, 2004, In Boonstra, 2004: 323) differentiated learning strategies in organization related to learning, facilitation and behavior of employees, i.e. to (1) learning and communication processes, (2) participation and involvement in the learning activities, (3) facilitation and support of the learning processes, (4) negotiation and agreement, (5) manipulation and co–optation, and to (6) explicit and implicit coercion. According to Decuyper and associates (Decuyper et al., 2010) three basic groups of the learning strategies in organizations are related to processes of information exchange, discourses and conflicts solving, i.e. to: (a) *sharing* information, knowledge, and proposals, (b) *co–construction*, that entails listening to each other and

mutually refining, building on, or modifying original narrative, and (c) *constructive conflicts* (elaborated discussions).

Sambrook (Sambrook, 2005, In McCarthy and Garavan, 2006: 246–247) proposes a holistic model of the *context* and *process* related learning strategies. *The context related learning strategies* includes learning strategies related to organization (culture, structure, management support for development, and the nature of the business itself), learning strategies related to organizational functioning (human resource management/development, staff, expertise) and learning strategies related to employees itself (responsibility for learning, motivation to learn and change, and time dedicated to learning and development). *The process of learning related strategies* includes strategies associated with the nature of the training, learning or development initiatives, and interventions such as type, practice, pace, learner control, and knowledge.

Brandi and Iannone (2015: 16) consider lifelong learning strategies in organizations as an important factor and conditional principle for the value creation and the actualization of success. These strategies contribute to creating the conditions for competitive and successful performance in organizations. Brandi and Iannone (2015) categorized human resource strategies into three main groups: strategies related to skills development activities, strategies related to learning systems and incentives, and strategies related to work design and the organization of work. They claim that "lifelong learning strategies on an enterprise level can be understood as policies, strategies and practices used in the ongoing inclusion and development of personnel in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes and competences, to close employment and socio–economic gaps" (Brandi and Iannone, 2015: 18).

Figure 1. A conceptual model of learning strategies in organization
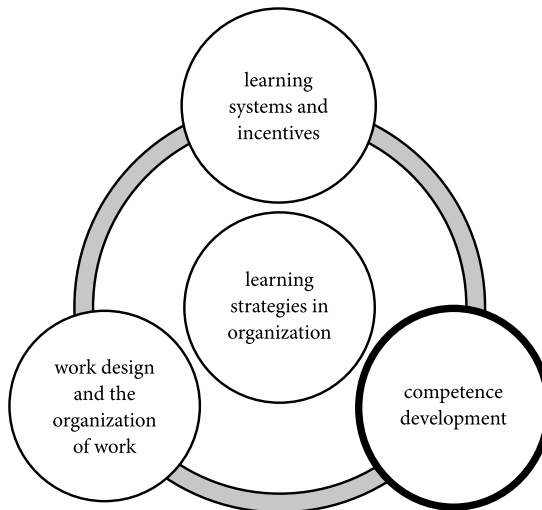
Source: Brandi, Iannone, 2017: 2

To answer the question about the learning strategies in the organization that can leverage and support competence development Brandi and Iannone (2017) researched learning strategies of 194 successful companies, across 53 industries. Their findings revealed three main (influential) sub–features for learning strategies development: learning systems and incentives, competence development, and work design and organization of work. In the model showed at Figure 1 *learning systems and incentive structures* are aimed at creating learning arrangements that produce and support motivation and commitment. *Work design and the organization of work* are aimed at creating strong network ties, collaborative learning opportunities and employee–led organization of work in the workplace, while *competence and/or skills development* are aimed at influencing employee competences (knowledge, skills, and experiences) formed and developed through formal and informal learning strategies.

Brandi and Iannone emphasized that learning strategies must "draw from behavioral and socio–cultural learning approaches, leveraging learning that occurs especially in the informal arenas" (2017: 4). In historical perspective, learning strategies in the organizations were dominantly oriented toward competence development, and "were mainly formal, especially encompassing pre–professional development through post–secondary studies, vocational training, education, and certification" (Brandi, Iannone, 2017: 2). However, in the contemporary organizations with strategic orientation learning include activities that are especially informal and practice–based oriented (traditional, and e–mentorship programs, on–the–job training, just–in–time learning, online network knowledge exchanges, communities of practice, by virtual reality supported programs, e–learning, etc.). Brandi and Iannone (2017) emphasized that "greater access to formal education and knowledge has also led to a perceived devaluation/commodification of knowledge and hard skills, elevating the appreciation for the ability to apply knowledge and do something with it" (Brandi, Iannone, 2017: 2).

Supportive Perspective. As main influence tactics that could help implementation of adult education and adult learning strategies in organizational context Yukl (Yukl, 2004, In Boonstra, 2004, p. 301–304) identified: rational persuasion, inspirational appeals, consultation, exchange, collaboration, apprising, coalition tactics, personal appeals, ingratiation, and pressure.

1. *Rational persuasion* – is a flexible tactic "that involves the use of explanations, logical arguments, and factual evidence to show that a request or proposal is feasible and relevant for attaining task objectives" (Yukl, 2004, In Boonstra, 2004: 301).

2. *Inspirational appeals* – that "involves an attempt to develop enthusiasm and commitment by arousing strong emotions and linking a request or proposal to a person's values and ideals" (Yukl, 2004, In Boonstra, 2004: 302).

3. *Consultation* – is a form of empowerment that involves invitation of the target person to participate in determining how to improve a proposal or in planning how to implement a policy or change that has already been approved.

4. *Exchange* – that involves "the explicit or implicit offer to provide something the target person wants in return for carrying out a request or supporting a proposal" (Yukl, 2004, In Boonstra, 2004: 302).

The incentives for these four tactics may involve a wide range of tangible (e.g., a pay increase or promotion, scarce resources, information, assistance on another task, assistance in advancing the target's career, etc.) or intangible benefits (e.g., prospect that the target person will feel good as a result of doing something that is noble and just, making an important contribution, performing an exceptional feat, or serving organization, a promise to return the favor in some unspecified way at a future time, etc.).

1. *Collaboration* – that involves an offer for the provision of required resources or for assistance in the case that the target person will carry out a request or approve a proposal, and the increasing benefits to be obtained by carrying out a request. While exchange involves an impersonal trade of unrelated benefits, collaboration "involves a joint effort to accomplish the same task or objective" (Yukl, 2004, In Boonstra, 2004: 303).

2. *Apprising* – that involves an explanation of benefits that the target person as an individual has because of some request or proposal.

3. *Coalition tactics* – involve support from other people (peers, subordinates, superiors, or outsiders) that influence the target person. Coalition tactics are frequently used in different combinations with other influence tactics.

4. *Personal appeals* – involves asking someone for a favor separate of affective relation or loyalty to the agent.

5. *Ingratiation* – is behavior that has as a consequence that target person feels better about the agent, that include giving compliments, doing spontaneous favors, behaving politely and respectfully, and acting cordially.

6. *Pressure* – that include "threats, warnings, and assertive behavior such as repeated demands or frequent checking to see if the person has complied with a request" (Yukl, 2004, In Boonstra, 2004: 304).

Different than previous authors, as main adult learning strategies for managing improvement of organizational performance, Levin (2004) and Davis (2014) recognized different learning activities. Thus, Levin (2004: 78) emphasized five different activities:

(1) *search conferences* – staged joint planning conference where the outcome is concrete working plans that could initiate change. Search conferences

are builds on collective interaction and lead to participative learning processes and concrete experimentation. They are usually conducted by external facilitator over few days, bringing participants in a setting separate from the ordinary work context.

(2) *dialogue conferences* – usually last two days and they are aimed to clarification of rules that guide the organizational process. It is outdoors activity with external facilitator, without hierarchical positions domination over the conversation;

(3) *mutual gains bargaining* – the core process elements are to identify the conflicting situations and to shape a creative process where the participants create new actions that would potentially fulfill their interest. The outside facilitator plays an important role in helping the participants to understand the difference between interests and positions and to support the creation of alternative solutions.

(4) *conventional meetings* – can contain one–way communication from the power–holders or it can encourage an open discussion involving all attendees. A meeting might be an approach to inform the employees of a future development, or it might take the form of stocktaking an already running change process, and

(5) *task forces* – is a group with a clear and stated goal, i.e. the experimental activity initiated to create a more effective organization. A task force can be structured to support the participation of employees and it can be structured to lead to collective reflection.

Based on complaints obtained by survey aimed to get answers about what employees disliked about the learning activities they had, and what they would like instead of them, Davis (2014) generated list comprises of six distinctive, from andragogy standpoint very interesting strategies for learning/development of employees:

1. *Project–based learning* – purposeful, liberating learning that is embedded in the work context and develops critical business skills.

2. *Learning catalogue* – lists all skills held within the organization, with the name of the skill–holder and their cell phone number/e–mail contact; when an individual need to learn a skill, she or he could consult the catalogue and contact a colleague to see if they are available to assist; that way all employees are interconnected and becomes part of the learning culture.

3. *Ready–at–hand learning* – modules that last between 30 and 60 minutes, that are made available on the learning portal on the intranet; each module focuses on a very specific skill or knowledge area and allows employees to select exactly what they need to learn.

4. *Internal volunteering* – programs where the employees offer their skills and knowledge to another team within the organization for mutual ben-

efit; for ten days each year every employee volunteers time and service to another team where employees have the interest to learn; employees learn new skills, make new connections across the organization, and may bring back ideas that can benefit their own team or whole organization.

5. *Self–managed learning* – a goal is to engage and challenge managers to develop themselves by taking control of their own learning and to share learned with peers or their team.

6. *Active orientation* – it facilitates networking among newcomers; that activity has potential to introduce new employees to the most relevant people and organizational resources and engages newcomers with a workplace culture.

Holistic Perspective. Interconnection of learning in the organization and different aspects of the organization (organizational development, formal and informal organizational structures) is enabled by different learning strategies. In the learning organization strategy of development, the learning culture is one of the main strategic goals, derived from organizational philosophy and deeply rooted in the vision and mission of the organization and its' core strategy. The strategy of the learning organization is learning oriented, performance aimed, with increased capacity for further development. Concept of the learning organization is deeply intertwined with strategically oriented organizations and leaned on the set of different strategies: (1) strategy of learning and work combination, (2) strategy of beginning with the existing conditions, (3) strategy of learning the culture of two–way communications, (4) strategy of setting up the training ground, (5) strategy of building connections with core work, (6) strategy of building a learning community, (7) strategy of collaboration with the opponent(s), and (8) strategy of learning infrastructure development (Sengé, 1991, In Ovesni, 2014).

Watkins and Marsick (1993: 47) underlined three clusters of strategies in the learning organizations: "(1) linking formal and informal learning through better planning, (2) helping employees learn how to learn and think more complexly, and (3) supporting performance through just–in–time training and desktop learning." As especially important for the learning organizations they underlined strategies for informal (self–directed learning, networking, coaching, mentoring) and incidental learning (learning from mistakes, internalization of meaning about actions of others).

Conclusion

The organizations with strategic orientation are driven by learning of employees. Learning is deeply embedded in every aspect of organizational performance. It affects behavior, attitudes, beliefs, norms, working patterns, formal and informal structures, organizational climate, organizational mission, and vision.

Through different learning strategies and tactics, organizations transmit memory, develop current procedures, manage dynamics between tangible and intangible organizational structures, create and re–create own future. Learning strategies differ from one to another organization due to the organizational goals, organizational context, characteristics of management, industry, systems, strategies, working patterns, policies and procedures. Their evolvement and changes are driven by development and dissemination of the knowledge about adult learning. They are also driven by external changes related to domains of politics, economy, law, demography, global changes.

Albeit available and relevant literature shows the absence of deeper (both empirical and conceptual studies) about learning strategies and possibility of their improvements, it is apparent that continuous learning for continuous organizational development is the central point of the new learning paradigm, that emphasize improvement of the quality of learning of employees. Learning strategies could consist of differentiated tactics. They may be catalysts for transformation into the learning organization. Learning strategies transmit knowledge and transform the organization. At the individual level, learning strategies should help the transformation of employees into autonomous, dynamic, self–directed, self–determined persons. At the organizational level, learning strategies may lead to performance improvement, to changes in policies and procedures. At the theoretical level, future research about learning strategies should strive to establish deeper linkage with other relevant issues in human resource development (organizational commitment, work engagement, change management, virtual human resource development, etc.).

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MISSIONS OF UNIVERSITY AS THE FRAMEWORK FOR LIFELONG LEARNING[1]

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Abstract

Significant qualitative changes in the work of the university stem from the tendencies to revive the concept of lifelong learning in higher education institutions based on expanding their missions from the educational, scientific and research, to the social and to the fourth one oriented towards sustainable development. The analyses conducted were guided by the goal: to consider learning opportunities throughout life in higher education institutions through the prism of the four missions of the university. The consideration began with the presentation of the concepts of the third and fourth missions of the university, and the concepts of the lifelong learning and life–wide learning. The final segment of the analysis includes the results of the work with the focus group with the representatives from the six countries of the Region. In this way, examples of good practice related to learning opportunities offered at universities beyond the regular teaching process were recorded. The findings point to the conclusion that the concept of four missions of the university represents an important framework for developing the context conducive to creating lifelong learning opportunities as well as that the creation of these opportunities contributes to the development of all four missions.

Keywords: lifelong learning; life–wide learning; social dimension of the university; four missions of the university; sustainable development

From the third to the triple mission of university

In the era of global political orientation towards transforming values and habits of the "21st century citizens" and giving importance to education and learning in that process, the role of university has come into a particularly sharp focus. The modern role of higher education institutions, assigned not only by theoretical foundations but also by global policy concepts such as lifelong learning (LLL) and sustainability, should be to support transformational processes, not only within institutional boundaries, but also in "building bridges between Academia and community" (Braun – Wanke, 2017). Operating between the sometimes–contradictory demands originating from traditional role of universities as 'scientific producers' of knowledge, which is not easily shared with the community and neo–liberal concept at one side – and the concept of integrative, holistic, approaches at the other side – universities are obviously going through a multidimensional transition process (Orlovic Lovren, 2017).

