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FOREWORD

Dear Colleagues, dear Readers!

We have prepared for you the second issue of the fourth volume of our scientific journal Acta Technologica Dubnicae, which is polythematic again.

As a novelty, we are happy to announce that we have entered into cooperation with De Gruyter Open and our journal will use the open access publishing model from this issue onwards. De Gruyter Open (www.degruyter.com) is one of the world's leading academic publishing houses headquartered in Berlin. Its name has been a synonym for first-class publications presenting significant scientific findings and discoveries for more than 260 years. De Gruyter Open publishes Open Access scholarly journals across all major disciplines. These journals are freely available at www.degruyteropen.com. Most of them are owned by universities, research institutions, scientific societies and other organisations. Acta Technologica Dubnicae has become one of them and you can find our studies and professional articles there. The printed version of the journal remains unchanged.

What is new in this issue? The first section of the journal is opened by Slávka Krásna's scientific study entitled Subjective Understanding and Individual Interpretation of the Life Value "Health" by the Second-Year Students of Lower Secondary Schools and of the First- and Second-Year Students of Upper Secondary Schools in Slovakia. By means of a questionnaire, she investigated how elementary schools pupils and secondary school students perceive some life values, how they understand them and what the values such as health, happiness, friendship, love and family mean to them.

In the second scientific study entitled Child Creativity in the Context of Education at Standard and Alternative Schools in Slovakia, the author Eva Szobiová introduces an overview of research findings concerning the level of students' creativity and knowledge about education at alternative schools in Slovakia (Montessori, Waldorf and ITI), at which the research was realised. A comparison of the results of students and teachers of standard and alternative schools have brought some diverse findings. We consider the finding that the students of alternative schools with the Integrated Thematic Instruction achieved significantly higher scores in the field of originality compared to students of standard schools important, as well as the fact that between the creative orientation of teachers and their students' creativity no link has been found.

The section of professional articles is opened by Mária Hužovičová and Peter Jakúbek's article Lifelong Learning in the Field of Employment Policy in Slovakia. By means of a theoretical analysis, they focus on the (un)employment rate as an important indicator of economic maturity and quality of life in a particular country and the situation in Slovakia. The authors see a possible way of facing this problem in increasing the quality and efficiency of lifelong learning.

Milan Jozek, in his article Interpersonal Communication in the Process of Value Formation, deals with the issues of pedagogical-psychological and ethical dimensions of the importance of interpersonal communication in social life. He emphasises that a lack of communication often makes the educational process even more demanding and, therefore, this topic requires more attention and real solutions.

Inetta Nowosad and Ewa Karmolińska-Jagodzík from Poland, in their article Contemporary Education – Changes of the System, Research Reports and the Dimensions of Real Social Expectations, analyse the current state of being within the educational system and the socially expected changes in Poland. These changes are introduced from the aspects of teachers, students and their parents.

The possibilities of the development of psycho-didactic skills of visual art students participating in a new pedagogical practicum were the focus of a qualitative research undertaken by Hana Stadlerová from the Masaryk University in Brno. In her article entitled The Development of Psycho-Didactic Skills within Special Art Education Projects, she deals with the issues of a special art education program designed for socially disadvantaged clients.

In the article entitled A Cross-Cultural Examination of Curriculum and Sexuality Outcomes in Primary School, Róbert Osad'an from Slovakia and Yasmin Safir from Canada deal with the issues of sexuality and sex education, which they analyse and offer a comparison with regards to the attitudes of parents, as well as the curricula of selected elementary schools in Canada, the USA, Kenya, Australia a Ghana. In the final part of the article they suggest solutions regarding the field of child education to parents.

This issue of the journal brings reviews of three interesting books. In the first one, Erich Petlák evaluates, analyses and points out the positive features of the book written by Tomáš Jablonský, Silvia Matúšová et al. – Učiteľ a hodnoty. Európske hodnoty a kultúrne dedičstvo - výzva pre vzdelávanie (Teachers and Values. European Values and Cultural Heritage – a Challenge for Education), Ružomberok: VERBUM, 2013.

Réka Majasai from Hungary introduces a book edited by Ádám Nagy and Levente Székely: Másodkézből. Magyar Ifjúság 2012 (Secondary Source. Hungarian Youth 2012) published in Budapest in 2014.

The publication with the title Education in Transition reviewed by Silvia Barnová was edited by a Hungarian professional Erika Juhász. It was published in cooperation with Dubnica Institute of Technology in Dubnica nad Váhom, Slovakia in 2012.

In the section dedicated to information, our attempt is to introduce our outstanding pedagogues, psychologists and personalities from the field of science and technology when celebrating their life anniversaries. Erich Petlák in his brief contribution introduces the life and work of a pedagogue – Professor Ľudovít Višňovský. In the second article, Viola Tamášová pays attention to Professor Zdeněk Obdržálek's contribution to the development of Slovak pedagogy in the 20th century.

The final contribution in this section is Ladislav Várkoly's information regarding the scientific conference Present Day Trends of Innovations 2014, which was held in Brno, Czech Republic on the 22nd-23rd May, 2014.

I wish you pleasant moments spent by reading, evaluating, or thinking about your contribution to the next issue of our scientific journal Acta Technologica Dubnicae.

Viola Tamášová
Editor

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STUDIES

Subjective Understanding and Individual Interpretation of the Life Value “HEALTH” by the Second-Year Students of Lower Secondary Schools and of the First- and Second-Year Students of Upper Secondary Schools in Slovakia

*Slávka Krásna**

Abstract: The article focuses on the value “health”, as a component of the value orientation of students of lower secondary schools and upper secondary schools in our country. At the same time, it focuses on the presentation and interpretation of the results of a research conducted on a sample of students of selected schools, which was a part of a more comprehensive research on subjective understanding and individual interpretation of selected life values of lower secondary and upper secondary school students in Slovakia.

Key words: values, life values, subjective understanding, individual interpretation, students of lower secondary schools, upper secondary school students.

1 Introduction

The values in human life are understood as an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary concept, and in defining the concept of value orientation we have encountered multiplicity, typical for conceptually rich categories, more in e.g. Hlásna and Dohnanská (2012), Čepelová (2014), Pasternáková (2012, 2013, 2014).

Čepelová (2014) perceives values as an interdisciplinary concept that is explored from different perspectives of science and is used in several scientific disciplines. Philosophy, pedagogy, sociology, ethics, and also psychology deal with this concept, but it is also a commonly used term that can be handled even with no academic and scientific skills.

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According to Prudký (2004), the concept of values:

- is always related to the meaning of the object attributed to the object by an individual or a group;
- it is the meaning that is essential and that represents the contents of the object for the evaluator;
- the values in the society, in a group, in an institution, in a particular culture and an individual's values, etc. are a relevant factor;
- moral values and the system of values (ethos) are a vital source of motivation and direction of behaviour, they are the source of dissatisfaction/satisfaction, social satisfaction, social cohesion or, on the other side, tension, social exclusion and rejection.
- short- and long-term goals and activities in a group, society, in the state;
- it is particularly important to know one's own value preferences, structure and orientation to be able to define ourselves and our position in the society (Prudký, 2004).

According to another author, values originate from the interaction between the subject and the object of the evaluation. The interaction principle contradicts the a priori nature of values - values exist outside objects and people, they are merely a product of a complex relationship between man and some parts of the (physical or social) environment (Cakirpaloglu, 2009).

Klčová (2007, cited in Čepelová, 2014) defines values as the regulators of human behaviour. This definition can be amended to include a view of the regulators of human behaviour. On one hand, our behaviour is regulated by the external environment (external regulators) and depending on this it is regulated by the individual personal (internal regulators). Values in this sense may be also defined as norms that people follow throughout their lives.

Čepelová (2014) in agreement with Sičák (2011) states that values are manifested in a subjective-objective relationship with the evaluation aspect, which in turn affects the behaviour and experience of man. Cognitive and affective aspects of the evaluation are fundamental constructs for the value orientations of a personality.

Hartl and Hartlová (2000, cited in Čepelová, 2014) perceive a value as a criterion, stimulus, standard regulatory element of the activities of an individual or even entire social groups. A value is thus created and differentiated in the socialization process, as a part of social consciousness and it reflects the culture of the society.

The value in a person's life, according to Průcha et al. (2008), is understood as the "subjective degree of importance attributed by an individual to certain things, phenomena, symbols, other people etc."

"The definition of values is not clear at all," Čepelová (2014) states; and, like in many areas of psychology, also in this matter the plurality of opinions prevails. The common denominator in the above definitions is mainly the determining

character of values, whether in regards to the individual's personality or his conduct; the values are even perceived as a self-regulating element. In summary, it can be concluded that the values constitute one of the defining features of the personality, which means that values are reflected in the personality of an individual, his motivation, needs, activities, behaviour, but also in his temperament.

Further on, Čepelová (2014) states that the theoretical basis of value orientation is defined with a strong emphasis on the search for truth through empirical, critical and rational approach. At this level, people often know what to do, they are able to advise others, but not themselves, because the behaviour of others is easier to evaluate, the problems are more obvious, visible, solvable because they are observed from a certain distance and from a point of view of someone who is only externally affected by the problem. In (any) theory, everything is easily deducible and justifiable, behaviour is precisely defined.

The practical form of value orientation emphasizes the practical values useful in real life and approaches the persistent quality. The theory remains in the background. Sometimes it can be an obstacle, because in order to adhere to the theory we forget to live the life; we are too bound by various rules and principles, adherence to which prevents us from living a spontaneous life.

Finding connections and intersections between the two perceptions is essentially a search for the meaning of human life itself. If we manage to get to the core of the examined issues and to the understanding of the basic parameters and connections as close as possible, we can create some practical recommendations substantiated by relevant theoretical knowledge. The empirical part of the value orientation analysis creates a good basis for the theory and vice versa. Linking theory and practice is a key tool in finding answers to questions and subsequent generalizations (Čepelová, 2014).

