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FOREWORD

Dear readers,

the Editorial Board of Acta Technologica Dubnicae has prepared the third issue of the journal.

The studies open the questions of mobbing among teachers at primary schools from the point of view of sociological, legal and pedagogical aspects. The authors from Slovenia present the results of their research and analyze the phenomenon of mobbing and its consequences. They have obtained very interesting results and some new views.

The concept and methodology of the barometer of inclusive education of people with disabilities and the preliminary results of the research in ten EU countries are presented by the authors from Germany.

The next study is based on the topic of mobbing at work and opinions on the issue in Slovakia. Thus the reader has the possibility to compare some aspects of mobbing in Slovakia and Slovenia.

The author from Hungary opens the question if mass media will substitute traditional pedagogical processes. He focused on the relation between communication and learning in a new media space.

The verdict of many scientific studies and life experience that the knowledge of foreign languages helps a person find better position in the European labor market is confirmed by the Slovak authors in their article. They emphasize the role of student mobility in this issue.

The last article uses the space for supporting the technical education in pre-primary education implementing interactive education systems.

We wish you will choose the topic interesting for you which could be an inspiration for your professional work.

*Viola Tamášová
Editor*

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STUDIES

Some Sociological, Legislative and Pedagogical Aspects of the Prevalence of Mobbing among Teachers in Primary School (Case Study)

*Jana Goriup – Vilma Alina Šoba – Tjaša Purgaj**

Abstract: The paper sets forth the discussion of the occurrence of mobbing in Slovene elementary school. The study is based on empirical facts collected at three different schools. There are some differences between organizations in occurrence, victims' characteristics, the reasons and consequences of mobbing. The results of the empirical research of the psychosocial conditions in the analysed working places show that more and more teachers as employees are becoming mobbing victims. Mobbing is defined as a very strong social stress factor. Each individual or social group experiences mobbing at work as a conflict situation and communication. An attacked individual as a victim of the conflict is exposed to permanent and long-term attacks by one or more people at work. The intention of these attacks is to oust the individual from the organization or to harm him/her in other ways. A lot of pressure is being imposed on the person and also intimidation, humiliation, molestation or other negative influences appear. Because of the psychic burden the victim usually becomes ill and often leaves the working position. Mobbing can affect the individual in a way that s/he is no longer capable of fitting into any new working environment. The most frequent consequences named by the victims are: stress, insomnia, concentration problems and family problems.

Key words: mobbing, psychological violence, emotional violence, workplace conflict, teachers.

1 Introduction

In the contemporary Slovenian post-modern society, the credits for work done are no longer appreciated, because we live in a society eager for quick results and outstanding achievements, as well as past achievements (often) are no longer relevant. We cannot overlook the fact that the fundamental categories of human habitation within explosive technological development, harsh economic conditions and open labor market are not intact anymore. Consequently, the individual's relationship to the achievement of universal values leads to widespread competition, individualistic orientation, all the faster pace of life and unbridled consumerism in all social subsystems, including the education.

The development of an increasingly complex post-modern society in recent decades has been marked by changes that affect the quality of human life and bring unpredictability and uncertainty to their lives. At the same time constant and increasingly unpredictable changes, which increasingly seem to be a fixture of our lives, raise questions about human life and job quality. Within these processes and trends, the work place is becoming less secure and less predictable. An individual has not been exposed to such a significant risk in a society and s/he has not had to adapt to such social circumstances yet. Today, in the post-modern reality, it is completely different, because the individuals themselves make decisions of their own life and health. This also applies to handling, understanding and "tackling" socially adverse events such as mobbing in a workplace as the labor market is undergoing major changes. Individuals should obtain information about their rights and

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opportunities of social and education systems. They must also provide inclusion into these, often very complicated processes. Therefore there is a requirement for a greater supply of information upon which individuals can decide, if they wish to be employed and labor organization must be interested in working effectively and taking care of the quality of their implementation.

The growing complexity of life is caused by increasing vulnerability of particular social systems and social groups of employees and requires their integration. Or, as D. Brečko (2007, p. 427) indicates, this situation is forcing us into the field “have” and thus the aspect of human “being” is neglected, which necessarily leads to strained interpersonal relationships, struggle for dominance, often driven by fear of job loss and, consequently, particularly material benefits. In such a work environment, where everyone wants to achieve only the best for themselves, one can quickly launch psychological violence against the person who threatens another person on the path to the desired goal of his professional career. That also applies to employees in basic education.

2 Mobbing as most common form of workplace violence

The most common form of violence in the workplace, called mobbing, is widespread already everywhere and the Slovenian school place is not immune. Otherwise, a phenomenon is in the Slovenian area often equated with a description of “psychological violence in the workplace”, the term originally comes from the Latin as “mobile vulgus” (Krajnc, 2010), which denotes a group of individuals with a low level of the organizational culture, and dominated by a type of destructive behavior, which is frequent among such players today. In the Anglo-Saxon-speaking environment a more established term occurs – “bullying” (as tyrannization, harassment, intimidation, and in American “harassment” (as well as or harassment, torture, disturbance, etc.). According to the current research an average of 5% of all employees in the European Union was exposed to mobbing. M. Dodoč Fikfak et al. (2006) point out that in Slovenia we face to even a higher level of mobbing, as the proportion of mobbing victims in Slovenia ranges between 20 and 30% and even up to 40% among employees in these intellectual institutions.

2.1 Some basic features of mobbing

The term mobbing was first introduced by the ethologists Konrad Lorenz (Leyman, 1993; Brečko, 2003), who observing the animals recognized the ways of their grouping, the ways they drove away the intruder or eliminated the competitor, and how individual animals behaved. In the 80s of the 20th century a Swedish psychologist of German origin, Heinz Leymann, understood the term mobbing transferred to jobs, “downloaded” it to a workplace situation and named people’s aggressive behavior in a workplace (Brečko, 2003, p. 62). According to H. Leymann, mobbing is “communication full of conflict in the workplace between employees or between superiors and subordinates, while a person is attacked in a weak position (subjected to the conflict, not in the hierarchy) and subjected to systematic and prolonged attack by one or more persons with view and/or result out of the system, while under attack as a person that feels discriminated” (Leymann, 1995, p. 18).

Based on several studies H. Leymann identified 45 different acts of mobbing, which he classified into five groups according to their consequences or purposes (Kostelić-Martić, 2007, p. 27). He described the acts of mobbing as attacks on the possibility of expression and communication, on the possibility of maintaining social contacts, personal reputation, quality of work and health of the employee. C. Knorz and D. Zapf (1996, p.12-22) also mentioned the performance of individual disdained glances and gestures, refusing contact, ignoring, spreading rumors, criticizing the work, limiting the opportunities for expression, injurious questions to the victim, placing non-compliant job (far below the ability level of victims), ridicule, constant interruption of speech, intentional unavailability for the needs of victims, shouting, use of profanity, suspiciousness of psychological health of victims, verbal threats, assignment of meaningless tasks, constant allocation of new work, assignment of tasks which endanger the health of victims, attacks against political bias, criticism of private life, etc.

The attacked individual experiences the destruction of social networks, because suddenly no one speaks to him/her, and when s/he addresses someone in the workplace, s/he is being ignored, transferred to another office (away from the staff); co-workers' prohibition to communicate with the victim; comprehensive ignorance of the working environment, etc. This, of course, triggers the demolition of the victim's acquired social status. H. Leymann (1995, p. 33-34) states that the demolition of victim's social prestige is marked by gossip behind his back, spreading rumors, attempts to ridicule the victim, assumptions about the victim's mental illness, attempts to coerce the victim for review by a psychiatrist, mockery of his physical defects, mimics about his mode of walking, voice or gestures in order to ridicule the victim, attacks on victim's political and religious orientation, mocking his private life, insulting the account of his ethnicity, making tasks that have a negative impact on the confidence of the victim, incorrectly assessing the work efforts to insults, questioning his/her business decisions, profanity and other expressions that do not belong into the working environment, sexual attempts or verbal sexual convergence offers, etc.

This of course leads to the destruction of the quality of professional and personal functioning of an individual, as s/he does not receive new tasks, because s/he donated all the major tasks to the extent that s/he still cannot find any task for himself/herself, and s/he is given meaningless work tasks far below the level of his/her ability, or s/he is given tasks much more often than other employees, especially those that go beyond the level of his/her qualifications in order to discredit him/her.

Due to the experience of such attacks the victim's health is also compromised since the attacks on his/her health are manifested by noxious tasks and physical violence as it is easier to exert physical violence with an apology to someone. In this way, the "discipline" is physically abused, injury or unnecessary expense are caused intentionally, psychological consequences at home or work environment are caused deliberately and sexual violence is exerted (Leymann, 1995, p. 33-34)

Other researchers (e.g., Resh, 1994; Gruban 2003, Davenport et al. 2005; Kalčič – Knavs, 2007; Zapf, 1999, etc.) pursued the problem and found out that in the process of mobbing it is possible to identify certain developmental stages at which the conflict can develop into mobbing, which mostly results in termination of the employment relationship between the employee and employer. The situation that triggers mobbing is usually a conflict which intensifies and develops into a personal dispute. In the second phase of psychoterror, the attacks on an individual are becoming more intense. The target of attacks becomes the victim's personality. An extensive and increasing process of spreading rumors among the victim's colleagues in a workplace starts with the avoidance of communication with him/her.

This gives rise to serious and intensive development of psychosomatic disorders which are becoming more intense and more serious. The result is the individual's sickness and absence, but the manager starts (in the third stage) to implement the first disciplinary action (e.g., lower wages, in extreme cases even termination of employment). L. Weaver (2006, p. 8) points out that the cases of mobbing in the final stage almost always end in the termination of employment. The decision is made by the victim who cannot stand more injustice in the workplace or by the leaders.

N. Davenport et al. (2005, p. 41) even talk about the mobbing syndrome, which includes ten different factors, e. g. the assault/threat to the dignity of integrity, credibility and professionalism of employees; the denial, humiliation, intimidation, insulation, maliciously and controlled based communication; and removing a person from his/her environment presented as his/her free decision. They appear in various combinations, systematically and repeatedly, so their impact on the victim becomes the main element of mobbing syndrome:

- they operate directly or indirectly in an insidious or obvious way, as mobbing is caused by one or more employees;
- they occur continuously, repeatedly and systematically over a certain period;
- the victim is marked in such a way that s/he is at fault;

- they build on a person's shame and confusion;
- the victim is frightened, isolated and plunged in obedience;
- they act in order to displace the victim.

As such actions are not identified, they are misinterpreted, ignored, tolerated, encouraged, or even instigated by the management organization (see also Tuškej, 2007, p. 26-27).

2.2 Forms of mobbing

Regardless of whether mobbing is going on at the same or different hierarchical level we distinguish two forms of mobbing. When the attacker and the victim are at the same hierarchical level we are talking about the horizontal mobbing. However, if they are acting at different hierarchical levels we are talking about the vertical mobbing, within which occur strategic mobbing and "staffing" (Kostelić-Martić, 2007, p. 27-28). Today the virtual mobbing or e-mobbing are more and more frequent forms of mobbing.

FORMS OF MOBBING		
HORIZONTAL	VERTICAL	
Employees at the same hierarchical level.	Employees at different hierarchical levels.	
	STRATEGIC MOBBING	"STAFFING"
	Superiors Leadership→Subordinated	Subordinated→ Superiors Leadership

Table 1 *Forms of mobbing*

2.2.1 Horizontal mobbing

In this form of mobbing employees' position in the company is equal and they are trying to get rid of another employee by various negative acts. Feeling threatened, jealousy or envy can be stimulated to get rid of the employee. Especially, if those who carry out mobbing think it might help them in their advancement in professional careers. In other cases of the horizontal mobbing, a group of employees in the company exercises violence against one of the members of this group, who is chosen as a "sacrificial lamb". The reasons for mobbing are similar to the example above: that the attacker/s are committing acts of violence to hurt the victim, because they feel threatened which incites envy and jealousy in them. With humiliation, insults or other harassment they annoy the individual mentally; they actually glorify themselves and act out their own frustration and try to demonstrate that they are stronger and more capable than the victim (Kostelić-Martić, 2007, p. 27-28).

2.2.2 Vertical mobbing

Psychological violence occurs between a superior(s) and a subsidiary, or group of subordinates. These are acts of violence made between employees at different hierarchical levels. In this context, the role of aggressor and the victim are changeable; once one, another time the other. When a superior tries to remove someone to a lower position we talk about the strategic mobbing. The attacked individual may occur as a surplus after the reorganization, acquisition or merger. It may also happen that the victim simply cannot adapt to the changes made within the company and cannot be incorporated into the new environment. As such, the employee is obviously undesirable, so the systematic psychological violence usually precedes his/her termination. The superior deliberately uses violence, insults and humiliates the subordinate, and in this way s/he tries to get rid of the victim (Kostelić-Martić, 2007, p.27-28).

The opposite situation is possible, when a group of subordinates carries out psychological violence against the superior, in this case a victim of mobbing. This type of violence in the workplace is called “staffing”. The Slovenian translation does not exist for it yet, but it could be described as group mobbing, working or mobbing up. Such cases are rare, but they occur mainly in those cases where employees want to get rid of their boss (Bakovnik, 2006, p. 4).

There are two other forms of mobbing that researchers rarely mention. The first one is the so-called “bullying” (Einarsen – Skogstad, 1996), which characterizes cruel, inhuman superiors’ behavior to subordinates within the organization, with the purpose to humiliate the subordinate and to demonstrate the superiority and domination over the individual or group of individuals. This behavior occurs when the superior feels that his/her subordinates carry out their work better than him/her. So s/he begins to punish the subordinate with constant criticism or confiscation of the responsibility and competence.

S/he often refuses to share any information relevant to business with anyone, because s/he believes that no one is trustworthy. With an elevated tone s/he forces the subordinate employees to meet the claim and insists that his/her methods and tasks of work execution are the best. In some English-speaking countries the terms bullying and mobbing are often equated and used as synonyms (Mlinarić, 2007). Another form is “bossing” (Brinkmann, 1995) which indicates mobbing by the superior, although not as brutal, but this does not mean a less intensive process. When the boss is a mobber, the victim has no chance to escape from this circle which means that he is already ready for “shooting”.

2.3 Reasons for the emergence of mobbing

The causes of mobbing are multifaceted, complex and simultaneous. They do not occur only with the individual, but also in work organization and society. D. Brečko (2007, p. 420) connects mobbing pre-conditions with mismatch in the organization (because of the rigid hierarchy, low levels of decision-making, underestimation of employee skills and vacancies), inadequate management styles (e.g. authoritarian way, risk-tolerant obvious signs of violence), social status of the mobbed (and their cultural and national origin, color, sex); exercises of power, strengthening the cohesion within the group, fear of job loss and dissatisfaction in the workplace. A. Cvetko (2006, p. 33) lists the particular external causes of the mobbing development and points out the market competition, globalization, major organizational changes (privatization, mergers, restructuring, etc.), the economic crisis and others. That certainly raises resulting feelings of employment insecurity and increases expectations of organization’s and employees’ flexibility.

2.4 Mobbing victims and perpetrators (mobbers)

Anyone in employment can be a mobbing victim. A. Kostelić-Martić (2007, p. 28) and D. Brečko (2007, p. 421) noted that the victims of mobbing are mostly “honest” individuals, who have observed and reported irregularities in the work place; young people, starting a professional career or just busy people, as well as those prior to retirement, who have slowed the rhythm of work, with reduced motivation for new forms of vocational training and/or have too high incomes; people who want new working tools (new computers, new software) and more autonomy in work; people who after many years of efficient work required recognition of their status, working conditions and higher wages, individuals identified as surplus labor; highly creative individuals; employees with physical disabilities; employees who are frequently absent from work due to illness or are on sick leave; members of the opposite sex who are in clear minority; individuals and/or who practice a different sexual orientation.

Mobbing researchers (e.g., Brečko, 2006; Leymann, 1993; Zuschlag, 2001; Niedl, 1995; Einarsen – Skogstad, 1996; Zapf, 1999; Namie, 2000; Cvetko, 2006; Davenport et al., 2006) estimated that most mobbers are people with personality disorders, also less capable, but with strong personality without the ability to love, joy and play; without creativity, not capable of giving and sharing. As strong personalities they can easily be joined by other “bad” people, in fear of not becoming victims and

trying to avoid mobbing situation. They identify themselves with a mobber or embark on his side. With creation of mobbing they want to disguise the weakness in another sphere of their lives (mostly private). Thus, they form a group around him in which they prove their strength and importance on the expense of victims.

Mobbing researchers describe different types of mobbers as socially dysfunctional, of inferior potential, egocentric persons, professionally dysfunctional, as guru and sociopaths (Koić, 2006, p. 187-195). But in fact, mobbers very often feel inferior (each overpotention is hiding an impotence). They want to play a more dominant role and push away anyone who stands in the way to their success. This should be done from a personal fear that they will not be appreciated or even that they will become victims of mobbing themselves. Some mobbers function consciously with the intention to harm someone or to compel him to leave the job. This occurs when they feel threatened (e.g. in career), or in a situation, where the working organization perceived problems with surplus labor, which will require reducing the employees. However, mobbing in the initial phase often happens unconsciously. Thus, some people begin to mob the others simply because they do not know how to behave differently within the group.

In many cases, the main mobbers' feature is their egocentrism. They are convinced that they must be given everything what they need by the others who should be grateful to them. Such individuals do not have empathy and cannot understand the others' feelings. They often state that they are the victims and that the others attack them. They behave very amiable to authority, excessively servile to the colleagues, emotionally immature and selectively friendly. Being discovered they claim that they are the victims, but when being asked to admit responsibility, they blame the others and always want to be in the spotlight.

D. Brečko (2007, p. 421) also notes that the attackers are in 44% of cases the staff members, in 37% the superiors, in 10% the superiors and subordinates at the same time and in 9% of cases the subordinates. A. Kostelić-Martić (2005, p. 18) states that the perpetrators torture the victims because of the sense of jealousy, envy, fear, uncertainty and antipathy. The offenders may also be individuals, who feel that their reputation and position in the work organization is at risk.

2.5 Consequences of mobbing

Mobbing is a psychological violence in the workplace and, as such, it is one of the most insidious forms that decomposes economic and social security, dignity, mental and physical existence of an individual and normal functioning of social processes (Kečanović, 2006, p. 23). The consequences of mobbing are, just as the causes, very diverse, complex and unpredictable. Mobbing can cause very negative consequences in complex work organizations and, consequently, in the global society. Marais-Steinman (1998, p. 4) notes that mobbing in the workplace causes immediate and often long-term disruption of interpersonal relations in work organization and work environment in general, which usually results in reduction of service quality and loss of productivity and efficiency. Also, because the victims of mobbing from spend 10% to 52% of their time on planning defense strategy, survival strategies and maneuvering in the organization.

Absenteeism, most often due to the victim's illness, is critical for the employers. Further loss for the victim represents the dismissal of work relationship. At the global level mobbing in companies may eventually result in unemployment and psychological and physical problems that affect the victim's social status. Consequently, the costs are also reflected in the cost of health care and long-term rehabilitation for reintegration of victims, the costs of unemployment and retraining of victims and the costs of disability and disability among the victims whose working capacity is reduced due to the violence. Mobbing also influences the employees who are (silent) witnesses of a hostile attitude. These events are usually only (powerlessly) observed, but there are rarely found those who try to stop the perpetrator. Although the witnesses of violence are not directly related, but feel the effects, namely: guilt, fear of consequences in the event that would help the victim, fear that they may become victims themselves, retreat or avoidance of the offender not to attract his attention, imitation of committed act

in order to avoid the role of potential victims or even to achieve success, joining the offender (e.g., for promotion). Acts of mobbing are mentally so tiring that they leave serious consequences for an individual, work colleagues and the victim's family. The organization itself and the society also feel the consequences of bullying.