Under the umbrella of trends oriented towards democratisation and modernisation of higher education institutions, the concept of "Third Mission of University" emerges and gains its popularity. In relation to the original, exclusively teaching purpose of the medieval University and the research component embedded by Humboldt's university reform – aimed at continuous review of knowledge and contribution to the research role of teaching (Bodroški Spariosu, 2017) – this third mission refers to the role of higher education institutions in learning and developing the "rest" of the community.

The very opening of higher education institutions to the community comprises a potential for implementing lifelong learning programmes, especially in the domain of accomplishing its "lifewide" component. 'Non–traditional' participant groups are important, but LLL programmes should be directed towards them as well as 'traditional' participants so that both have multiple benefits from them (Smidt, Sursock, 2011). The interaction between the university and the community should contribute to this complementarity. Each of the missions is, naturally, mutually complementary and hardly separable, which is easily observable from their descriptions.

Thus, this concept includes three dimensions of university: the research, the educational and the social one. Within the research dimension the emphasis is placed on the transfer of technology and innovations which are the result of research in academic environment towards non–academic environment – a wider community that may benefit from it (http://www.e3mproject.eu/docs/Green%20 paper–p.pdf).

The educational dimension includes forms and programmes of lifelong and continuing education, whereas the social one, that is, 'social engagement', rep-

resents "partnership of university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good (Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) Committee on Engagement, 2005)" (EC, 2008: 8–9).

As with any successful interaction, this cooperation between the university and the community should be mutually beneficial: it should be reflected not only on the strengthening of democratic and transformative potentials of society, but also recurrently – on the effectiveness of research and educational activities undertaken by higher education institutions. In the era of advocacy for respecting cultural and social diversity as well as of highlighted inequalities with the increasingly developed academic and professional mobility in the European Higher Education Area, the focus is still on 'traditional' students and their participation in education. It is rightly emphasised that, from the point of achieving the social dimension of higher education and lifelong learning, the concern about the wholeness of the process is necessary and practical and not only declarative – from education of children, the problem of youth drop out, to higher education as an inseparable segment of lifelong process; it implies setting clear links between higher education and lifelong learning both in educational policy and among decision makers (EC, 2008), that is, "..strong partnership relationships among the government, higher education institutions, students, employees and employers" (Bodroški Spariosu, 2017: 122).

In the prime of changes, the social role of university is globally recognised as a leader in projecting directions of future development, possible problems and solutions, which is then expected "..to widen the access to knowledge and its benefits to as wide a range of individuals as possible." (Smidt, Sursock, 2011: 22) In the European Higher Education Area, the university is seen as a significant player in developing 'knowledge–based economy society', and therefore in developing innovation and creativity of all inhabitants. Given the aging population trends, these goals will be difficult to achieve unless the principle of "widening participation in higher education" (Orr, Mishra, 2015: 468) is involved in the practice of 'socially engaged' universities.

In complex mutual interactions, in addition to obstacles, the processes which enhance conditions for LLL implementation occur – not only in terms of their lifewide dimension, but also in terms of the increase in the number of participants, that is, accessibility and flexibility of study programmes. "Expanding the range of learners becomes the key strategic issue, and the key activities for universities to develop are the establishment of systems for fair assessment and validation of all forms of prior learning, and providing relevant, creative and innovative educational programmes" (EUA, 2008: 4).

No matter whether one talks about a 'social dimension', 'socially engaged university' or 'open university', for the above and many other reasons, the necessity of developing the 'third mission' in parallel with the first two is unquestionable. Its complementarity with the educational and research dimensions makes that one should rather speak of the triple rather than the third mission of university. By considering the comprehension of the coverage of these missions, the authors also speak of the 'fourth mission', the understanding of which leads us to a related concept of sustainability of modern university relevant to examining the relationship between higher education and lifelong learning.

The fourth mission or sustainability of university and lifelong learning

The emergence and spreading of the idea and concept of sustainability of university are part of social, scientific and research, and practical response to the previously outlined requirements for higher education. The recent data, according to which more than 600 universities in the world have signed the Bologna and Halifax Declarations or Copernicus Charter for Sustainable Development, indicate the general agreement regarding future development (Filho, Manolas, Pace, 2015).

What is sustainability of university? Following the logic of the whole institution and interdisciplinary approach, it is about integrating the principle of sustainable development in the curriculum and teaching, research and institutional development, that is, in "...three major university functions, learning and teaching, research and internal and external social responsibility ... these together to advantage future generations and their environments." (Renner, Cross, 2009: 62). Each of these functions should include all stakeholders of the university area (students, teaching and non–teaching staff) and of the non–university area (research practitioners, experts, non–governmental sector, private sector, etc) at local, national, regional and international levels, while their engagement should be based on mutual connections of the main 'pillars' of sustainability: the environment, economic and social development. In addition, the community is not only one of the partners in cooperation: it is the context within which the university develops, which gives specific characteristics to all its functions, and in whose development university as a whole with its partners should be most actively involved. Such an integrated approach could be illustrated by the following figure:

Figure 1. Integration of the university and the community
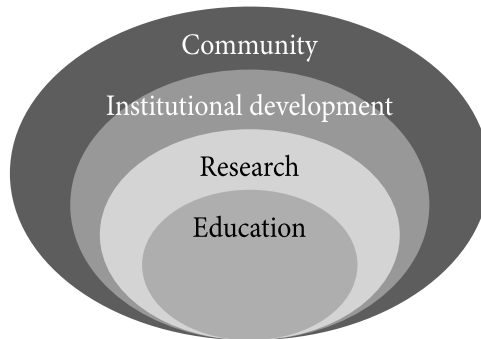
However, by the insight into literature and international practice, it can be concluded that there is still a tendency to rather deal with internal than external functions of the university (Renner, Cross, 2009). In parallel, it diminishes the role of university both in contributing to sustainable development and in implementing lifelong learning within and 'outside the walls'. Some examples from practice in different environments indicate that this challenge is not insurmountable as well as that the exchange of ideas and experiences in their application adds quality to the "complex network of experience and learning for all" (Cortese, 2003).

Thus, for example, Edith Cowan University (Thailand) unites the university and the local forces around the project "Thailand for Mental Health and HIV/Aids Prevention and Holistic Care", in partnership with the Thai Ministry of Public Health, Colleges of Nursing, Tertiary Hospitals and local community; it resulted in development of curricula and training for 32 nurse educators, who has since then (since 2007) delivered training for nurses in Thailand and surrounding countries (Renner, Cross, 2009). Within the project "Fostering innovative labour market – oriented educational and research approaches in the field of Renewable Energy at Latin American and European Institutes of Higher Education", supported by the ALFA III Programme of the European Union, university–labour market and business partnerships were strengthened by improving teaching and research concepts and capacity building programs in the field of Renewable Energy and developing of a network between European and Latin American universities (Leal Filho, 2009).

In an effort to reduce the gap between universities, that is, scientists and researchers "...as inhabitants of a strange parallel world" (EC, 2003), in the Netherlands, and then all over Europe and other parts of the world (America, Canada, Israel), in the seventies of the XX century "science shops" emerged as "grass – roots research organizations ... which answer the scientific requirements of local

citizens and NGOs and help create an awareness of society's needs." (EC, 2003) These organisations, originally inititated by students, gather paid staff and volunteers today, appearing in various forms and areas of operation: University of Seville, Spain, supports the science shop in participatory development of ecology plans, as well as in finding appropriate solutions for improving quality of life in less priviledged areas of the city through innovative architectural and civil engineering projects; another example, from the United Kingdom, Queen's University, shows how both community and students and their professors may benefit from involvement in process of research and delivering of its results (free of charge), in the various fields of science and humanities: in four years only, it gathered together 200 local organizations and 300 students around 400 research projects (EC, 2003)

By criticising the reducing of the research function of university to "technological transfer, patents and spin–offs ...limited to the economic and financial aspect of development", and while failing to consider that "...the collaborations and potential synergies with the local community go beyond achievements purely related to technological progress or to the business system" (Rinaldi et al, 2017: 2–3), the authors speak of the 'fourth mission' of university as a framework for overcoming these weaknesses. It refers to the role of universities, especially those in the field of social sciences and humanities, in recognizing and appreciating social needs and paths of satisfying them through cooperation with the community.

The dominance of technocratic, reductionist, monodisciplinary approaches and one – economic – development area certainly does not satisfy all authentic life needs or lead to sustainability. In order to open a university towards the community and create flexible learning programmes and research accessible to all, it is not crucial how many missions there are, but how they are mutually linked and put in place to meet the community's life needs, developmental roles of universities and creating conditions for quality life of future generations.

In order to better understand the ability of the university within its missions to open the door wide to lifelong learning and a wide spectrum of participants, it is necessary to look at authentic characteristics of the concept itself – without diminishing the significance of their different determinations and rooting in specific characteristics of various environments and cultures.

Lifelong learning – from the meaning to the role in accomplishing the four missions of university

If we intend to bring lifelong learning into the context of university's activities, by considering their mutual relationship through the lens of accomplishing four missions of university, which is the aim of this paper, it is necessary to analyse in great detail the syntagm "lifelong learning".

The analysis of numerous definitions of "lifelong learning" (which we are not going to enlist on this occasion) leads us very quickly to believe in the rightfully based assertions given in *A Memorandum of Lifelong Learning* that "lifelong learning is still defined in a variety of ways in different national contexts and for different purposes" (CEC, 2000: 9). Although in various considerations of lifelong learning the definition mentioned in the Memorandum (and accepted by the European Commision and the Member States within the European Employment Strategy) is very frequently used, where it is defined as "all purposeful learning activity, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence" (CEC, 2000: 3), certain, though not insignificant differences can also be found at the level of the sample of the analysed definitions.

Lifelong learning is thus understood as: the general principle of education and upbringing; "being equipped" with both formal and informal learning opportunities and/or use of formal and nonformal learning opportunities; learning that possesses certain characteristics (the most important of which is to take place throughout life); activity (of learning); process (of acquiring knowledge and skills); the aspect of education and training; a vision; a policy; a continuously supporting process (for acquiring knowledge, skills, values...); a holistic view of education; "...a framework to the concept of a continuum of learning from the cradle to the grave" (Learning for Life, 2000: 69); the collective name for all forms of learning throughout life; access to education; the concept; the paradigm... and, of course, in some other ways we have not included in this sequence.

It is understandable that each of the abovementioned placement of lifelong learning into a specific category of phenomena further implies its particular properties that are highlighted in the foreground. However, it seems to us that we could classify all the abovementioned frameworks for further defining into three categories, which are different, but in no way opposing, but complementary; they would be: the concept, the activity and the process. The emerging forms of lifelong learning as a concept are firstly: the general principle of education and upbringing, aspect, the vision, the policy, the holistic view of education, the framework, the approach, the paradigm... When we emphasise that lifelong learning is the activity, then it includes activities of those who create learning opportunities and activities of an individual who uses and (also) creates various learning opportunities. We associate teaching and learning processes with lifelong learning as a process as well as with the changes that come from these processes which are further refered to as functions of lifelong learning. If any of the three emerging modalities of lifelong learning is missing, the possiblity of its revival is endangered.

The authors David Aspin and Judith Chapman indicate yet another possible context for considering lifelong learning, pointing out that lifelong learning

can be used for reaching a further goal and that it is then predominantly related to economy, but it can also be understood as "good in and for itself". When it comes to the other approach, its aim is to "enable those engaging in it not arrive anywhere but" as R. S. Peters interprets it "to travel with a different view" through life (Aspin, Chapman, 2001:1).

While the second approach draws attention to the comprehension of lifelong learning and its embeddedness in the whole life of man, the first approach takes us further to the question of functions lifelong learning can have in people's lives and their communities. The definitions of lifelong learning into which we have had an insight show that highlighting some of its functions are often integral parts of these definitions. The most frequently stated expected results of continuing, and throughout one's life present acquisition of knowledge and development of skills, competences, attitudes and values, expressed in the form of changes (or areas of change) to which they should lead, are: personal, civic, social and working life; personal fulfillment; employment; employability; economic progress and development; adaptability; active citizenship; social inclusion; social cohesion; or concisely and collectively "... development throughout life in all areas of life" (Zakon o obrazovanju odraslih, 2013, Član 3); "... in all roles circumstances, and environments." (Watson, 2003: 3). By following the listed effects, that is, further goals, at the end of the shown sequence, we come again to lifelong learning as "good for itself".

Quite often, as it may be seen, for example, in the publications of the Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket), the concept of lifelong learning is linked to the concept of life–wide learning. In this case, lifelong learning is seen as "...a holistic view of education... recognises learning from different environments... it consists of two dimensions: 1. lifelong learning recognising that individuals learn throughout a lifetime, and 2. life–wide learning recognising the formal, non–formal and informal settings" (Skolverket, 2000: 19). While the first dimension is seen as a relatively unproblematic, the second – life–wide learning is characterized as "more complex, as it embraces an extensive range of learning settings and contexts" (Skolverket, 2000: 19).

Even if prior to considering the second dimension of lifelong learning it has not been clear that it is necessary to provide individuals with a wide variety of learning opportunities in order to achieve the concept of lifelong learning, it has now become clear. Given the abundance of resources it has, the university certainly has a highly significant place among those opportunities. The "entry" of lifelong learning to university definitely leads to a series of qualitative changes in its functioning, starting from the necessity of re–examining to finding ways to accomplishing its own "new" missions.

Changes are already visible but not limited to the level of terminology by introducing the categories of "Lifelong Learning Univeristy" (LLLU) at universities, which represent "...an open system – accessible, supported, flexible, perme-

able, at the boundaries, operating with a range of different rhythms, acting as or becoming a learning organisation" (ALLUME, 2009: 19).