Grác (1979) proposes to distinguish the values that are objective and accepted by the society. A person can acquire these values and they become his/her individual, subjective values. The above mentioned author distinguishes the following groups of values:

- unknown values that exist and are valid but they have not yet been acquired;
- identified but unrecognized values - these are the real values that exist in the society, an individual knows them but does not recognize them or identify with them;
- recognized but undesirable values - these are the real preferred values of an individual, however, in some situations they become undesirable (e.g. boldness becomes an undesirable value in case of danger).
- desirable values attract individuals, motivate them to action and they represent the goals to achieve.

Cakirpaloglu (2009) states 22 categories of value classification:

1. Category of the carrier of values - according to this category the author divides the values into individual, group and universal values;

2. Category of the origin of the values - values are divided by origin into individual and universal values;
3. Category of the values' function and position - here we can divide the values into values as a means and values as a goal;
4. Category of generality - according to the degree of generality, the author distinguishes between specific and general value preferences;
5. Category of the relation of values to the human nature and to the nature of animals;
6. Category of the hierarchic position of the value - values are categorized according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs;
7. Category of value substantiality - here the author distinguishes between two types of values:
 - expected values - normative standards of conduct,
 - values oriented on the realization of existence;
8. Category of the value content - according to the content, the above mentioned author divides the values into the following groups:
 - normative values
 - values emphasizing the individual and social desirability,
 - preferences affecting behaviour.
9. Category of the human needs role - according to this, the author distinguishes:
 - values adapting to new and changing conditions, the so-called adapting values;
 - values focusing on the defence of ego, called defence values ;
 - values of growth and learning - self-fulfilment, learning;
10. Category of the direction of preferences – the author distinguishes the value areas by the type of goodness;
11. Category of the degree of consciousness - according to this the values can be broken down into:
 - conscious - occur in adults and mentally healthy persons,
 - unconscious - found in the behaviour of children, immature individuals and pathological cases;
12. Category of the values' manifestation intensity:
 - relating to the external, surface and internal human characteristics - explicit values or implicit values,
 - values according to the time factor - actual, potential,
 - socially oriented values
13. Category of the approach and attitude to the reality;
14. Category of time perspective - past, present, future;
15. Category of the degree of inference - inductive approach, deductive approach;
16. Category of effect modality:
 - positive and negative values,

- progressive and regressive values
 - potential and actual values,
17. Category of the extent of embeddedness – the author distinguishes:
 - external and internal values,
 - true and authentic values;
 18. Category of the distance of values from the person:
 - specific values - represent emotional attachment to close and familiar contents, matters and objects;
 - abstract values associated with distant objects, objectives;
 19. Category of values' intensity is focused on determining the value intensity;
 20. Category of the value location - objective values (external behaviour, external goals ...) and subjective values (intrinsic properties, internal goals...);
 21. Category of the means of operationalizing the value, i.e. the position and function of preferences in the research process, where the values may represent an independent or dependent variable;
 22. Category of the size of preferences determines and classifies the values based on a predetermined rate, size - quantitative classification of values, while something may have a higher, something a lower value within the same category.

As Vacek (2013) notes, everyone has their own system of values, which guides their actions and thinking. It is not important whether one is aware of his hierarchy of values or if his actions are rather intuitive. The more comprehensive a value system is, the more connected it is to the overall personality of an individual, and the more significant influence it may have on the behaviour of an individual. The system of values is an important indicator of the personality orientation and it significantly affects their motivation and self-regulation.

According to Nákonečný (2009), the processes of formation and shaping of value orientation are influenced by exogenous and endogenous factors in human life and – as follows from the analysis of several authors' work - value orientation is a relatively stable category of life, having also a certain degree of rational justification. At the same time, it is a category formed and shaped in interaction with other people which significantly influences the life of an individual in the society - depending whether and to what extent he/she accepts the values declared by the society as socially desirable and adopts them for his own.”

According to Göbelová (2008), value orientation is a hierarchical set of values adopted by individuals, groups, communities, and it represents a continuous, relatively stable system of values, which in turn regulate and direct the behaviour of an individual or group of people. Individual value orientation consists of a system of attitudes, interests, preferences and tendencies to act and behave in a certain way. The author further notes that the value orientation of a person, therefore, is one of the most important parts of the internal structure of

our personality because it reflects our experience, and based on this it allows us to differentiate the (in)correct, irrelevant/relevant; it allows us to assume a standpoint in our life.

The development of young people's value system, according to Kraus (2006), is not yet complete, because young people create their value orientation in confrontation with diverse life situations and other endogenous or exogenous influences. According to the author, today's youth (girls more than boys) are more prone to commercialization - approximating the model of global youth in reflection of the world's globalization. Young people at present do not protest against the consumer society of adults, on the contrary, some research shows that the value system of youth more or less aligns with the average values of the entire population, the main preferred values being friendship, leisure and travel. In our opinion the value orientation is affected - among other factors - by the often omitted context of a group of people belonging to the same generation, which, according to several authors (Krásna, 2013), manifests common characteristics significantly different (not only from the sociological point of view) from the previous or the following generation (more details to follow).

2 Methodology and Research Methods

After the 3rd grade students of lower secondary schools (more Hlásna - Dohnanská, 2012), we have focused the most recent survey of subjective understanding and individual interpretation of selected life values on the 1st and 2nd year students of upper secondary school. Currently known research of value orientation of lower secondary and upper secondary school students in Slovakia was performed mainly by means of quantitative methods in several age groups. In case the respondents were to arrange the life values previously selected by researchers, health as a life value was usually in the first place or at least one of the first places (e.g. Kolář, 1997; Sak, 2000 and 2004; Klčovanská, 2001; Šamanová, 2004). The same results were recorded in supervising the graduation thesis and other final papers of our students (Nerádová 2007; Gajdúšek 2007; Paľuš 2007; Kubovičová 2009; Samko, 2011; etc.). We would like to expand these existing views for the exploration of subjective understanding and individual interpretation of the selected life values of students.

By means of a simple questionnaire we have created, we focused on the exploration of subjective understanding and individual interpretation of the selected life values of lower secondary and upper secondary school students; however, we are going to use possible methods of quantitative and also qualitative evaluation of the obtained data.

We formulated the following **research objectives**:

1. to determine the subjective understanding of selected life values of the 3rd and 5th grade students of lower secondary schools and the 2nd grade students

- of upper secondary schools and to interpret it in relation to variables: students' gender and school location;
2. to identify the individual interpretation of the selected life values of the 3rd and 5th grade students of lower secondary schools and the 2nd grade students of upper secondary schools and to interpret it in relation to variables: students' gender and school location.

We formulated the following **research questions**:

- What is the subjective understanding of selected life values of students of selected grades of lower secondary and upper secondary schools?
- What is the individual interpretation of selected life values of students of selected grades of lower secondary and upper secondary schools?
- What is the relationship between the subjective understanding of selected life values of students of selected grades of lower secondary and upper secondary schools and the students' gender?
- What is the relationship between the subjective understanding of selected life values of students of selected grades of lower secondary and upper secondary schools and the school location?
- What is the relationship between the individual interpretation of selected life values of students of selected grades of lower secondary and upper secondary schools and students' gender?
- What is the relationship between the individual interpretation of selected life values of students of selected grades of lower secondary and upper secondary schools and the school location?

We set the following **research variables**: selected life values, gender and school location.

We established the following **research sample** for the whole conducted research: the research sample will consist of the 3rd and 5th grade students of lower secondary schools and the 2nd grade students of upper secondary schools, who will be divided by gender and school location during the evaluation and interpretation of the results. Sample will only consist of the students of fully organized (where at least one class of each grade is open) state schools in Bratislava and in smaller towns in Slovakia, the condition being that the school is not in a village and it is not a non-fully organized school (where one or more grades are not open due to insufficient number of students) or school with combination-class or one-class system. The sample selection is not strictly random, but given by the willingness of principals, representatives of schools and school teachers to allow this kind of research at their school and classroom. (Non)fulfillment of the objectives and answers to the research questions can be resolved only after completing data collection, the obtained data will be evaluated and subsequently interpreted. Meanwhile, we can only describe the partial findings.

The first research survey was carried out in the 2nd semester of 2011/2012 in questionnaires for 3rd grade students of lower secondary schools in different localities of Slovakia (Hlásna and Dohnanská, 2012).

The subsequent research survey was conducted in the first semester of 2013/2014 via anonymous questionnaires. 288 questionnaires were distributed to schools, the return rate being 100%; however, 7 questionnaires were not counted into the evaluation since they were not filled-in or they were filled with vulgarisms. We can categorize the sample of the surveyed respondents by:

1. *Gender* - Questionnaires were filled-in by 281 students: 133 girls, which constitutes 48.6% and 148 boys, which constitutes 51.4% of the sample of respondents. All respondents filled in the gender data.
2. *Locality* - Questionnaires were distributed to five upper secondary vocational schools in the Trenčín, Nitra, Banská Bystrica and Žilina region (Secondary Technical School of Civil Engineering Žilina, Business Academy Zlaté Moravce, Secondary Vocational School Tisovec, Secondary Technical School of Civil Engineering Trenčín, Combined Secondary School Partizánske). Questionnaires were completed by 281 students, which represents 97.6% of the sample. All questionnaires contained the necessary identification data. (Data from the students of Bratislava schools have not yet been evaluated by the date of submission of this paper).

Since the subsequent data collection for the purposes of our research was focused on the 1st and 2nd grade students of upper secondary vocational schools, we decided to use a simple anonymous questionnaire **“Subjective understanding and individual interpretation of selected life values of upper secondary school students”**.