Consequences for an individual	Consequences for the staff and co-workers	Consequences for the organization	Consequences for the society
depression, sleep disorders, heart problems, social security threat, loss of self-respect, distorted interactions, suicide	negative impact on working conditions, productivity and results, reduced job satisfaction, increased mistakes, absence of motivation for work	increased absenteeism, lower efficiency and productivity, financial and human losses, loss of reputation	increasing healthcare costs, losses in the pension system, increased unemployment in the country, lower productivity in the entire society

Table 2 *Consequences of mobbing*

We note, however, that the power and higher frequency of mobbing is detected not only in the private sector but also in the public sector, which also includes the educational system. Women are more likely to be found among the victims and men more often among perpetrators. Psychological violence exist at all organizational levels the agents being both superiors and colleagues. We often cope with multiple agents; in this case, violence is even longer.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research objectives

Because mobbing is a repeated, deliberated, offensive and hostile behavior directed to the victim as a target, we were interested in the fact whether such socially undesirable processes take place in the Slovenian school system. According to the research done so far, mobbing is frequent mostly in public institutions (Parent-Thirion, 2007; Škrilec, 2008; Brečko, 2006). We wanted to know what dimensions of psychological violence in the workplace are detected or experienced by the teachers in Slovenian elementary education subsystem.

In the survey among the primary school teachers of different gender and age we wanted to find out:

- Are they familiar with the phenomenon of mobbing?
- Which role did they encounter with in mobbing?
- How were they treated being the victim?
- Who were the mobbers?

3.2 Research method

The survey was based on the descriptive and causal non-experimental method – empirical social science research.

3.3 Research model

We employed a quota-type sample (n-106) reflecting the primary school population in Slovenia. Regional school distribution was also taken into account. The current study included 89 female teachers (84%) and 17 male teachers (16%) as the feminised nature of the school field was entirely expected. The interviewed teachers were divided into three age groups: up to 34 years (24.5%), from 35 to 54 years (67.9%) and over 55 years (7.5%).

3.4 Research hypotheses

The research hypotheses were implicitly expressed in the form of research questions about dependent associations or differences.

3.5 Procedure of data collection and processing

The necessary empirical data were obtained by interviewing the elementary teachers, which was conducted during December 2009-March 2010. The principals of elementary schools were first asked to participate, and after they agreed, we carried out the interviews anonymously and collectively-run with the previous guidance and request for participation. All the questions in the questionnaire were closed-type questions. The obtained empirical data were processed with the statistical software package SPSS. We calculated the absolute (f) and percentage (f %) frequencies, and the resulting tabular data display. For the verification of dependent relationships between the variables, we used the χ^2 -test.

4 Results and interpretation

4.1 Familiarity with the process of mobbing

The obtained empirical data showed that the majority of respondents are familiar with the concept of mobbing. 91 teachers (85.5%) have and only 15 teachers (14.2%) have not heard about mobbing. The result was expected because nowadays the media very often report about violence at work. During the research, the new Penal Code (Official Gazette, No. 29) came into force, in which mobbing was defined as a crime, and the frequency of occurrence of mobbing presentation to the public was very high.

Familiarity with mobbing	Male		Female		Up to 34 years		35-54 years		Over 55 years	
	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%
<i>Yes</i>	16	94.1	75	84.3	25	96.2	62	86.1	4	50.0
<i>No</i>	1	5.9	14	15.7	1	3.8	10	13.9	4	50.0
Total	17	100.0	89	100.0	26	100.0	72	100.0	8	100.0
χ^2-test	$\chi^2 = 1.64, g = 1, p = 0.243$				$\chi^2 = 8.840, g = 2, p = 0.012$					

Table 3 *Number (f) and percentage (f %) of teachers' familiarity with the concept of mobbing by gender and by age*

As the result of the first χ^2 -test shows, the null hypothesis is retained. Statistically significant difference between the sexes upon familiarity with the concept of mobbing does not exist. Most of the men (94.1%) as well as female respondents surveyed (84.3%) are aware of mobbing, as we expected. We expected that gender has no significant effects on familiarity with the concept of mobbing.

We noted a statistically significant difference in the teachers' age so the outcome of χ^2 -test shows that the null hypothesis can be rejected as. Elderly teachers were less familiar with the concept of

mobbing. In the group up to 34 years 96.2% of surveyed teachers knew mobbing, while among those over 55 years of age, only 50%.

This result was not expected, because we assumed that the age of the respondents would not affect the teachers' familiarity with the model of mobbing as a complex and aggressive violence. This result is probably due to different concepts, understanding and perception of workplace violence, as in the Slovenian area there is only one technical term for the concept of this form of violence. As the elderly respondents heard about the term "harassment" and "workplace bullying", they were not really familiar with the term "mobbing" in a recent context and concept.

4.2 The role which the teachers encountered with in the process of mobbing

Role in the process of mobbing	f	f%
<i>Observer</i>	19	17.9
<i>Victim</i>	15	14.2
<i>Offender</i>	3	2.8
<i>None of these</i>	69	65.1
Total	106	100.0

Table 4 Number (f) and percentage (f %) of teachers' role in the process of mobbing

15 surveyed teachers (14.2%) said that they (already) have been or still are a victim of bullying at the workplace. This proportion was surprisingly high, suggesting that at least one of seven respondents has already been exposed to mobbing. If we analyze the percentage of respondents, who have witnessed mobbing, the information is even more alarming. We noticed 19 observers (17.9%) of mobbing development. If we combine these figures, we find out that a third of all surveyed teachers have been subjected to mobbing. Thus it can be concluded that the harassment at workplace is in the school environment present! Three surveyed teachers even admitted that they had implemented mobbing. Only 69 (65.1%) surveyed teachers have not met psychological violence in any of these applications yet. This suggests that mobbing is a serious problem in the subsystem of Slovene primary education and that it should be investigated and eliminated as soon as possible.

The role in the process of mobbing	Male		Female		Up to 34 years		35-54 years		Over 55 years	
	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%
<i>Observer</i>	3	17.6	16	18.0	3	11.5	14	19.4	2	25.0
<i>Victim</i>	2	11.8	13	14.6	2	7.7	10	13.9	3	37.5
<i>Offender</i>	1	5.9	2	2.2	0	0.0	3	4.2	0	0.0
<i>None of these</i>	11	64.7	58	65.2	21	80.8	45	62.5	3	37.5
Total	17	100.0	89	100.0	26	100.0	72	100.0	8	100.0
χ^2-test	$\chi^2 = 0.627, g = 3, p = 0.890$				$\chi^2 = 8.415, g = 6, p = 0.209$					

Table 5 Number (f) and percentage (f %) of teachers' role to in the process of mobbing by gender and by age

Based on χ^2 -test we found out that in both cases, the null hypothesis is retained, which means that regardless of the teachers' gender and age, we cannot talk about the existence of statistically significant differences of the role in the process of mobbing.

We find that the relatively equal shares by gender roles are distributed. Thus, 11.8% of male and 14.6% of female responders have already experienced mobbing. Only 17.6% male and 18.0% female respondents confessed being the observers or witnesses of mobbing acts. Male respondents (5.9%) prevailed among the perpetrators while the proportion of female respondents was slightly lower (2.2%). The result was not expected since other studies in our country and in other countries (e.g., Parent-Thiron et al., 2007, p. 101) have revealed that women are frequently found in the group of victims, which was not confirmed in our study.

The detailed examination of frequencies shows small differences in responses between different aged respondents. We noted that with the age of respondents, the number of the victims and observers of mobbing actions was rising. Thus, we conclude that the surveyed teachers over 55 years were and are the most vulnerable group as 37.5% of them have already found themselves in the role of victim. Among those aged up to 34 years, 7.7% identified themselves as victims. With higher age, the number of those who have already witnessed mobbing rises. In the age up to 34 years 11.5% of the surveyed teachers have witnessed the harassment in the workplace; in the middle age group 19.4%, and among those over 55 years, 25.0%. All three offenders of mobbing captured by our survey were in the group from 35 to 54 years old.

Such an outcome was expected, as older teachers who are about to retire, are, slower is their pace of work, they have less incentive for new forms of vocational training than their younger counterparts and they receive higher wages. All this disturbs younger teachers who are refusing such mode of work behaviour and to whom the older teachers are often “in the way” in implementing new approaches, techniques and teaching methods, as they refuse teamwork and reject younger colleagues’ proposals.

4.4 The mode of treatment in case of mobbing victims

The mode of treatment	f	f%
<i>Sick leave</i>	8	7.5
<i>Service replacement</i>	26	24.5
<i>Taciturnity, secrecy</i>	20	18.9
<i>Discretion, severance</i>	6	5.7
<i>Lamentation</i>	46	43.4
Total	106	100.0

Table 6 Number (f) and in percentage (f %) of teachers’ conduct in case of being a victim

46 of teachers surveyed (43.4%) said that if they had been affected by mobbing, they would have filed a lawsuit against the offender. The results are consistent with the answers about the respondents’ familiarity with the Article in the new Criminal Code (KZ-1, Uradni list RS št. 55), which defines mobbing as a crime, as about 40% of the respondents was familiar with it. Those familiar with the novelty would most likely bring the action. Almost a quarter of teachers (24.5%) would decide to change the workplace; 20 (18.9%) would choose secrecy and would have accustom to the situation by saying “there is not better elsewhere”. We estimate that this is the worst possible solution, so we were, on the one hand, surprised. On the other hand, under the current harsh social conditions most employees are afraid of losing their jobs, so they do not want to be exposed to other problems or even to deep the existing ones. 6 surveyed teachers (5.7%) would wait for the employer to dismiss them from work so they could be given the severance pay, 8 of them (7.5%) would have stayed on a longer sick leave.

The method of handling	Male		Female		Up to 34 years		35-54 years		Over 55 years	
	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%
<i>Sick leave</i>	0	0.0	8	9.0	0	0.0	6	8.3	2	25.0
<i>Service replacement</i>	3	17.6	23	25.8	11	42.4	15	20.8	0	0.0
<i>Taciturnity, secrecy</i>	4	23.5	16	18.0	1	3.8	15	20.8	4	50.0
<i>Discretion, severance</i>	1	5.9	5	5.6	0	0.0	5	6.9	1	12.5
<i>Lamentation</i>	9	52.9	37	41.6	14	53.8	31	43.1	1	12.5
Total	17	100.0	89	100.0	26	100.0	72	100.0	8	100.0
χ^2-test	$\chi^2 = 3.846$, g = 4, p = 0.427				$\chi^2 = 27.356$, g = 8, p = 0.001					

Table 7 Number (f) and percentage (f %) of teachers’ replies on a topic of hypothetical reaction to mobbing (in case of being a victim) by gender and by age

We found out that there are no statistically significant gender differences in the way of victims' conduct in case of mobbing. The null hypothesis, based on the χ^2 -test, is retained. The overview of frequencies showed that 52.9% of male and 41.6% of female respondents would bring an action against the perpetrators. The result is encouraging as people are increasingly aware that they need to fight for their rights and ultimately for their health. Surprisingly, the longer sick leave would not be chosen by any male respondent, but this option would be chosen by 9% of female respondents. 18.0% of female and 23.5% of male respondents would keep silent about the unpleasant and abusive events, 25.8% of female and 17.6% of male respondents would seek another job.

Such an outcome was not expected, since we assumed that the shares in the category of secrecy would not have been so high. If we keep silent about the problem, do not entrust it to the others or do not act, then the existence of a latent threat of the already intolerable situation is a message to the offenders that we approve of their actions or that we are afraid of them. This is definitely good neither for the individual's health nor for the quality of work. The silence often leads to serious health problems, depression, trauma, resulting in disability retirement or the victim simply cannot find a way out of such situations and the possibility of suicide increases.

The null hypothesis about the existence of age differences between the teachers can be discarded according to the χ^2 -test. The variance is explained by a statistically significant difference in the way of conduct between different age groups. The higher the age the higher the number of teachers who would take the sick leave or keep silent. None of the teachers surveyed up to 34 years would go to hospital, while 8.3% of those between 35 and 54 years and 25.0% of those over 55 years would have done so. A half of the oldest respondents would have accepted such situation and no one would consider changing the job. 42.4% of the surveyed teachers younger than 34 years would have sought a new position.

The difference between the answers is both obvious and expected. The teachers shortly before their retirement have only few opportunities of a new employment in another school. Therefore they do not see a solution in the replacement of the service or in any action in the case of harassment in the workplace. Most of them would keep silent or would seek refuge in a sick leave. The older teachers surveyed expressed their intention that they would "for these few years be patient", would do what they would have to do, but without any extra effort in work and in interpersonal relationships.

Although the employment, even in Slovenian elementary schools, is more and more difficult to get, the younger teachers surveyed think differently. In a large extent they would search for a new job (42.4%). Also, because they estimate that they are more easily employable, have many innovative ideas, motivation and enthusiasm which give them an advantage on the labor market. More than a half of them are also convinced that if being victim of mobbing, they would bring an action against the attacker, which is definitely encouraging.

3.4. Teachers and the mobbing offenders

Offender	f	f %
<i>Leadership</i>	13	12,3
<i>Colleagues</i>	3	2,8
<i>Co-workers</i>	7	6,6
<i>Parents</i>	4	3,8
<i>Students</i>	5	4,7
<i>None</i>	74	69,8
Total	106	100,0

Table 8 *Number (f) and percentage (f %) of offender types*

The school environment is free from classical subordination, which is typical for many other institutions with a specific and orderly position hierarchy. The headmaster of a school is superior to teachers and we recognized students and their parents as subordinates to teachers.

Since 14.2% of the respondents were identified as victims of mobbing in our study, significantly more respondents reported about perpetrators, we conclude that the respondents who had only observed mobbing responded to this question. The teachers most often recognized the superiors as the agents of bullying in their workplace. In 12.3% of all cases the headmaster or the school director was detected as a mobbing offender. Each headmaster leading the school wants to see “his” school reaching high, if not enviable, results. Achieving them is possible only if teachers are adequately trained, motivated for teaching as well as for the acquisition of new knowledge and their sustainable development. Only in this way they can be successful in the transfer of knowledge and skills to their students, in developing their potential and talents. As the schools compete for the affection of students and their parents, the schoolmaster often pushes on the teachers requiring and expecting too much of them. The teachers may feel such pressure threatening. If the school climate does not include the team spirit, if the manager cannot properly lead and guide their employees, an authoritarian leadership style could easily turn to mobbing.

The other teachers (6.6%) often mobbed the interviewed teachers. This is a group of collaborators who associated in order to offload a certain person. The fact that mobbing was carried out by 4.7% of the students and by 3.8% of their parents is surprising in our research. This finding points to the pedocentric attitudes and child’s permissive education. Parents have become overprotective in educating their children, and do not trust and do not believe teachers like they did in past. Thus, parents are often willing to do everything to destroy a specific teacher psychically and to banish him/her from school. It would be interesting to learn about parents’ reasons of the behavior to this teacher and which actions they use to mob him/her.

We were surprised by the fact that students stick out as mobbing offenders. Though there is a significant difference between teachers and students in age, the surveyed teachers stated that they are also by their students. We assume the falling students’ respect, appreciation and recognition of teachers. We suppose that students mob teachers continually by rising their anxiety, not listening to them, not following the implementation of the lesson, avoiding to speak, scolding and break them... In short, the question of the teacher’s authority quickly arises. And above all: Are modern teachers really no longer matches with pupils? Are they not able to work in changed circumstances and at the same time not able to build their professional authority and gain the trust of students?

Offender	Male f f %		Female f f %		Up to 34 years f f %		35-54 years f f %		Over 55 years f f %	
<i>Leadership</i>	2	11.8	11	12.4	1	3.8	11	15.3	1	12.5
<i>Colleagues</i>	0	0.0	3	3.4	0	0.0	2	2.8	1	12.5
<i>Co-workers</i>	3	17.6	4	4.5	2	7.7	4	5.6	1	12.5
<i>Parents</i>	0	0.0	4	4.5	1	3.8	3	4.2	0	0.0
<i>Students</i>	1	5.9	4	4.5	2	7.7	3	4.2	0	0.0
<i>None</i>	11	64.7	63	70.8	20	76.9	49	68.1	5	62.5
Total	17	100.0	89	100.0	26	100.0	72	100.0	8	100.0
χ^2-test	$\chi^2 = 5.402, g = 5, p = 0.369$				$\chi^2 = 8.075, g = 10, p = 0.622$					

Table 9 Number (f) and percentage (f %) of offenders by gender and age

Based on the χ^2 -test, we found out that in both cases the null hypothesis is retained, which means that regardless of gender and age of the surveyed teachers we cannot speak of statistically significant differences of the mobbing perpetrator.

The frequency distribution showed us that 11.8% of male and 12.4% of female respondents said that the mobbing offender most often was the superior. A colleague attacked 3.4% of female teachers and no male teacher. A group of employees attacked 17.6% of male and 4.5% of female colleagues. We detected that the female teachers are more often attacked by a single person, probably because women are known as “less strong” and resist the attacker less than men. The teachers are often harassed by a group of employees, since men are identified as more virtuous and harder to be confused. Males are probably afraid to mob a single individual, as the offender fears a retaliatory attack. The group against an individual is of course an easier and more subtle form of bullying in the workplace. Parents, who frequently participate in the mobbing process together with their children, had harassed 4.5% of teachers. Students in about equal measure harassed both interviewed male (5.9%) and female (4.5%) teachers.

The interviewed teachers up to 34 years were in most cases mobbed by their colleagues (7.7%) and students (7.7%). The teachers between 35 and 54 years said that they most often had been abused by a parent (15.3%). The surveyed teachers over 55 years have been mobbed by the supervisor and their colleagues by the same extent. It is noticeable that older teachers were still more respected as both students and students’ parents did not mob them. Pupils frequently engaged the youngest teachers, knowing that they have less work experience with restless and distracting students that they learn about their work and are not familiar with the all methods to calm down the class yet.

5 Conclusion

The results of our study show that at least one of seven elementary school teachers has been already exposed to mobbing. The figure is alarming, because we have already indicated how serious the consequences of mobbing are on individuals and on the organization. A precise description and analysis of them are important for mobbing prevention. There are several different measures how to prevent mobbing effectively: improvement of the management style, delivering clear information, open communication, organization culture which commands the teamwork. Organization arrangement or psychological contract, as a special agreement between employers and employees, setting out the duties and responsibilities of the superiors in the detection of mobbing as well as sanctioning the offenders are particularly interesting forms of prevention. One solution to help victims is also the so called “open phone” (a 24-hour help line free of charge). Permanent, quality and content-relevant information and awareness of mobbing phenomenon, various public or organizational campaigns against mobbing and highlighting the current legislation are among the most effective means of prevention. A new Penal Code (PC-1) was adopted in Slovenia in 2008, which in the 197th Article accuses perpetrators of mobbing and sends them to prison for up to 2 years

Of course, more can be done by changing our minds and value system. Good interpersonal relations and cooperation with one another must become the highest value, not crowded out by the desire for higher wages and competition which are very much specific in consumer-oriented Slovenian post-modern society. Also, because it is right to “prevent mobbing in order to remain ‘human’, that we preserve human dignity at work and our personal integrity and thus remain a ‘healthy society’... It is time to move to a better quality management with people at work. This does not mean that services will become more secure than ever, they can become a place of personal and professional development of individuals, which is their fundamental purpose” Brečko (2007, p. 427).