The Project "ALLUME – A Lifelong Learning University Model for Europe", which was implemented by a consortium of ten European universities and within which the concept of LLLU was being developed, had the aim "...to help universities, in a concrete and practical way, to elaborate a vision, mission and action plans dedicated to adapting their own organisation and leadership in order to become a LLL university, in short to develop a lifelong learning strategy within their institution" (ALLUME, 2009: 5). In the "Final Report" of the project, based on the earlier analyses by the author Pat Davies, it is stated that a Lifelong Learning University is the one where:

- "Learning is shared: the distinction between teaching and learning is more blurred, students and staff learn together, from each other, and from people and activities outside the university as well as inside it.
- Learning is valued wherever and whenever it takes place: it includes the validation of prior, non–formal and informal learning – for entry, for part of a diploma, may be for whole diploma; the curriculum takes account of prior and other learning.
- Assessment is varied: a large range of assessment methodologies are built and used for different skills, knowledge and competences.
- Learning is lifelong and life–wide: how to learn lifelong, at any time of a personal or professional pathway is a learning objective, included in the 'learning outcomes'.
- Learning is enjoyable and a rewarding experience" (ALLUME, 2009: 19).

When we look at these basic features of learning at universities that would belong to the model of Lifelong Learning University, the first impression already leads us to the conclusion that work at these universities is characterised by significantly different qualities in terms of properties compared to the ones that would rather fit the model of traditional universities. These very different qualities contribute to the fact that re–orientation of universities to the new model is not an easy process, but certainly a long–term one. One of the first steps in that process is the adoption and development of the strategy for implementing the lifelong learning concept at university, while taking into account both its dimensions. The strategy for implementing this concept can be at the same time the strategy for opening up space for accomplishing the four missions of university. In fact, we thus come to the nature of the relationship between the concept of lifelong learning and the missions of university, which is characterised by interdependence within which university occurs as support to accomplishing the concept of lifelong learning, while lifelong learning occurs as a way (strategy) for accomplishing the four missions of university.

Such mutual relationship persists despite the claims that lifelong learning "… represents a shift away from the notion of provider–driven 'education' towards individualised learning… It lays greater emphasis on the individual's learning experience with a correspondingly reduced responsibility for the education provider" (Fieldhouse, R. in Federighi, P, Bax, W, Bosselaers, L, 1999: 22). Reducing the provider's responsibility does not mean reducing its activities, but it requires its greater opening up to the community and diverse participant groups as well as mutual linking of providers and social partners in order to meet individual and specific needs of service users by re–orienting to the demand–driven approach thereby enabling individualised lifelong learning.

Since we have realised the importance of introducing lifelong learning at university presented through the mutual benefit, we will look at the results obtained via the workshop process with the focus group on the forms and programmes at universities in the region and activities organised with students and other target groups of participants beyond the teaching process and, on this way, search for activities which expand the missions of the university.

About lifelong learning and missions of the university through examples of good practice in the Region

We were provided with the examples of good practice at predominantly state universities in the Region at the international conference "Building Bridges in Adult Education" which was held from 25 to 26 October 2017 in Skopje (Republic of Macedonia). The workshop entitled "University and lifelong learning" was organised as part of the programme. The workshop method was used to initiate the process of exchanging examples, to clarify them and find similarities and differences in the countries in the Region as well as to make projections of activities that higher education institutions could and should implement beyond the regular teaching process with students, and in some cases, within different projects. These are the activities that support implementing the lifelong learning concept as well as all four missions of the university.

In the workshop context, focus group work was used as a technique for data collection. A total of 14 members took part, almost a half of whom were university professors and researchers who perform educational activities in the field of adult education, while the other members were predominantly employees in adult education within the non–formal education subsystem. As observed by the countries, the members of the focus group were from: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, Macedonia, Slovenia and Serbia. Through the moderated process, a number of group activities with concrete examples were identified on the basis of which, for the purpose of this paper, we prepared a list of activities represented beyond the regular teaching process of the faculty (Table 2).

Table 2: Activities implemented at universities
in the Region beyond the regular teaching process

List of activities
✓ Continuing education programmes for university professors (for example: "Fundamentals of teacher competencies and academic skills of university professors; "TRAIN" Project – Training & Research for Academic Newcomers, the programme for assistants and assistant professors; ...)
✓ "Curriculum globALE" (Global Curriculum for Adult Learning and Education; acquiring skills for course management)
✓ Open days of the University (for secondary school students)
✓ Days of Sciences (for children and citizens)
✓ Different short–term courses (for example: foreign languages)
✓ Days of a particular profession members
✓ Alumni clubs
✓ Different programmes for members of professions and occupations (who are trained at lower levels of education than the university level) belonging to the same or related fields of work
✓ Professional training courses, some of which lead to obtaining professional qualifications
✓ 50+ Lifelong Learning Centre
✓ University of the Third Age
✓ "Academic Week" – promotion of lifelong education for seniors
✓ Study visits
✓ Museum exhibitions
✓ Involvement in events such as, for example, "Museum Night", "Lifelong Learning Week" and the like, open to the public
✓ E–learning
✓ Theoretical engagement in the current social issues (debates for citizens)
✓ Centres for career development, information and counselling of students (in most cases)
✓ Students' work with specific, mostly marginalised, population groups (seniors, students of elementary adult education schools, Roma population, people affected by natural disasters...)
✓ Student service in the area of international cooperation
✓ International summer schools for students

The obtained list of activities can be analysed in at least two ways. The first way is based on the target groups for whom the activities are intended. Judging by the age, the programme beneficiaries include groups comprised of children as well as of the third age representatives. Furthermore, the target groups are very broadly defined in some cases, so they fall under the category of "citizens" or certain population groups (predominantly from marginalised groups); when

they are more specific, the listed users include: children, high school students, students (domestic and foreign), former students of a particular faculty (alumni), university professors and associates engaged in teaching, members of certain professional groups and occupational groups (professional and vocational development), as well as seniors (people aged 50+ or the third age people). By monitoring the above mentioned user groups, the coverage seems quite large; however, the impression made about the coverage should be placed in the context of certain facts including examples from the entire Region and not only from the faculties of only one country since with some universities do not work with some of the target groups, that is, some of the activities are not represented in some countries.

The second way in which the list of activities can be analysed is based on the functions that these activities have, that is, the goals towards which they are directed. In this way, the following is distinguished: continuous improvement of the university teaching staff; information and general and culture–based education; development of key competences; development of professional competences (with the possibility of acquiring a qualification); career counseling and guidance of children and youth; educational work with members of marginalised groups in support of their social inclusion; gathering members of the same or similar professions and occupations; international connections with other universities; development of e–learning; and enriching the cultural and tourist offer of the communities in which the universities operate. All the listed functions, which are beyond the scope of regular teaching, indicate, first of all, that the universities in the Region, including the University of Belgrade, open their doors to members of several generations and that, in this way, they can meet a wider range of their educational needs at faculties. In addition, the functions support the expansion of the university missions. However, there is still "however". It refers to the insight obtained that it is about the initial steps to support lifelong learning and accomplish the four missions of the university, as well as to the fact that in most cases it relates to non–formal programmes rather than the actual provision of learning flexibility and the participation of different target groups in formal education at the university level.

Concluding remarks

The concepts of the third and fourth missions of the university promote the importance and the need to establish mutual links with the community and integrate sustainability in all aspects of their functioning. The experiences from practice and applied projects indicate that the links between higher education and the community are intertwined and necessary, not only for the well–being of society but also for the quality of teaching and the functioning of universities. The mutual complementarity of the missions requires our focus not on their number, or on them individually, but on the conditions to be achieved and to contribute in synergy to quality education and development.

Participation monitoring in higher education in the world speaks of a steady increase in the number, but not of the sufficient representation of different student categories with regard to age, social background, needs and previous educational experience. The application of the lifelong component is neither sufficient nor complete without ensuring life–wide coverage of learning programmes.

Starting from the very definition of lifelong learning, we have easily come to the conclusion about the interdependence between the concept of lifelong learning and the concept of the four missions of the university, which appear in support of each other both in their foundation and in further development within the university. The four missions of the university can be seen as a framework for the implementation of the lifelong learning concept in as much as its implementation enables further development and enrichment of all four missions.

The examples of good practice in implementing extracurricular activities with different target groups (of different ages) in the Region, which we obtained by working with the focus group, create an image of the variety of work and in this way the implementation of numerous (possible) functions of the university through which new qualitative effects are achieved both at the individual level and the community level.

These effects can be further subsumed under the four missions of the university. However, it is not a matter of continuous practice, but mostly the matter of new and individual examples.

Despite the quotes from the documents and the examples of good practice in the Region, there is a tendency, not only in practice, but still on the theoretical and research level, of bringing down the university functions predominantly to traditional, internal – educational and research functions and designing programmes and providing conditions primarily for the education of full–time students. Considering and transferring the university missions into practice, through the synergy of research, policy improvement in this domain and the application of the provenly good and suitable model in the social context, can contribute to the diversity and quality of solutions for the accessibility and success of lifelong learning programmes for all and for the general benefit. These programmes, in return, have a strong potential for introducing diversity and improving access and teaching effects – both for "standard" and "non–standard" students.

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HOW TO EDUCATE TEACHERS:
WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM RESEARCH INSIGHTS ON TEACHING AND TEACHER EDUCATION IN SERBIA AND FROM CONTEMPORARY UNDERSTANDINGS OF TEACHING[1]

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Abstract

Inspired by the fact that teacher education is often seen as the cause of low quality of teaching, but also as a potential solution to this problem, in the paper we look for recommendations on how to educate teachers in Serbia. Starting from an analysis of research data on teacher education, professional development and teaching in Serbia, as well as from contemporary theoretical understandings of teaching, we derived implications for teacher education on two levels – systemic and curricular. As important system measures to be taken we point out: finishing establishment of the initial teacher education system; providing support to the programs of teacher education and induction; changing system of teachers' professional development and taking special care for the status of teacher profession on the state level. The suggestions for the curriculum development and methodical aspects of teacher education are: focusing the curriculum on the teacher competence, basing teaching on dialogue, reflection, interdisciplinary approach and teamwork of teacers and providing context where students feel safe.

Keywords: teacher education, teacher professional development, contemporary understandings of teaching.

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Introduction

If we were to analyse practical implications and recommendations for policy–makers given in publications that research various aspects of teaching, we would probably get an insight that many of them emphasise the importance of introducing changes into a system of initial teacher education and professional development. We could conclude that teacher education is often seen as the worst problem in education today, but at the same time, it is promoted as the best possible solution to all other problem we are facing in education. As other authors boldly put it – without the reform of teacher education there will be no reform of education (Torres, 1996). The ideas behind this are easy to understand. By putting effort into improving teacher education system we can, to some extent, ensure that teachers are well "equipped" with competencies which will enable them to fulfil tasks and roles that teacher is expected to deal with today and thus contribute to the overall quality of education. This kind of thinking resulted in a particularly high interest in teachers and teacher education by various stakeholders in the past couple of decades: international organizations (see: European Commission, 2007; OECD, 2005, 2010; UNICEF/UNESCO, 1996), policy–makers in many countries, teacher professional associations (see: ATEE, 2006), researchers in the field of education, teacher educators themselves. At the level of international education policy, it is emphasised that "teachers matter" (OECD, 2010) and that the quality of education for all can be improved by systemic activities of investing in teachers and their education (UNESCO, 2014).

We share the beforementioned views on the importance of teachers and the need for systemic actions on a national level which would contribute to the quality of teachers' work and quality of education as a whole. We also agree with the statement that teacher education and professional development play an essential role in accomplishing this goal (in our previous papers we emphasized the need for reforms in this field, as well as for ensuring adequate work conditions, changes in policy which would facilitate social and professional recognition and empowerment of teacher profession, and teacher participation in policy of education see: Mitrović & Radulović, 2014; Radulović & Mitrović, 2015). However, we believe that such declarative commitment to systemic support for teacher and their education and professional development is only a start and that we need to revisit the issues of teacher education to understand better what kind of education could be a genuine support for teachers.

Thus, we intend to provide a brief overview on the current state of teaching in our schools and on how teacher education is organized in Serbia, based on recent researches, our own experience as teacher educators, law and policy documents. Further on, from the standpoint that teaching is the central aspect of school and teachers' work, for which teachers need to be prepared through education (Meyer, 2002), we will provide an overview of different contemporary

theories of teaching/learning and derive implication from them on how to educate future teachers. Finally, based on the insights we have gained, we will define the recommendations to improve teacher education in Serbia.

The Current State of Teaching and Teacher Education in Serbia

Teachers and Teaching in our Schools

Our previous research endeavours, aimed at understanding the quality of education in teaching, provide some insights on the teaching practice and everyday teachers' work in our school. One of our research showed that 20 different teaching methods were observed on 354 classes in various schools and various school subjects, whereby they could be interpreted as diverse in term of students activity. However, methods that are not related to teachers' lectures, students' exercises and examination of students' knowledge, such as lectures by students, practical assignments, dialogue and play–like activities, are observed on less than 11% of the classes included in the study. Especially seldom (observed on less than 3% of the classes) are the methods which enable the exchange of experience and meaning between students, peer–learning, dramatisation and role play, brainstorming, creating tables and schemes, research work, i.e. methods and techniques which deviate from traditional teaching. We have also found that the assessment practice in our schools is dominantly traditional when compared to contemporary endeavours to change the paradigm of school assessment to make it purposeful for education (Mitrović, 2014; Mitrović & Radulović, 2014; Mitrović, 2017). Moreover, studies have shown that teachers do not see evaluation as an important process for their practice and their professional development (Stančić, 2014). Thus, systematic approach to self–evaluation and reflection about the quality of work did not yet come to life in our schools. Research also shows that teachers are familiar with various methods of teaching and (self)evaluation but do not use them often (Radulović & Mitrović, 2014, Stančić, 2014).

Similar conclusions are derived from the research on how teachers perceive typical teaching and teachers in schools in Serbia, and how they perceive an ideal teaching and teacher (Radulović & Mitrović, 2015). The results show that majority of teachers consider that typical teaching in schools is transmissive and that typical teacher has a role of "knowledge transmitter" as dominant. These results confirm previous findings that current teaching practice in Serbia is traditional. At the same time, teachers consider that good teaching is related to encouragement of students' cognitive development or nurturing and care for students, whereby the good teacher is the one who organises learning process

and is focused on students. Thus, teachers are not only aware that there is a kind of teaching which is different from the current one (traditional), but they also consider such teaching as better than the traditional one. Still, the way in which the majority of teacher's work is not the one they consider to be good.