“The purpose of this anonymous questionnaire is to find out how the upper secondary school students understand certain life values, how they interpret them, what the values mean to them, what values are included there... Your class was chosen from many upper secondary schools throughout Slovakia, because you are able to adequately express your own opinion. Please write a few sentences about the terms below, in which you explain what it is, what is the meaning of that term ... HEALTH, HAPPINESS, FRIENDSHIP, LOVE and FAMILY.” Before the end of the questionnaire we asked them the following question and provided appropriate space for their comments: “Which of your requirements, dreams, life goals must be met to make you consider yourself RICH in some area of your life?” At the end of the questionnaire respondents were asked to indicate the year (1 2 3 4), gender (girl - boy) and location of the school (Bratislava - outside Bratislava); after this we thanked them for completing the questionnaire.

3 Findings

The evaluation of the questionnaires distributed to the 1st and 2nd grade students of upper secondary vocational schools was performed in the first semester of

2013/2014 through questionnaires for the 1st and 2nd grade students of upper secondary vocational schools in various localities of Slovakia. 281 students expressed their opinion on the examined life value - HEALTH.

Table 1 The most common responses of students of upper secondary schools outside Bratislava regarding the item HEALTH

	Girls	Number		Boys	Number
I.	Health is the most important	86	I.	Health is the most important	91
II.	Not being sick	20	II.	Not being sick	28
III.	Physical and mental health	15	III.	It should be protected and cherished	11
IV.	It should be protected and cherished	7	IV.	Physical and mental health	9
V.	Quite important	5	V.	Healthy lifestyle, diet, environment	6

Source: own research

From the interesting answers of respondents in this group we have selected:

Girls of selected grades of upper secondary vocational schools further stated:

“Health is something you cannot buy. It’s the most important thing a few people appreciate, only a few people have health. I personally try to do as much as possible for my health.” (girl/school in Žilina)

“It is an irreplaceable part of our lives that we often do not appreciate. We only understand the value of health once we get sick.” (girl/school in Tisovec)

“We only have one health, so we should treasure it. Not everyone is healthy. Those who are healthy do not appreciate it and those who would like to have it, cannot have it.” (girl/school in Partizánske)

“Health is divided into physical and mental. Physical health depends on lifestyle. Which means the diet, sports activities - everyone needs appropriate amount of physical activity; and, what is a major problem at present, whether the person smokes and drinks alcohol. Mental health - in my opinion, it cannot be defined. Everyone has a different life and develops differently and everyone has different things that are natural for them.” (girl/school in Trenčín)

The boys from selected grades of upper secondary vocational schools further stated:

“Health means to me the opportunity to go anywhere and do anything without restrictions due to pain or illness.” (boy/school in Žilina)

“Living in a healthy environment. Unfortunately it’s no longer possible.” (boy/school in Tisovec)

“For me, health is just a word, I do not care if I die today or tomorrow.” (boy/school in Partizánske)

“Health means to be free of the addictions of the modern world: coffee, cigarettes, drugs, alcohol, gluttony. Devoting more time to our external and internal (mind) wellbeing and less time to the “thieves of time” such as TV, PC games.” (boy/school in Trenčín)

“Healthy diet and healthy living. No smoking, drinking or drugs.” (boy/school in Trenčín)

“Health should be valued, because not everyone is healthy. When people are healthy, everything is easier.” (boy/school in Zlaté Moravce)

Tab. 3 The most common responses of girls of the 3rd grade of lower secondary schools and selected grades of upper secondary vocational schools outside Bratislava regarding the item HEALTH

	Girls, 3rd grade of lower secondary schools			Girls (upper secondary vocational schools)	
I.	Health is important/the most important	39	I.	Health is the most important	86
II.	Life without illness	22	II.	Not being sick	20
III.	Physical health Mental health	18 18	III.	Physical and mental health	15
IV.	Health is happiness	13	IV.	It should be protected and cherished	7
V.	Health can not be bought Health should be valued Health should be protected	9 9 9	V.	Quite important	5

Source: own research

Our sample of girls demonstrated that also the female students at lower secondary and upper secondary schools consider health to be the most important value; health is defined as the life without illness by most of our female respondents. In both age groups the concept of physical and mental health is in

the third place in terms of the frequency of occurrence. Younger girls in our sample perceive health also as happiness and as a value which “cannot be bought”. Group of younger and older girls subjectively perceives and interprets health as a value that should be protected and cherished.

Tab. 4 The most common responses of boys of 3rd grade of lower secondary schools and selected grades of upper secondary vocational schools outside Bratislava regarding the item HEALTH

	Boys - lower secondary schools			Boys - upper secondary vocational schools	
I.	Health is important/the most important	19	I.	Health is the most important	91
II.	Life without illness	18	II.	Not being sick	28
III.	Health is a condition	9	III.	It should be protected and cherished	11
IV.	When I feel well / When I feel good	6	IV.	Physical and mental health	9
V.	Physical health Mental health To value the health	5 5 5	V.	Healthy lifestyle, diet, environment	6

Source: own research

Our sample of boys showed that lower secondary and upper secondary school students perceive health as the most important; health was defined as life without illness by most of our respondents. Younger students of our sample state that health is a condition and at the same time that health is when you feel well. In both age groups the concept of health in the context of physical and mental health occurs as well. The older boys perceive health also in terms of a healthy lifestyle and diet; this viewpoint does not occur in the group of younger students. The younger and older students in our sample concur on subjective perception and individual interpretation of health as a value that should be protected and cherished.

Our respondents also state that they do not do things that would endanger their health and do not even want to try; they also expressed a wish for all people to be healthy. They deem it important to help the sick. To other respondents health means being without harm or injury, feeling good, having good immunity, a lot of minerals, not having to see a doctor; health is not having to wear glasses, being able to do anything, living without pain, having a good diet, stress-free life, being able to have fun and do sports, having no disability (eg. sick brain), crutches, wheelchair, no physical or mental impairment, no complicated illness, enjoying life; health means life without cancer and depression; they have associated the life in poor conditions with health deterioration. They further

stated that their future life development depends on health and that health can be destroyed by alcohol, cigarettes, drugs. It has also been shown that as the students get older they feel the need to cherish and protect their health for example by healthy lifestyle. In both age groups, the concept of health in the context of physical and mental health occurs as well.

4 Discussion and conclusions

Based on the analysis of the sample responses, we can conclude that the majority of the 1st and 2nd grade students of upper secondary vocational schools in the Trenčín, Nitra, Banská Bystrica and Žilina regions subjectively perceive the concept of health as the most important value. In the survey sample of boys this was indicated by 61.5% and in the sample of girls by 64.7% of respondents. Only three boys stated that health is not important, none of the girls in our sample indicated this. 15% of girls and 19% of boys described health as the absence of illness. In 11.2% of the girls' responses and in 6% of the boys' responses health is perceived as the unity of physical and mental health. A common feature in most of the completed questionnaires was the emphasis on the need to protect and promote health - the need to protect and value the health was emphasized in the responses of 5.3% of girls and 7.5% of boys. Several respondents declared the concept of health as a link between health and a healthy lifestyle. As the acquired findings show, the girls and boys in our sample do not take health for granted and they point out the limitations resulting from health complications or difficulties.

Only three respondents complained about their health. It was also revealed that some respondents are sensitive to the health condition of their family members (my grandmother is sick too, she takes a lot of medicine...) or persons with whom they are in closer contact (my friend lost her mother - she died of smoke-filled lungs...). This respondent's statement is also affecting her views on our society: "So the cigarettes shouldn't even be produced"...

Our respondents expressed subjective perception and individual interpretation of the concept of health as the highest value associated with the trouble-free way of life - going to school, performing routine activities; also with a healthy lifestyle, healthy diet, healthy food, disease prevention, medication, concerning their own health and as well as the health of their close ones; with the living conditions; they also demonstrated awareness that smoking, alcohol, drugs, etc. seriously harm human health.

There were no forms of subjective perception and individual interpretations of the concept of health related to preventive health check ups, to maintaining good hygiene and to health in terms of the whole population, for example in connection with countries with health risks, health as a medical term, health in the context of health insurance, vaccination, healthy work conditions, health requirements to perform particular work, in the relation to pandemics, chronic

diseases, diagnostics or animals' health. It is obvious that these components of daily life do not resonate with the lower secondary or upper secondary school students, they do not have experience or direct contact with them. However, we suppose that if we had conducted our survey at the time of publishing of this paper when the Ebola disease is a widely discussed topic, this would have been reflected in the subjective perception and individual interpretation.

The questionnaires handed in by the 3rd grade students of lower secondary schools, as well as the students of upper secondary schools were often difficult to read and contained a lot of grammar and spelling mistakes. Some of the questionnaires could not be included into the research evaluation due to the use of coarse language; however, this was not the case of the 3rd grade students of lower secondary schools. So far we can conclude that the students of the selected upper secondary vocational schools usually perceive health similarly to the definition of the World Health Organization, which defines health as "the state of complete physical, mental and social well-being while preserving the ability of the body to adapt to the changing conditions of life." However, this view has certain distinctive individual characteristics, as was expected.

When observing the common characteristics in the responses we have evaluated so far, we can conclude that the girls filled in the questionnaires more completely and the boys wrote less and more simply. Although it was the contents of the responses, not their form, what was important to us, it is obvious that most students' responses were rather unreadable and contained a lot of grammar and stylistic mistakes.

From the above results of research and the results of the research processed so far, we can generate some forms of values in terms of subjective understanding and individual interpretation of selected life values by students:

- a) **global values and partial values** - Global values are based on values socially preferred in our society, based on global values of our planet and as such they give rise to the partial values of the individual (or society of people) which are identified by the individual. On the other hand, each of the preferred values of the individual is based on the globally recognized values (e.g. moral code, law, religious principle etc.) which are then analyzed and modified, accepted, preferred, recognized and internalized by the individual or society at various stages of human life and development ("Living in a healthy environment").
- b) **universal values and unique values** - Universal values are based on the "written" and "unwritten" rules and standards of the world, of the society or a particular social group in a form beneficial for the mankind. Unique values are created in a unique situation for an individual, couple or group, and they are based on the uniqueness, specificity of a particular situation or person ("Health means to me the opportunity to go anywhere and do anything without restrictions due to pain or disease").