However, the phenomenon of mobbing most often occurs in the environments characterized by:

- a highly competitive working environment with the “career” and with strong hierarchical structure;
- feeling of redundancy;
- dominated authoritarian style of leadership and management;
- weak and uncertain planning of organization changes;
- weak and insufficient integration and participation of employees in decision-making;
- low potential for professional training or retraining;
- the lack of mutual respect, especially respect for cultural differences;
- the lack of clear rules at work and rules of behavior;
- an excessive workload and meaningless tasks, which are defined insufficiently and ambiguously;
- the detectable absence of employees’ professionalism (Kostelić-Martić, 2005, p. 24).

We can conclude that the main finding of our research is the recognition and also a proof that the man is making himself a disservice if he is a helpless prisoner of the mobbing situation and that it is still significantly a higher risk if anyone in the workplace intentionally or unintentionally ignores it. In both cases the deviation is unacceptable; as the first means that the man does not take responsibility for what he does and what is happening to him, the other is owned by those who blindly trust in their own strength and self-sufficiency. As victims are usually responsible individuals with a sense of social justice and motivated people with a healthy personality tradition which was confirmed by the empirical data obtained. This fact needs a serious attention of both the so employees (teachers) and employers (the state), because only satisfied employees are successful workers, not only for themselves but for the society as a whole.

Therefore all the parties, without prejudice to the role of malicious, feel a real need for reconceptualization, and nobody and nothing can avoid it in the contemporary post-modern times. It is becoming increasingly clear that even simple decisions in primary schools which do not care only for students’ education, but also for the health of the employees, must pass a test of legitimacy. If they do not comply with it, they can be replaced by others, which are freer and fairer and, above all, more human and man-oriented.

It is important that interpersonal space (especially in the modern globalized world) is essentially a plural space, a world of differences. Changed understanding, questions about the dimensions of humanity, the presence of many socially undesirable phenomena at the workplace and, consequently, the absence of health and reduced opportunities for a decent life and establishment of ethical space. The meeting place of teachers, students and parents is including the idea of changing world gaining new dimensions.

The resulting changes require reconsideration of acquisition and transmission of knowledge, methods of its evaluation and especially the social status of teachers. Certainly the new concepts of acquisition and transmission of knowledge require changes in organization of the subsystem itself, changes in attitudes, a new authority, power, autonomy and accountability. Work, organizational and professional autonomous processes simply should not be controlled by subjugation beliefs any longer. It seems that the reflection of new concepts of knowledge acquisition and dissemination should also include the utopian dimension, as the world without vision, without any instrumental utopia, is only realism and standstill. Therefore it is essential to provide enough space and scope for imagination. Where to find the reflection of impulses about “different” organization of work in primary education?

Because of the extreme dynamics of social changes which require reconceptualization of basic categories, it seems that the sphere of teachers’ work, leadership management and a state with all its institutions, in particular, will undergo the reorganization of their work principles, as they will not be able to operate in old concepts any longer. Although, despite the constant changes in school system,

the frames remain unchanged. But there is no longer space and time only for minor changes. The accumulated contradictions show that a solution is not possible only in (re)searching inside the old concepts. Apparently, with all the tendencies to provide as much as possible of the accumulated knowledge to the individual, many new and effective teaching strategies, techniques and methods of teaching and learning have been created. Unfortunately, we also have to note that the process of losing the fundamental mission of educational work and understanding of what is inherent to this work – learning and training – has begun.

In sharp economic and working situation, we perceive the growing commitment to the development of the ethics of participation, based on a professional conversation, which emphasizes the power of the participants in the process. An important element of such empowerment is the awareness that there exists a solution. In any case, the individual may exercise as a unique creature only if he/she is independent and free in his/her creativity and immanence. The independence is associated with the need to know how to take care of oneself and how to maintain control over our actions, how to control events around us and how to be aware of ourselves. And what is particularly interesting: that an individual is allowed to care for others. Especially the last idea shows sociality, an individual's need to be embedded in social networks, to be independent, but not to be attacked by an aggressor. Therefore it is not unusual that the protective factors which provide a teacher to be successful are those, which allow him/her to exercise being an operator and work autonomously. This includes acceptance, respect, compassion, interest and trust, and in particular understanding of the objectives and purpose of functioning and learning in the new perspectives.

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Barometer of Inclusive Education – Concept, Methodology and Preliminary Results in Selected European Countries

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Abstract: This paper presents concept, methodology and preliminary results of a European research project on inclusive education of persons with disabilities. The project *pathways to inclusion* (p2i) is funded by the EU Commission and coordinated by the European umbrella organization *European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities* (EASPD). To get an overview on legal situations, practice and progression related to inclusive education a ‘barometer assessment’ instrument was developed and applied in 10 EU countries. The barometer criteria are deducted from Art. 24 of UN CRPD, the methodology follow the idea of the Open Method of Coordination and is explained as an information based rating. Selected results of the assessment are presented. The barometer instrument has proven as an effective tool for data analysis and assessment.

Key words: inclusive education, inclusion, separation, education system, European countries, pathway to inclusion (P2i), European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD)

Introduction

The Statement of Salamanca (1994) was the start for intensive international efforts to develop inclusive educational systems wherever possible. The Statement said clearly that regular schools “*are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes ... building an **inclusive** and achieving education for all* (Art. 2, *Statement of Salamanca*) and says schools should “***include** all children regardless of individual differences or difficulties, (and) adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of **inclusive education***” (Art. 3, *Statement of Salamanca*). For this and the following argumentation see also: Schädler, J.: Begriffliche Grundlagen der Forshungsmethodik (English version) http://www.uni-siegen.de/zpe/projekte/P2i/begriffliche_grundlagen.html?lang=de.

With this highly respected international document inclusive education had become an official but non binding programmatic objective of the international community framed in a human rights perspective. When the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) was finally accepted in New York on the 13th December 2006, it stated the right for inclusive education as one of the central dimensions of human rights of persons with disabilities. The UN Convention says in Art. 24: “*States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an **inclusive education** system at all levels and lifelong learning...*”

Even though Art. 24 UN CRPD focuses in some parts on primary and secondary schools, it also states that all levels of education must be included and policies must also refer to pre-school, tertiary and other lifelong education forms. Meanwhile the European Union and 17 of its member states have formally ratified the document. In doing so, they have integrated its prescription in their national legal framework and thus committed themselves to implement inclusive education at all levels.

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It is important to note that education in international law is seen as a part of overall economic, social and cultural rights. As long as institutional practices are not directly discriminative the UN CRPD does not demand an immediate, but a progressive overcoming of segregating systems that are rooted in educational traditions of a certain state (Poscher et al., 2008). Nevertheless, Article 4 of the UN CRPD says that states have “to take appropriate measures” and “with a maximum of all available resources” have to fulfill the inclusive demands of the Convention. To monitor the progress a monitoring system was agreed upon that is able to identify the steps taken by each state. States that have ratified the Optional Protocol of the Convention have to report to the UN every two years on the present position and on progress towards full implementation.

In the following, this paper presents the concept of a *European Barometer on Inclusive Education* that has been developed in the European project *Pathways to Inclusion* (P2i)*. The project (2009-2012) is funded by the *Lifelong Learning Programme (Comenius)* of *Directorate General (DG) Education & Culture of the European Commission* and is coordinated by the *European Association of Service Providers (EASPD)*. One of the objectives of the project is to provide an overview on the progress of implementation of Art. 24 (Inclusive Education) of the UN CRPD and thus to support the implementation process.

1 Conceptual basis, methodology and structure of the ‘barometer assessment’ on inclusive education

Whether or to what extend inclusive education of children with disabilities is implemented depends on the political will and the educational policies of governments and other political actors. Laws, structures and procedures have to be changed, resources have to be provided or shifted, conflicts have to be solved etc. (Pathway to Inclusion (P2i): Progress Report, 2009). In European politics, it has become apparent that systematic comparison and reporting between member states according to agreed criteria can produce public and political attention. The ‘open method of coordination’ (OMC) has been developed to create political dynamics and to develop a mutual learning process involving the scrutiny of specific policies, programs or institutional arrangements presented as good practices in the national strategic reports. For this and the following argumentation see also: EASPD / Schädler / Dorrance (Eds.) (2012): EASPD – Barometer Of Inclusive Education In Selected European Countries. Brussels / Siegen, ZPE-Schriftenreihe: p. 4.

It is a political framework “for national strategy development, as well as for coordinating policies between EU countries on issues relating to poverty and social exclusion, health care and long-term care as well as pensions. The open method of coordination is a voluntary process for political cooperation based on agreeing common objectives and common indicators, which shows how progress towards these goals can be measured” (European Commission, *Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. Policy Framework 2011*).

Using the OMC-approach the ‘barometer’ was conceptualized as a tool that refers to the prescriptions of Art. 24 UN CRPD. Moreover, it was taken as the normative basis and as the basis for developing criteria for the assessment of the existing situation regarding legislation, given practice and transformation developments. A set of questionnaires was developed that address the national level in each country. The complete versions of national questionnaires and a full version of the barometer results with all references can be found on the project website (www.pathwaystoinclusion.eu). The

* The P2i-consortium consists of: European Association of Service Providers for persons with Disabilities (EASPD, BE), Fonty Opleidingscentrum Speciale Onderwijszorg (Fontys OSO, NL), Association for Lifelong Learning (ALLL, HU), Vlaams Verbond van het Katholiek Buitengewoon Onderwijs (VVKBuO, BE), National Federation of Voluntary Bodies (NFVB, IE) Die Steirische Behindertenhilfe (AT), Finnish Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (FAIDD, FI), CUDV Draga Training, Occupation and Care Center (SI), Zentrum für Planung und Evaluation Sozialer Dienste, University of Siegen (ZPE, DE), Institut d’Education Motrice Charlemagne – Mutualité Française Indre et Loire (IEM Charlemagne, FR), Centro de Educação para o Cidadão Deficiente (CECD, PT).

assessment is structured in three parts: 'Statutory Legislation and Prescriptions' (A), 'Situation in Practice' (B) and 'Progression of Implementation' (C). The national partner experts of the P2i consortium were to complete their questionnaire and were asked to involve other national experts in their research process and to identify main references and comments. Data sources were official government reports, official statistics, scientific studies or other sources such as the *Special Needs Report* of the *European Agency for Special Educational Needs* (<http://www.european-agency.org>).

It was recognized in the development of the barometer methodology that a European overview based on national level data can provide only limited insights into the real development as the situation varies not only from country to country but also from region to region and from one local district to another. Therefore, all partners were to select a local region that could be regarded as rather typical for their country. Following the same methodology, the local research was conducted by all participating countries with a written questionnaire and with semi-structured expert interviews.

Finally the national partner experts of the P2i consortium were asked to do a rating on the situation of the legal basis, practice and progress of inclusive education in their countries. The barometer instrument conceptually follows the idea of an "informed rating" on inclusive education of people with disabilities and/or special educational needs (SEN) in participating European countries. The objective is to use the available data to identify the tendencies and to produce the information relevant for policy makers and other stakeholders to promote the implementation process of inclusive education. The P2i-project was inspired by the Germany Inklusionsbarometer presented by SOVD in 2010 (http://www.sovd.de/fileadmin/downloads/pdf/sonstiges/neu_-_Landkarte_Inklusion.pdf).

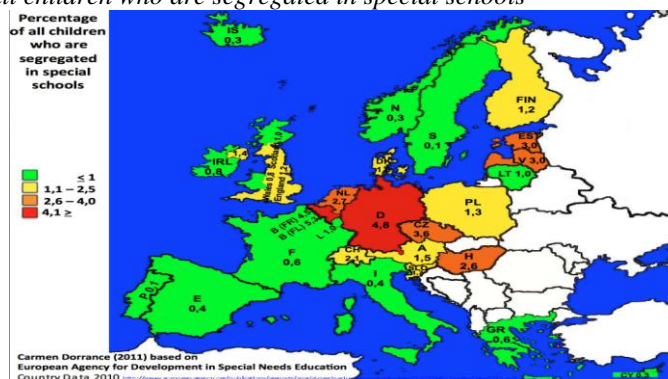
The barometer assessment instrument was used in an 18-month research process and proved to be an effective tool acceptable according to scientific standards. Its results are to create or endorse debates within the participating countries.

2 Selected results of the barometer assessment

2.1 Inclusiveness of school systems in the EU countries

The map below shows the differences regarding the inclusive education of people with special educational needs across Europe. The data have been taken from the recent report of the *European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education* 2010 (European Agency, 2011). The percentage of children and young people with SEN that are not included into regular schools vary from 1% to 6%. As outlined above, the reasons and explanations for these discrepancies are multifactorial, and must partly be seen in the light of different statistical reporting systems and different definitions for pupils with special educational needs. But of course the percentage of people excluded from inclusive education also reflects educational traditions and policies on how to address special educational needs in the educational system of a country. Particularly in the light of the obligations of member states having signed and ratified the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, it is important to analyse more precisely how statutory legislative prescription on inclusive education can be assessed, and how practice and implementation progress is developing.

Figure 1 Percentage of all children who are segregated in special schools



2.2 Assessment of the Statutory Legislation and Prescriptions

In all European countries education is a highly regulated sector of society. Statutory legislation and prescriptions structure of the educational system provide the framework for the practice and development of inclusive education. This framework governs the allocation of resources, the environment under which schools and other educational facilities work; their conceptual orientation, teacher training and many other institutional preconditions that can be favourable or hindering for inclusive education.

In Part A of the barometer questionnaires the P2i national partners were asked 18 questions to assess the legal basis for inclusive education in their countries (for national reports and the full barometer report see www.pathwaystoinclude.eu). The results show that in spite of legal changes in all countries which have supported inclusive education, many pupils with SEN can enroll in a regular school only under certain organizational and financial caveats. In nearly all participating countries pupils with disabilities do not have effective access to primary and secondary inclusive education with the same ease as the others in their community.

In most partner countries legislation is neither consistent nor sufficient. In countries with a strong tradition of special education, legislation has to bridge the “old system” of special schools with new approaches to inclusive education. In other countries inclusion oriented legislation has not been accompanied with the allocation of the necessary resources to provide inclusive arrangements for all people with SEN in regular schools or other educational facilities. Efforts to make new resources available or shift resources from the special system to the mainstreaming one have been of limited success so far. Thus, both by inconsistent legislation and practice, people with disabilities in many cases have no access to inclusive education in mainstream services in their community on an equal basis with others. This is not to say there has been no progress. In some countries positive changes in educational laws have been introduced which have produced real changes to practice.

The following table shows how national partners assessed the statutory legislation and prescriptions in their countries. All questions were yes/no-questions. In this table the green bar above the line indicates the percentage of questions with a positive answer. The red bar under the line indicates the percentage of questions with a negative answer. Positive means positive implementation of the UN CRPD.

Figure 2 Results of Barometer assessment Part A: Statutory Legislation and Prescriptions; Percentage of the positive and negative answers of the 18 questions in Part A (representing the assessments of the partner experts)



2.3 Assessment of the inclusive education practice

In Part B of the barometer questionnaire (with 19 questions) P2i national partners were asked to assess the practice of inclusive education in their countries. The results show that even though there seem to be positive changes towards a less segregating school system in all participating countries, nevertheless inclusive education is not yet a high priority (for national reports and the full barometer report see www.pathwaystoinclusion.eu). The percentage of all pupils with disabilities or other special educational needs excluded from regular education is still very high measured against the expectations of the UN CRPD. However, the percentage of segregation varies considerably between participating countries and differs also from the age level of the education systems in all countries.

Importantly also, although there has been a general slow increase in inclusive education, this has not been accompanied by a general decrease of persons with SEN in special schools or other segregating facilities. On the contrary, especially in countries with a traditional special education system, the number of children and youngsters in special schools has in fact also been increasing. In particular this is true for those with more severe disabilities or educational needs. So a pattern of reform can be identified rather as a “progress by addition” than a progress by (structural) change.

The following table shows how P2i-experts assessed the current practice of inclusive education in their countries. All questions were yes/no-questions; green means percentage of yes-answers; red means percentage of no-answers. Positive means positive implementation of the UN CRPD.

Figure 3 *Results of Barometer assessment Part B: Practice of Inclusive Education Percentage of the positive and negative answers of the 19 questions in Part B (representing the assessments of the partner experts)*

positive
negative

2.4 Assessment of inclusive education progression

In Part C of the questionnaire (with 22 questions) P2i national partners were asked to assess the development and progression of inclusive education in their countries. There are important indicators on different levels that give reason to assume that the education system in participating countries will become less segregating and more inclusive by 2015 (for national reports and the full barometer report see www.pathwaystoinclusion.eu).

Firstly, there is a growing sensitivity to human rights issues in societies that results from effective campaigning for non-discrimination and equal rights of people with disabilities. Secondly, there is also a public questioning of the special school system as a result of the surprisingly intensive reception of

the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities in many European countries. Thirdly, professional opinion has become stronger in putting forward the argument that inclusive education brings better results for pupils with SEN than segregating approaches. Fourthly, demographic developments will probably contribute to more inclusiveness of the education systems because the absolute decrease in the overall numbers of children will provide better school and classroom conditions.

There are also some very concrete policies recently started in some participating countries to close or reshape the special school system and concrete initiatives of authorities for special schools to give attractive financial incentives to regular schools ready for inclusion. Also local governments are increasingly willing to change their education system for children with SEN. But it is still realistic to assume that the development towards more inclusive education will be an on-going but mostly rather slow process.

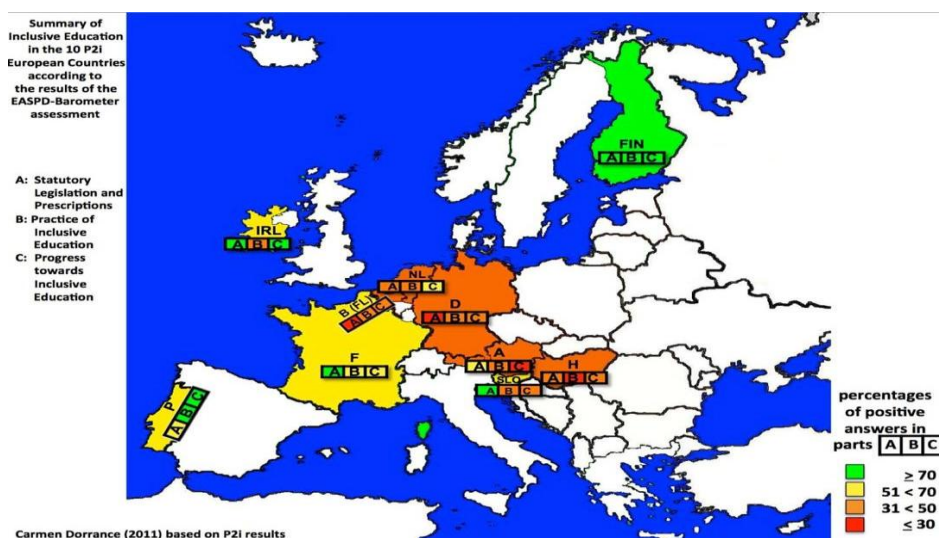
The following table shows how national partners assessed the progression of inclusive education in their countries. All questions were yes/no-questions; green means percentage of yes-answers; red means percentage of no-answers. Positive means positive implementation of the UN CRPD.

Figure 4 *Results of Barometer assessment Part C: Progress towards Inclusive Education Percentage of the positive and negative answers of the 22 questions in Part C (representing the assessments of the partner experts)*

positive
negative

The map (Figure 5) gives an overview on the assessment results of all participating countries. For a more detailed picture it is necessary to discuss the comprehensive and more differentiated results that can be found in the national barometer reports and in the full version of the barometer report (all information see: www.pathwaystoinclude.eu).