In overall, we could say that the current state of teaching in our schools is saturated by a traditional transmissive understanding of education in teaching (Radulović & Mitrović, 2014). Thus, teaching practice did not reach the qualities of modernistic understandings of education in teaching (students active learning, cooperative and interactive teaching methods, evaluation as a tool for development of practice, etc) which are advocated in policy documents that define Standards of quality for work of educational institutions (2012) and Standards of competencies for the teaching profession and their professional development (2011). Such state of practice is surely not in accordance with contemporary tendencies in understanding education in teaching and in conceptualising teaching method, which are underpinned by postmodern ideas, i.e. diversity of methods, teachers' autonomy in creating methods by relying on characteristics of the context (Mitrović & Radulović, 2014).

Studies show that the gap between the contemporary theoretical understandings of teaching and the teaching practice in schools in Serbia is not the only one. There is also a gap between teaching practice and teacher's knowledge and their perspectives of good teaching: teachers are familiar with different teaching methods, but use them rarely; they are aware of possibilities of (self) evaluation, but do not see evaluation as an important process for development of their practice; teachers consider that good teacher organizes students' learning activities and/or cares for students emotions and holistic development of students, but they teach on traditional way. This suggests that teachers' pedagogical–psychological and methodical education is necessary but not just any kind of such education is appropriate. Before we explore the possibilities to organise the relevant teacher education, first we will provide an overview of the existing state of teacher education in Serbia.

Teacher Education in Serbia

To our knowledge, there are no up to date systemic analyses of how the teacher education is organised in Serbia. Thus, we will provide an overview of the legislation regulating the system of teacher education and professional development in Serbia and some available data on the current situation in practice, as reported in recent publications. By changes in the Law on the fundamentals of educational system introduced in 2009 (which are still in place in the newest Law [...], 2017) all teachers that are to be employed in schools must have a master degree in education and a minimum of 30 ECTS in pedagogical–psychological–methodical courses and 6 ECTS of school practice. Analysis of study

programs for the initial education of class teachers conducted in 2013 shows that subject didactics course make 20 to 36% of all courses, pedagogical and psychological courses – 10 to 15%, while teaching practice takes 5 to 7% (Simić, Bauchman & Stančić, 2013). As for initial teacher education for subject teachers, the situation is much diverse depending on the subject. Faculties of natural sciences (e.g. chemistry, biology, physics, mathematics) usually have separate study programs for teachers. Faculties in the field of social sciences (including languages) usually have special modules within study programs or a set of elective courses dedicated to initial teacher education. Still, the differences between the faculties are great – some faculties have up to 48% of all ECTS (300) dedicated to courses that prepare students for teacher profession, while many of them have none, especially faculties from the field of engineering, medicine, etc. (Simić et al., 2013). To this day, new master and lifelong learning programs at the universities have been introduced with the purpose to provide initial teacher education for graduate students from various faculties, but also for teachers already employed in schools. However, even though master programs for subject teacher education are implemented at the state universities in Serbia since 2013, graduated students cannot get employed in schools. The professional title they obtain is not in the rulebooks that regulate who can get employed as a teacher in schools. From our own experience as teacher educators we can also add that, even though these are the newly introduced master programs, their implementation is not supported by allocating more human resources in the institutions who implement them.

The *induction program* requires that novice teacher has an experienced teacher as a mentor (he has to hold a license and have at least five years of experience in the field of education), whereas mentors role is to enable the novice teacher to pass the state license exam and work autonomously, by providing support in planning and realization of teaching and monitoring his/her work and progress (Rulebook on license for teachers, preschool educators and professional associates, 2008). Studies on teachers' experiences during the induction period show that in many cases novices do not even know who their mentor is or when they did – he/she was not a teacher of the same subject or from the same school or city, and quite rarely mentors were estimated as motivated for the role (Rajović& Radulović, 2010; Stančić, 2015). Furthermore, support from the mentor was estimated as the weakest contribution to teachers learning during the induction period (Stančić, 2015).

As of *professional development of teacher during their work*, the Rulebook on continuous professional development [...] from 2016 defined several forms of professional development (e.g. accredited short programs – so–called "seminars", lifelong learning programs organized by higher education institutions, professional conferences, summer and winter schools, study trips, performing innovative classes and activities in the school, participation in research and projects, publishing articles and schoolbooks, etc.) The teacher is required to col-

lect at least 100 credits in 5 years through different forms of professional development, whereas 80 credits need to be gathered by attending the seminars that can last from one to three days (8 credits per day). However, there are no clear regulations on how others forms of professional development are converted into credits, except for accredited conferences (1 credit per day). Studies have shown that the seminars offered, even though they are numerous and cover different topics, are not planned and chosen based on the systemic analysis of teachers' needs (Alibabic & Segrt, 2010; Kundačina & Stamatović, 2012; Munćan, 2011). Novice teachers are more satisfied with the offer of programs than experienced teachers, and class teachers are more satisfied than subject teachers. It could be concluded that the actual system of teacher professional development is not equally adjusted to the teachers' needs concerning different stages of their career cycle (Marušić & Pejatović, 2013). Also, seminars are usually based on a transmissive model that does not secure the real change in teachers attitudes. Thus they cannot ensure application of knowledge in practice (Pesikan, Antić & Marinković, 2010).

From the previous overview, we can conclude that the system of teacher education in Serbia is still in the process of establishment, especially the part of this system which is related to initial subject teacher education and teachers' professional development. Thus, it is not a surprise that there are not enough systemic studies on the contribution of various programs to the teaching practice in Serbia. According to research results obtained before introducing changes in legislation related to teacher education in Serbia, teachers have gained extensive academic knowledge (mostly from their subject field), while knowledge from the field of pedagogy, psychology and subject didactics were neglected. If they acquired such knowledge, it was as academic knowledge, based on outdated sources, without linking it to practice, if organised practice existed at all (Rosandić et al., 2002). Research related to pedagogical education of subject teachers in Serbia (Rajović & Radulović, 2007; Vujisić–Živković, 2007) and studies in other countries (Kansanen, et al., 2000; Korthagen, 2001; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981) also show that existence of pedagogical–psychological and methodical education at the initial level is not a guarantee that future teachers will develop appropriate competencies, which are in line with contemporary understandings of teaching/ learning. That is why, according to teachers' view, they entered schools unprepared for work and had to rely mostly on advice from their colleagues and their own experience as students (Cvijan, 2011; Rajović & Radulović, 2007).

A recent study on student–teacher perspectives on teaching (Stančić, Jovanović, Simić, 2013), which included students who attended psychological and pedagogical courses at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, shows somewhat similar results – majority of students did not yet form a specific perspective on teaching. However, having in mind that this study was organised during initial education, it is important to emphasise that the results also point out the dif-

ference in dominant perspectives of teaching among students depending on the number of teacher education related courses they attended. That is, dominant perspective on teaching as transmission of knowledge is more frequent among students that just started attending teacher education courses, while perspective of teaching as a road to social change is more frequent among students who attended these courses for a longer period (Stančić, Jovanović, Simić, 2013). These findings could be taken with optimism: initial teacher education could contribute to the competence of teachers if it is organised properly.

As for programs of teachers' professional development during work, the important questions is how to ensure that teachers participate in them. Research on factors that influence secondary school teachers' participation in different forms of professional development in Serbia (Marušić & Pejatović, 2013), shows that there are no great differences between teachers of various age, previous education and type of the school. Authors of the paper interpret some smaller differences related to the type of programs that teachers choose in the light of teachers' initial education. VET teachers mostly do not have any psychological–pedagogical and methodical education, so they choose programs from this field more often. As potential factors that influence these findings, they also state changes in teachers' needs throughout the career, their understandings of knowledge, as well as the availability of different forms of professional development. As the most important factors they point out teachers' awareness of the importance of professional development for the quality of teaching and for the teaching profession, as well as teachers' satisfaction with own position and roles; while extrinsic motives, such as obligingness of professional development, have a minor role (Marušić & Pejatović, 2013). Not putting in question any of the beforementioned factors, we consider that availability of programs is of particular importance, that is, the possibility that teacher can make a choice of which program he or she will attend. That choice is not related only to their professional judgment, aspirations and needs, but also to objective availability, i.e. proximity to the place where programs are organized, their price. Thus, a factor of personal choice and factors of institutional and systemic support are in interplay.

Contemporary Theories of Teaching and Implications for Teacher Education

There are several possibilities to classify teaching theories. Here we will start from the Bonk and Cunningham (1998) classification which is based on the contemporary understanding of learning. According to this, Bonk and Cunningham present the three general theoretical perspectives on which the contemporary theories of learning and teaching are based: learner centred instruction, constructivist (cognitive and social constructivism) and sociocultural approach.

What are the main ideas about teaching from the perspective of learner–centred instruction theory? From that perspective teaching, as intentional process of constructing knowledge from information and experience should be based on learners' developmental and individual capacities – not on the program and externally planed contents and goals. Thus, in teaching, we have to take into account learners' individual' characteristics and differences between learners – their capabilities for learning, learning habits, styles and approaches, their interests, their language, cultural and social background... Teaching should develop students' motivation for learning and interest in topics of learning, provide different learning experiences and develop different learning skills. From this perspective, good atmosphere in a classroom and positive emotions are essential for the process of learning. Criteria for assessment should respect individual differences, and we should evaluate not only achievement but individual learning progress also. Also, assessment should be an integral part of the teaching process, not an isolated activity (Bonk & Cunningham, 1998; Radulović, 2017).

From the perspective of cognitive–constructivist approach to learning and teaching, teaching should facilitate learner's cognitive activity and provide the learner with opportunities to recognise and apply patterns. So, teaching tasks should be adjusted to learner's cognitive scheme and organised around learner's previous knowledge and misconceptions, while contents should be organised around concepts, problems, questions, relations – not around individual information. Also, contents and teaching activities should have a sense for learners and should initiate learner's investigation, reconsideration, reflection on learning process and strategies. Assessment should be focused on individual cognitive development, in accordance with developmental stages (Bonk & Cunningham, 1998; Radulović, 2017). Social constructivist approach highlights that teaching should start not only from previous individual knowledge but also on mutual learners' interests and experiences and topics which are relevant for learners. Teaching should enable active learning through the group activities and cooperation and should encourage collaboration, negotiation between learners, as well as learner individual and group autonomy, initiative, leadership, joint responsibility for learning. In such classroom atmosphere learners influence own learning, and learners' participation is developed. Teaching also should stimulate multiple perspectives, interdisciplinarity and different approaches to problem–solving. Assessment should be focused on the team, as well as on individual participation in cooperative activities, and should be continuous, informal and cumulative. Standards and criteria should be results of agreement (Bonk & Cunningham, 1998; Radulović, 2017).

According to sociocultural approach teaching as "settings, and cultural artefacts in one's learning environment" (Bonk & Cunningham, 1998: 36) has a great impact on the individual learning and development. Teaching enables internalisation through the process of "taking new information that was experienced or

learned within a social context" (Bonk and Cunningham, 1998: 36). Teaching here is understood as a socially interactive relation, cognitive apprenticeship … through observation, participation and exchange tools and signs". Teaching should provide different kinds of incentive and give necessary level of support to learning; it provides learning through cooperative activities, dialogue, building intersubjectivity. From the perspective of this approach, the class should be organised as a learning community, with authentic participation in a constructive conversation.

As we could see from this brief overview, understandings of teaching/learning in these theories are to a large extent similar. They put more or less emphasis on the role of peers, emotions in learning, students participation, assessment; but all of them stress the importance of learner's activity in the process of knowledge construction. For a teacher to organize learning process according to these contemporary understanding of teaching/learning, he/she should have knowledge of developmental stages (cognitive constructivism), individual differences among students and their motivation (cognitive constructivism and learner centred instruction), interactive approach to teaching, cooperative learning, student participation and authentic assessment (social constructivism and sociocultural approach). However, *knowledge about* is not sufficient, as we have discussed previously. It is necessary that teacher *know how* to: research individual differences among students, plan teaching/learning based on students' previous knowledge, experience, interests; plan different learning tasks and different teaching methods, demonstrate and evaluate different approach to problem solving, create secure context and positive atmosphere in class, monitor students' progress (learner centred instruction, cognitive and social constructivism, sociocultural approach); organize cooperative activities, facilitate students participation in descission making about teaching and assessment, understand students' action in the social context, participate in the dialogue (social constructivism and sociocultural approach). To organize teaching in such manner, teacher needs to have more than skills – he/she needs to *accept certain values and beliefs*: importance of individual differences of students, students experience, relevance of the activities for students, different perspectives, trust in students competence to participate in the dialogue and share responsibility for teaching/learning process. Thus, teacher education should be organised in such a way to develop *teacher competence*.

According to some of the contemporary views on teaching, competence includes not only knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to organise teaching according to different theories of teaching/learning, but also understanding that good teaching is not the application of defined prescriptions, techniques and patterns in teaching. All teaching/learning situations are different, thus teacher education should develop teachers awareness of the contextual dependent nature of teaching, students` present learning situation, diversity in the classroom (both

individual and cultural), students` perceptions of technologies used in teaching, and awareness of the need to continually evaluate and improve teaching (Prosser & Trigwell, 2001). Development of such awareness in teachers implies higher tasks for teacher education. It needs to capacitate teachers to research/evaluate the context, to adjust his teaching to the context, and to change context to facilitate learning and expand students' and own autonomy. Teacher education develops competence understood in such a way is the education that leads to transformation and capacitates a person for a continuous transformation (Pavlović Breneselović & Krnjaja, 2012).