- c) **values proximal in time and values distant in time** - Values proximal in time are identified by an individual based on the values distant in time accepted in the particular society and perceived individually by individuals and social groups. And vice versa, the foundation of the values distant in time is created in the positions proximal in time which can be delimited in short-term, medium-term and long-term (“Health affects the future development of our life”);
- d) **short-term and long-term values** are often subjectively perceived and interpreted individually in the overall value system of the individual within the society - long-term values consist of many short-term values, and after the “priority” of a short-term values ceases, another short-term value emerges with the perspective of being included in a long-term value etc. (“Health is always the most important in human life”);
- e) **autonomous and heteronomous values** are based on the fundamental difference in their origin - an individual uncovers the autonomous values inside himself, while the heteronomous values are offered to him from “outside”. Resolving the (in)consistency levels between them is the focal point of the individual value system in confrontation with the preferred values of the community, social group, society (“It is insane that young children get hammered.”);
- f) **individual and group values** in the process of their creation and subsequent internalization (if that is the case) are influenced by the reality of life - individual values are focused on the individual and are mostly autonomous; group values are preferred in a larger social group (“I am happy when my friends are healthy too.”);
- g) **values at the informative and formative level** - The values at the informative level are based on the cognitive aspects of human life and specific knowledge, facts, information; the values at the formative level are based on the internalization of values, their direct impact on the system of values of a particular individual, his views, experience, degree of his personality development, mental ability, axiological concepts of the individual etc. (“People who live in poor conditions tend to get sick.”);
- h) **adaptation and anticipatory values** - the adaptation values are reflected in the current life situation, in the presence of adaptation to the current life conditions of an individual’s life within a society; the anticipatory values relate to a possible situation in the near and more distant future, considering the future needs of a well-rounded active life of an individual, social group or society (“Health means being free of the addictions of the modern world: coffee, cigarettes, drugs, alcohol, gluttony. Devoting more time to our external and internal (mind) wellbeing and less time to the “thieves of time” such as TV, PC games.”)
- i) **traditional values and innovative value** - From the content point of view, traditional values represent the stable norms of a specific social group or

society and represent their unchanging value “setting”; on the other hand, the innovative values reflect the current needs of every society. The ideal case is when the traditionally set “proven” values are preserved but adapted to the current innovative components of values. (“Health means a lot to me. I do not do things that would jeopardize it nor do I want to try.”);

- j) **standardized values and existential values** - The essence of the standardized values is their worldwide recognition and declaration as a standard of globally and universally preferred and applied values and preferences; existential values that are often in conflict with them result from the current situation, when a person is struggling for survival (healthy food vs poverty induced diet, consumption of unsuitable food, for example food from garbage, etc.).
- k) **socially desirable values and socially undesirable values** - socially desirable values are in accordance with social or group norms, and vice versa, socially undesirable values are in conflict, in contrast with them. There is a possibility of including the undesirable values into the value system of an individual or group (“For me, health is just a word, I do not care if I die today or tomorrow.”);
- l) **progressive values - regressive values** - Progressive values are advancing, ongoing, developing in a positive way, these are the values that provide the possibility of human progress, it can be assumed that these values will also be relevant in the following years of the life of an individual or a group. Regressive values are the values that do not provide the opportunity to move forward, it can be assumed that these values are not going to be relevant in the following years of a person’s life and their preference would mean “a step back” to the lower level of the value system, possibly dysfunctional in terms of the future world or causing difficulties in the future life (“I’ll start taking care of my health only when I get older.”);
- m) **priority value - secondary values** - priority, preferred values come first in the value system of the society or individual and secondary values are those which are still important to an individual or society, but they are secondary to the first group of priority values (“The human life and health is the most important, other things also important, but they are secondary.”);
- n) **stable form of values - labile form of values** - stable form means deeply internalized values, unchanging, steady, balanced values in the life of an individual or recognized by the society in the long term; labile form of values is presented by its shallowness, lack of internalization, relatively rapid volatility (“Health is an indispensable part of our lives that we often do not appreciate. We only understand the value of health once we get sick.”)

The collected partial results of the survey on the subjective perception and individual interpretation of selected individual life values of the 3rd grade

students of primary schools and upper secondary schools in Slovakia are the respective sample of 1st and 2nd grade students of upper secondary vocational schools will become a part of a comprehensive survey of a wider sample of the 3rd and 5th grade students of primary schools and 2nd grade students of upper secondary schools in fully organized state schools in selected Slovak towns and they will form a part of a broader interpretation of the results. The sample of students is experiencing “its” adolescence and the well-known typical features of this developmental period will naturally be taken into consideration during the interpretation of these results (e.g. Tamášová and Geršicová, 2013). At the same time, we realize that when interpreting the results, it is necessary to take into account the fact that each generation, according to sociologists, has its own specific way of life and, consequently, its own specific requirements. This is most visible in direct comparison with the previous generation. Thirty, twenty or even ten years ago, the visions of how the world would be like in 2010 were completely different from the current reality. The rise of personal computers, mobile phones and social networks surpassed the most daring predictions. Currently, there is a generation being formed and growing up, which has been in touch with these technologies since the early childhood. These are young people who perceive communication, reality, friendships, information in a completely different way than people in their thirties (The Generation Z is coming). Several authors agree that **the behaviour, values and attitudes of the “Millennium Children” differ significantly from the previous generation in response to technological and economic impacts of the internet.** However, another group of experts say that the characteristics vary by region, depending on the social and economic conditions in which they live (The Generation Z is coming). According to Saviit, the Generation Z is the most self-assertive generation in modern history (Sedlaková, 2012) - instead of waiting for the information to be filtered by the previous generations, it dictates the trends - often even before completing the primary school. Social networking overcomes all the barriers in communication... - everyone able to write can share their knowledge and experience - and sharing the knowledge is essential to the Generation Z. The above findings, in our opinion, show a different view on the way of building and sharing values among young people, who are the target group of the research.

“Health is the only value recognized by all ...” (Latin proverb)

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Child Creativity in the Context of Education at Standard and Alternative Schools in Slovakia

*Eva Szobiová**

Abstract: The contribution gives a review of the research findings mapping (survey) the pupils' creativity level. It provides information about education in alternative schools: Montessori, Waldorf and the Integrated Thematic Instruction (ITI), where the research was realised. The Torrance test (TTCT) and Urban test (TSD-Z) were used for the identification of pupils' creativity. The procreative tendency of the teachers was examined by the Self-Rating Scale of the Creatively Oriented Personality (SRSCP). The comparison of pupils' and teachers' results from standard and alternative schools brought diverse results. Our findings regarding the creativity level of pupils attending the second grade of Montessori and Waldorf schools (N=50) in comparison with the children in standard schools suggest no significant differences. The pupils of the alternative classes of ITI (N= 206) achieved significantly higher scores of originality than those of standard schools (N=194). A link between the teachers' creative orientation and their pupils' creativity has not been found.

Key words: standard schools, alternative schools, creative thinking, pupil, teacher, creative personality.

1 Introduction

Aim of the research: The research was focused on monitoring the creativity level of pupils attending standard and alternative (Montessori, Waldorf and the Integrated Thematic Instruction – ITI) schools in Slovakia. We presumed that pupils as well as teachers at alternative schools would show higher creativity levels since their pedagogical-educational aims are directed towards creativity as the key characteristic feature of complex personality development. The purpose was to compare the levels of creativity abilities and creativity tendencies of pupils at standard and alternative schools (classes).

Standard (traditional) schools: mostly memory-reproductive with an authoritative role of a teacher; the usage of coercion methods, there is a relatively stable organization of school classes, teaching, and school year; with fixed curriculum and teaching plans defined by „someone from the outside“-

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mainly by the Ministry of Education, with a directive approach to school management and the educational process.

Alternative schools: approaches offering options to traditional institutionalized education or movements which refuse the concept of formal education (according to UNESCO).

Montessori schools: supporting autonomy, creativity, responsibility for own actions; an environment offering mutual respect, cooperation, and help; teachers are highly qualified, show empathy and provide individualized stimuli for all children.

Waldorf schools: encouragement of own opinion, autonomy; emphasis on creativity and own creation of pupils; teachers are “free” creators of curriculum, i.e. “teachers of Waldorf schools are not limited to the curriculum of traditional type and they plan education in cooperation with pupils and partially with their parents as well.” (Průcha, 1996, p. 24)

The Integrated Thematic Instruction – ITI: a newer view on the development of psychical functions and processes (Bloom, Gardner), creating a brain compatible environment; innovation of teaching methods and strategies formed on the basis of the discovery principle; revisions of curriculum and creating a year-long theme to organize the curriculum content.

Sample: Pupils attending 2nd grades at Montessori and Waldorf school (N=50) versus pupils at standard school (N=35) in Bratislava (average age 8 years; SD = 4.79 month). Pupils in 3rd and 4th grades (9 - 10 years) of 10 alternative classes following the Integrated Thematic Instruction model (N=206) versus pupils in 3rd and 4th grades of 9 classes at standard schools (N=194) in Bratislava, Banská Bystrica and Pezinok.

2 Methodology and research methods

The Torrance test of Creative Thinking (TTCT) – Incomplete Figures (Jurčová, 1984); The Urban figural test of creative thinking - TSD – Z (Urban, Jellen and Kováč, 2002); PACT – Pennsylvania Assessment Creative Tendency (Rookey, 1971); Self-rating Scale of the Creatively Oriented Personality - SRSCP, (Szobiová and Fichnová, 2003).