Figure 5 Map: Summary of Inclusive Education in the 10 P2i European Countries according to the results of the EASPD-Barometer assessment



Conclusions

The P2i-assessment on the situation and perspectives of inclusive education for persons with special educational needs (SEN) conducted in 10 European countries can be summarized as follows:

Increasing awareness

There are clear indicators that there has been an increase of awareness both of the educational potential and the citizen's rights dimension of inclusive education for children with SEN in all participating countries. This is reflected in positive statements towards inclusive education formulated by governments, parents' organisations, teacher unions and other relevant public actors. It is also reflected in legal developments for support of inclusive education concerning education and school laws.

Rights for inclusive education without rights for the needed resources

The assessment results show that in the past years in all participating countries there have been changes in educational, youth welfare and social laws to support the possibilities of children with SEN to be educated in inclusive settings. In two out of ten participating countries (Finland, France) legislation was rated "fully supportive" for inclusive education. In all other countries legislation has not been accompanied with the allocation of necessary resources to provide inclusive arrangements for all persons with SEN in regular schools or other educational facilities. Efforts to make new resources available or to shift resources from the special system to mainstreaming have been of limited success so far. Thus, both by legislation inconsistent with UN CRPD values and also sometimes by practice, persons with disabilities in many cases do not have access to inclusive education in mainstream services in their community on an equal basis with others.

Significance of categorization and diagnostic procedures

In all participating countries, there are institutionalized procedures by which children with developmental problems that affect their learning performance are processed into the status of a "disabled child" or into the status of a child with other special educational needs. For the person with learning problems this is important, because this status gives access to support measures other children do not get. For the school system the categorization process is important because traditionally it directs the placement of a child. In countries with a strong tradition of special education, the "diagnosis" and categorization are still the mechanisms for placing children into different types of special schools, which are profiled around the so-called "primary defects" of children (e.g., hearing impaired, blind,

physically disabled, intellectually disabled, emotionally disabled, language disabled, etc.). In other countries the categorization is more used for placing children in “special units” of ordinary schools or for allocating additional hours of support in normal classrooms.

One view is that categorization of students must be eliminated because of its inherent stigmatization and replaced by general school budgets and perhaps additional budgets for providing measures to prevent the necessity for categorization. An alternative view is that the assessment and categorization processes in welfare state arrangements are unavoidable gate-keepers of resources. Thus progress to inclusive education must meet the challenge to find intelligent ways of categorization that allow access to additional support in mainstream educational settings without producing segregating and stigmatizing effects. Therefore it is all the more important to look for examples of good practice related to non-discriminative forms of categorization.

Path-dependending developments

The assessment results show that the development in inclusive education is path-dependending, i.e. restricted in their options and speed by the traditions of the general educational system and the special education system of each country. These traditions have led to certain institutional structures in educational systems, power and interest structures, “taken-for granted-assumptions” and routines that are now being questioned, but nevertheless hold a high degree of resistance to change. The educational and political challenges of implementing inclusive education have to be coped with from different structural backgrounds and starting points. One very important aspect of this is how national school systems deal with children with SEN who have behavioral problems or are “slow learners”. By tradition, in Germany, Belgium and Hungary this has led to an extensive structure of specific special schools that does not exist in most other European countries.

The longer and the more established the tradition of special education in a country is, the more difficult and conflicting is the reform process towards inclusive education. The more universalistic and comprehensive the tradition of a school system is, the easier are developments towards inclusive education. Both decentralized regulation and privatization of school systems are not per se supportive for inclusive education. They need a strong legal framework which individuals with SEN and local actors can refer to in particular situations to realize their rights.

Increasing inclusiveness and increasing segregation (“progress by addition”)

The data in all participating countries show an increase in the number of persons with SEN in inclusive educational settings on all age levels. Inclusive education is realized mostly in pre-school facilities where more children with SEN are educated in inclusive than in special institutions. At the primary school level the percentage of pupils with SEN in regular schools is growing remarkably quickly in all participating countries, but with big differences (approximately 10-50%) according to starting points and traditions. At the secondary school level, the development of inclusive education is slower.

The general increase of inclusive education has not caused a general decrease of persons with SEN in special schools or other segregating facilities. On the contrary, especially in countries with a traditional special education system the number of children and youngsters in special schools has also been increasing. So a pattern of reform that rather follows the principle of “progress by addition” than progress by (structural) change can be identified. More people are involved in the SEN-systems and as a consequence, people with more severe educational needs still are mostly excluded from inclusive education.

Resource barriers against inclusive education

Assessment results show that in all countries there are still very elementary barriers against inclusive education to be yet overcome. In some countries the majority of mainstream school buildings do not comply with accessibility standards. In addition, assistive transport is often provided only to special schools. There are also frequent problems in adaption of equipment. Deficits are also identified

concerning the availability of functional assistance and care provision, even though in some participating countries many positive developments have also been reported.

Assessment procedures in development

In all partner countries the process for more inclusive education also led to a critique of and conceptual changes of assessment procedures in most countries. Whereas the traditional assessment procedures functioned to place persons with SEN in special institutions, the new concepts of assessment are oriented to a man and his or her social-ecological context and they strive to create educational arrangements in inclusive settings, identifying needs, supporting measures and conditions for an individual plan.

Parents' involvement in decision making

Decision-making processes for providing special needs education have been opened up for parents' involvement. Parents have been given more rights to be involved in decision making about the school career of their child. But the resources are often not guaranteed when parents opt for inclusive education.

Conceptual aspects and teaching models

The assessment results show that in all countries there have been intensive developments of teaching models for inclusive education. These have included involving special school staff to support inclusive education in mainstream schools or to prevent segregation in cases of children at risk of segregation. The decisions of school authorities to reduce classroom sizes in inclusive settings have been handled very restrictively in most participating countries. Due to demographic changes in some countries, especially with falling populations in rural areas, classrooms in preschool facilities and primary schools have become smaller, thus creating more favourable conditions for inclusive education.

Availability of adaptive and communicative technology in inclusive education

The assessment results of the questionnaire show that the adaptive technology is not completely restricted to special schools and is also available in inclusive settings in all countries. This is also reported for alternative and augmentative communication technology. Nevertheless, even though new models of mutual support between special competence centres and mainstream schools have been developed, very often knowledge, competence and creativity to apply, adapt and use the technological means is still difficult to find in inclusive education.

Teacher training without (sufficient) inclusive orientation

There are differences in teacher training orientation between the partner countries. In the countries with a strong tradition of special education most academic teacher training curricula still completely separate the mainstream and the special school sectors. The education of teachers for children with SEN is still dominated by the special school's perspective. In these countries inclusive education has not become a mandatory topic for the mainstream teacher training yet. In other countries there are concerns about the relevance and quality of inclusive education teaching, especially in the initial phases of teacher training.

Monitoring of progress in inclusive education

Whereas in some partner countries, there are several statutory or official institutions that systematically monitor the progress of inclusive education and regularly publish the data, in other countries there is no systematic monitoring of the number of pupils with special education needs in mainstream schools or other educational settings. The paucity and variability of data collection seriously impairs effective monitoring as required under Art. 24 of the UN CRPD.

Initially, during the project all partners felt the trend towards greater inclusion would continue and perhaps accelerate. However, as the project has continued there has been an increasing concern as to whether this positive development can be maintained under the pressures of the economic crisis.

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Mobbing and its Occurrence in the Slovak Republic

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Abstract: The paper discusses the analysis of respondents' opinions on the issue of mobbing. The authors were interested in the respondents' personal attitudes and experience thereof. Readers can find enclosed the results of the survey conducted on the discussed issue.

Key words: bullying, abuse, aggressor, causes and consequences of bullying.

Psychological terror in the workplace is a phenomenon as old as the work itself. It made its way into the public only as late as the 90s of the 20th century being viewed as the core cause of significant productivity reduction and escalation of tension and absenteeism caused by mental disorders that have been inevitably brought with it. Anglo-Saxon and Nordic countries examined and scrutinized this negative phenomenon and have labelled it as mobbing (Hirigoyenová, 2001). Mobbing includes systematic, intended and especially repeated attacks of an individual or a group at a particular person (Svobodová, 2008).

Mobbing can be discussed only if its symptoms are regularly repeated and last for a certain period of time; only then it is evident that the conflicts and misunderstandings are not of temporal nature. It is a systematic intriguing, hostile and unethical communication, often wrong behaviour and acting towards others, i.e. psychological terror in the workplace, which is initiated and managed by colleagues or superiors or subordinates and it is intended to harm, humiliate, belittle or exclude somebody from the team and by doing so to compel the person to leave the workplace (Provazník, 2002).

The conflict always works as a trigger stimulus of mobbing. Mobbing develops on the basis of a personal or work conflict which was never solved. Naturally, not every conflict evolves into mobbing. However, whether colleagues can find a reasonable solution or even more dissensions occur, that is not a matter of a pure chance. The crucial motto is the working atmosphere. Whether a person feels good at a workplace or not, primarily depends on the atmosphere in the company. Most workers feel the poor working climate as the no. 1 stress factor and they suffer from it more than they do from the pressure of time or performance (Huberová, 1995).

Another motive of mobbing can be a certain otherness of its victim; such as their hairdo, figure, clothes or different religion, but also exceptional working performances and results. In a company in which the policy of pushiness takes over and the ruthlessness is the means of climbing up the career ladder, the presence of mobbing is more presumable than in a company with open and fear-free atmosphere. Where there is no team work and the concept of team is only an empty term, workers are often fighting and plotting against each other.

Unsuitable working conditions, increased workload or ignorance of workers' needs by the management often provide fertile ground for mobbing. The triggers of mobbing are usually unbalanced persons that are driven by the fear of their own failure. Moreover, these people suffer from lowered self-esteem and mobbing is the way of improving their self-esteem condition (Gossányi, 2007). Prevention is better than cure. And just prevention is the best chance to dampen the psychological terror in a company and to stop the mobbers. There are many appropriate suggestions and proposals. To test and implement these anti-mobbing strategies is not in the competence of the affected. That is the task for unions, work councils and personal boards but particularly for the management (Huberová, 1995).

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Although there are no specific data available, mobbing is economically very unprofitable. With the successful mobbing prevention, absenteeism can be largely degraded. The basic preventive step is to start speaking publicly about mobbing (Provazník, 2002).

The psychological terror often finds victims totally unprepared. The basic recommendation in reaction to mobbing is always to develop the response activity in the shortest possible time. In the majority of cases, the response is possible only with the help of the others. Reactions of the affected usually differ according to their gender. Women evidently seek the assistance of others more often than men; they are far more aware of the causes and context of psychosomatic illnesses and they express themselves more openly. Men tend to downplay the psychological terror because they perceive it as a personal defeat.

There are basic rules to be kept when tackling the mobbing. The affected person must firstly answer the question whether there is a chance to reach an agreement peacefully (Provazník, 2002). If, despite all the efforts, there is no progress, it is, for the sake of personal mental health, necessary to think about handing in the notice. In such situation, it is important for the victim to keep the initiative and optimism and engage oneself in finding a job and concentrate on the future (Huberová, 1995).

If the issue of mobbing is overlooked or terminated by leaving of the victim and the mobber stays at the workplace, the whole situation may be repeated. Therefore it is important and necessary to monitor, whether new employees are hired for the same positions. It should be the role of personnel department to reveal the true state of the affairs (Svobodová, 2008).

Conflicts in work life are nothing exceptional and we are constantly surrounded by them. It takes just a problem in our private life; we meet a nervous colleague or boss and a conflict appears out of thin air. He, who wants to survive at work, must master the conflict management. Five types of conflicts are distinguished:

- Diverting conflicts: there is a classic situation – two sides and a single problem.
- Target conflicts: two sides have different objectives.
- Role conflicts: a person is not either satisfied with or recognised in their role or the same role is claimed by several persons.
- Compliance conflicts: persons have different perspectives, cultural models, educational methods and they advocate their individual beliefs to be the only proper ones.
- Relation conflicts: persons literally cannot stand each other (Merg – Knödel, 2007).

Each long-term conflict was a quite small one once. But as it was neglected or was not taken seriously, it has grown into enormous dimensions providing strong emotions on both sides. To ignore a problem is not a solution. If we want to solve the problem quickly and reliably, we should keep several basic rules of managing the conflicts in a positive way:

- Talk about the conflict in privacy with the person directly involved. Then more people act more rationally and responsibly as in front of bystanders.
- Do not reproach but describe. When we reproach the opponent for something, we make him to defend himself. It is much safer to describe the situation from our perspective.
- Do not seek the roots, focus on solutions. Looking for the roots leads to embarrassment, reasoning and search for the culprit. Only solutions eliminate conflicts.
- Keep self-esteem and do not give way to emotions.
- Empathize to the situation of your opponent and do not try to change him.
- Agreement, not satisfaction. At the end of a discussion, it is always necessary to sum up on what we have agreed; to change the agreement into a goal and let the opponent acknowledge that he sees it so.
- Prevent future conflicts (Merg – Knödel, 2007).

Each conflict should be handled immediately at its beginning; however, in some cases, any ways of mitigating the conflicts are pointless. Objectivity and self-control are the best companions and counsellors in ways how to handle the situation. Sometimes, the conflict lasts for too long; personal enmity is deep and if we really hate someone, it is impossible to find a peaceful and acceptable solution in a discussion. Then it is good to take a few days off in order to calm down and relax. Moreover, people facing this situation should seek professional help because mobbing is an enormous psychological stress. Sometimes, however, there is the only solution: to change the job (Benešová, 2009).

Each of us faced crisis and stressful situation at work, which we tried to solve, either successfully or unsuccessfully. Stress at workplace can be caused by various factors. Among the major stress factors are fear of losing the job, increased job demands, disturbed interpersonal relationships, and conflicts with supervisor. Long-term exposure of a worker to one or more stressors can be the cause of several health problems.

It is not possible to prevent stress in the workplace, but there are ways how to manage it:

- *invest into interpersonal relationship* – attentiveness to others, respect, willingness to listen to them, understanding them, praising them and remembering, for instance, their birthday but also paying the attention to their criticism or learning to establish a compromise helps to eliminate stress and prevents other stress factors (Praško, 2007);
- *follow the principles of efficient communication* – efficiency of a correct communication depends on the ability to understand verbal and non-verbal messages around you; it is necessary to pay attention to gestures, voice tone and role of your colleagues;
- *choose the right job* – at the job interview, ask questions in order to achieve a real picture of the company and department, work culture, interpersonal relationships and potential or hidden problems;
- *control potential anger* – if you feel your nervousness rise, leave the environment as fast as possible and try to breathe deeply; identify the real source of your anger and make a communication plan in order to communicate with people with whom you are in conflict; this will prevent displaying unexpected emotions;
- *have realistic expectations* – if you want to avoid disappointment, do not overdo your future success vision; always check on the real chances for reaching the set result and correct your expectations accordingly;
- *adjust your attitudes* – your attitudes affect the way people perceive you and the way your surroundings perceives themselves in your presence; try to see the world through the eyes of other people; does your presence raise good or bad feelings?; if you are not satisfied with what you see, you may need to change your attitudes;
- *follow through with things* – disability to follow things through to an end can may become a burden in the future; to fulfill something means to reach an inner feeling of satisfaction for all involved parties; therefore remember to provide evaluation, feedback and praise; if you are assigned a new task and you have not finished the previous one, make a list of “to do” tasks;
- *treat yourself a holiday* – people are not machines and therefore they cannot work without a break till total wear; people need to relax; if possible, avoid taking work home with you.

According to the experts, the causes of mobbing lie also in the attitudes and behaviour of managers. Therefore, managers should, therefore, not ignore mobbing. Each boss should be familiar with, at least, basics of psychology and attend several practical courses and trainings in order to learn something about conflicts and communication problems and their management. They should try to learn as much about their subordinates as possible – to know, what is important for them, what they wish for and what they have done. Those, who are attentive, consistent and observant enough, can reveal possible traces of conflicts. Bosses are responsible for ensuring that their subordinates have

done their best and in the best possible conditions. If any of them comes in need of help with a problem, a boss should pay the attention. Company should, in any case, take mobbing seriously and properly examine the situation. They cannot stay impartial in the case of mobbing, be it of moral or economic reasons. They must take appropriate measures to make clear that mobbing is unwanted in the company (Kratz, 2005).

Mobbing prevention in the company may include training of workers in charge of dealing with the issue of mobbing. It includes especially legal education and assertive behaviour trainings in order to learn to judge by themselves the seriousness of their behaviour and to develop adequate response to various stimuli or to divert them away. Hence, it is important to teach the workers specific principles of mental hygiene so that they will increase their resistance to stressful situations (Horváth, 2001).

The management style reflects the way of the intended and planned influence on workers and their performance so the company is able to meet its objectives. The management style describes forms of communication between superiors and subordinates. Authoritative management style anticipates a boss with ultimate competencies providing all the necessary decisions on his own. Subordinates are obliged to carry out his decisions in a perfect and infallible manner; they are permanently controlled. This management style can be drastically manifested in company's turnover, which can reach up to 100%.

A counterpart of the previous management style is a cooperative management style. Boss perceives the subordinates as colleagues and partners who, according to their skills, knowledge and experience, actively participate in the process of achieving the set objectives. Thus, delegation of tasks, powers and responsibilities allows the workers considerable amount of autonomy. The company is managed by the spirit of partnership, free of pressure, pushiness and unhealthy desire for power (Kratz, 2005).

Information and education should focus on the issue of mobbing at all corporate levels. That could be provided during meetings or via anti-mobbing campaigns (Kratz, 2005). Prevention is better than therapy and therefore various forms of seminars and trainings for not only executives but all employees are proposed. In these sessions, information on causes and impacts of mobbing is spread and various conflict solution models are discussed. It should be clearly stated, what is an appropriate behaviour and what is not. Each worker should know what mobbing is and how it can endanger the atmosphere in the company, performance of workers and its negative impact on human health.

Many experts require companies to designate one person, who will, analogically to an ill person, take care of all problems that have been caused by psychological terror. The body might be a corporate council or a generally recognised colleague who has been especially trained for such situation or it also might be an impartial professional.

It is especially in the large enterprises where the stress and deadline pressure rule the team and so the exchange of views between colleagues is frequent. There is a quick group formation and raise of various misunderstandings. A possible solution is to have a monthly meeting of a department or a team in which subordinates and superiors can equally express their opinions on the subject matter. The topic of such session is the present situation and search for the roots of problems. It is a handy tool of handling the conflicts and erasing minor misunderstandings between colleagues (Huberová, 1995).

We cannot find specific references in our legislation referring to the solution of psychological terror, bullying or sexual harassment in the workplace. NR SR Act No. 311/2001 Coll. Labour Code, as amended, provides in its Basic principles as well as in §13 prohibition of discrimination, i.e. the right to work without restrictions and direct or indirect discrimination. And it declares that the execution of rights and obligations arising from the labour relations must be conducted with regard to good manners. No one shall abuse these rights and obligations to the detriment of the other. No one shall demean the dignity of workers at workplace. Employees who suffered the damage resulting from a breach of labour relations can claim their rights in court.

NR SR Act No. 124/2006 Coll. On safety and health at work as amended, states that employer must ensure that the factors affecting mental workload and social factors do not endanger safety and health of employees. Description and recognition of the forms of aggression helps us to achieve an early awareness of danger and provides us with the possibility to eliminate identified risks effectively.

It is important to identify exactly what shall be recognized as mobbing at workplace and what shall be not. The definition should be implemented, for instance, into the Labour Code. Authorities competent for dealing with the mobbing at workplace should be designated and these should, in cooperation with employees, deliver a detailed strategy drafted in accordance with established criteria. Thus, the jointly prepared procedure should be, and currently is, mandatory for all workers and its effectiveness is subjected to the consent of trade union bodies (in accordance with §82, par. 3 LC).