What Can We Learn – Suggestions for Teacher Education

- Starting from the insights on the current state of teacher education and professional development in Serbia, teaching in our schools, and contemporary understandings of teaching/learning, we can derive implications for teacher education on two levels – systemic and curricular. As the most critical *system measures* to be taken we point out:

- Finishing the establishment of the initial teacher education systems. Although the analysis of legislation shows that the system of initial teacher education is established and that certain professional psychological–pedagogical and methodical education of teachers is ensured, the review of the sub–legal acts and practice lead to a different conclusion. Foremost, the process of establishing quality initial education for subject teachers in Serbia is an incomplete process. It is urgent to ensure the recognition of the competence of subject teachers who have completed master programs for teacher education. Also, it is necessary to ensure the minimum quality of initial teacher education programs, which could be reflected in their appropriate structure, the relevance of university teachers and institutions that are implementing these programs, and pedagogical competence of the accreditation commissions for this kind of programs. To ensure that initial teacher education programs are adequately established and implemented in the upcoming period, we should persist in providing professional (psychological–pedagogical and methodical) teacher education. However, providing special support measures to institutions that implement initial teacher education is also needed, especially in areas in which this education is least developed (subject teacher education, teachers of professional subjects – VET). Bearing in mind the solutions in European countries, as well as the beforementioned results of the research in Serbia, it is necessary to provide in the long run the duration of this part of education for all teachers.

- *Support to the programs of teacher induction*, which should encompass elaboration of the induction program, program for mentors and novice

teachers, networking of mentors and novice teachers in the local envi-
ronments, as well as the evaluation of the mentors' roles.

- *Changes in the system of teachers' professional development*, which should
  go in two directions. The first one is related to systemic monitoring of
  teachers' needs, establishing of professional development on these needs
  and their changes, as well as to research of the professional develop-
  ment system and critical review of the existing system of accreditation
  of professional development programs (seminars). The other direction
  should go into strengthening of other forms of teachers' professional
  development, such as establishing system of recognition and incentives
  for teacher research, participation of schools and teachers in different
  projects; better links between self–evaluation and professional develop-
  ment and broader autonomy of schools and teachers in the process of
  self–evaluation (de–bureaucratization of these processes).

- *Care for the status of teacher profession*. Teacher position, which is based
  on the degree of autonomy he has in the educational system, his partici-
  pation in the decision making about various aspects of the school sys-
  tem, and also on other characteristics of his social position, will surely
  influence the selection of student–teachers and teachers to be employed
  in schools and their work satisfaction. As studies suggested, this satis-
  faction is also linked with teachers' participation in professional devel-
  opment programs, thus care for the members of teacher profession is a
  crucial systemic influence to teacher education and professional develop-
  ment, and it has a greater role than beaurocratic conditioning of teachers
  to attend seminars. As it is emphasized in the theoretical views on the
  teacher profession in the postmodern era – it is not enough to reduce
  teacher professional learning to the fulfilment of standards, it is neces-
  sary to ensure support for their learning and community in which they
  will learn (Hargreaves, 2003).

Even though in establishing and implementing this kind of systemic meas-
ures different actors of the educational system have an important role, the great-
est responsibility is on policymakers. When it comes to the meaning of the
insights discussed in this paper for those who plan and implement teacher edu-
cation, we could single out the following suggestions for the *curriculum develop-
ment and methodical aspects of teacher education*:

- *Focusing the curriculum on the development of teacher competence*. Many
  publications and policy documents on teacher education today, both on
  the national and international scope, emphasise the importance of devel-
  oping teacher competencies as a specific kind of professional knowledge
  which includes knowledge, skills and attitudes. The analysis of knowl-
  edge that teacher needs in order to organise teaching in accordance with

contemporary didactic understandings confirms that the competencies are necessary, which includes teachers awareness on important phenomenon of the educational process and school life, critical examination of values which are in the base of certain behaviours and accepting values which are grounded in particular theories of teaching/learning. Many authors that developed their ideas under the umbrella of postmodern and critical paradigm emphasise that development of such competence requires more than formal education and programs of professional development. They call this approach to teacher education as an "old paradigm" and confront it with the conception of the new paradigm (Darling–Hammond & Richardson, 2009). That new paradigm encompasses the approach to education as permanent transformation, understanding teacher as a reflective practitioner and researcher, activities within the school which build partner relations and learning community (Pavlović Breneselović & Krnjaja, 2012). Thus, the context in which teacher is learning and working is important for his/her development of competence. The appropriate context (learning community) cannot be developed by itself. Development of such context is a part of learning process/transformation and its consequence. From this perspective, the development of competence requires empowerment of teachers to be agents of change and building a professional identity of a leader.

- *Dialogic methods and reflection.* Orientation to such kind of competence requires appropriate teaching for (future) teachers. In short, we could say that teacher education should be organised with respect for their knowledge and perspectives, with opportunities to gain experience (practical part of education) and with organised reflection on that experience. Similar ideas were stated by many authors whose field of expertise is in teacher education (Hargreaves, 2001; Schon, 1987; Radulović, 2011, 2016). Practice by itself is not sufficient. Only with the analysis of experience through exchange with colleagues and opportunities to reflect on it by examining different perspectives of the event (school teachers', students', university teachers') what teacher experienced in practice become the experience through with he/she learns. As specific forms of learning, which could be used in initial teacher education and in their professional development, we could single out: discussions among the colleagues, collaborative problem solving, peer class observations and analysis of experience with critical friends, collaborative counselling and planning of teaching, evaluation of work, analysis of students' work products, collaborative research.

- *Interdisciplinarity and teamwork.* For understanding practical problems and theoretical dilemmas, it is necessary to confront knowledge from different perspectives, thus also perspectives of different scientific dis-

ciplines. For that reason, it is important to organise teacher education through collaboration and teamwork of university teachers that come from different scientific fields (psychology, pedagogy, subject didactics, philosophy, sociology of education). This is also implied by the sole complexity of educational issues but gets more on importance if we bear in mind that methodical knowledge and education of teachers of subject didactics for many fields are not developed enough.

- *Context in which (future) teachers learn.* For reflective questioning of own practice and implicit and explicit standpoints, it is necessary that teachers feel safe, without fear of consequences for sharing own thoughts and that they are learning in the atmosphere of mutual respect. It takes time to build such atmosphere and work in small groups is advised. Furthermore, it is necessary that those who learn have a subject position in that process, which implies that programs of professional development cannot be short–termed and out of context.

The premise of creating program for teacher education (both for initial education or professional development during work) is that those who develop such programs share and critically reflect on values and understanding on which they intend to do so, thus to build clear conception of the study program, being aware of the theoretical and value standpoints. Moreover, it is important that they continue to develop the program in the process of its' implementation, thus not only to inform the participants of the program aims and standpoints but also to make them active participants in the discussion about the program and its' further development.

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CLIL IN THE EARLY FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING: FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

The following chapter contemplates on the use of the content and language integrated learning (CLIL) approach in foreign language learning and teaching in the Republic of Slovenia. The chapter focuses on a presentation of the results of the second part of a two–phase on–going research into the attitude of foreign language teachers regarding the gradual introduction of the first foreign language (FL 1) in Slovenian public primary schools. The school year 2014/2015 was the beginning of a gradual introduction of FL into the second grade of one third of primary schools. FL 1 was supposed to be taught according to the CLIL approach, but this was not the case in some schools, due to the lack of suitably trained teaching staff and insecurity of teachers with the CLIL methodology. Great efforts have been put into the training of FL teachers in using of the CLIL approach. However, the second school year, 2015/2016, has seen a decline in the usage of the "core" CLIL approach and has consequently seen an introduction of surrogate and similar–CLIL approaches into FL 1 teaching. The chapter uses findings from a qualitative research to investigate and present the reasons for such a development and its implications for future research as well as class practice.

Keywords: attitudes, CLIL, early language teaching and learning, foreign language, language teachers

Introduction

Introducing the first foreign language (FL 1) in the first cycle (grades 1 to 3) of Slovenian primary schools has caused serious discussions regarding the nature and effects the teaching of foreign languages might have on young learn-

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ers. Questions have been raised as to the skills that teaching at an early stage requires. The rapid expansion of FL teaching at an early age has triggered a demand for well–trained and qualified teachers with English language competencies on an appropriate level (Enever, 2016: 361). Recent studies of primary English provision have indicated a suggested pattern of one to four lessons weekly in primary schools (Enever, 2011; Hu and McKay, 2012; OECD 2011). In some contexts, municipalities, schools or even central governments have chosen to provide a more intense model –a compulsory or optional study of some or all curriculum subjects taught through the medium of English during the secondary school phase (Enever, 2016: 357). Needless to say, a more intensive model of provision of FL teaching at an early age may allow for delivering substantial areas of the curriculum in English or any other foreign/second language, assuming the availability of highly skilled teachers (Enever 2016: 357). This intensive model of FL provision is in some contexts become known as content and language integrated learning (CLIL), meaning that the language curriculum area is combined with another curriculum area, so both are learnt at the same time (Enever, 2016: 358).

In Slovenia, the problem of foreign language teaching provision was addressed by the Resolution on the national programme on language policy 2014-2018 (Resolution). Point 2.1.2 of the Resolution (National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, 2013: 1012), Goal 4 (12) suggests that the next five years ought to be dedicated to creating of suitable didactic content and materials for the purpose of encouraging multilingualism. The following guidelines in the Resolution are particularly important for our research, since they specify the already mentioned guidelines:

As to the foreign language teachers, the Resolution should:

- motivate the introduction of innovative teaching and learning approaches (CLIL, language portfolio, etc.);
- stimulate cross–curricular linking of foreign and mother tongue(s) teachers on the school level with the purpose of creating a common school language curriculum;
- motivate teachers for an on–going professional training in the fields of language competences and didactics;
- boost mother tongue teachers in the foreign language skills acquisition and vice versa (National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, 2013).

In order to address some of the above mentioned issues this part of the chapter focuses on two key issues in the area of the above mentioned foreign language teaching to young learners, i.e. the attitudes towards the learning and teaching of FL 1 at an early age according to content and language integrated learning approach (CLIL) and the role of the language teacher.

Teaching a foreign language at an early age:
The foreign language teacher's profile and provision

First, we looked into one of the core issues of FL 1 teaching. Due to its importance and impact it has on the formation of attitudes toward foreign language learning it has received considerable attention by researchers and practitioners alike. Some of the renowned writers have already dealt with the topic as early as in the late 1960s and early1970s (Gardner and Wallace, 1972; Jakobovits, 1970; Rivers, 1964). In recent years, Cameron (2001: 1) has pointed out to an important element in primary language teaching, namely, young learners tend to be more enthusiastic and lively as learners. Often they will have a go at an activity even if they do not quite understand the goals, and they are keener on pleasing the teacher rather than their peers.

The worldwide trend of introducing FL 1 teaching from an early age on has somehow redefined the role of the young learners' language teacher. In European context meant developing a model of a generalist primary school teacher with extra qualifications for teaching a foreign language (Brumen and Dagarin Fojkar, 2012; Enever, 2014, 2016). Since FL 1 has been introduced in the first cycle (grades from 1 to 3) of primary schools in Slovenia, questions have been arising as to who is allowed to teach young learners. While the generalist model is recommended in most countries, Eurydice (2012: 85) suggests different profiles of foreign language teachers to be used across Europe. This in turn suggests the area of primary education is applicable to foreign language teaching. In the Slovene context, Brumen and Dagarin Fojkar (2012: 39) point out that both specialist and generalist teachers' models are used with generalist teachers who are required to get an additional qualification for teaching a foreign language up to grade 6 of primary school. See Table 1 for a detailed description of teachers' qualifications according to Eurydice (2008).

Table 1: European categories of qualified foreign language teachers
(Adapted from: Eurydice, 2008: 78).

Title	Qualification description
Generalist teacher	Qualified for teaching of (almost) all curriculum subjects, regardless of the specific training
Specialist teacher	Qualified for teaching of two different subjects, one of them being a foreign language
Partly specialized teacher	Qualified for teaching of a group of at least three different subjects, one or more than one being a foreign language
Unqualified teacher	No special definition by Eurydice. Example: in Britain, it can be a senior language assistant, teaching foreign languages, normally a native speaker with a university bachelor degree in his/her mother tongue.

A special teacher training course is therefore required for teaching young learners for specialist teachers in the first cycle of primary school. To cope with the inevitable shortage of suitably trained staff, schools have encouraged their FL teachers to get the necessary qualification in the early FL teaching and vice versa, school managements have motivated their first cycle primary generalist teachers to attend the special course in early FL 1 teaching. This was a necessary step, since all Slovenian primary school were required to introduce FL 1 as latest as school year 2016/2017.

It is well known that negative attitudes can lead to a weakening of learners' motivation and thus to a hindering effect, whereas positive attitudes can do quite the opposite (Merisuo–Storm, 2006: 10). Therefore, it is important for a teacher to look into the attitude of his or her pupils (Oxford, 2001: 168). As to motivation in teaching young learners, specialist language teachers would normally be more motivated to study languages and would be more at ease in teaching young learners. Unlike them, primary education teachers or, if you like, primary generalist teachers may not be equally motivated to study and consequently teach a foreign language to young learners (Bratož, 2015: 183). In her survey, Rixon (2013: 20) reports on a heated debate of the issue of the primary English teacher provision. She identifies the predominance of specialist English teachers in primary classrooms, finding a generalist (class) teacher as the sole or main teacher of English in only 10 per cent of the contexts. In this respect, one of the recommendations ensuing from investigating global practices of teaching English to young learners reported by Garton, Copland and Burns (2011) would concern developing teachers' English language proficiency and skills. The authors argue that primary school teachers who received training in English language teaching often lack confidence in their English ability, which is not necessary the case if related to their actual or insufficient proficiency level. The latter is often merely a general belief that a native–like competence is required for teaching English to young learners (Garton, Copland and Burns, 2011). Moreover, it is necessary for a CLIL teacher to be able to manage her/his language competences (Ludbrook, 2014: 95).