For the purposes of creativity identification, a second subtest, The Incomplete Figures, was used from Torrance Figural Test of Creative Thinking, standardized for Slovakia by M. Jurčová (1984). It is a well-known and verified testing method in which ten incomplete figures are to be used as a basis for drawing interesting objects or pictures that would not be made up by anyone else. For each of the pictures then a story has to be devised, the most complex and interesting possible, with an ingenious and unusual title. In the test measuring the individual's tendency to structuration and integration, three indicators of creativity were assessed:

- *fluency* - the number of relevant (adequate) answers
- *flexibility* - the number of various solutions indicating different tendencies in solving tasks, a change in the approach, the ability to change the way of thinking
- *originality* - the score is determined by low statistical frequency, the measure representing the decline from what is current, ordinary or evident.

The fluency score was represented by the number of acceptable answers. The flexibility points were gained by the creations belonging to various categories (however, they are not of the same degree of universality and they depend on the frequency of occurrence of the given theme). Originality was measured by a 0-3 point scale, on the basis of the frequency of occurrence of individual themes in the investigated sample. 0 points were gained by the answers occurring in more than 5% of the cases, 3 points were gained by fanciful, uncommon answers, occurring in less than 1% of the cases.

The TSD-Z (Urban Creative Thinking Test, the Slovak form adapted by Urban, Jellen and Kováč, 2002) is based on the principle of uncompleted figures or shapes. There are five figures enclosed in a frame and the last one, the sixth one, is outside the frame. The proband's task is to complete the drawing by individual shapes. This test also reflects the personality dimensions of creativity, such as taking risks, overcoming obstacles, complexity of the view, etc. Urban and Jellen, the authors of the test, are of the opinion that in comparison with the Torrance tests the Urban test is more objective in reflecting the age differences in creative performances.

Using the PACT questionnaire (Pennsylvania Assessment Creative Tendency, Rookey, 1971), we examined the levels of creative tendency among schoolchildren. This questionnaire includes 19 statements (i.e. I like to try new things). The proband's task is to express his/her agreement or disagreement on a 5-point Likert scale (5 - absolute agree – 4 moderate agree – 3 uncertainty – 2 moderate disagree – 1 absolute disagree). The reliability and validity of the questionnaire were verified throughout several research projects in the USA. According to the author's opinion (Rookey, 1971), this method offers valid assessment of creativity in pupils, because it eliminates stress from tasks and the form of statements does not distort the results.

SRSCP (Self-rating Scale of the Creatively Oriented Personality, authors Szobiová and Fichnová, 2003) is a relatively exact questionnaire method of prompt orientation, serving the purposes of identification of procreatively oriented personality types of school teachers on the basis of self-rating of their own preferred ways of behaviour and experience in the described situations of both personal and professional character. Procreative orientation – this term describes the type of personality with which it is possible to identify a certain tendency to creativity as such openness to new trends, as well as certain procedures and approaches to the work and further characteristics or traits shared

by creative individuals, however, it does not mean that these abilities are invariably manifested in each procreatively oriented personality. Personalities of this kind actively co-operate in introducing new forms, procedures, etc., they show interest in the growth of both their own creative abilities and those of the children in their care. Verification of the SRSCP (Szobiová and Fichnová, 2003) with a sample of N=111 has shown its high internal consistency, as well as its highly significant correlations with classical creativity measures - TTCT - Torrance (Jurčová, 1984).

Statistic procedures: ANOVA – analysis of variance, Mann-Whitney test, Kruskal-Wallis test, t-test, non-parametric correlations.

3 Results

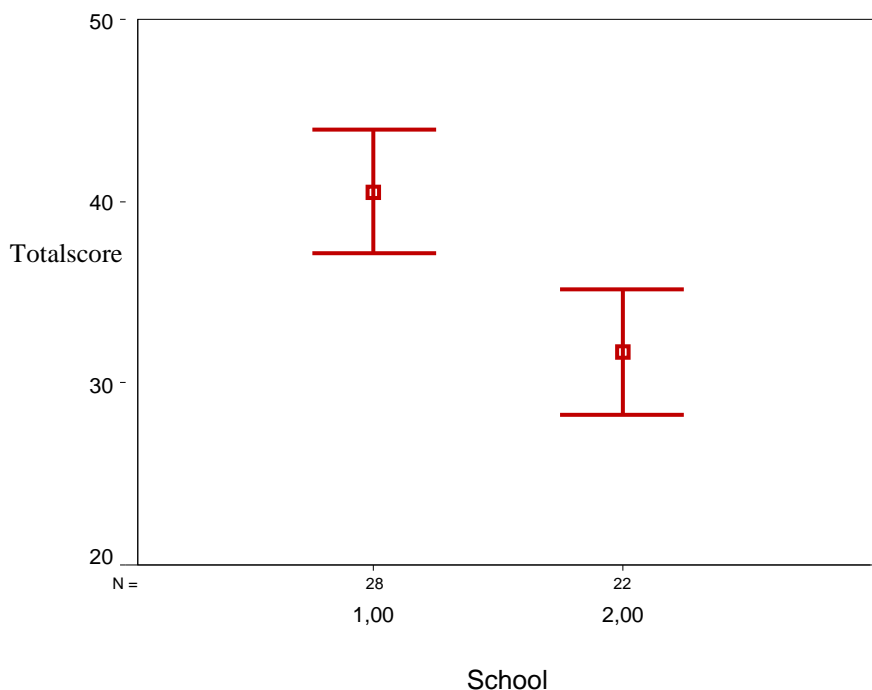
Table 1 Comparison of attained scores of creativity factors of pupils attending standard (s) and alternative (a= Montessori, Waldorf) primary schools

	FLs	FLa	FXs	FXa	ORIGs	ORIGa	ELABs	ELABa	SUMAs	SUMAa
N	35	50	35	50	35	50	35	50	35	50
AM	9.96	9.36	5.50	4.91	15.46	13.45	9.57	3.95	40.50	31.68
SD	0.19	1.76	1.00	1.15	3.54	4.68	9.19	3.91	8.75	7.78
Minimum	9.00	2.00	4.00	1.00	10.00	4.00	0.00	0,00	28.00	7.00
Maximum	10.00	10.00	8.00	6.00	27.00	23.00	33.00	13.00	61.00	44.00

Explanatory notes:

FLs, FXs, ORIGs, ELABs, SUMAs = values of fluency, flexibility, originality, laboration factors and the total score obtained from pupils at standard primary schools.

FLa, FXa, ORIGa, ELABa, SUMAa = values of fluency, flexibility, originality, laboration factors and the total score obtained from pupils at alternative primary schools.



Notes: 1 = standard primary school, 2 = alternative primary school

Figure 1 Comparison of the attained results in total scores of pupils attending standard and alternative (Montessori, Waldorf) primary schools. The line represents 95% of results.

Table 2 Statistical significance of differences in each factor of creativity and the total score of pupils attending standard or alternative (Montessori, Waldorf) primary schools

	FL	FX	ORIG	ELAB	SUMA
P	0.036*	0.167	0.152	0.028*	0.001**

FL: APA (U = 247.500; p = 0.036)

FX: APA (U = 243.000; p = 0.167)

ORIG: APA (U = 235.000; p = 0.152)

ELAB: APA (U = 196.000; p = 0.028)

SUMA: APA (U = 139.500; p = 0.001)

Explanatory notes:

* =5 per cent level of significance, ** = 1 per centlevel of significance,

FL, FX, ORIG, ELAB, SUMA = fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration, the total score

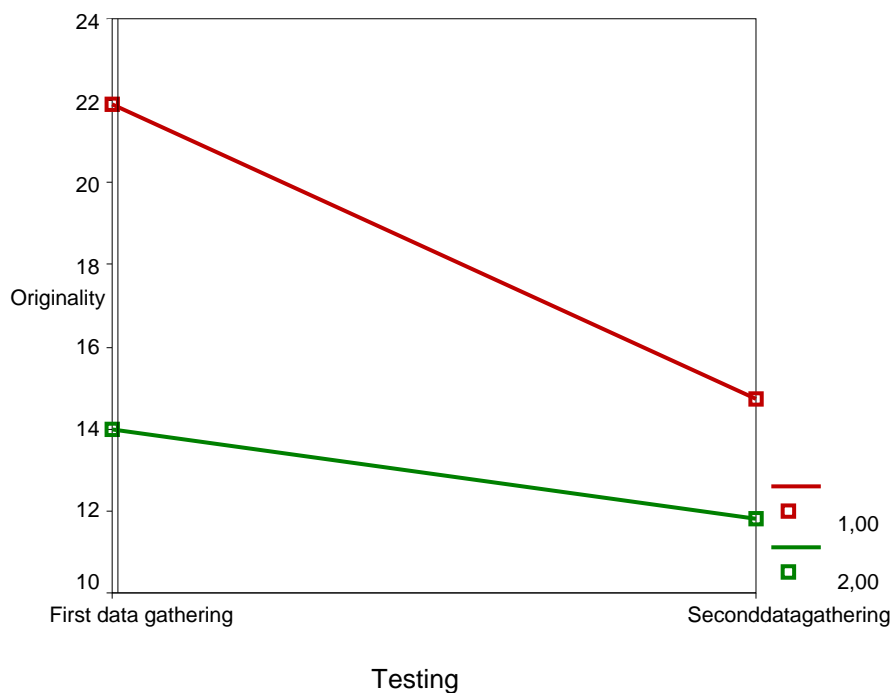


Figure 2 Illustration of differences over time (after 2 years) in the level of creativity factor in pupils attending standard or alternative (Montessori, Waldorf) schools

Table 3 Correlations between scores of standard school teachers and alternative school teachers (N=11) in the SRSCP and length of their service and creativity level in pupils