Legislative measures could include sanctions and responsibilities of solutions of specific causes and administrations of legal remedies (appeals). In regard to the gravity, the cases would be addressed either disciplinary at the workplace or by a legal action. Administrative measures could include where and how workers can lodge their complaints, their records and assessments of further procedure. Counselling could be also a part of these measures. The complaint should remain anonymous till the start or even during the investigation, if the case requires so (Horváth, 2001)

In the context of the issue of mobbing, we conducted a survey which aimed to identify and analyse current situation in working climate of teams and employees' experiences of mobbing in private companies in Slovakia. Based on this objective we have set the following survey tasks:

1. Identify groups that participated in the survey by demographic data.
2. Determine whether mobbing occurs in private companies in Slovakia and asses its scope.
3. Identify the role of mobbed workers.
4. Determine to what extent the experience is individual or collective.
5. Analyse the average occurrence of negative acts and their frequency.
6. Characterize the person who committed the negative acts in a acollective on the basis of the evaluation sheet.

To conduct the survey, we used the questionnaire method. The reason why we decided to use the questionnaire was the fact that this method allowed us to obtain a considerable amount of information in a short period of time. We also considered its disadvantage that some employees might not fill in all the items and some employees might not have completed the questionnaire at all due to the fear of losing their job even though the questionnaire was anonymous.

Formulation of items in the questionnaire was provided with regard to three sets of data. The first set consisted of items focused on the demographic data. The second set consisted of specific questions detecting personal experiences of employees with negative acts. The third set detected feelings of employees about the person who committed the negative acts through twelve character traits that the person manifests.

Respondents were employees of private companies in Slovakia, working at various department and positions. The questionnaires were distributed by supervisors who were also in charge to collect them back. The total amount of distributed questionnaires was 150. The total amount of participants was 127 (85%), that is, with regard to the sensitive issue of survey, rather high return. The survey was conducted in spring 2011 and the obtained information was interpreted in quantitative and in qualitative analysis.

The aim of the first set of items was to identify the groups that participated in the survey. We identified the respondents by their gender, age group, marital status and education, position in the company and the number of subordinates.

Age categories	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
20-30	5	6%	1	2%	6	5%
31-40	25	29%	10	24%	35	28%
41-50	38	45%	19	45%	57	45%
51-60	17	20%	12	29%	29	23%
Total	85	100%	42	100%	127	100%

Table 1 *Composition of survey sample by age and sex*

The total number of respondents participating in the survey (127) the survey involved 85 men (67%) and 42 women (33%). The most numerous group consisted of men in the age group of 41-50 years – 31 (45%) and women dominated in the age group of 41-50 years – 19 (45%). Numerically the lowest sample in men and women was the age category of 20-30 years – men 5 (6%) and women 1 (2%). The overall average age of all participants was 44 years; with men the average age was 43 years, with women 45 years. It is the middle adult period and the period of the highest working ability and the highest performance.

Marital status	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Married	62	73%	33	79%	95	75%
Divorced	4	5%	3	7%	7	6%
Widow/Widower	2	2%	0	0%	2	2%
Single	17	20%	6	14%	23	18%
Total	85	100%	42	100%	127	100%

Table 2 *Marital status of respondents*

As we have anticipated, the prevailing marital status of men as well as women is married; men 62 (73%), women 33 (79%). Numerically the smallest group of men and in women are widows/widowers: 2 are men (2%) and 0 women (0%).

Education	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Primary	3	4%	0	0%	3	2%
Secondary without GRE	17	20%	5	12%	22	17%
Secondary with GRE	52	61%	28	67%	80	63%
University	13	15%	9	21%	22	17%
Total	85	100%	42	100%	127	100%

Table 3 *Education of respondents*

Most respondents are secondary school graduates with GRE, 52 (61%) men and 28 (67%) women. Minimum of participants are only primary school graduates, 3 (4%) men, 0 (0%) women, which shows that the companies realize the importance to employ qualified people and that the improvement of workforce skills is among their essential goals. 22 (17%) respondents are university graduates; 13 (15%) men and 9 (21%) women.

Position	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>Employee</i>	71	84%	37	88%	108	85%
<i>Middle management</i>	13	15%	5	12%	18	14%
<i>Senior management</i>	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%
<i>Other</i>	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	85	100%	42	100%	127	100%

Table 4 *Position in a company*

This item should identify the respondents' position in the company, which may be a crucial factor influencing mobbing. Both men and women formed the largest group of employees in total of 108 (85%); 71 (84%) men, 37 (88%) women, and on the contrary, the smallest group of respondents belonged to the senior management – very small number of just 1 (1%) man. 18 respondents worked in middle management (14%); 13 (15%) men and 5 (12%) women.

Executive	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>Yes</i>	14	16%	4	10%	18	14%
<i>No</i>	71	84%	38	90%	109	86%
Total	85	100%	42	100%	127	100%

Table 5 *Number of executives*

18 (14%) are executives out of all the 127 respondents; this makes 14 (16%) men, 4 (10%) women. Most respondents – 109 (86%), 71 (84%) men and 38 (90%) women, are not executives.

The aim of the second set of items was to identify personal experience with mobbing directly as a victim or indirectly, as a witness of it. The detection was carried out via questions identifying specific negative acts. The items of the questionnaire were divided into two sections. In the first section, we identified personal experience with mobbing and frequency of occurrence of negative acts at a workplace. When answering each questions, respondents could choose a five-digit range of intensity (1 – never, 2 – from time to time, 3 – once in a month, 4 – once in a week, 5 – daily), which expressed the frequency of negative acts occurrence. The following tables show the incidence and frequency of negative acts described in the questionnaire.

	Men	Men	Women	Women	Total	Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>Never any act</i>	10	12%	8	19%	18	14%
<i>At least sometimes with some</i>	75	88%	34	81%	109	86%
	85	100%	42	100%	127	100%

Table 6 *Never experienced a negative act*

Based on the responses of the 127 respondents, 18 (14%) employees have never experienced negative acts; 10 (12%) of them were men and 8 (19%) were women. Most respondents 109 (86%) have experienced some negative acts from time to time. Slandering, monitoring, verbal harassment, criticizing and deliberate withholding of information are common practices. It is necessary to realize that if the colleagues or superiors refuse and humiliate the victim, his/her time at work becomes unbearable and it reduces his/her concentration on performance and increases the probability of errors which creates an opportunity for repetition and escalation of negative acts. Damage to the victim's health and, if it is a good employee, handing in the notice, are hardly recoverable losses for the company.

Table 7 and Table 8 show the average incidence and frequency of negative acts.

	Never		Sometimes		Monthly		Weekly		Daily		Mobbed total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Men	60.8	71.6%	19.8	23.3%	3.0	3.6%	0.9	1.1%	0.4	0.4%	24.2	28.4%
Women	30.5	72.6%	10.5	25.0%	0.6	1.5%	0.3	0.7%	0.1	0.3%	11.5	27.4%
Total	91.3	71.9%	30.3	23.9%	3.7	2.9%	1.2	1.0%	0.5	0.4%	35.7	28.1%

Table 7 *Experience with negative acts occurrence*

Out of the 29 negative acts in average, the respondents said that in 71.9% they have never experienced negative acts; 23.9% have sometimes experienced negative acts; 2.9% monthly; 1% weekly and 0.4% are experiencing any of the stated negative acts on a daily basis. With regard to personal experience with a negative act, it is not only one-time experience but recurring unpleasant events. The most commonly experienced negative acts in the last six months according to the questionnaire were the following:

Men:

1. Ignorance of my views and opinions 56% (act no.16).
2. Spreading rumours and gossip about me 56% (act no. 6).
3. Assigning the tasks below my qualification and skills 53% (act no. 4).
4. Withholding the information necessary for fulfillment of your tasks 51% (act no.1).
5. Constant work criticism 40% (act no. 15).
6. Recurring reminding of my mistakes and errors 39% (act no. 13).
7. Attempts to find errors in your work 38% (act no. 27).
8. Hoax 36% (act no. 18).
9. Profanities and spontaneous expressions of anger 34% (act no. 9).
10. Withdrawing some of my duties 33% (act no. 5).

11. Offensive remarks about me and my personal life 33% (act no. 8).
12. Exaggerated jokes, making fun of me, sarcasm 33% (act no. 25).

Women:

1. Spreading rumours and gossip about me 71% (act no. 6).
2. Ignorance of my views and opinions 50% (act no. 16).
3. Withholding the information necessary for fulfillment of my tasks 50% (act no. 1).
4. Recurring reminding of my mistakes and errors 40% (act no. 13).
5. Attempts to find errors in my work 40% (act no. 27).
6. Constant criticism of my work and efforts 38% (act no. 15).
7. Excessive monitoring of my work 36% (act no. 22).
8. Delegation of tasks with unrealizable objectives 33% (act no. 20).
9. Exposure to unmanageable workload 29% (act no. 28).
10. Exaggerated jokes, making fun of me, sarcasm 26% (act no. 25).
11. Private messenger 26% (act no. 19).

In the second part of the questionnaire items we indentified whether these negative acts were perceived as mobbing, their topicality, who committed them and how many employees in the past five years, respectively, in six months were victims or witnesses of mobbing in their surroundings.

Have you been a victim of mobbing in the past 6 months?	1	2	3	4	5	6	
	No never	Only rarely	Sometimes, from time to time	Several times a month	Several times a week	Daily	Total Mobbed
<i>Men</i>	74	5	5	1	0	0	11
	87%	6%	6%	1%	0%	0%	13%
<i>Women</i>	39	2	1	0	0	0	3
	93%	5%	2%	0%	0%	0%	7%
Total	113	7	6	1	0	0	14
	89%	6%	5%	1%	0%	0%	11%

Table 8 *Mobbing victims in past six months*

Out of the 127 respondents 14 (11%) perceived negative acts such as mobbing, including 11 men (13%) and 3 women (7%). 6% of respondents said that they had been mobbed only rarely; 5% sometimes and 1% monthly. Mobbing has not occurred in higher frequency, i.e. weekly.

	(1)	(2+3+4)	(5+6)	(2+3+4+5+6)
	No never	Occasionally	Regularly	Total mobbed
<i>Men</i>	74	11	0	11
	87.1%	12.9%	0.0%	12.9%
<i>Women</i>	39	3	0	3
	92.9%	7.1%	0.0%	7.1%
Total	113	14	0	14
	89.0%	11.0%	0.0%	11.0%

Table 9 *Mobbing occurrence*

We combined the frequency categories (Table 8) and created three frequency categories: not mobbed, occasionally mobbed and regularly mobbed. In percentage terms, it reads 11% out of overall respondents were mobbed occasionally, 11 men (12.9%) and 3 women (7.1%). None of the respondents is mobbed regularly, which is a positive indication, 89% of respondents do not perceive negative acts as mobbing because their frequency is very rare and so in this case, we are not dealing with mobbing because, according to Leyman's definition of mobbing, it is considered to be executed only if a person is attacked once a week for six months minimum by one or more persons. In the following evaluation we tried to determine the position of the mobbed within the company; we monitored the influence of position on the perception of mobbing.

		30 (1)	30 (2 - 6)	30 (2+3+4)	30 (5+6)	36 (a)	37 (b)
		No never	Total mobbed in last 6 months	Occasionally	Regularly	Total mobbed in last 5 years	Witnesses of mobbing in last 5 years
Employees	105	93	12	12	0	15	26
		89%	11%	11%	0%	14%	25%
Executives	18	16	2	2	0	3	4
		89%	11%	11%	0%	17%	22%
Middle management	18	16	2	2	0	3	3
		89%	11%	11%	0%	17%	17%
Senior management	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
		100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%

Table 10 *Influence of position on mobbing*

Out of the total of 14 victims in last 6 months most – 12 (11%) – are ordinary employees and 2 (11%) are in the senior management group. A positive finding is that none of the mobbed experienced mobbing on the regular basis.

The facts that 14 respondents admitted that they had been mobbed during past 6 months and a number of victims increased to 18 in last 5 years indicate that mobbing cannot be considered as a secondary social problem anymore. This is also confirmed by the number of witnesses of mobbing in past 5 years, that is, the total of 30 (22 men and 8 women), which is nearly one quarter – 24%. Witnesses, by standing idly by, help the mobber to commit the negative offences continually and become the so-called accomplices of mobbing. 16 people were both witnesses and victims of mobbing, 11 men and 5 women. According to this result, the number of witnesses that were also victims is higher in comparison to those who were not mobbed at all. It is clear that those respondents are more sensitive to the working climate and they are more attentive to their surroundings.

Persons who mobbed	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>Colleague – he</i>	4	25%	1	33%	5	26%
<i>Colleague – she</i>	0	0%	1	33%	1	5%
<i>Group of male colleagues</i>	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Group of female colleagues</i>	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Mixed group</i>	3	19%	0	0%	3	16%
<i>Subordinate</i>	2	13%	0	0%	2	11%
<i>Superior</i>	7	44%	1	33%	8	42%
Total	16	100%	3	100%	19	100%

Table 11 *Who mobbed*

In the questionnaire we were interested in detecting the number of mobbers and those who mobbed. Men were mobbed by their superiors (bossing) in 44%, in 25% only one person was an aggressor against a single individual, in 19% mobbing was committed by a mixed group against a single individual, and in 13% a superior was mobbed by a subordinate (staffing). With women, 42% of mobbing was committed by the superiors against subordinates (bossing), in 5% the aggressor was a woman – a female colleague, and an interesting finding is that in 26% the aggressors were men; the group of mobbers against a single individual did not occur with women.

In the last third set of items, the respondents' task was to characterize the traits of a person who committed negative acts defined in the evaluation sheet. The sheet consisted of 12 personal traits. The evaluation scale consisted of four grades with a trait (value 1), its counterpoint (value 4) and two intermediates (value 2 and 3). 41 respondents completed this evaluation sheet, 27 men and 14 women.

Based on the survey of mobbers' personal traits and their evaluation, we can conclude the following: the perpetrator of negative acts is rather psychosomatically disturbed, irritable, rather aggressive and depressive, less calm, more sociable, lively, well-minded, slightly dominant, rather tensed, open, critical, extrovert, emotionally stable with typical male characteristics.

The provided evaluation of the traits cannot be considered accurate and authoritative because it is generally difficult to clearly identify the character of a mobber. However, it is possible to structure fundamental thinking of a mobber, that is, the basis of his thinking is an effort to find something negative about the victim, even if the victim is an absolutely perfect, flawless and ideal person, because the mobber does not hesitate to use almost any means available, even those immoral ones. It is important to realize that a person, who needs to build his own self confidence by humiliating and harming others, is weak and probably suffers from a complex.

Category	Total				Men				Women			
Scale Trait	1 N	2 N	3 N	4 N	1 N	2 N	3 N	4 N	1 N	2 N	3 N	4 N
1 – Nervousness	4	11	21	6	1	9	13	4	3	2	8	2
2 – Aggression	4	9	26	3	2	8	15	2	2	1	11	1
3 – Depression	6	15	20	1	1	11	14	1	5	4	6	0
4 – Irritability	2	19	18	3	1	11	13	2	1	8	5	1
5 – Sociability	8	16	12	5	5	11	8	2	3	5	4	3
6 – Gentleness	7	19	11	4	6	12	7	1	1	7	4	3
7 – Dominance	4	9	18	10	3	7	10	6	1	2	8	4
8 – Continenence	9	21	10	1	5	11	10	0	4	10	0	1
9 – Openness	12	16	10	3	5	13	6	2	7	3	4	1
10 – Extroversion	7	16	15	3	2	13	10	1	5	3	5	2
11 – Emotional instability	5	12	20	4	3	10	13	0	2	2	7	4
12 – Masculinity	4	25	9	3	3	14	7	2	1	11	2	1

Table 14 *Traits of a mobber – numerical evaluation*

Category	Total				Men				women			
Scale Trait	1%	2%	3%	4%	1%	2%	3%	4%	1%	2%	3%	4%
1 – Nervousness	9.5%	26.2%	50.0%	14.3%	3.7%	33.3%	48.1%	14.8%	20.0%	13.3%	53.3%	13.3%
2 – Aggression	9.5%	21.4%	61.9%	7.1%	7.4%	29.6%	55.6%	7.4%	13.3%	6.7%	73.3%	6.7%
3 – Depression	14.3%	35.7%	47.6%	2.4%	3.7%	40.7%	51.9%	3.7%	33.3%	26.7%	40.0%	0.0%
4 – Irritability	4.8%	45.2%	42.9%	7.1%	3.7%	40.7%	48.1%	7.4%	6.7%	53.3%	33.3%	6.7%
5 – Sociability	19.5%	39.0%	29.3%	12.2%	19.2%	42.3%	30.8%	7.7%	20.0%	33.3%	26.7%	20.0%
6 – Gentleness	17.1%	46.3%	26.8%	9.8%	23.1%	46.2%	26.9%	3.8%	6.7%	46.7%	26.7%	20.0%
7 – Dominance	9.8%	22.0%	43.9%	24.4%	11.5%	26.9%	38.5%	23.1%	6.7%	13.3%	53.3%	26.7%
8 – Continenence	22.0%	51.2%	24.4%	2.4%	19.2%	42.3%	38.5%	0.0%	26.7%	66.7%	0.0%	6.7%
9 – Openness	29.3%	39.0%	24.4%	7.3%	19.2%	50.0%	23.1%	7.7%	46.7%	20.0%	26.7%	6.7%
10 – Extroversion	17.1%	39.0%	36.6%	7.3%	7.7%	50.0%	38.5%	3.8%	33.3%	20.0%	33.3%	13.3%
11 – Emotional instability	12.2%	29.3%	48.8%	9.8%	11.5%	38.5%	50.0%	0.0%	13.3%	13.3%	46.7%	26.7%
12 – Masculinity	9.8%	61.0%	22.0%	7.3%	11.5%	53.8%	26.9%	7.7%	6.7%	73.3%	13.3%	6.7%

Table 15 Traits of a mobber – percentage evaluation

1 – Nervousness

As the evaluation demonstrates the overwhelming majority of 64.3% perceive the mobber as a nervous person; 14.3% state that he is “almost always” nervous. An assessment of men and women correlates with their common evaluation, i. e. 63% of men and 66.7% of women describe the mobber as a predominantly nervous person.

2 – Aggression

When assessing the aggression all scale values have appeared. 69% of respondents assess the mobber as medium aggressive; 7.1% as almost always aggressive. 9.5% of the respondents characterize the mobber as a non-aggressive person. Most men (63%) perceive the mobber as rather aggressive, 37% as a rather non-aggressive person. Similarly most women (80%) perceive the mobber as a rather aggressive person and only 20% as a rather non-aggressive person.

3 – Depression

The average evaluation of a mobber as a rather depressive person (50%) and a rather non-depressive person (50%) shows a very balanced assessment. More men (55.6%) assess the mobber as a rather non-depressive, self-possessed person whereas, in contrast, more women (60%) characterize the mobber as a depressive, discontented person.

4 – Irritability

Similar values as in the assessment of depression occurred in the assessment of irritability. The average values were balanced again: 50% of the respondents assess the aggressor as a rather irritable and 50% as a calm person. More men (55.6%) assess the aggressor as a rather calm person whereas more women (60%) characterize the aggressor as an irritable, slightly frustrated person.

5 – Sociability

The majority (58.5%) label the mobber as sociable and lively and 41.5% as rather antisocial and restrained. The assessments of men and women were similar in average values; majority of men (61.5%) and majority of women (53.3%) assess the aggressor as rather sociable and 38.5% of men and 46.7% of women assess the mobber as a rather antisocial and restrained person.

6 – Gentleness

Most respondents (63.4%) perceive mobbers as calm, quiet and well-minded people, of which 9.8% almost always think so. 36.6% assess the mobber as being irritable and hesitant. 69.2% of men characterize mobbers as rather gentle and 30.8% as rather irritable. Similarly, 53.3% of women describe the aggressor as a gentle person and 46.7% as an irritable person.