Teacher beliefs regarding teaching approaches and methods

Beside the above–mentioned issues regarding the foreign language teachers, there is another important issue that requires dealing with. We are talking about teacher beliefs regarding their teaching approaches and methods. The latter reflects particular assumptions and beliefs about how learners ought to learn (Richards and Rogers 2014: 346). The authors claim that it is the approaches and methods that prescribe how teachers should teach, thus inevitably reflecting assumptions about the nature of good teaching, the practices and techniques a teacher should use, his/her role in the classroom, the kinds of language and

resources he/she should use, and the kinds of grouping arrangements and inter-actions that should occur in their classrooms. This is especially the case in our research that deals with the attitudes of foreign language teachers with regard to the partial and trial introduction of an innovative approach in the primary FL 1 provision in Slovenia. It often occurs that when a new approach or method is introduced, they are promoted as the best solution to the language teaching chal-lenge (Richards and Rogers, 2014). These solutions are often based on assump-tions that the process of second/foreign language learning are entirely under-stood and thoroughly researched. Interestingly, the very same researchers, who study language learning, are often reluctant to disperse prescriptions for lan-guage learning, even those based on their own research, because they are aware of the fact that current knowledge is tentative, partial, and above all, changing (Richards and Rogers, 2014: 346). That is the reason why over simplified theo-ries and prescriptions found in the literature supporting some approaches and methods are risky. Let us take CLIL for example, since it is one of the core re-search issues of the chapter. In making their case for CLIL, Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2010: 153154) suggest that is has a significant contribution in providing learners of all ages with motivating experience which are appropriate for knowl-edge creation and sharing. Moreover, learning by CLIL they are cultivating the "cosmopolitan identity" where learning and using languages for different pur-poses is supposed to generate tolerance, curiosity and responsibility as global citizens. Upon which Paran (2013: 140141) observes that it is not clear why CLIL can achieve what it promises, unless it is our choice to accept CLIL as "better" than other language teaching approaches. Some approaches and methods have become widely accepted and practiced, others may have attracted less interest and support, mainly because they are difficult to understand and use, lack clear practical application, require special training, are not readily compatible with lo-cal traditions and practices, necessitate major changes in teachers' practices and beliefs (Richards and Rogers, 2014: 347). What can teachers do in such situa-tion? They can either match their teaching to the method, adapt the method to local needs, or even develop a personal approach or method (Richards and Rog-ers, 2014: 347). Presented with a new approach or method the teacher needs to study it and its principles and then apply it to her/his own teaching. To be able to do this, teachers need to acquire new beliefs and practices (Richards and Rogers 2014: 347), or, in other words, dismantle the traditional teaching approach and replace it with the presumably appropriate and up–to–date one. But this process may run contrary to the teacher's own beliefs and understandings as Borg (2006) would put it and in such a situation the presumably innovative approach may turn out to be unsuccessful.

Teachers' beliefs are very often very resilient and resistant to change (Clark and Peterson, 1986), which is a normal feature of attitudes in general (Nastran–Ule, 1997; Ule, 2000). Even if teachers actually have a go at a particular innova-tion that does not initially conform to their prior beliefs or principles and prove

successful at it or find it helpful, they might accommodate an alternative belief or principle. The reason for the teachers' beliefs or principle to be so resilient is the simple fact that they are formed on the basis of teachers' own schooling as young students while observing teachers who taught them (Nastran–Ule, 1997; Ule, 2000). It may therefore be easier for young, novice teachers, to adapt their attitudes towards an innovation, for they themselves have received training by teachers who have adopted "new" or "up–to–date" approaches in their teaching. In this venue, adding to the new set of beliefs and understandings regarding the new approach or method, teachers also need to acquire a new set of skills, they may also need to learn to use different kinds of teaching materials and resources, even change their ways of interacting with learners (Richards and Rogers, 2014: 348). What teachers need is the ability to tailor the "new" approach or method to their needs, but in order to do so, they need to assign a greater role to their creativity and individuality (Richards and Rogers, 2014: 350), which in turn requires courage and support from within the educational system.

Foreign language teaching at an early age according to CLIL: Issues and dilemmas

The following section focuses on the principles of teaching a foreign language in line with the CLIL approach. Coyle, Hood and Marsh (2010) claim that CLIL is an umbrella term adopted by the European Network of Administrators, Researchers and Practitioners (EUROCLIC) in the mid–1990s. It encompasses any activity in which a foreign language is used as a tool in the learning of a non-language subject in which both language and subject have a joint role (Marsh, 2002: 58). Coyle et al. (2010: 1) define CLIL as a dual–focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language. Firstly, FL teachers should bear in mind that the core principles behind Content and Language Integrated Learning include global statements such as "all teachers are teachers of language "(The Bullock Report – Language for Life, 1975, In Darn, 2015) to the wide–range advantages of cross–curricular bilingual teaching in statements from the Content and Language Integrated Project (CLIP) (Darn, British Council, 2015). "The benefits of CLIL may be seen in terms of cultural awareness, internationalisation, language competence, preparation for both study and working life, and increased motivation. While CLIL may be the best–fit methodology for language teaching and learning in a multilingual and increasingly multicultural Europe, the literature suggests that there remains a dearth of CLIL–type materials, and a lack of teacher training programmes to prepare both language and subject teachers for CLIL teaching" (British Council & BBC, 2017: 1). In short, "the theory may be solid, but questions remain about how theory translates into classroom practice" (British Council & BBC, 2017: 1). If carried out in the suitable manner, CLIL

can prove to be an innovative approach with undoubted advantages (Coonan, 2012; Marsh, Victor, and María, 2013). The approach itself is widely known, but under different denominations – in French speaking countries is the programme called EMILE, in some regions it is called bilingual education (Marsh, 2012). The terminology varies due to the intensity and variant of CLIL/EMILE: in case of so called hard CLIL (Lipavic Oštir, Lipovec and Rajšp, 2015: 13), which means that CLIL is consequently applied in all classes, it is often referred to as language bath, full immersion. In case of so called soft CLIL, it is referred to as partial immersion, its radical version is referred to as language shower (Lipavic Oštir, Lipovec and Rajšp, 2015: 13).

There are still some important issues that need to be addressed regarding CLIL. It seems that in spite of, or maybe because of, many of the pioneer studies which have highlighted the supposed uniqueness of CLIL and have attempted to differentiate it from other similar bilingual education models, it has been made clear that the description of what CLIL is or is supposed to be in comparison with other programmes or models is indeed problematic and has not facilitated adequate comparative studies (Cenoz, 2015; Cenoz, Genesee and Gorter, 2014). Very often, a programme is labelled CLIL by a national or even local denominator, usually with the common denominator of a foreign language, which is mainly English as a language of instruction (Morton and Llinares, 2017: 1). In contrast to the above–mentioned, there has been an alternative use of the term CLIL, which has emerged recently and is supposed to represent any type of pedagogical approach that integrates the teaching and learning of content and foreign/second languages (Dalton–Puffer, Llinares, Lorenzo and Nikula, 2014; Llinares, 2015).

A study of foreign teachers' attitudes regarding the FL 1 teaching at an early age

In this section, we present the results of a study on FL 1 teachers' attitudes towards CLIL approach in the early stages of Slovenian public primary schools. The issue addressed was, whether the FL 1 teachers' attitude towards FL 1 teaching according to CLIL changes and due to which reasons. The results here described base on a qualitative research paradigm that was carried out as part of a PhD research. Aimed to gather vital data regarding the trial introduction of FL 1 into the second grade of one third of Slovenian primary schools we managed to carry out twelve semi–structured interviews. They were done in the period from February to March 2016, which was the second year of a three–year trial introduction of FL 1 into the first cycle of primary schools. At the end of the three year trial period FL 1 was supposed to be introduced into all Slovenian primary school.

Interviewees came from 12 different primary schools from the north and northeast, north–west, south as well as south–west of Slovenia. To guarantee the anonymity, we decided to name the participants Interviewee. The frame is constructed from empirical data, namely from narrative interviews, some of which were, due to the distance, carried out via skype (2), some via mail (2), some telephonically (6) and some live (2).

Four out of twelve statistical Slovenian regions (Republic of Slovenia, Statistical Office, 2015) were not included in the research, namely: the Osrednjeslovenska region, the Koroška region, the Savinjska region, and the Spodnjeposavska regija. Representing the other eight regions were two interviewees from the Obalno–kraška region, one from the Pomurska region, three from the Podravska region, two from Goriška region, two from Gorenjska region, and two from Notranjsko–kraška region. According to their status (based on their level of training, accumulated points in the course of in– as well as out–of–service training), the Interviewees were divided into four levels (See Table 2 below):

Table 2: Teacher status in Slovenia

Level	Qualifications
Teacher	Basic level
Teacher–mentor	Acquired after 4 years in service and an appropriate number of points
Teacher–advisor	Acquired after 8 years in service and an appropriate number of points
Teacher–counsellor	Acquired after at least 8 years in service and an appropriate number of points

The interviewees were asked to reflect upon their attitudes towards CLIL during FL 1 lessons in the second grade of primary school. Interestingly, their attitudes regarding the use of CLIL in their FL 1 class did not differ greatly. The only exception was Interviewee 12 who was the only interviewee with a very positive opinion on CLIL. Interviewee 12 pointed out "Personally, I have been teaching in the first cycle according to CLIL for 12 years and the results are obvious. The advantage of this method is that the pupils don't consider FL 1 like a separate subject, but merely just a part of their timetable." The Interviewee 12 also added one detail that seems to have been overlooked by the other interviewees, namely the positive results of the approach with children of migrant and social background (immigrants, Roma and Sinthi). "The CLIL approach excellently caters specially for needs of those pupils; it enticed a feeling of equality, since everyone needed to invest the same effort to understand the teacher." The so called balancing effect of CLIL with migrant pupils was already reported by

Coyle et al. (2010: 18), who claimed those children to encounter serious problems in learning due to lacunae in language competences in the official/regional language.

Interviewee 1 was acquainted with CLIL approximately eight years ago (NB: the interview with Interviewee 1 took place in February 2016). The interviewee claimed only some elements of CLIL to be effective. Eight other interviewees out of twelve shared the same opinion. What unites the above–mentioned interviewees is that they have already heard about CLIL or have been using some elements of CLIL. Interviewee 1 (teacher–mentor, 19 year of work experience) stated that "some elements of CLIL (predominantly language shower) were very efficient, for they kept the pupils' motivation high; moreover, I think that acquiring the so–called classroom language is also very important." Interviewee 2 (teacher–mentor, 12 year of work experience) added "CLIL is partly efficient, it took me two months for my pupils to understand the instruction, which is why I have not been able to keep up with the core–curriculum." Among the reasons why the interviewees used only some elements of CLIL seven interviewees out of twelve highlighted the time–consuming activity negotiations with class teachers, which appears to be one of the major reasons that hinder teachers from using full CLIL in FL 1 teaching.

Six interviewees out of twelve claimed CLIL to be merely partly useful, stating a variety of reasons. In this vain Interviewee 11 (teacher–mentor, 10 years of work experience) highlighted the work load CLIL requires from a teacher stating, "Working with CLIL requires enormous adjustment skills and a lot of co–operation with the class teachers, joint planning, exchange of materials.". The Interviewee added another problem to the already mentioned, namely the problem of the so–called migrating teachers (working in more than one school), who rarely have the opportunity to meet their colleagues. Similarly, Interviewee 8 (teacher, 10 years of work experience) shared the same opinion with the above–mentioned teacher adding "from the organizational point of view, it is a challenge." The challenge of keeping up with the class teacher was one of the reasons for which Interviewee 7 (teacher–mentor, 10 years of work experience) shared the opinion on the appropriateness of CLIL at an early age. Beside the already mentioned reasons stated by Interviewees 1 and 11, Interviewee 7 also pointed to financial reasons as to who and how much would be paid for the CLIL lesson. It is precisely the organizational issues (difficult cooperation with class teachers) that have persuaded Interviewee 4 (teacher, 7 years of work experience) to think that "CLIL would be more appropriate in the second (grades from 4 to 6) or even in the third cycle (grades from 6 to 9) of primary school, when the linguistic competences of pupil reach a suitable level." Moreover, the Interviewee 7 was sure that "I would not be successful with CLIL in the first cycle". The Interviewee7 supported this claim by saying that "not all pupils' mother tongue is Slovenian, therefore I see no reason for giving them extra

load of foreign language acquisition in, for example, Slovene Maths, or Science." Similarly, Interviewee 3 (teacher–advisor, 26 years of work experience) shared the above opinion by stating "I could independently use CLIL in individual lessons, especially with older pupils".

Six interviewees out of twelve preferred teaching by cross–curricular links approach or theme–based approach, claiming CLIL to be theoretically an excellent approach, what it lacked was according to the interviewees the practical application. They sustained that they would not be able to carry out their CLIL lessons in accordance with high standards set by the CLIL theorists. To support this claim Interviewee 3 (teacher–advisor, 26 year of work experience) stated "it is hard to find the right dose of CLIL, for I understand the necessity of cross–curricular links." Similarly, Interviewee 7 (teacher–mentor, 10 year of work experience) claimed that "theoretically everything is fine, practically, well it's not entirely ok... Now I use only some elements of CLIL, but I predominately teach using cross–curriculum links." The same opinion was shared by Interviewees 8, 9, 11, and 12 or as Interviewee 9 (teacher–mentor, 13 years of work experience) would say that "following CLIL exactly by the book was impossible." The shift away from CLIL was explained by the Interviewee's stating that assessment of the pupils' knowledge did not meet the expectations. The tests were namely not drawn up in such a way that they would test the competences acquired during CLIL lessons. Another Interviewee reported a shift away from CLIL. Interviewee 11 (teacher–mentor, 11 years of work experience) stated how the FL 1 lessons were carried out exclusively using CLIL, but already in the second year of the trial introduction (school year 2015/2016) CLIL was dropped for theme–based teaching and to the so–called matrix, favoured by the guidelines issued by the National Board of Education that counselled the entire project. Quite the contrary was the opinion of the Interviewee 12 (teacher–counsellor, 7 years of work experience), who spoke in favour of CLIL, saying "I normally link my lessons with subjects such as Maths, Science, Sport, and Music." Ricci–Garotti (2008: 4749) reported the above–mentioned subjects, as well as a few others, to be among the subjects that are often taught by CLIL, which was reported by a number of primary and secondary schools alike.