	FL	FX	ORIG	SUMA
SRSCP	1.000**	0.000	0.800	0.800
SRSCP1	0.800	0.600	0.400	0.400
°Practice	1.000**	0.000	0.800	0800

Explanatory notes:

FL, FX, ORIG, SUMA = fluency, flexibility, originality, the total score

Table 4 Comparison of the attained scores of creativity factors in the TTCT and the Urban test of pupils attending standard (s) and alternative (a = ITI) primary schools

	FLs	FLa	FXs	FXa	ORIGs	ORIGa	TSD-Zs	TSD-Za	PACTs	PACTa
N	194	206	194	206	194	206	194	206	194	206
AM	9.86	9.76	7.31	7.63	16.29	20.67	33.20	34.83	50.40	47.65
SD	0.85	0.44	1.30	1.02	4.07	4.56	10.23	9.66	6.67	8.54
Mann-Whitney U	238.00		Kruskal Wallis $X^2 = .898$		t = 5.06		ANOVA		Kruskal Wallis $X^2 = 4.111$	
Wilcoxon W	291.00 z = 1.271		Sign. .638		p < 0.01		Sign. .497		Sign. .128	

Table 5 Scores of creativity tendency of the PACT questionnaire in teachers of standard and alternative classes with the Integrated Thematic Instruction

Teachers	Scores of creativity tendency		T - value
Alternative classes (N = 10)	AM = 79.43	SD = 10.73	1.77
Standard classes (N = 9)	AM = 74.20	SD = 9.84	

4 Discussion and conclusions

Contrary to our preassumptions we found out that the pupils attending standard primary schools achieved significantly higher scores in the factors of fluency, elaboration and in the total score in comparison with pupils attending alternative (Montessori, Waldorf) primary schools.

The level of originality factor of the pupils attending standard education has significantly decreased two years after primary school entry. On the other hand, the originality of pupils attending alternative schools (Montessori, Waldorf) has declined only non-significantly over the same time. We can conclude that alternative schools in our sample had a more favourable effect on creativity

development than the standard schools, the impact of which was obviously more negative.

The presumption regarding a positive relationship between the procreative orientation of teachers and the creativity level of their pupils was confirmed only in the fluency factor. We noted positive correlations between the creative orientation of teachers and the length of their service.

The pupils of alternative classes with the Integrated Thematic Instruction (ITI) show significantly higher figurative originality level in comparison with the pupils of standard schools. This type of education probably affects progress of pupils in graphic creativity more intensively.

The teachers of alternative classes express a stronger tendency for creativity. We assume that more flexible teachers are more likely to be engaged in alternative schools with the ITI.

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ARTICLES

The Lifelong Learning in the Field of Employment Policy in Slovakia

*Mária Hužovičová - Peter Jakúbek**

Abstract: The rate of employment (or vice versa the rate of unemployment) is an important indicator of economic maturity and quality of life in a particular country. Compared to other countries of the European Union, unemployment in the Slovak Republic is a serious problem. Improving the quality and the efficiency of Slovak educational institutions can be one of the ways how to struggle with this problem. The Slovak economy has been transformed from planned economy to market economy, and, therefore, retraining, re-educations and improvement (in the field of industry and services) have been required. The Institute of Lifelong Learning is very helpful in this field. The article deals with shortcomings of the Institute of Lifelong Learning and it points out the reality leading to drawbacks. It also concerns the following possibilities, which might improve the current situation. In a theoretical analysis of the current state, we define the basic terms and problems in this field.

Key words: lifelong learning, adult learning, unemployment, education, efficiency of fund spending.

1 The definition of lifelong learning

A perspective of learning is required for the society to become successful and advanced. It brings the demand for constant learning, extending knowledge, competencies and skills of citizens. The experience indicates that the knowledge of graduates is not adequate for both graduates and employers. The graduates do possess the knowledge, but they are not able to apply it in their professional lives.

Thus, it happens that after reaching some academic degree, completing a course or training, a graduate is not able to find a job and becomes unemployed. These

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shortcomings lead to the need for lifelong learning of all citizens. This concept means learning for the whole life. Its contribution should be top-quality education for all people (at the pre-reproductive, reproductive and post-reproductive age). A country or a company is developed and pushed forward by human resources. A desire for learning and developing one's skills is also very helpful. *"Under the concept of lifelong learning we understand all the activities carried out throughout one's life, with the goal to improve one's knowledge, skills and abilities ... it consists of school and further education."* (Stratégia celoživotného vzdelávania, 2011, p. 49). The concept of lifelong learning is understood as the group of all the activities related to education and development of human knowledge, skills and competencies throughout the whole life. As stated in the Memorandum of Lifelong Learning (Memorandum celoživotného vzdelávania, 2000), the attention is oriented on the individual, all according to his/her needs. Subsequently, the basic ideas and strategies of lifelong learning emerge from this demand: new basic skills, human resource investment, permanent innovation of educational and learning processes, new consultancy conceptions enabling the access to learning for all people regardless of the differences, and increasing the value of education. Veteška and Tureckiová (2008) tend to use the concept of learning throughout one's whole life, replacing the concept of lifelong learning. It is for the reason that this concept focuses on the skills to learn or more precisely on learning competencies.

2 Forms and periods of lifelong learning

The concept of lifelong learning and its forms defined by Memorandum of Lifelong Learning (2000):

Formal learning is defined by ISCED (In Classification of learning activities – Manual, 2006, p. 13) as education provided within the school system, university system and other educational institutions. It usually starts at the age of 5-7 years and continues to the age of 20. It is provided by institutions oriented on education and vocational training. A graduate reaches some academic degree. Cadefop's dictionary (2008, p. 86), the summary of basic terminology from the field of education, brings another definition of formal learning: *"The learning that occurs in an organised and structured environment (e.g. in an education or training institution or on the job) and is explicitly designated as learning (in terms of objectives, time or resources). Formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view. It typically leads to validation and certification."* According to the mentioned definitions we can identify some minor differences. In the Slovak Republic we use the definition identical to the definition of ISCED. Within the professional terminology, in the Slovak Republic, it is also stated as school education.

- Non-formal learning represents all the organised and systematic educational activities which do not correspond with the definition of formal learning. This learning occurs at educational institutions or also out of them. It includes people of all age groups (ISCED In Classification of learning activities - Manual, 2006, p. 13). This kind of learning can occur at the workplace or various organisations, *“which have been established to supplement formal educational systems”* (Porubská and Határ, 2009, p. 130). In the professional terminology, we may find it also under the concept of additional or further education. The Strategy of Lifelong Learning (Stratégia celoživotného vzdelávania, 2011) brings the concept of continuous learning. This concept represents the process of deepening, improving and extending knowledge. It also includes the development of all the skills and competencies necessary for a particular job position.
- Informal learning or other learning is not planned and intentional. Its basic characteristics are that it is neither institutional nor organised. It stems from the daily life. *“It is neither organised nor structured on particular goals, time or intention to learn. Informal learning is mostly not intentional from the student’s point of view.”* (Cedefop, 2008, p. 94). The informal learning is *“the reflexively adopted experience gained at work, within the family life or gained within the relationships with other people. Informal learning can also be an evaluation of one’s behaviour or particular situations or it can represent own educational projects.”* (Beneš, 2008, p. 54). This learning is related to real life situations and problems, which the individual has to deal with. This process of solving stems from the intrinsic motivation of the learner, which contributes to his own development. This is probably the main advantage of the informal learning.

Lifelong learning focuses not merely on its institutions, but also on the educational process, on learning and its outcomes. It is an inevitable and permanent activity, in which the continuity and need for whole life learning is emphasized. That brings the demand for its accessibility to everyone regardless of age. Not only the demands and interest of citizens, but also the demands of employers have to be taken into consideration.

Adult learning represents the subsystem of lifelong learning. Through adult learning, the individuals are not only allowed to develop themselves, but at the same time, they contribute to the development of the society in positive way. According to Plamínek (2012), adult learning is defined as intentional, systematic mediation and adoption of a human experience and knowledge from various fields. Meditation, gaining and consolidation of knowledge, skills and habits, development of social and work activities are considered to be the main goals of adult learning. Adult learning is also characterized as *“systematically organised development of knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, interests, needs, aspirations and other personal characteristics, which are necessary for fully-*

fledged social life at work. It is also important for the life outside the workplace and for wide-ranging personal development." (Švec, 2002, p. 160) As stated in Veteška and Tureckiová (2008, p. 16-17), the concept of adult learning is understood as *"an integral part of individual's life within the society... i.e., it is an essential part of lifelong learning. Its goal is the improvement of knowledge, skills and professional competencies. It occurs within re-qualification and specialized courses, which can be offered not merely by companies but also by higher educational institutions and universities."* Further education focuses on the possibility to provide education after reaching a particular academic degree. It is divided into vocational, civil and interest education (Veteška and Tureckiová, 2008). It aims not only to improve the chances of getting a job, but also increases the chance to being promoted as for the work position. An individual, subsequently, lives a productive, fully fledged and satisfied life. Beneš (2008) points out the fact that learning, especially adult learning, occurs depending on individual and biographical rarities. On a large scale, it is socially determined and differentiated.