7 – Dominance

In this case, 68.3% of the respondents describe the mobber as rather submissive, moderate and 31.7% as rather dominant. Most men (61.5%) consider the person to be rather submissive and moderate; 38.5% of respondents view the person as rather dominant. Most women (80%), similarly to men, assess the mobber as rather moderate and 20% as rather dominant.

8 – Continnence

The majority of respondents (73.2%) view the mobber as rather restrained and tensed and 26.8% describe the mobber as spontaneous and sociable. Assessment of men and women correlates with the summary evaluation, in which 61.5% of men and as many as 93.3% women assess the mobber as restrained and tensed and 38.5% of men and 6.7% of women assess the mobber as spontaneous and sociable.

9 – Openness

The assessment indicates that the mobber is rather open and critical. In the joint average assessment, most respondents (68.3%) view the mobber as above and 31.7% consider the person as withdrawn and uncritical. This joint assessment is identical with the assessment of most men (69.2%) and most women (66.7%).

10 – Extroversion

In this case, the assessments were in middle values. Most respondents (56.1%) perceive the mobber as rather extrovert and social; of which 7.3% as almost always think so. 43.9% of the respondents assess the mobber as rather introvert. Similar percentage occurred with most men (57.7%) and with most women (53.3%) who describe the aggressor as rather extrovert, open and sociable and 42.3% of men and 46.7% of women describe the mobber as introvert and withdrawn.

11 – Emotional instability

In assessing the emotional instability the respondents favour the opinion that mobber is emotionally stable. 58.5% of the respondents assess the aggressor as rather emotionally stable and 41.5% consider the mobber as rather emotionally instable. Men's assessment is closer to the joint assessment, in which 50% indicates emotional stability and 50% rather instability. These numbers are higher with women, as many as 73.3% of them describe the mobber as emotionally stable and 26.7% as rather emotionally hypersensitive and instable.

12 – Masculinity

All respondents agree that a mobber has typical male traits. In the joint assessment, 70.7% of the respondents assess the mobber as confident, creative and responsive and 29.3% characterize the mobber as rather typically feminine. In this case, the men's and women's assessments are identical with the joint assessment, in which most men (65.4%) as well as most women (80%) describe the aggressor by typically male characteristics.

Conclusions

Out of the total of 150 distributed questionnaires 127 were completed; 85 were completed by men (67%) and 42 by women (33%). The average age of the participants was 44 years; average age of men was 43 years and average age of women was 45 years. Most respondents (63%) are secondary school graduates with GRE test indicating that the companies are trying to employ qualified employers. The most numerous group consisted of ordinary employees (85%), in which 14% of the respondents work as executives. The questionnaire evaluation shows that 18 respondents (14%) have never experienced mobbing and majority of respondents 109 (86%) have experienced some negative acts from time to time. Despite the reduction in mobbing occurrence and positive survey results, mobbing is present in the companies even nowadays. Interestingly, however, none of the respondents was mobbed regularly, i.e. daily, which is a very positive indication.

The third task was to identify the position in the company of the people who were mobbed. Most of the 14 victims were ordinary employees (12) and 2 were in senior management group in last 6 months. One of the tasks was to determine to what extent the experience with mobbing is an individual or a group experience. For both, men and women, an individual experience with mobbing prevails; in 11% of men a new form of mobbing occurred – staffing, in which subordinates attack the superior.

Next task, the fifth one, was to analyse the occurrence of negative acts and their frequency. Out of the total 29 negative acts, the respondents indicate that they have never met with negative acts – 71.9%, 23.9% have sometimes experienced negative acts, 2.9% have experienced negative acts monthly, 1% have experienced negative acts weekly and 0.4% have been experiencing some of the negative acts daily. Out of the total 27 respondents, 14 respondents (11%) perceive negative acts as mobbing: 6% rarely, 5% sometimes and 1% monthly. 89% respondents do not perceive negative acts as mobbing due to their rare frequency. We conclude that the frequency of negative acts has decreased at all levels; verbal aggression (threats, putting-down, and insults) prevails among men; passive aggression in the form of indirect communication and critical remarks prevails among women.

In the sixth task we tried to create a profile of the mobber based on the results provided by the questionnaire in which the perpetrator of negative acts is rather psychosomatically disturbed, irritable, rather aggressive and depressive, less calm, more sociable, lively, well-minded, slightly dominant, rather tensed, open, critical, extrovert, emotionally stable with typical male characteristics.

Based on the comparison of the results provided by sub-tasks, it can be concluded that mobbing is on a slight decline in this company which means that even the slightest indication of an aggressive act in a workplace should be paid attention to and should be suppressed. It is necessary to note that the assessment based on this survey cannot be considered as completely accurate and authoritative due to the assumption that the respondents have provided us with socially preferred answers caused by their fear of losing the job.

Based on the survey results, we propose the following:

- to develop a clear and written ethical code of the company in which it shall be clearly defined what is meant by aggression at the workplace;
- to provide clear examples of undesirable behavior;
- to specify consequences for threat or violent act;
- to encourage reporting of aggressive incidents;
- to determine how and to whom the incidents are to be recorded;
- to provide protection for the employee who reported such an incident in order to prevent the retaliation;
- to establish detailed investigation of these incidents;
- to solve conflicts as soon as they arise and openly communicate about them;

- to apply “ethics programme” for employees in the area of violence prevention in the workplace, which shall include notifications based on the employment relations, and which will specify potential conflict of interests;
- to reduce input of monotonous and repetitive work;
- to develop management style and prevent vague specification of functions and tasks;
- to distribute organizational standards and values to all levels of the organization effectively, for instance, through staff manuals, information meetings and newsletters;
- to provide a clear definition and description of tasks in the organization, e.g. criteria and rules for promotion and reward system;
- to improve responsibility of management and their competencies and conflict-solving skills and communication skills;
- to include establishment of positive atmosphere in the workplace into the strategic objectives of the company, for instance, by organizing informal meetings focused on teambuilding, communication improvement and socializing in informal situations;
- to encourage appropriate workplace culture, which shall include the commitment of top management to employees’ well-being, emphasis on the safety at work and dialogue between management and labour regarding the decisions about the workplace.

The introduction of these systems implicates changes regarding the personnel and their work. The implementation of the proposed activities is not easy; the effort to create an appropriate working climate is like a never-ending story but its constant nourishing, improvement and evaluation lead to a business success. It all depends only on the enterprise itself, whether and if it implements these proposals and profits from them along with its employees. The consequences may vary; they may endanger mental and physical health of employees and stability of the organization. The mobbed person may be forced to leave the company and the company, where mobbing occurred, may easily lose its key employees. Therefore it is important to monitor the occurrence of negative acts and fight mobbing in its inception. Lessons from other countries should warn us. Several countries have already implemented or are preparing to implement legislative amendments on the negative acts in order to make these acts illegal and provide protection to potential victims but also to sustain healthy and efficient operation of the companies and entire economies. It should be noted that prevention and education are the greatest opportunities to eliminate the negative behaviour in the bud. It just takes to pay more attention to one’s surroundings, to be more tolerant, to understand that others are also facing some problems and to give up egoism and own welfare and express your own opinion about this issue and actions associated with it.

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ARTICLES

Communication and Learning in the New Media Space

*Gábor Szécsi**

Abstract: The age of electronic communication is the age of opening categorical and classification boundaries. In the new media space the traditional distinctions between children and adult experiences collapse and disappear. The aim of this essay is to show that the use of electronic technologies has abolished the traditional pedagogical thinking, and brings in new conventions. As a result of evolving new practices which rely on electronic communication devices, communication has become an essential activity among children, helping them acquire and share everyday information and knowledge with intensity and efficiency that can even change the traditional pedagogical thinking. The use of new communication technologies and forms of learning support gain particular importance especially in a system of lifelong learning, which provides identical frameworks for children and adults.

Keywords: electronic communication technologies, networked individual, disappearance of childhood, new pedagogical paradigm.

By using the electronic communication technologies the media-networked individuals become members of a virtual community that is determined by the global and local conditions for an effective method of information exchange. In this new, virtual community the traditional distinctions between children and adult experiences collapse and disappear. This paper argues that the new perspective created by the electronic communication has transformed not only our concept of learning and the traditional role of a teacher but also our notion of pedagogy as a science. Electronic communication has become an essential activity among the young, helping them acquire and share everyday information and knowledge with an efficiency that can even crack the conservative shell of pedagogical thinking. I will attempt to show that the expansion of electronic communication technologies, therefore, leads us to a new way of thinking about learning and teaching.

1 A networked individual in electronic societies

Linguistic communication is creating an action of a society, community, and an individual. It is a creative process which determines and forms our personality and identity through our communication roles. Moreover, the human mind is a structure affected by the prevailing technologies of social communication. That is to say, there is a specific inner relation between the communicative structure of our minds and the communication technologies which can be regarded as dominant in certain cultures.

The inner relation is present in all major historical changes in dominant communicative technologies, from the change-over to the literacy with the dominance of electronic media (television, the internet and mobile telephone). In this essay, I try to prove the above-mentioned assumptions of the effects of electronic media on our conceptualization of community.

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To clarify the nature of this new conceptualization, I take the hypothesis as a starting point – the twentieth-century expansion of electronic communication has transformed our notion of the relation between a place and a community. With a greater proportion of our communicative acts taking place via electronic media, the physical co-presence and the co-located interpersonal relations, as the determinants of the nature of human interactions, are diminishing.

It seems that in the space of electronic media, a community should be understood as a virtual network of interactions between individuals who uniformly accept and apply some rules of communication aimed at the effective exchange of information. In other words, there is an inner relation between the criteria of community and the global and local conditions for an effective method of information exchange. The global and local conditions transform our notions of the structure and life of a community.

Electronic communication creates a new context in which our notions of culture, community, society and human interactions become more complex. These notions can be regarded as the bases of the idea of the global and local information communities in which the communication attitudes of people are determined by their impression of themselves as permanently available individuals whose communicative acts are embedded in special information net.

This paper argues that by creating new, information communities, the electronic technologies have been speeding up through the crossing of traditional conceptual, social, cultural and political boundaries. As a result of this process, we are experiencing conceptual, social and cultural convergences in new global and local forms of communities.

My general argument is that the bases of such conceptual, social and cultural convergences are the linguistic convergences which lead to the appearance of a new kind of communication language. With the interaction of global and local communicative situations of the electronic era, most linguistic, cultural and social boundaries have become more permeable. These permeable linguistic, cultural and social boundaries affect both the particular behavior and social identity. The increasing functional permeability of these boundaries is a result of such linguistic, cultural and social processes that contribute to develop the media-networked individuals' complex identity (Nyíri, 2005).

The complex identity, however, is rooted, first of all, in the new forms of communities. In other words, the use of electronic media can make our concept of community more complex by creating new kinds of communities. A networked individual becomes a member of both a global community based on the global communication crossing national cultural boundaries and a local community that is organized on the basis of specific, inner norms in the space of electronic communication.

As Joshua Meyrowitz (2005) writes about the “multiple, multi-layered, fluid, and endlessly adjustable senses” of the media-networked individuals' identity: “Rather than needing to choose between local, place-defined identities and more distant ones, we can have them all, not just in rapid sequence but in overlapping experiences. We can attend a local zoning board meeting, embodying the role of local concerned citizen, as we cruise the internet on a wireless-enabled laptop enacting other, non-local identities. And we can merge the two as we draw on distant information to inform the local board of how other communities handle similar issues and regulations. All the while, we can remain accessible to friends, family, and colleagues from anywhere via a text-message enabled mobile phone.”

By using the electronic communication technologies, a networked individual becomes a part of a network of interactions between humans who uniformly accept and apply some rules for the communicative acts aiming at the effective exchange of information. In other words, the media-networked individuals become members of a virtual community that is determined by both the global and the local conditions for an effective method of information exchange.

In this new virtual community, new localities are being made which are particular in many ways and influenced by global processes and global consciousness. Thus the new local communities organized in the space of electronic communication, on the one hand, strengthen the local attachments, the local identity and, on the other hand, can be regarded as integrated elements of virtual communities created by global information exchange. Consequently, the global virtual community serves as a kind of comparison background for the local communities organized in the age of electronic media. With globalized communication space, electronic media give the networked individual external perspectives from which to judge and define one's own local community. In other words, the twentieth-century expansion of electronic communication technologies, as J. Meyrowitz (2005, p. 23) writes, "have placed an interconnected global matrix over local experience". The networked individual determines the characteristics of his own local community in the light of information acquired in the global communication space.

The global perspective created by electronic communication has transformed not only the community definitions but the individual relation to social rules. In the space of electronic communication there is a new possibility to change the rules of social perception and the national institutions of political and cultural domination as a consequence of new global perspectives.

2 Towards a new way of thinking about learning and teaching

One of the most characteristic features of the virtual space of electronic communication is that it lacks the compulsory categorization system and the classificatory forms and norms of a print society. In the media-networked global and local communities it is difficult to maintain several traditional categorical distinctions that characterized the print societies. That is, as electronic communication technologies expand, the dividing line between several political and social categories becomes increasingly indistinct.

The age of electronic communication is the age of opening categorical and classification boundaries. In this new space of communication the traditional distinctions between private and public, between children and adult experiences, and between male and female spheres collapse and disappear. In the age of electronic media, as Meyrowitz (2005, p. 29) suggests, we are experiencing "both macro-level homogenization of identities and micro-level fragmentation of them".

A new virtual social space is in the progress which strengthens the cohesion of competing local communities, and in which, therefore, the influence of traditional social and political institutes declines. The new communication situations created by the use of electronic technologies foster greater emotional attachments to the local community which we choose from among the competing communities deliberately without social and political restrictions.

Thus in this new social space there is a fundamentally new possibility to change the rules of social perception and the conceptualization of the relation between the local communities and traditional political institutes of state. Thanks to the changes, the networked individual is attached to the place and position appointed by his own social class less and less. Through his multi-channel communicative acts he can become acquainted with more and more communal forms, ways of life, traditions and values, in the light of which he can choose more deliberately from among the competing local communities. And this more deliberate choice becomes a part of the more and more complex and multi-layered identity of the networked individual.

One of the most important consequences of the openness of the new communication situations created by the use of electronic technologies is that the boundaries between childhood and adulthood became blurred. In Nail Postman's (1994) terms, the "disappearance of childhood" is one of the convergences of social and cultural categories experienced in the new media space. By using electronic technologies children are routinely exposed to the so called "adult information". As J. Meyrowitz (2005, p. 29) writes, "just as there is a blurring of traditional distinctions between children's and adults' experiences

/.../, so is there a breaking down of the traditional similarities among what people of the same age or same gender experience”.

The use of the electronic technologies, therefore, has abolished the traditional pedagogical thinking, and brings in new conventions. As a result of introduction of new practices which rely on electronic communication devices, communication has become an essential activity among children, helping them acquire and share everyday information and knowledge with an intensity and efficiency that can even change the traditional pedagogical thinking. The use of new communication technologies and the involving forms of learning supports gain particular importance especially in a system of lifelong learning, which provides identical frameworks for children and adults. So there is no sense in making distinctions between the children's and adults' world, since new forms and technologies of learning can be developed for and applied to any age group.

The “disappearance of childhood”, accordingly, is one of the consequences of conceptual convergences that are rooted in the increasing functional permeability of the boundaries between communication situations in the age of electronic media. Electronic communication unties us from the restrictions and limitations implied in traditional social classing and interactions. As J. Meyrowitz (2005, p. 30) points out: “Yet, with a wide array of electronic media, including the mobile phone, we are also liberated from the same bounded and confining experiences. We are free to choose our own networks for membership and our own level of engagement in each network. We are free, as well, to shape our degrees of connection to local space.” The expansion of electronic communication has abolished classroom enclosure and erodes the existing pedagogical norm system by this functional permeability of situational boundaries. By appearing a new virtual society, the traditional role of the teacher becomes anachronistic in this way.

The novelty of the structure and function of knowledge acquired by electronic communication is a consequence that affects the bases of traditional pedagogical thinking. It is a problem which provides new scope for pedagogical researches. The effects of this problem appear more and more significant in social and cultural dimensions that force pedagogical thinking in a wider framework. The change has an expanding effect on the framework of the new, electronic forms of learning, adding new dimensions. The use of electronic communication technologies sets pedagogy a big methodological challenge.

Pedagogy becomes a part of the process characterizing the scientific life of information society leading to disappearance of traditional disciplinary boundaries. And this disciplinary openness can be regarded as a basis of a new pedagogical paradigm which helps us to form general theory of the cognitive background. The consequences of the new teaching/learning forms appearing in the new media space can help us work out a methodological conception that offers appropriate solutions to the new cultural challenges.

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The Effect of Foreign Language Competences and Student Mobilities on Graduates' Employability in the European Labour Market

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Abstract: Foreign language competences belong to the employers' essential requirements set for workforce. The enhancement of acquired competences and the acquisition of new ones form a part of higher education. In the paper employability of the graduates of the Faculty of Biotechnology and Food Sciences in the Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra on the European labour market has been analysed. The graduates completed their study in the years 2007-2011. A questionnaire was used to survey 300 graduates by the 30th June 2011, out of which 103 responded. The Faculty of Biotechnology and Food Sciences prepares professionals in the fields of biotechnology, food technology, applied biology, hygiene and food safety. Input data have been evaluated by the methods of analysis, synthesis and comparison. In relation to the mathematical-statistical methods used, the input data have been classified according to the qualitative and statistical characteristics and evaluated by the association tables and graphs. We have come to the conclusion that foreign language competences are actively used by 43% of the respondents in different sectors of national economy, and the dominant foreign language is English. Within half a year after graduation 74% of respondents who had taken part in student mobilities, and 48% of respondents who did not participate in them, found jobs on the labour market. The time of getting the first job is influenced not only by knowledge, working skills and other competencies but also by current job vacancies.

Key words: graduate, foreign language competences, student mobilities, labour market.

1 Introduction

International transfer of information and knowledge belongs to the essential needs in all spheres of life. In concordance with the words of L. Török and L. Mura (2011) regionalization and globalization dramatically shifted the boundaries of mutual communication. Foreign language communication in today's multicultural world is a prerequisite of better success on the labour market. The whole learning process is focused on the acquirement and mastering of all language functions and competences, through which the students gain the ability to understand and express their thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written forms (reading, writing, listening and speaking) appropriately to the needs in specific real professional, social and cultural situations. In accordance with the "Key Competences for Lifelong Learning – a European Reference Framework" (2007), the Slovak University of Agriculture (SAU) also aims at the improvement of students' foreign language skills, which promote social cohesion and employability in a knowledge society. The students in all accredited programs at individual faculties of SAU are prepared to meet all requirements for being employed in the European labour market. The Faculty of Biotechnology and Food Sciences (FBFS) prepares academically educated professionals in the fields of biotechnology, food technology, applied biology, hygiene and food safety (see www.fbp.uniag.sk). The aim of this paper is to evaluate the data and information on the employability of FBFS graduates in the European labour market. The paper analyzes the graduates in various sectors of national economy, it evaluates the students' mobilities, the use of foreign language skills and the time of getting the first job.

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2 Methodology

There are primary and secondary data used in the paper. The primary source of data was a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire focused on the employment of the graduates of the Faculty of Biotechnology and Food Sciences in various sectors of national economy. The survey was conducted in the period from the 1st March 2011 to the 30th June 2011. Secondary sources of the data were literary resources available from electronic databases of Slovak Agricultural Library at SAU and from other scientific resources, scientific journals and the like.

The questionnaires were sent to 300 randomly selected alumni from graduation years 2007 to 2011 from all regions of Slovakia. The amount of returned questionnaires achieved around 34%. The studied group consisted of 103 graduates, 75 women and 28 men. The input data were evaluated by the methods of analysis, synthesis and comparison. In relation to the mathematical-statistical methods used, the input data were classified according to the qualitative and statistical characteristics and evaluated by the association tables and graphs.