It turned out that only the Interviewee 12 (teacher–counsellor, 17 years of work experience originating from the Podravska region) stood out. Being the only interviewee to use full CLIL in FL 1 teaching claimed to have become such an excellent teacher thanks to CLIL. Further, we should not ignore Interviewee 1 (teacher–mentor, 19 years of work experience originating from the Obalno–kraška region) who supported CLIL and advocated its efficiency, in spite of the reasons impending her from using full CLIL in the second year of the trial introduction (inflexible working hours, different style of teaching required for CLIL lessons). In contrast to the already mentioned interviewees, five interviewees only partly use CLIL or have completely discarded it. What unites them is the

last group is the relatively small number of years in service (between 7 and 13) and the lack of specific training in CLIL. To support the choice of not using CLIL one of the interviewees, Interviewee 3 (teacher–advisor, 26 years of work experience, originating from the Podravska region) highlights the main idea behind her rejection of CLIL, saying how theory of CLIL and CLIL practice are often in great discrepancy. The reader should nevertheless be reminded that it is the case of a subject–specialist, not a class teacher, who up until the school year 2014/2015 worked as a specialist teacher in the third cycle of the primary school (grades 6 to 9).

Discussion and conclusion

To summarize the results of the qualitative analysis we can claim that the majority of interviewees who had been using CLIL for at least one year (the first year of the trial introduction of FL 1 into the second grade of primary schools) have moved away from hard CLIL in the second year, but have kept some elements or some strategies of CLIL. FL 1 teachers seem to have preferred cross–curricular links or theme–based teaching instead (also the CLIL matrix), thus following guidelines issued by the National Board of Education). FL 1 teachers have enumerated a number of reasons for their shift from CLIL. Problems such as organisational issues (placement of FL 1 lessons on the timetable, payment issues, large groups, mixed–abilities and combined classes to name only a few), features of the Y generation pupils were mostly the reasons to drop CLIL in their FL 1 teaching. Moreover, teachers also emphasized the increasing need of catering for special needs as well as the difficult process of establishing the proper rapport with the pupils at such an early age. What should also be highlighted is the obvious support CLIL has received in the East and Northeast part of Slovenia and lack of it in the West and South–west part of the country. The reasons for such a bipolar situation may lie in the poor or lack of training in CLIL teaching. The latter was reported by some interviewees originating from the West and South–west of Slovenia respectively as well as in the lack of support offered to CLIL teachers, be it by the school, school management, or other institutions, such as the National Board of Education, Ministry of Education). Based on the above–mentioned results two strong categories can be formed which we named *Pro CLIL* and *No CLIL*. The latter allows for further ramification, hence, we formed three sub–categories, named *alternative approaches*, *ability for CLIL*, and *CLIL obstacles*. If we go even further, a main theme can be drawn up. We can name it Reasons for (not) using CLIL in FL 1 teaching.

To sum up, only 1 interviewee or 8.3 % of the participants used full CLIL, 7 interviewees or 58, or 3.0 % used some elements of CLIL. Four interviewees or 33, 3 % do not use CLIL for various reasons; either they are not familiar with it

(1 interviewee) or they simply do not make use of it (3 interviewees). Based on the results from 2 interviewees from the above–mentioned group that do not use CLIL originate from the Goriško region, 2 from the Notranjsko–kraška region. Further, the interviewees share on the average 8 years in service compared to the interviewees who use some elements of CLIL, whose average is 17 years in service. Beside the already mentioned differences, there is also a tendency to differentiate the northeastern regions from the west– and south–western regions, for the four ones who do not use CLIL originate from the west of Slovenia, contrary to the interviewee using full CLIL in FL 1 teaching who comes from the east of Slovenia.

It would be presumptuous to overgeneralize the results and our claims, a larger sample might lead to different results, though based on the obtained results as well as based on our private talk with FL 1 teachers around Slovenia it is very likely that results would not be any different. Interestingly, the majority of the interviewees seem not to have changed their attitudes regarding the use of CLIL in their FL 1 teaching, regardless of the obstacles and difficulties encountered in their FL classes, though they have changed their opinion on CLIL. It would be helpful for the FL 1 teachers to have the option to choose the teaching strategy that best caters for their pupils' needs and guarantee for the best results in the teaching and learning context.

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COMPETENT INDIVIDUALS IN COMPETENT SYSTEM: INTERCULTURAL CURRICULUM AND TEACHERS' COMPETENCIES[1]

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Abstract

This paper presents the concept of intercultural education as conscious, continuous and focused effort to overcome and deconstruct the dominant stereotypes and prejudices, and to recognize and prevent discriminatory practices in education. Two important requirements for the implementation of intercultural education are discussed: a) intercultural curriculum that focuses on deconstructing dominant oppressive practices and empowering students to acknowledge and initiate social change, and b) interculturally competent teachers. Intercultural competences are presented through the concept of equity literacy: recognising biases and inequities, responding to them, and redressing them in order to cultivate and sustain oppression–free communities. Special attention is given to the concept of a teacher as a reflective practitioner and leader – able to create own practice and initiate changes where they are needed. The benefits of the teacher leadership for intercultural education are discussed, as well as the support teachers need in order to be able to engage with diversity in a meaningful way.

Keywords: teachers, intercultural education, intercultural curriculum, intercultural competencies

Introduction

There is a significant confusion in terminology used for the concepts of education aiming at respect for diversity, inclusiveness and equity. On one side, different terms are used by different authors to signify the same content (for exam-

ple, multicultural and intercultural education, education for diversity, etc.), or one term is used to denote different types of education. The terms frequently used in literature are education for social justice, intercultural/multicultural education, inclusive education, anti–bias education, transformative education, etc. The above listed concepts are sometimes used as synonyms, sometimes as the levels of education for the respect diversity, and sometimes as necessary components without which it is not possible to talk about transformative education aiming at the respect of diversity, recognition and change of discriminatory practices, inclusiveness and equal opportunities. According to many authors, education that promotes the respect for diversity, knowledge about other cultures and understanding the contribution of various social groups to the community, without the social justice approach (namely, without critical assessment and deconstruction of dominant stereotypes and prejudices, without recognition of mechanisms that create and sustain the inequalities in a society, and without changing the discriminatory practices) is inadequate (Banks, 1993, 2010; Gorski, 2010; Nieto, 2011). Some authors talk about *transformative education* (Lee et al., 2011; Nieto, 2000) that deals not only with contents and/or areas of education in a narrow sense, but with culture in general and with the climate in an educational institution and in a community as well. It includes both the concepts of social justice, and the multiple perspectives of various social groups and it represents conscious, continuous and focused effort to overcome and deconstruct the dominant stereotypes and prejudices, and to recognize and prevent discriminatory practices. Paul Gorski introduces term *equity literacy* to denote more meaningful approach to diversity and Interculturalism because it implies understanding of equity and inequity as well as justice and injustice rather than just understanding different cultures (Gorski 2013; Gorski, & Swalwell, 2015). Equity literacy means to recognise various biases, discriminations and inequities and to respond to them, as well as to redress them in order to cultivate and sustain bias free and discrimination–free communities (Gorski, 2013). Equity principle should not be confused with the equality: equity is the process through which we provide students real possibilities of equality of outcomes (Enid Lee quoted by Nieto & Bode, 2010).

In this article we will use term *intercultural education* to signify education that is based on respect for diversity, solidarity, equity, cooperation and participation. This is the education that a) actively challenges dominant stereotypes/prejudices and practices that create and maintain different types of oppression/inequalities, b) increases knowledge, understanding and sensitivity of mechanisms which perpetuate and maintain system of domination and c) help students to commit to capacity building for personal and institutional transformation. In order to do such a complicated task teachers need to have various competencies for challenging system of domination and for providing both material resources and emotional resources to their students. They need to believe in students capacities and values, to care for them, to have high expectations from all of them, and instead of simply giving them the resources, they need to "draw on the tal-

ents and strengths that students bring to their education" (Nieto & Bode, 2010: 46). In that sense the main goals of intercultural education, according to Sonia Nieto and Patty Bode, are:

- "Tackling inequality and promoting access to an equal education.
- Raising the achievement of all students and providing them with an equitable and high–quality education.
- Giving students an apprenticeship in the opportunity to become critical and productive members of a democratic society" (2010: 44).

According to Paul Gorski (2009) intercultural education is a political movement and process which attempts to secure social justice through comprehensive school reform. The main goals of intercultural education, according to Paul Gorski (2010), is transforming education that holistically critiques and responds to discriminatory policies and practices in education, which means that

- Every student must have an equal opportunity to achieve to her or his full potential and must be prepared to competently participate in an increasingly intercultural society.
- Teachers must be prepared to effectively facilitate learning for every individual student, no matter how culturally similar or different from them.
- Schools/high school institutions must be active participants in ending oppression of all types, first by ending oppression within their own walls, then by producing socially and critically active and aware students.
- Education must become more fully student–centred and inclusive of the voices and experiences of the students.
- Educators, activists, and others must take a more active role in re–examining all educational practices and how they affect the learning of all students: assessment methods, pedagogies, educational materials and textbooks, and so on.

For the purpose of fulfilling those aims, two issues should be focused on: a) intercultural curriculum which reflects intercultural values and fosters students' competencies and b) reflexive, competent teachers well prepared for the challenges of the implementation of intercultural curriculum.

Intercultural Curriculum:
How to Build Interculturally Competent System?

The development of intercultural curriculum, or a degree to which it reflects the differences existing in the society, can be compared with the phases in intercultural education. Considering that issue, Banks (1993) distinguishes

four stages in the development of the ICE. The first stage includes incorporation of concepts, information and theories from ethnic studies into the school and teacher education curricula. The second stage was in a way answer to shortcomings of the approach of ethnic studies and its focus was on educational transformation that would increase education for equity, thus meeting the needs of students from minority groups. The third phase was about inclusion of other marginalized groups (not only ethnic) which demanded to have their perspective to be reflected in curricula and the current (fourth) phase of intercultural education consists of the development of comprehensive theory, research and practice that take into consideration interrelation between different kinds of diversity such as race, gender, class, age, etc.

Sleeter & Grant (2009) developed five approaches to intercultural education that can be applied to the curriculum. *Human relations* approach focuses on developing sensitivity, tolerance, harmonious interpersonal relations and helping students to become culturally aware, but with no structural change in mainstream curriculum and with minimum students' participation. The goal of *teaching the exceptional and culturally different approach* is to train students to be culturally sensitive and to be able to assimilate into society. In order to do so, teachers need not just to understand the multicultural issues, but to have certain skills of how to "train" students to be culturally sensitive. The *single group studies approach* is focused on one specific cultural group and on the causes and the roots of oppression that group has been subjected to. This approach requires change in teaching content, but without necessary changes in the structure of the curriculum. The *multicultural education* approach increases intercultural awareness by providing additional perspective on different intercultural issues. This requires both the content and curriculum changes. Finally, the *multicultural education and social reconstruction approach* focuses on deconstructing dominant oppressive practices and empowering students to acknowledge and initiate social changes.

According to Paul Gorski (2010) intercultural education is a continuum from accepting status quo, in which curricula, pedagogies, counselling practices, and all other aspect of education continue to reflect primarily perspectives and approaches of dominant groups and dominant ideology, i.e. dominant regimes of truth (Foucault, 1977), to transformative process in which social justice and equity education are in the centre. Between those extremes, there are four more stages focusing on surface–level cultural traits (*Heroes and holidays – food, festivals & fun*), different customs and behaviours of the cultures (*Cultural dictionary*), celebrating differences that are seen as an asset by making connections across various group identities and drawing on personal experiences of students so that the students learn from each other (*Why–can't–we–all–just–get–along*), and addressing inequalities in various aspects of education though single or temporary programs (*We did multicultural education LAST month*). The most in-

clusive approach according to Gorski is transformative approach (*Social justice and equity education*) that focuses on strong determination to make all aspects of schools and schooling equitable and to ensure that all students have the opportunity to develop their full potential as learners.

James A. Banks (2010) points at the mainstream–centric curriculum that only reflects the perspective of the dominant group and it endangers both students from the dominant group and those from marginalized groups, because it denies the opportunity of multiple perspectives to be included in the learning process. It reinforces both internalized domination and internalized oppression: false sense of superiority of students from the dominant group (not challenged by the perspective of other groups) and sense of invisibility, inferiority and worthlessness of marginalized students. The main cause of lower motivation and school–failure of students from marginalized groups is conflict of culture and values, e.g. huge gap between the experience they have in their families and experience they get through schooling (difference theory) and not the social deprivation (culture deficit theory). According to Banks there are *four levels of integration* of intercultural contents in the curriculum. *Contribution approach* is frequent approach among educators, because it provides easy way to include various differences in the mainstream curriculum. Differences that are included in the curriculum are usually all visible elements of one culture like clothing, music, food, games, etc., and they are included mostly during specific days and celebrations (for example, Roma International Day). Problem with contribution approach is that dominant group uses its own criteria to select cultural artefacts of other groups that would be visible in curriculum, that, in many cases might reinforce prevailing stereotypes about those groups (for example, Roma culture is usually celebrate in schools through dance and music because these are the most visible aspect of their culture from the perspective of non–Roma group). Even more serious critique of contribution approach lies in the fact that while making visible some superficial aspects of different cultures, institutionalized practices that deny marginalized groups equal chances and maintains the system of oppression, remain hidden. *Additive approach* consists of the addition of content, concepts and perspectives of different groups to the curriculum. This approach is easy to implement because it does not require change of curriculum's structure. Problem with the additive approach is similar to the problem that contribution approach has: other culture groups in the curriculum are still perceived from the perspective of the dominant group and the issue of interconnectedness between different groups remains unaddressed. The main difference between the *transformation approach* and the first two approaches is that it starts with the change of goals, structure and perspectives of the curriculum. Different perspectives are visible in curriculum in a way that enables students to understand the complex ways in which diverse cultural groups participate in certain society. Problem with this approach lies in its implementation, since it requires

major curriculum revision, modification of pre–service and in–service training for teachers in order to improve their intercultural competencies and new learning materials written from the perspective of different groups. The *Social action approach* includes all elements of the transformation approach with one significant addition: it includes components that require students to think critically and participate actively in social change. This approach enables students to develop capacity for critical reflection, decision making process and engagement in social changes (Banks & McGee Banks, 2010). Through various social studies subjects, literature, music, art etc. students are encouraged to re–examine common beliefs, stereotypes/prejudices and mechanisms that reinforce and maintain discrimination and oppression in the society. They are also encouraged to challenge their own beliefs and stereotypes toward other cultural groups; they practice critical thinking, argumentation, improve their techniques of research and data assessment, and experience themselves as the agents of social change. However, the implementation of social action approach is even more challenging than with the transformative approach, because it requires a fundamental re–examination of usual ways of thinking and behaviour, which is likely to provoke resistance.