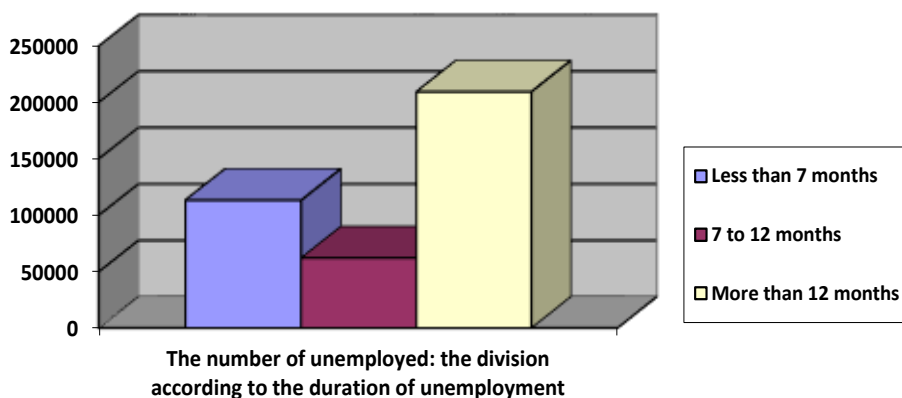
There also exists an educational financial aid, provided by the European Union. Between the years 2007-2013, the financial aid was provided via Grundtvig programme, which was the part of the funding programme called Lifelong Learning Programme, LLP. This programme focused on adult learning, on people older than 16. It did not include the university and secondary school students of internal studying programmes (SAAIC, 2010). The national project called *Ďalšie vzdelávanie a poradenstvo pre dospelých ako nástroj lepšej uplatniteľnosti na trhu práce* (Further Education and Consultancy for Adults as a Tool for Better Employability in the Labour Market) has been currently taking place. It has been implemented since 01/2013 to 09/2015. Its goal is to connect employers' demands with the demands of learners and educational institutions. The individuals will gain skills, knowledge and abilities, which will guarantee the future possibility to be successful in the labour market. The acquired knowledge will be accepted in the system of further education. The employers will get an accurate description of learners' knowledge, abilities and skills. It is possible due to the fact that they can participate in the creation of the modules of educational programmes (National Institute of Lifelong Learning, 2010-2014).

3 Slovakia and the lifelong learning policy

The need for adult learning in the Slovak Republic is inevitable, especially in the environment with increasing requirements on the abilities and skills of job applicants. It is not a problem only in Slovakia, but also in the European context. Despite the fact, that all the European governments support re-qualifications and employing people under 30, it is necessary to deal with another group of people.

It is the group of fifty-year old people (and older), who have more and more serious problems to find a job.

The opportunities for education are perceived in various contexts. The first and the most important is the economical one. According to the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, in the first quarter of 2014, 382 900 Slovak inhabitants were unemployed. And not speaking of 210 000 long-term unemployed people (those, who have been unemployed for more than one year), what represents the vast majority of unproductive inhabitants. These people cost a lot of money. An accurate division of unemployed people is shown in Figure 1.



Source: COLSAaF, 2014

Figure 1: Unemployment in Slovakia, 1st July, 2014, division according to registration at COLSAaF

A lot of people from this group grew up in the educational system, which was set according to demands of the socialist planned economy. For them, there is only a little chance to respond flexibly to the requirements of the labour market. The transition from planned economy to market economy (also for better efficiency of almost all competitive companies) must have led to the reduction and transformation of labour force. The theories that every problem in the labour market will be solved by an invisible hand seem not to be accurate, and do not work in the Slovak Republic. And therefore, what cannot be solved by the labour market itself, it has to be done by the state. One of these things is providing and organising adult learning and re-qualification courses for the unemployed inhabitants in order to become more flexible and efficient, using their new skills. As an example of implementing the 2012 governmental programme declaration, we can mention one of the current projects of the Government of the Slovak Republic funded by the European Union. The name of the programme is:

“Ďalšie vzdelávanie a poradenstvo pre dospelých ako nástroj lepšej uplatniteľnosti na trhu práce“ (Further Education and Consultancy for Adults as an Instrument for Better Employability in Labour Market.). The applicant of this project is the The National Institute of Lifelong Learning; with the irrecoverable fee of 27.994 million euros. The website of The National Institute of Lifelong Learning about the contribution of this project states: *“The Slovak Republic, with 2.8 %, is one of the countries of the European Union with the lowest number of people participating in the programmes of further education.”* Therefore it is inevitable to implement a reform of further education and set a system of consultancy for adults (NÚCVSR, 2014).

Table 1: Participation in lifelong learning (15-64 – year old)

Year (average in %)	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
ISCED (Total)	3.7	4.3	4.6	4.1	3.9	3.3	2.8	2.8

ISCED: A figure based on the reached academic degree

Source: NÚCV, 2011, p. 11

Adult learning within lifelong learning is undoubtedly helpful for citizens' integration into the labour market. It is also an inevitable pillar when changing a job. There occurs one question: Is it helpful to invest money in lifelong learning for people, who have not been employed during their life? According to The Headquarter of Labour, Social Affairs and Family 2014 data, 85 000 Slovak inhabitants have never been employed. This represents one quarter of all the unemployed people. These people are usually secondary school or university graduates, especially those, whose field of study is not perspective. That means that there is a very little chance to get a job for them. The highest percentage of unemployed consists mainly of people with secondary vocational education.

Table 2: The division of unemployed people according to their education

The level of education	The number of unemployed to date 1 st July 2014
Unfinished elementary education	18 596
Elementary education	91 206
Lower vocational education	8 199
Secondary vocational education	114 617

Complete secondary vocational education	94 262
Complete secondary general education	14 117
Higher vocational education	1 509
University education (bachelor degree)	7 552
University education (master degree)	33 994
University education (doctoral degree)	108
Not determined	9
In total	384. 825

* The academic degrees are stated according to the Slovak education system.

Source: COLSAaF, 2014

According to the results published by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, the biggest group is created by unemployed citizens with elementary, secondary vocational and partially with university education. Lifelong learning directed by the government and The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of Slovak Republic, in cooperation with The Ministry of Labour, Social affairs and Family, is necessary to be made more efficient. There is also a need for helping people with lower education. Re-qualifications or the way how to supplement the education from other professional fields, would help many job applicants. Supposing the higher demand from employers, many applicants would be more advantaged.

The previous issue repeats a vicious circle. There is a large number of graduates, who are unable to find a job in the fields currently offered. Subsequently, funds are needed for re-qualification of these people. Of course, lifelong learning does not consist exclusively of re-qualification and enhancing of education (for the unemployed), but it also provides help for the employed. If the situation in labour market changes, thanks to lifelong learning they will be able to keep their jobs. Or as the case may be, they are able to change the job. In many cases, the fields of study are not efficient. It causes a professional stagnation, wasting time and money on side of the state. As stated by Tamášová and her team (2013), in 2007, a group of experts was established. The goal was to create a concept of lifelong learning development in Slovakia, named Strategy 2011. Its main goals are focused on:

1. Motivation and the approach of individuals to lifelong learning.
2. Convergence of education with employers' demands.
3. System and structure of consultancy services with an emphasis on adult education.

4. The level of individual's competencies for his professional and personal development: financial literacy, entrepreneurial competencies, foreign language competencies, digital literacy, and active citizenship.
5. Further education funding.

Among other things, the document Strategy 2011 describes also the system tools, helpful in increasing the efficiency and success rate of lifelong learning in the Slovak Republic. This strategy is three years old, its system tools are, to a certain degree, supertemporal and usable for the future.

According to the Strategy of lifelong learning (2011), the main system tools are:

1. A communicational platform of educational institutions and employers.
2. A multimedia platform.
3. Career consultancy.
4. Finances supporting further education.

4 Conclusion

The educational policy of the state should be focused on strategic investment into citizens' education, concerning especially the field of most demanded professions. This way the chances of getting a job, the ability of adaption to employers' demands would be noticeably increased. The chances for breaking through in the career and for developing one's personality are also higher. In order to ensure successful results of lifelong learning, there is a need for the participation of all the entities (government, employers and citizens). A close connection between the educational programmes and the employers' demands is also required. A special attention is paid to education of the unemployed. The main task is to create an active employment policy, where vocational courses are created in order to keep one's job, or to get a new one.

In the document Strategy 2011 the recommendations for an action plan are suggested. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family is responsible for their implementation. According to our findings, we choose main ideas from the article:

1. To create a sustainable system of communication among the educational institutions and employers focused on mutual information exchange about knowledge, skills and competencies needed in the labour market.
2. To create an integrated consultancy system of career education consisting of databases informing about learning possibilities in the labour market.
3. To develop activities leading to closer link between the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Labour, Social affairs and Family activities, with the goal to avoid contradictory decisions (in the effort to increase the employment rate).

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Interpersonal Communication in the Process of Value Formation

*Milan Jozek**

Abstract: Issues of communication, isolation, and education are part of our everyday lives, whether private or professional. The behaviour of the young generation at school and at home has different forms. It demonstrates their actions, way of thinking and feeling. Furthermore, their behaviour expresses their future tendencies. These forms of behaviour are strongly influenced by a lack of communication. As a result, the educational process is made harder, sometimes even impossible. Many experts in ethics, pedagogy and psychology have been paying attention to this issue and have started to evaluate its impact on the young.

Key words: change of values, authority, personality, self-actualisation, friendship.

1 Introduction

The human nature plays a crucial role in the process of self-actualisation in the society. Interpersonal relations form the basic component of this process, in other words, it is the direction of person to person. In social behaviour, there are typical forms of attitudes that are connected with particular social activities. These are isolation, egocentrism, egoism, animosity and sadism (Leszczuk, 1982, cited in Adamski, 1982, p. 305). On the other hand, the altruistic attitude inclines to voluntary care for the others and their welfare, as well as expressions of benignancy. A subjective attitude that prefers only individual knowledge and subjective feelings lead a young person to isolation. However, as a result, these aspects might be helpful in the process of personality growth and for the common good.