3 Results and Discussion

Changing demands on workforce and technology in the global knowledge economy make the vocational training difficult. Much broader skills and competences than just the acquirement of scientific and technological knowledge are needed. The Reference Framework specifies eight key competences (URL 1):

- communication in the mother tongue;
- communication in foreign languages;
- mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology;
- digital competence;
- learning to learn;
- social and civic competences;
- initiative and entrepreneurship;
- cultural awareness and expression.

In our opinion, some key requirements are imposed on the personality of managers, people with higher education, such as innate characteristics, natural intelligence and acquired managerial characteristics. These include expertise and experience (also foreign), economic knowledge, socio-psychological knowledge and knowledge of management methods. For being a good manager, the managerial skills such as technical, technological skills, conceptual skills and social (communication) skills are also important. According to R. Dušek (2011) the graduates do not need only to gain the knowledge and skills but also to keep, develop and successfully use them in practice.

We examined the views of respondents who graduated between 2007 and 2010. The examined group of respondents consists of 19 graduates (18%) of graduation year 2007, 33 graduates (32%) of 2008, 23 graduates (22%) of 2009 and 28 graduates (27%) of 2010. The respondents have completed the university education in the following study programs: biotechnology – 24.2%, food technology – 67.9 % and applied biology – 7.8% of respondents. The data on the graduates' employability are by Z. Freibergová (1997) a valuable basis for school management at assessing the quality of educational process, they are an important source of information used in professional consultancy and they can also be used in a comparative study of successful graduates of individual schools on the labour market or as a part of a school marketing study. At present, schools must create adequate conditions for the formation of a universal future professional equipped by good foreign language competences. These measures endeavour to minimize the risk of graduate unemployment. These issues are dealt with, among others, also by L. Mura (2010). Young people, university graduates, who cannot enter the labour market, are exposed to psychological problems and depression (Heretik et al., 2011).

3.1 Activities of the respondents on the labour market

According to D. Lamberton (2002) it is necessary to prepare the workforce in such a way that they are able to operate effectively in individual job positions, and also to increase the competitiveness of entrepreneurial entities and thus the competitiveness of the industry. The analysis of the graduates' activities in various sectors showed that out of the overall number of respondents 12.6% of them work in agriculture, 21.3% in food production and 25% of respondents are employed in educational institutions for agro-food industry. The respondents work at different positions involved in the economic performance of the whole.

Figure 1 The proportion of respondents employed in various sectors of national economy broken down by SK NACE

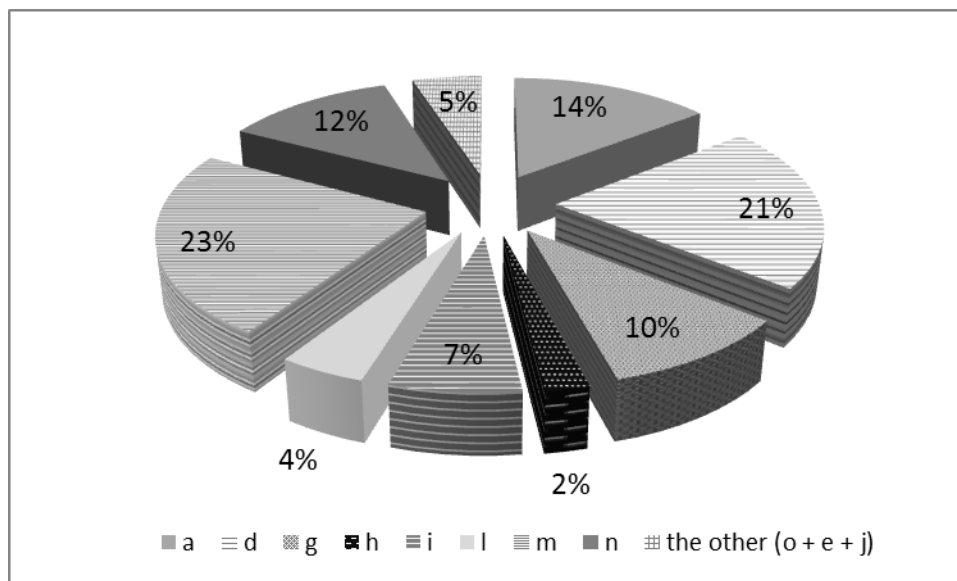
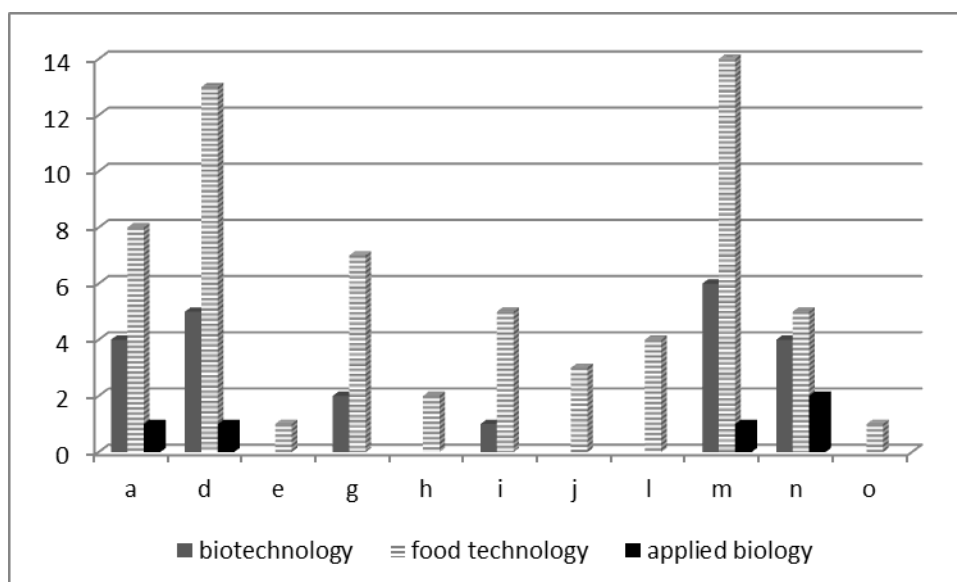


Figure 2 Number of respondents in the national economy according to the completed study program broken down by SK NACE



A – agriculture, D – manufacturing, G – wholesale and retail trade, H – hotels and restaurants, I – transport, storage, L – public administration, M – education, N – health care, O – other community and social services, E – electricity production and distribution, J – financial intermediation

Out of all respondents 10.7% operate in the sphere of health and social care, 8.7% of them in the wholesale and retail trade, 5.8% of the respondents work in the sectors of transport and storage, 3.9% in public administration, defence and welfare, and 2.9% of respondents work in financial intermediation. In the manufacture and distribution of electricity, gas and water work 0.9% of the respondents and other community, social and personal services are provided by 0.9% of the respondents. Figure 2 documents the fact that 88% of the graduates are active in the field of their study. To the deadline for submission of questionnaires there were 10.7% of the respondents unemployed. On the Slovak labour market there were 82% of the respondents employed and 10% of them worked abroad (the Republic of Ireland, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Slovenia).

3.2 Student mobilities

A key requirement in achieving a “global responsibility”, according to G. L. Downey et al. (2006), is the art to work effectively with people who define problems in a different way than the others. D. E. Chubin et al. (2005) claim that such an outcome can be achieved by students being exposed to the solution of problems in a multicultural environment. The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) adopted at the Slovak University of Agriculture enables the students to complete internships and study stays at universities, in companies, businesses, or on farms abroad. The primary precondition in the expansion of student mobilities within the European higher education area is by E. Roháľová (2005) the enhancement of foreign language communicative competences of the students.

We found out that the stay abroad was completed by 18.4% of respondents, out of which 3.9% completed the study stay (student mobility), 0.9% completed the study stay and at the same time they had the possibility to work and 13.6% of respondents worked abroad.

Student mobility	2007	2008	2009	2010	altogether
Participated	9	2	6	2	19
Did not participate	10	31	17	26	84
altogether	19	33	23	28	103

Table 1 *Overview of the respondents' student mobilities*

3.3 Foreign Language Competences

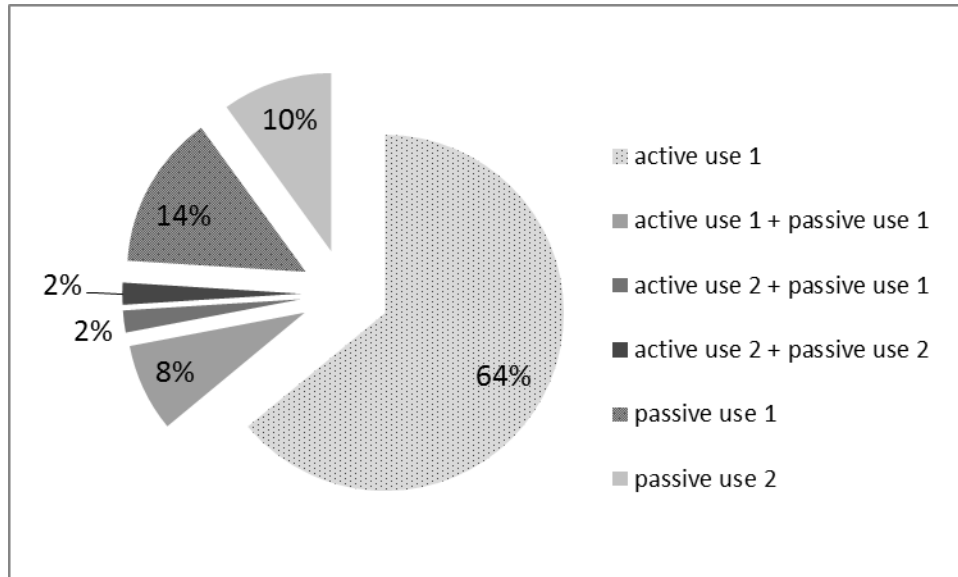
Teaching foreign language skills and competencies at the Department of Professional Language Education of the Faculty of Economics and Management at SAU is based primarily on the specific needs of the students and the teachers try to simulate specific life situations in which students can occur and work. That is the reason why such methods as model situations, case studies, training, project writing and presenting play an irreplaceable role in foreign language lessons. All of the mentioned methods require team work, and thus simulate the social environment in which students will work after graduating from the university.

Model situations and, in particular, case studies help students acquire not only language skills and confidence which they can apply as future employees of multinational organizations, but also intercultural knowledge and understanding. Therefore the main goal of language education is to learn vocabulary, phraseological units, professional style in simulations of authentic situations, such as: conducting meetings, interviews, business meetings and negotiations or business correspondence. In the period of market globalization and society focused on knowledge economy the foreign language competences of individuals play an important role. In the questionnaire, participants were also asked if they used foreign languages after graduating from the SAU.

We found out that 39.8% of respondents were trying to improve their foreign language competence after completing the second degree of higher education at FBFS in organized forms through language courses and 13.6% of them within the doctoral study in order to achieve the PhD degree. There are 41.7% of respondents who enhance their foreign language skills through a self-study. Communication

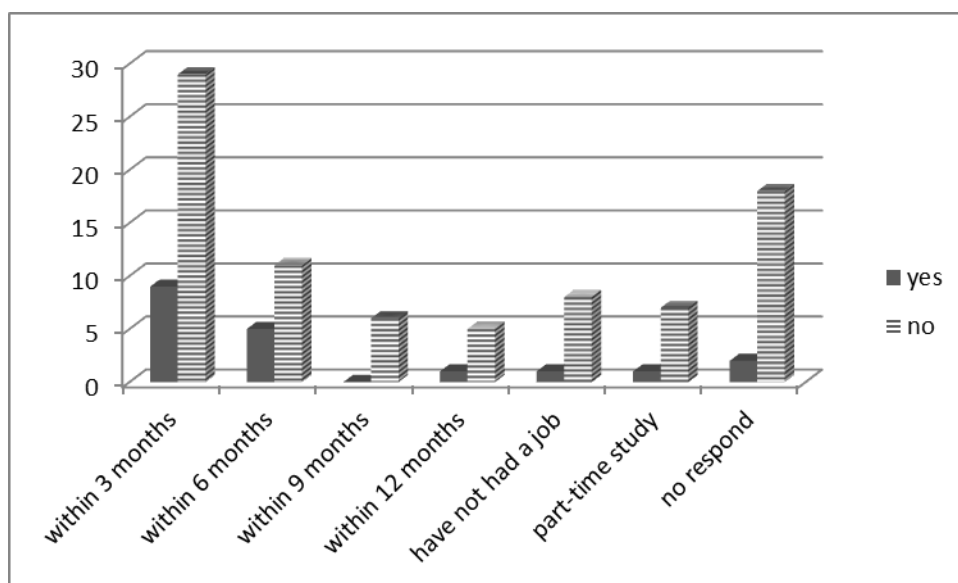
skills in foreign languages are applied by 43.7% of respondents, 2.9% of them communicate actively in two world languages (English + German, English + Spanish) and 25.2% of respondents communicate in their mother tongue and English and 6.8% of them in German language.

Figure 3 Overview of the respondents' use of foreign language competences



There are 8.7% of the respondents who communicate in two foreign languages, one actively (mainly English), and the other passively. Out of all respondents 4.8% have passive knowledge of two languages (English + German, German + Russian), 8.7% of the respondents speak only English, 4.8% of the respondents can speak German, and French is used by 0.9% of the respondents. The remaining 46.6% of the respondents have not used their foreign language communication skills yet. We assumed that the respondents who completed their mobility stays abroad have better chance to get job on labour market than those respondents who have not completed the mobility. This hypothesis was confirmed. Within half a year after graduation 74% of the respondents who took part in mobility could find a job while out of those who did not participate in any mobility just 48% of respondents were employed.

Figure 4 Time needed for getting the first job depicted in relation to student mobilities



By examining the time needed for getting the first job, we found out that 68% of the respondents of graduation year 2007, 79% of the respondents of 2008, 77% of 2009 and just 42% of the respondents of 2010 started their job within half a year. Comparison of these data confirms the fact that some respondents of graduation year 2010 had bigger problems to get suitable vacancy on the labour market than the respondents from previous years. The realised analysis showed that the graduates who completed mobility abroad during their studies could find job much earlier than the graduates who did not use such opportunities. It must be noted that to find a suitable job in the field of study also depends on vacancies in the labor market in a given region of Slovakia and also in international labor markets. The ongoing economic and financial crisis is also reflected in Slovakia, where the rate of unemployment in various regions differs significantly. We expect that the graduates of FBFS will use their expertise, language, and laboratory (practical) skills in the labor market more intensively. This intensive use of the knowledge and skills can be expected after more favorable macroeconomic and stable microeconomic conditions will be created.

4 Conclusions

The participation in the student mobilities abroad increases students' level of expertise and foreign language communication skills and creates better conditions for their employability on the European labour market. It enables the graduates as future managers to fulfill business objectives more effectively and to cope successfully with difficult situations at work. We found out that within half a year 74% of the respondents participating in mobility and 48% of the respondents who did not participate in any mobility could find a job on the labour market. The time of getting the first job is influenced to a large extent by the existing job vacancies on the labour market.

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Technical Education Support in Pre-Primary Education by Interactive Teaching Systems

*Peter Brečka– Miriam Bitterová**

Abstract: The paper deals with the possibility of interactive whiteboard (IWB) implementation to the technical education support in the frames of pre-primary education. It also presents some types of IWB, deals with problems associated with this issue and introduces teachers' competencies needed for the work with them. The final part points out the results of the research realized in this field in the USA and in Slovakia.

Keywords: interactive whiteboards, technical education, pre-primary education, types of interactive whiteboards, teachers' competencies in interactive whiteboard use.

Introduction

Digital technologies as teaching tools have already found their place in different forms and situations in the support of technical creativity in pre-primary education. However, the individual work was dominant up till now. This has been changed by the system of interactive whiteboards used in the teaching process at pre-primary level and due to this fact they have got their place among actual trends in education supported by multimedia. The following implementation of these tools to education requires qualified teachers. In this case an important role is played by the hardware and software specification of the system and also by the fact how it could be used in this field of pedagogy.

1 Types of interactive whiteboards

The interactive whiteboard as a didactic technique is one of the possibilities how to innovate the teaching process in pre-primary education. This technique and teaching aids – teaching materials develop not only the cognitive functions of the personality but also the processes of creative technical thinking, imagination, they increase students' interest in studying and help to form pupils' attitudes.

On the Slovak market a lot of types of interactive whiteboards of different producers can be found. New producers follow the well-tried principles and quality software to integrate all the already used tested technological elements. Suitability of certain solutions for pre-primary education can be seen mostly in the usage of systems based on electromagnetic principle, ultrasound and infrared rays. Concrete reasons are the followings: fast echo, while writing there is no need to put high pressure on the board (as in case of resisting boards), while writing on the interactive whiteboard we prefer to use special pens – styluses, used by electromagnetic technology. Pupils learn how to use this pen correctly, fix their own psychomotor skills, eliminate mistakes etc. From the point of view of the software support IWB producers have been focusing on this age group of children and trying to create simple, interesting, graphically colourful, intuitive environment for them where they learn to work fast and without bigger problems (e.g., the software ACTIVprimary, the board Promethean ACTIVboard that is represented by a transparent floating panel of tools, icons big enough that can be reached by each child. It contains audio clips that keep children's attention and make the environment attractive).

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The world market of interactive whiteboards is much bigger and due to this fact we introduce the following overview of some actual, commercially available IWBs. The table contains just the basic types of IWBs of given producers with selected technology of reading (some producers use in some cases more principles of IWB functioning). We do not present the products with function based on a specific technology. The mentioned products have an agreement of software usage with the main technology producer.

Product	Producer	Technology - reading	Writing tools
ActivBoard	Promethean	Electromagnetic passive Melamine surface	ActivPen – 2-button pen
CleverBoard	Sahara Presentation Systems plc	Ultrasound – infrared	Interactive electronic pen
eBeam	Luidia	Ultrasound – infrared China – email surface	Electronic pen with more buttons
iBoard	iBoard Canada Manufacturing Inc.	Ultrasound – infrared	Colourful markers + Pen + digital eraser
I-Cabinet	Mimio Virtual Ink	Ultrasound Ceramic board	Colourful markers + Pen + digital eraser
Inspire	Interactive Technologies	Resistive	Pen, finger
Intelliboard	Numonics	Electromagnetic	Pen
Interwrite	GTCO CalComp	Electromagnetic passive (contactless)	Electromagnetic rechargeable pen (with 2 buttons)
Mimio	Virtual Ink	Ultrasound – infrared	Electronic pen
Panaboard	Panasonic	Ultrasound – infrared	Electronic pen
PolyVision Eno	PolyVision Co.	Bluetooth technology Magnetic ceramic – steel surface	Electronic pen with bluetooth
Qomo	Qomo	Infrared China surface	3 colourful pens, eraser, finger
SmartBoard	SMART Technologies	Analog – resistive	Finger + 4 colourful markers, erasing sponge
Starboard	Hitachi	Ultrasound – infrared	3-button electronic projecting pen, finger
TeamBoard	Egan TeamBoard Inc.	Resistive – contact reading Infrared	Finger, electronic pen

Table 1 Overview of some selected iwb producers

To create a wider competition in sale of different IWB brands and types for schools, there has appeared a paradox connected with teaching materials for particular whiteboard types. It often happens that a school or schools in the city own more types of IWBs and this results into a problem of exchanging electronic materials that can be shared by teachers. It is generally known that “the power of information is in the ability of their exchange” (Stansbury, 2010). According to this statement the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTA) has decided to associate leaders on the UK market. It has recently announced that all the main IWB dealers have made an agreement that their educational content will be disposable in a common format. Due to the fact that these educational sources became more available, the idea of more effective technology usage has been supported. Out of the file specification (.iwb) an application for document browsing has been created (Boardviewer) and a library code can be used by the software producers for integration support to their own applications. The above integration has been agreed by the following companies in the United Kingdom: eInstruction, Hitachi, Luidia, Mimio, PolyVision, Promethean, RM, Sahara Presentation Systems, SMART Technologies and TeamBoard. Although IWB dealers in the UK have bound to deliver the .iwb standard software, it will not happen immediately because specialists responsible for the development are still testing the software.