Both Banks and Gorski talk about the transformation of the curriculum as the aim. Incorporation of the intercultural education in the curriculum has to be cross–cultural and demands the change of the substance of the curriculum: of the basic curriculum assumptions, its aims, promoted values, methodology and working materials. Eneed Lee and collaborators think of intercultural curriculum as a shift from *the paradigm of tolerance to the paradigm of transformation* (Lee et al, 2011). These two paradigms differ, both in assumptions about the cause of the cultural conflicts, and in the conceptions about what has to be changed in education system, which are the aims and methods of intercultural education, and how the intercultural education of teachers should look like. Tolerance paradigm is more oriented toward individuals and their restrains/capacities for possible changes, while transformation paradigm emphasizes interpersonal and institutional level as the main obstacle and at the same time capacity for social change. The main source of cultural conflicts according to tolerance paradigm are prejudices people have, and what needs to be changed in order to eliminate discrimination is a change of individual attitudes and behaviours. Thus, the main goal of intercultural education is to provide information about the other cultures and to foster interaction between people from different groups, since this is the best way to deconstruct stereotypes/prejudices people have. Transformation paradigm, on the other hand, the roots of cultural conflicts sees in discrimination/oppression that is embedded in the system and (explicitly or implicitly) institutionalized. Participation in the system of oppression happens either by internalized dominance (when people think that their privileged status is part of "natural order") or by internalized oppression (when members of oppressed group start to believe that they deserve marginalized treatment because they are

not capable as others). What needs to be changed is elimination of is oppressive practices and deconstruction of the dominant power structure and privileges in terms of cooperation, negotiation and alliance building. Instead of adding some discrete pieces about other cultures (also known as "tourist approach") in curriculum that stays intact, transformation paradigm insists on changing the whole curriculum in order to include intercultural and social justice issues. All aspects of curriculum should integrate intercultural issues, critical thinking and social justice concepts/practices related to different groups: gender, age, class, religion, ethnic/national groups, etc. Curriculum should reflect diverse cultural experiences and perspectives, enabling students to connect their experiences and interests (home experience) with what they are thought at school. Cooperation, mutual learning, engagement in joint projects, active participation are all seen as powerful tools for reaching education equity (Lee et al. 2011).

Since transformation paradigm requires integrated curriculum and competent teachers who are willing to challenge their own belief system, to critical review the power system in a society and to identify and alter educational practices to deal with different forms of institutionalized discrimination, the important question is how to prepare teachers for such a complex task.

Teachers' Intercultural Competencies: How to Empower Competent Professionals?

Teachers' intercultural competences are deduced from the listed aims of intercultural education – the change of attitudes/values on one, and the transformation of education system on another side, i.e. creation of the education system based on mutual respect, inclusiveness, respect of the rights and of the equality, in which every child would be able to develop all potentials. Intercultural competences include important ethical and political dimensions because they promote and support the concept of citizen who respects interconnectedness with other citizens and who lives in a complex world where encountering cultural difference is becoming the norm (Santerini, 2010). According to some authors, teachers' competence for teaching socio–cultural diversity concerns the know–how of acting in a specific diverse educational content so that knowledge, resources and abilities are mobilized, accepted and transformed to bring an added value (Byram, Nichols & Stevens, 2001). Mills and Ballantyne stressed the responsibility teacher educators have in supporting the teaching profession "to develop deeper, more meaningful ways of engaging with diversity in educational settings" (2010: 454). This is an important contribution to a "more humane, equitable, socially just and democratic society" (Ambe, 2006: 694).

When talking about intercultural competencies, Paul Gorski (2013) introduces the concept of equity–literate educator who has knowledge, skills and val-

ues important to deal with diversity in a way to enable all students to develop their potentials to its fullest. The equity–literate educator must have the ability to *recognise* different biases and mechanisms (implicit or explicit) that perpetuate system of inequality, both at the classroom/school level, educational policy level and at the level of society as a whole. Competent educator needs to recognise biases and oppressive practices in school curriculum, including teaching materials, teaching methods, textbooks, methods of evaluation of students etc. According to the Council of Europe (2009), knowledge and understanding of key concepts of social justice and intercultural education competences is very important for teachers in multicultural/contemporary world because they enable them to be sensitive to and respond effectively to diversity. Knowing and understanding the key legislative and policy frameworks, guidelines and principles of intercultural education in order to achieve equity in education and protection of child/human rights is of the utmost importance for teachers (Council of Europe, 2009).

Although necessary starting points, knowledge and understanding are not sufficient for intercultural education. In order to contribute to change, teachers need to be able to apply knowledge in building up "cooperative, non–discriminatory organizational culture which realizes optimally the idea of living and learning together" (Council of Europe, 2009: 7). Equity–literate educators, according to Gorski, need to have the ability to *respond to* biases and inequities in a way to help students and other colleagues to recognise different biases and oppressive practices and to engage them in a dialogue of how those practices are being manifested through teaching materials and textbooks, classroom interactions and school policies. The ability to *redress* biases and inequities in a longer term and to prevent their re–appearance in classroom and school is also important intercultural competence. Teachers need to be able to advocate for equitable and just school practices, they need to make clear distinction between celebration of diversity and promotion of equity in school, they need to use a variety of approaches in teaching students about different "isms" and they also need to constantly reflect and evaluate their own practice and its impact on students.

The ability to *create and sustain a bias– free and equitable learning environment* for all students is in line with *learning to do* and *learning to live together* competences as defined by International Commission on Education for the Twenty–First Century (Delors, 1996). Creating the supportive and safe learning environment that fosters social interaction and active participation in learning process is not an easy task, especially when one has in mind that biases and limited notion of identity are embedded in cognitive, social and emotional functioning, and that societies in which we live reinforce competitiveness and perpetuate the idea of inequality at many different levels (Vranješević, 2012). The ability to establishing participatory, inclusive and safe learning environment, means that teachers express high expectations for all students through higher–order pedagogies and curricula; understanding that students have different levels of access

to resources and cultivate a classroom environment in which students feel free to express themselves openly and honestly (Gorski, 2013).

Since intercultural/transformative education recognizes the importance of human agency, self–regulation and meta–learning in the development of young people as citizens, this implies a commitment to the cultivation of the sort of capacities and dispositions like courage, confidence, curiosity, self–belief in efficacy, willingness to accept difference, leadership, empathy and sense of moral purpose (Frost, 2010). In order to foster students' intercultural competencies, teachers must be competent themselves. They need to have *transversal competences*, to teach students how to learn and how to apply that knowledge in trying to solve real problems in real life situations.

The process of intercultural learning assumes continual review of own beliefs and value system, as well as support the others to do the same. That is why teachers have to be confident in their own identity, to be both *self–awar*e and *cultural–aware*. They need to understand the role of culture in the formation of one's own values, beliefs, patterns of behaviour, and problem–solving orientation. Competent teachers should be aware of the influence of their own culture and will be able to teach this concept to others (Reza 2000). *Interpersonal sensitivity*, as well as competence in constructive communication is needed, because teachers cooperate with other teachers, representatives of local community, policy makers and other stakeholders in the process of education, while advocating for the best interest of children. Interpersonal sensitivity often goes with *empathy*, i.e. the ability to de–centre from own point of view and to view the world from the perspective of other person(s) in order to understand, accept and appreciate plurality in attitudes, norms and values. The ability to *tolerate differences* (e.g. in values, beliefs, behaviour) is maybe one of the hallmarks of the competent teacher, which is the most frequently challenged in the multicultural context (both by students, who do not fit the norm and by colleagues with different perspectives regarding teaching and learning). *Cognitive and behavioural flexibility,* i.e. the ability to adjust own expectations and learning activities to the students' diverse needs and learning styles is also very important for interculturally competent teacher, together with ability to be *non–judgmental*, to treat ones opinions as hypothesis that are open for reconsideration, and not as ultimate truth. Since intercultural education means facing various problems and situations that one is not always prepared to deal with, one of the important capacities of intercultural teachers is *tolerance of uncertainty*, the ability to react to new, different, and at times unpredictable situations with little visible discomfort or irritation. Learning to manage the feelings associated with uncertainty and ambiguity is a skill associated with adaptation to a new environment and relating effectively to people who have different sets of values. Some authors (Reza, 2000), discuss the *sense of humility* as important ability that stems from the teachers' deep respect for the intricate and varied nature of cultures. Teachers with a sense of humility

approach the learning process with respect and perceive themselves as lifelong learners with capacity to reflect on their own personal and professional growth. Being the interculturally competent teacher also means to have courage to step out of the common framework, to embrace change and perceive is an inevitable and immanent part of our life. *Courage* to introduce changes, to experiment with different aspects of social life with no certainty when it comes to outcomes, is necessary for teachers if they want to teach their students to be proactive and fully participate in their communities. Personal courage and *openness for change* cannot be possible without *enthusiasm* and *commitment* to the core values of intercultural education. Teachers inspire others through communicating their sense of enthusiasm and passion for their subject matter and a spirit of commitment to the pursuit of cross–cultural knowledge and skills. In order to inspire students and serve as a role model, teachers have to "walk the talk".

Competent Individuals in Competent System: Teachers as Leaders of Change

Although the quality of intercultural education is closely related to the educational system, i.e. educational authorities, responsible for the development of intercultural curriculum, competent professionals – teachers still have the role that mostly determine the final result of educational process (OECD, 2011). For this reason teachers should have more active role in creating and initiating the changes in the process of intercultural education. Unfortunately, ETF regional reports on teacher development for inclusive education in Western Balkans (Pantić et al., 2011) as well as in Serbia (Macura–Milovanović et al., 2010) point to centralized character of the system of education that diminishes the role of the teacher. Namely, the role of the teacher in centralized system is deduced to one who implements plans and programs created by the experts in education (majority of them have no contact with school/classroom and practice). Most teachers do not have the opportunity to participate in any way in the development of the syllabi which they are supposed to implement. The effects of centralization are twofold: on one side, teachers are reduced on performers without professional autonomy in the process of curriculum development, and on another, they have no competences for participation in that process and for more active role in the process of education. Even when they are given small autonomy for adaptation of the curriculum, the choice of textbooks, evaluation of the education process and self–evaluation most teachers do not know how to use it (Pantić et al., 2011). The image of the teacher as passive knowledge transmitter (internalized by teachers themselves) create serious obstacle for development of interculturally competent system. Intercultural education assumes teachers who are reflective practitioners, who have required knowledge and skills to adapt to

the existing curriculum to cultural, developmental and individual needs of children, who permanently critically reviews, changes and improves his/her own practice. In the intercultural education it is expected that a teacher respects and implements values of intercultural education and is able to create own practice and initiate changes where they are needed; a teacher is expected to be a leader (Vranješević & Frost, 2016). Teachers' leadership assumes active participation of teachers in knowledge construction, where knowledge is not transmitted (transmission model of learning) but created in the process of exchange – transformative model of learning (Frost & Durrant, 2003).

Examples of the teacher leadership initiatives done in Serbia (Vranješević, 2014; Vranješević & Frost, 2016) demonstrated the great potential of teacher leadership in empowering practitioners to lead the development of intercultural and inclusive practice and to make important shift from mono–cultural to multicultural practice. Teachers who participated in those initiatives became reflective practitioners who critically re–examined their practice, identify problems and worked actively together on the possible solutions. They did not only become sensitive to various social justice and intercultural issues, but they actively used that knowledge/skills in order to make substantial changes in their intercultural practice.

In that sense teacher leadership can mobilize teachers' capacity for the leading change, their energy, ingenuity and moral commitment to improving the effectiveness of their practice and practice in their schools more widely. Then, teacher leadership can improve quality in the system by enhancing professionalism, capacity for self–evaluation and professional accountability. Finally, teacher leadership can build professional knowledge that teachers will trust because it is derived from tried and tested practices related to actual and familiar contexts (Frost, 2010).

Considering that teacher leadership assumes basic change in the way the process of learning/education is perceived, change of teacher's role, and the change of education policy (which can facilitate or linger the development of professional autonomy and teacher's initiative), the implementation of the idea assumes various kinds of support of teachers. First, teacher education curriculum should reflect the idea of teacher as autonomous professional who initiates and creates own practice and develops within professional culture which encourages innovation and distributed leadership. Curriculum should contain programs and methodology for support to reflection, planning and sharing of experience. Second, during initial education teachers should be encouraged for dialogue with other educational stakeholders about important issues related to education, which overcome the contents of their subjects. Third, it is important to empower professional associations of teachers to offer a chance for teachers to exchange the ideas and experience, to learn from others and through a constructive dialogue to improve and advance their practice. Fourth, it is necessary

to strengthen the relations between colleges/university and schools, to form the teams of teachers in schools who could be a significant support to future teachers in their professional development. And last (but not the least), teacher educators must constantly advocate for educational decentralization, i.e. for the development of education system so to support and encourage autonomy and initiative of teachers, in which the teachers are visible as active participants in initiation and creation of necessary changes.

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