Advantages of this solution are:

- preparing the content for one product and saving it in a file that will be usable again in another product;
- exchanging sources with colleagues and using the teaching content created by anyone else;
- taking own teaching materials in case the teacher moves to a school with another type of IWB;
- reading electronic materials provided by organizations, they can be provided in another format which saves time and money spent on the quality of these sources;
- schools will be more freehanded in IWB choice to choose the most suitable for their needs.

2 Teachers' competences

To use IWB in education process on a professional level, teachers have to acquire new didactic-technologic skills and competences. The usage of interactive whiteboard systems in each method of education supposes the existence of different integrated, resp. complex abilities of teachers (in the field of PC literacy, digital literacy, teacher's mastership, etc.). There remains the following question: the specification of these abilities or competences. In other words which competences are decisive, which significantly influence the professional usage of these systems in education process. Forming and developing of such competences is needed to be integrated in preparing teachers for pre-primary education. Among the most important competences can be found:

1. Usage of interactive whiteboard tools (service of the audiovisual didactic technique, the IWB itself and its supplementary equipment – data/video projector, PC, tablet, visualizer, multifunctional styluses, voting system, camcorder, etc.).
2. Choice of teaching materials (analysis of the educational programme and materials from the point of view of suitability for the curriculum aims and requested outputs from pupils considering their age specificities).
3. Preparation of teaching materials for interactive whiteboards and their pedagogic assessment – ability to use multimedia technologies in education (use of basic software support and further sources, e.g. interactive flash animations, templates, quizzes, videos and sounds).
4. Following the multimedia technology development with regard to interactive whiteboards (software and supplementary sources updating, mapping the use development, mapping application results, problems with the use of interactive whiteboards, information about the possibilities of content creation, exchange of experience, methods, tips, suggestions in teacher's community, e.g. portals such as: veskole.cz, activboard.cz, smarttech.com, etc.

3 IWB in pre-school institutions in Slovakia and in the USA

Numerous pre-school institutions have integrated various types of interactive whiteboards to their classes which has evoked discussions about the fact whether these interactive systems can speed up some progress in preparation for education at elementary schools. Some researchers proved that innovations that personalize learning and actively involve pupils into the teaching process and support teachers may be effectively implemented in pre-school institutions.

One of the first researches realized in the USA (McManic et al., 2011) has proved that the use of IWB in pre-school institutions positively influences basic language and mathematic predispositions, psychomotor and technical skills of children. The study also pointed out the fact that children made significant progress in the following fields: early literacy, knowledge of printed signs, understanding phonological connections, principles of writing and mathematic skills. At the very beginning of this study only 46% of children were prepared to study reading. Six months later the increase in readiness up to 82% was noticed. Only 72% of pupils achieved adequate score in mathematical tests concerning their readiness for learning mathematics. Till the end of the research this percentage increased to 92%. It has been proved that children who are familiar with these technologies beat in readiness those who

did not know anything about these systems. Children's progress noticed in testing (in pre- and post-testing) was statistically so significant that the percentage of children who were not ready to go to the kindergarten decreased in the next period by using IWB. This result has been noticed by a group of experts from the field of pedagogic and ontogenetic psychology and special pedagogy. They deal with children's readiness for elementary education in the USA. Some external evaluators who conducted testing took part in this research and the final data analysis was made by independent statisticians (McManis et al., 2011).

In 2011 – a creativity oriented research of pre-school aged children has been made in Slovakia. Its aim was to assess whether it is possible to develop creativity and increase the level of acquired knowledge of pre-school age children by solving interactive tasks on IWB in the field of technical education. It has been proved that a statistically significant difference was noticed between the input and output creativity measuring in the experimental group: the file of multimedia presenting exercise-books presented by interactive whiteboard containing tasks from the field of technical education applied in the education process at pre-primary level of education positively influenced the development of creative abilities of children. After the experimental verification of the assumption about increasing the level of acquired knowledge, the following fact was confirmed: children in the experimental group reached a significantly higher score in particular activities than those ones in the reference group.

On the basis of the above standpoints M. Červeňanská (2011, p. 123) states that: *“the interactive whiteboard as a didactic technique sharing information by multimedia presenting exercise-books as teaching tools applied in the education process in pre-primary education increases the level of acquired knowledge of children at pre-primary age and the use of the interactive whiteboard as a didactic technique in the education process at the pre-primary level of education can be evaluated as a motivation source very positively.”*

With reference to the above mentioned research we would like to draw the reader's attention to the following skills and abilities of children at pre-primary education level which can be developed by using the interactive whiteboard systems and relevant teaching tools:

1. Psychomotor capacity, principles of critical and creative thinking.
2. Communication in mother tongue.
3. Mathematical skills and basic skills in the field of science and technology.
4. Digital skills.
5. Learning how to learn.
6. Interpersonal, intercultural, social and civil competences.
7. Business competences, competences of active approach.
8. Cultural reception.

Conclusion

Finally we would like to emphasize the importance of developing children's creative abilities in the field of technical education by the use of interactive whiteboards that is connected with the development of other competences. It is also important to be aware of the fact that if the use of this technology is not based on an effective teaching method or it is not connected with an interaction support, such an education will bring just a small or no result. It is the responsibility of the teacher, what kind of interactive teaching materials s/he will prepare to involve young learners into the education process, to motivate them and to let them have the feeling of an active participation in the running actions. This depends on factors like: teacher's preparation for work with relevant technologies, level of their competences, training and support (provided by the employer and government, too) that are necessary to maximalize efficiency of these means.

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REVIEWS

Social Climate and Quality of Students' Lives in a Classroom (Slávka Hlásna)

Bratislava: Z-F Lingua, 2011. 146 p. ISBN 978-80-89328-60-4.

Silvia Šuverová*

Slávka Hlásna's peer-reviewed publication "Social Climate and Quality of Students' Lives in a Classroom" [Sociálna klíma triedy a kvalita života žiaka v triede] synthesizes both theoretical and practical knowledge from the field of social climate and the quality of students' lives in a classroom in four chapters which are organized in a logical sequence from the well-known themes of classroom social climate, through the concept of quality and life quality, to the notion of the quality of students' lives in a classroom.

In the first chapter of the monograph, the author pays adequate attention to the theoretical framework of the issues of school climate as for the factors, ways, methods and means of study. At the same time, this chapter contains a description of the opportunities that using knowledge regarding the school climate offers as well as the latest research results. The second chapter of the publication is focused on the notion of quality and the quality of life from various aspects, the basic terminology of the theme, but Slávka Hlásna also targets the extent of human life quality perception, the determinants that influence this category, and the dominant fields in the context of which more detailed attention is paid to the quality of life.

Especially the part dedicated to the field of education is valuable as not much attention has been paid to it in resources accessible to us and it has not been worked out to such an extent. These facts give the author a relevant basis for the definition of the basic structures and theoretical foundations of the theme of the quality of students' lives, what is, as for both content and focus, pioneering. Therefore the third chapter of the publication contains definitions of the terms quality and life quality in the sphere of education, defines the notion of the quality of students' lives in the classroom, the factors of school and home environment that are closely related to it and have an impact on the quality of students' lives in a classroom and at school.

The author of the monograph described some of the ascertained differences in the perception of the quality of life in schools between countries, while in the field of quality of classroom life research she attempted to summarize the results of recently published researches. The fourth chapter of this scientific peer-reviewed monograph includes a detailed description of the research in the social climate of a classroom and the quality of students' lives in a classroom from the perspective of 13-15 year-old students and their class teachers. What is unique, the research also focused on the relationship between students' evaluation of the quality of their school lives and the school climate. In this chapter the goals of research, research questions, hypotheses of the research, and research variables are clearly stated, the research sample and the means of research are described. Students' life quality in the classroom questionnaire was designed by the author and the gained results show that it is highly valid and reliable.

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The results of the research in the field of students' quality of life in a classroom as evaluated by students and class teachers are rendered and interpreted. The gathered data were studied in details and the differences between the opinions of students and their class teachers regarding the quality of students' lives in the classroom are commented on. From the point of view of the stated goals the research was focused on students' evaluation of the classroom climate. The formulated overall conclusions of the research and specific recommendations for increasing the quality of students' lives in a classroom represent an important contribution, as well as, the possibilities of using the gained results on theoretical, empirical and practical levels.

The research provides some valuable information and remarkable data collected in a large research sample that can serve as a basis for such a comparison that can lead to an increase in the quality of the educational practice in our schools. By its indisputable qualities, this peer-reviewed scientific monograph fulfills the requirements on a comprehensible guide on the topic and in many of its components opens new opportunities for the author to work out a theoretical framework regarding the fields of the quality of life in the educational context of school life in more detail.

Teaching Adults **(Alan Rogers)**

Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2002. 296 p. ISBN 10: 0335210996.

Iveta Žeravíková*

The third edition of the book “Teaching Adults” is an interesting and valuable source not only for teachers, but also for providers and policy makers of adult education. The author highlights the differences between education of adults and other educational programmes, as well as the difference of student-teacher relationship. As there automatically arises certain agreement or contract between the teacher and the learner. The author emphasises that in order to achieve the effectiveness of the contract/agreement, it is necessary to provide clear information about the program, as well as mutual harmonization of all three parts (provider, teacher and learner).

The author analyses the multiplicity of learning contexts – formal, extra-formal and informal contexts. He presents self-programming groups of adults and self-directed learning (distance education and various public lectures) chosen by the adults according their interests. He analyses how to make the courses more attractive and points out the situations, when it is necessary to change or modify the course in progress, which should always be done in co-operation with students, so that the course would fit their needs, interests and expectations.

In the first sub-chapter, the author points at several inequalities in the terminology and efforts to define them precisely and analyses the difference among the terms – “continuing education”, “recurrent education”, “lifelong learning” and “non-formal education”. He points at the various conceptions of adult education in terms of various cultures, but also on the various definitions from the point of view of several world organisations (OECD, UNESCO, NIACE, ACACE...). He considers the term “lifelong learning” the most consistent.

The author analyses types of natural learning – intentional and unintentional learning; incidental and unintended learning. He deals with the theories that deal with learning from two aspects – “why we learn” and “how we learn”. He presents two meanings of learning – learning as memorising and learning as a change. The author analyses plurality of the ways in which we learn. He states that it is impossible to identify and define the theory that would be the most effective and the most correct in practical application. That is the reason why in the question of individual theories we can never get to clear consensus.

A. Rogers analyses and offers solutions how to cope with some problems that could arise in the adult learning group. The author deals with the barriers to learning, causes and solutions of anxiety, positive aspects of anxiety, sources of emotional difficulties, ego-defensive mechanisms and learning attitudes. He emphasises the need of flexibility in the process of education, mainly in the area of setting the goals and working with learners, but he also points at individual understanding of these goals in terms of education and training. In the final chapter he author emphasizes that the adults are natural learners, that they define what they want to learn and what they need to learn and that these are the facts the educators should build on.

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INFORMATION

An Anniversary of a Distinguished Slovak Pedagogue

*Viola Tamášová**

Prof. PhDr. Peter Gavora, CSc. celebrates his 70th birthday this year. He was born on February 1, 1942 in Bratislava. He graduated the English studies and Slovak language at the Faculty of Arts of the Comenius University in Bratislava in 1965. He started his pedagogical work in Nitra and then he worked at the Faculty of Education of the Comenius University in Bratislava (1992-2011) where his career culminated by his inauguration to the professor of pedagogy (2004).

The scientific work of professor Gavora began in the field of English language teaching research and continued with the issues of literacy, learning from the text, pedeutology, classroom communication, student diagnostics and methodology of educational research. The basis of his publication work is formed by his scientific and research activities. Professor Gavora has published more than 170 scientific and professional papers, studies, monographs, edited dictionaries, and created and edited several encyclopaedia entries.

At the Faculty of Education of the Comenius University, he led the courses in pedagogical communication, educational diagnostics, methodology of educational research, and diploma seminars. He has prepared many graduates with bachelor's, master's and PhD. degrees. He is an author of the PhD. study programme at the Faculty of Education of the Comenius University in Bratislava where he held the position of a vice-dean for science and research for 6 years.

He has been a member in many Slovak and foreign committees for state final exams, habilitations and inaugurations. He has been the co-organizer of many scientific conferences. Professor Gavora is a member of a number of institutions and university scientific boards both in Slovakia and abroad. His work in editorial boards is considerable as well, e.g. he helped the journals *Pedagogická revue* and *Pedagogika.SK* gain credibility in the Slovak and Czech educational community.

We mention just some of his latest publications: *Gramotnosť. Vývin a možnosti jej didaktického usmerňovania* (with O. Zápotočná et al., 2003); *Učiteľ a žiaci v komunikácii* (2nd edition, 2007); *Sprievodca metodológiou kvalitatívneho výskumu* (2nd edition, 2007); *Úvod do pedagogického výskumu* (4th revised and enlarged edition, 2008); *Ako rozvíjať porozumenie textu u žiaka* (Gavora et al., 2008).

A number of recognized awards are the proof of his public scientific recognition, pedagogical and social contribution.

What is professor Gavora's motivation for continuous work in the development of pedagogy and its popularization? I think it is his love of knowledge, sincere and responsible relationship with students, and his deep interest in the quality of education in Slovakia.

Dear Professor Gavora, keep this direction, you are our role model. We wish you good health and lots of luck in your life.

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11th Symposium **“Geschichte der Erwachsenenbildung in Zentraleuropa”**

European Standards of Education in the Quality Management System of Universities and Institutions of Lifelong Education

*Viola Tamášová – Lucia Rákayová**

In 1995, a new tradition in educational cooperation among European higher educational institutions and universities was launched. Prof. Jurij Jug from University of Maribor, Slovenia, has initiated the project on “Geschichte der Erwachsenenbildung in Zentraleuropa” – History of Education of the Adults in Central Europe – and established its successful tradition of international symposia being held annually in different countries across Europe.

The very first Symposium was held in Brdo, Slovenia, in 1995. Since then, an international scientific symposium was held every year at a different university in a different city across various European countries. This year, **Dubnica Technological Institute** in Dubnica nad Váhom, Slovakia, will organize **the 11th International Scientific Symposium on European Standards of Education in the Quality Management System of Universities and Institutions of Lifelong Education**. The Symposium will be held on **6th-8th September 2012** in an internationally renowned spa town of **Trenčianske Teplice**.

The event continues the successful tradition of previous symposia being held in the following university cities:

1995 – Brdo, Slovenia,
1996 – Strobl, Austria,
1997 – Rogaška Slatina, Slovenia,
1998 – Debrecen, Hungary,
1999 – Zreče, Slovenia,
2000 – Pécs, Hungary,
2001 – Graz, Austria,
2002 – Opole / Radom, Poland,
2006 – Klagenfurt, Austria,
2008 – Pécs, Hungary,
2012 – Trenčianske Teplice, Slovakia.

The Symposium 2012 will be hosted by Dubnica Technological Institute in Dubnica nad Váhom (DTI). DTI is a private institution offering higher education in accredited study programmes focused on teacher training and practical preparation. Its main mission is to sustain, organize and provide higher education in accredited programmes as well as to facilitate creative scientific research in a wide range of courses and educational activities. Dubnica Technological Institute in Dubnica nad Váhom focuses on production and spreading the knowledge and innovations mainly in the field of applied study programmes and scientific disciplines; it trains the professionals with regard to the actual needs on the labour market in order to assist in creating knowledge society and sustainable competitive economy of the Slovak Republic. To accomplish the stated mission, Dubnica Technological Institute cooperates with universities across Slovakia and abroad as well as with entrepreneurs, public sector and nongovernmental organisations.

The Institute also participates in international projects and is extremely proud of being able to host and sustain the project on Symposia, which has such a long and successful history across Europe. The

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Symposium in Dubnica will continue the tradition of exchanging the experiences, theoretical knowledge and practical implementations on the issue of higher educational institution quality and lifelong learning.

The main **objectives** of 11th Symposium are: exchange of ideas, theoretical knowledge and practical experience in the field of quality management system of universities and higher education institutions as well as presentation of research results and theoretical knowledge in this field, and presentation of research results in the management of education quality. In addition, the Symposium should provide the grounds for establishing and developing the relationships with domestic and foreign universities, research institutions, practising experts and organizations.

The main focus of the 11th Scientific Symposium is divided into three main scopes:

1. Quality management system of universities.
2. Quality management system of institutions of lifelong education.
3. Management of quality of university education.

As in previous years, we believe this year Symposium to welcome significant representatives of higher educational institutions, universities and lifelong learning institutions from Slovakia and abroad; particularly from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Lithuania, Ukraine and other European and non-European countries.

The target groups of the Symposium are:

- European and non-European scientists, scholars and researchers working at universities or higher education institutions;
- European and non-European scientists and researchers from lifelong learning institutions;
- European and non-European practising experts working in the field of lifelong learning and in the field of education of the adults;
- undergraduate university students from Slovakia and abroad;
- postgraduate university students from Slovakia and abroad;
- universities, higher education institutions and lifelong learning institutions;
- managers of universities and lifelong learning institutions.

The published output of the conference will be a collection of abstracts with ISBN and a reviewed scientific monograph in English or German. As a part of the planned schedule of this international event, participants will enjoy accompanying social events and excursions to the local sights that will offer the grounds for informal talks, information exchange and networking. The organizers believe in taking the talks outside the conference rooms as such doing also offers the opportunity to learn more about the culture and history of particular European region.

If you are considering your participation at this exclusive annual event or you would like to publish your research in the planned monograph, please do not hesitate to send your registration form and a 250-words (maximum) abstract of your paper in English or German to the email address of the Symposium: symposium2012@dti.sk . The deadline for submission of registration forms and abstracts is 31st May 2012. A full-length paper and a power-point presentation should be sent to the same e-mail address not later than 30th June 2012. For more information on the Symposium, the Call for Papers and instructions please see the Symposium website at www.dti.sk/symposium2012.

ACTA TECHNOLOGICA DUBNICAЕ

Acta Technologica Dubnicae is an interdisciplinary journal whose primary objective is to fulfill the need for thorough discussion of research results in disciplines relevant to pedagogical, psychological and technological aspects of education and to contribute towards the wide diffusion of scientifically sound contributions in this domain.

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Please write your text in good English (American or British usage is accepted, but not a mixture of these). The submission should not exceed 20 pages with figures and tables (format A4, Times New Roman 12, single space). Use decimal points (not commas); use a space for thousands (10 000 and above).

Provide the following data on the title page (in the order given):

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Abstract. A concise and factual abstract is required. The abstract should state briefly the purpose of the research, the principal results and major conclusions.

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Appendices. If there is more than one appendix, they should be identified as A, B, etc. Tables and figures should be given separate numbering (Table 1, Figure 1), etc.

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References. The list of references (according to ISO 690) should follow the paper. Responsibility for the accuracy of bibliographic citations lies entirely with the authors. Citations in the text: please ensure that every reference cited in the text is also present in the reference list (and vice versa). Citing and listing of web references: as a minimum, the full URL should be given. All citations in the text should refer to the authors' names and the year of publication (e. g., Gordon, 2002; Gordon and Jones, 2002; Gordon et al., 2002). References should be arranged first alphabetically and then further sorted chronologically if necessary. More than one reference from the same author(s) in the same year must be identified by the letters "a", "b", etc., placed after the year of publication.

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