2 Discussion

What are the basic pillars of human nature in the society? How is it manifested and what is typical for it? These are the questions we deal with in this paper. There are three attributes characterizing the naturalness of humans in the society, highlighting their societal character. First of all, humans are open to other people. Then, humans need other people and their company. They would not be

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able to live alone and only in society they are able to grow. Lastly, humans unify with other people, creating various forms of society (Dogiel, 1992, p. 66). Everyone is born into a society. At home, where we are brought after birth, parents and probably also siblings are awaiting us. Some experts of development psychology claim that a child perceives other persons who are in its close proximity, before it is able to perceive its own personality. Moreover, they believe that these people provide both physical and spiritual support for the realisation of the child's needs. A young person grows mainly in a family environment and only later he/she integrates into societal institutions such as kindergartens, schools, sport clubs, etc. which participate in forming his/her personality. They become a part of the child's world in which he/she lives. Later on, in puberty, children tend to flee from often forced societal groups (Zwolinski, 1994, pp. 16-17). A typical feature of the youth stage is a change of personality, a young person transforms into a grown-up. This period is accompanied by many difficulties and behaviour crisis. Some young people go through this period easily, but some of them might be quite aggressive, irascible, differing from other young people in the way they dress and behave. They tend to do exactly such things that are rejected by the society they live in and they behave in an "anti-social way". In contrast, there are such young people who prefer being alone and out of contact. They are constantly lost in thoughts and are absent-minded. This period might last only for a short time, however, it might last for a few years, too. Some of the young might behave less irascibly. Instead, they study philosophy, religion, hoping they could change the world as they usually dislike everything they were taught and told. Another typical feature of this period is the rejection of authority as they adopt a critical stance on everything that has been discovered, invented or written so far (Plužek, 1994, p. 118). For example, the refusal of any authority might start with the rejection of their teachers or finding the negatives of their parents. As a result, society as such sinks into oblivion. The young does not wish to be labelled and placed into any social groups. They grow out of them. Of course, it does not mean that they do not need other people. They usually seek and long for the "authentic meeting". As in their childhood mostly parents chose their friends, in this period of life they wish to choose a particular group of people to spend their time with. Young people in puberty make a review of their environment and choose what is natural for them. And this time, they choose based on their criteria. They express a great desire for fellowship with other people. As evidence of this fact, they create groups with their own and typical ideology, symbolism and actions (Zwolinski, 1994, pp. 16-17).

A typical attribute of human nature in the society is *openness to other people*. It is natural that people look for contact with other people. Humans are open to each other and want to give away themselves and share with other people. In this process, they transcend themselves and realize their own being. As a result, an interpersonal relationship arises: me – you, and later me – us, and we – you. The

relationship me – you creates a basis and leads to the relationship me – absolutely, me – God as an absolute realization of interpersonal relationships (Dogiel, 1992, p. 66). Probably, one of the most popular figures of existential philosophy, Martin Buber, said that “by means of you, the person becomes I” (Zwolinski, 1994, p. 18). Interpersonal relationships are created through love and knowledge, facilitated by speech as a means of communication. The deepest meaning of interpersonal relationships is the gift of love. Interpersonal communication, also understood as the process of mutual exchange of personal values, enriches people and it enables them to realize their personalities. Of course, this communication is possible only thanks to the fact that humans are free and wise. This freedom and wisdom enable them to offer something to other people and also to accept gifts from the others. Therefore, it can be stated that a kind of value exchange is always a basis of interpersonal communication (Dogiel, 1992, p. 66).

A human being is not able to live alone, he/she needs other people, company. Only in society is a personality able to grow fully. Thomas Aquinas, the representative of scholasticism, claimed: “*homo est naturaliter animal sociale, eo quod sibi non sufficit ad vitam*”, in English “it is natural for a man to be social as he is not sufficient to live alone”. This applies to many areas of life, such as physical, psychological, intellectual, moral, economic, and political ones. In contrast to animals, humans are not born with ready nimbleness, reactions and behaviour. They have to learn everything step by step, with the help of others. Humans make use of knowledge and wisdom of antecedents, therefore, they do not have to start from the very beginning (Dogiel, 1992, p. 67).

As people are not self-sufficient neither for life nor for development, they unify with other people, they create various societies in order to gain good that they are not able to achieve on their own. The common good – *bonum commune* – is the goal of every society. These three features characterise and highlight the natural sociability of the human pointing out the need for a social life. The third points out the ability to carry out things, i.e. the ability to live with others and achieve social goals (Dogiel, 1992, p. 67).

Friendship plays a crucial role in the process of kindness formation. A friendly relationship between parents and growing children is very important as it helps and teaches young people how to establish it. Moreover, it teaches them how to accept certain commitments and prepares the young to act with love, of course, with prior knowledge of the person, his/her motives, readiness to talk as well as willingness to share his problems and happiness. Moreover, comradeship teaches them to be patient, sympathetic. It also teaches an active help, pleasure, resignation and also criticism. All these attributes are effectively provided that the person is convicted that he/she acts for the good of the other people. It has been proven by many researchers that a good comradeship between a father and his daughter resulted in a good choice of the daughter's life partner. The point was that the knowledge of comradeship created by the father served as a model when

choosing a husband (Malcher, 1982, cited in Adamski, 1982, p. 228). If the young experience a friendly relationship at home, within their family, they show a greater ability to make friends out of the house, in a group of friends and in homogenous comradeships, i.e. girls with girls and boys with boys. Friendship in which the young can get to know each other, might later result in a comradeship between boys and girls, which mostly grows into love. Love in the engaged and married couples that is based on comradeship helps in the process of marriage formation and their mutual support on their life path. If the relationships between parents and children are not based on comradeship, parents should at least show interest in their children's comradeship out of the house, and allow them to bring their friends home. Parents can see and discuss particular friendships. It is wrong if parents prevent their children from making friends or they forbid particular comradeship without any explanation. The forbidden comradeship will develop anyway. Moreover, it would create a suspicion that it is bad and focus on irrelevant things. Another fault of parents might be if they try to substitute a friend or try to choose friends for their children. A friend is someone chosen, someone who helps us to get closer to other people (Malcher, 1982, cited in Adamski, 1982, p. 229).

Mass communication, especially television, has become a kind of educational institution. Teaching basic skills such as reading and writing are not sufficient. It is important to learn how to listen and watch. We ought to keep in mind that we all live in the developing audio-visual civilisation in which there exist three symbols of communication – words, pictures and sounds. Illiteracy is not characterized by not knowing the letters of the alphabet. The issue of interpersonal communication, receiving and sending information and thoughts cannot be ignored in the education of the present youth. The functions of mass communication modify the existing role of parents who have to be engaged in the process preparation of the young for their future lives. Creation of appropriate conditions for building up immunity to external impacts and self-control of the young in every area has become extremely important. A strong emphasis should be placed on the so-called method of dialogue which might reduce destructive influence, develops the ability to accept others, and to criticize carefully and sensitively. All this ought to happen in an open climate, without any prejudice or suspicion. It is not advisable to criticise the young who adore their idols and heroes on TVs. Neither should we impose them our role models nor idols. The interpersonal dialogue does not work that way. On the other hand, it is not appropriate to just stand aside and wait till the young person realizes what is good and valuable and what is wrong. By means of constant and gradual development and focusing their attention on higher values in the content of recent programmes, we might be able to raise the overall culture of the young generation who very often feel lonely and under constant supervision. The mentioned motives of dialogue ought to help in the process of analysis and critical reflection. Moreover, they should lead to an active use of the observed

and experienced events (Grzegorski, 1982, cited in Adamski, 1982, p. 332). There is something in every human that does not change. The youth of today is the same as it has always been. However, at the same time we can claim that they are different from the youth before. In the past, the young generation was formed by painful war experiences, concentration camps, and imminent danger. As a result, such experiences brought about feelings and features of heroes. If in every period of life people long for love, in one's youth they long for it even more intensively. Nevertheless, the desire for self-actualisation should not be understood as a stance that allows us to do anything. The young do not want to be said yes or no as they are ready to be reprimanded. They need somebody who would lead them and who would support them. If they look for reliable people, it is because they feel they are full of kindness and are able to walk paths with them (Ján Pavol II, 1995, p.117).

The notion of education means the overall interaction and communication between adults (father, mother, teacher, family members, etc.) and children. The choice of educational methods and procedures influences a child's behaviour and experiences which, finally, also influence the behaviour of adults. The most important attribute in education is the emotional relationship with a child as well as the way of educational control. Furthermore, motivation of children and creation of a personal relationship that is based on unconditional acceptance and sympathy, put internal processes of self-development in motion. A human personality becomes more mature and grown-up. However, it is also crucial that the person is aware of these features (Čáp, 1996, pp. 131-135).

Behaviour disorders are defined as deviations in socialisation. The basic features of behaviour disorders can be defined as follows: unwillingness to respect common rules of behaviour for the particular age or level of intellectual powers. Even though that some children are able to understand these rules, they do not behave in accordance with them. The reason for such behaviour might be a different value system, which they bring from their families, other personal motives or the fact that they are not able to control their behaviour. As an example, we would like to mention the behaviour of Romany children, which corresponds with the principles of their ethnic group (e.g. their attitude to truancy). The relationship between majority and minority groups may be the source of various problems. Inappropriate behaviour can disturb social relationships. Probably, the most common barrier in establishing and maintaining a friendly relationship is the lack of empathy, heartlessness, egoism or inability to control one's behaviour. Children and young people who suffer from behavioural disorders are usually extremely focused on themselves and on satisfying their own needs. They do not accept the necessity to adapt to social expectations, i.e. to certain principles. Many times the reason is that they did not experience such a behaviour in their family. Their parents probably did not have an emotional relationship which would provide their children with positive experience and empathy. They are not considerate of others and the rights of

others they find to be pointless. People are not important for them and they are interested only in things they might gain from others. Their relationships are usually shallow as children are not able to act unselfishly, they engage themselves only if they can earn profit. As a result, they are often rejected and have a lot of conflicts. Moreover, they are not able to self-evaluate. Children are usually not critical enough. They do not consider their behaviour to be bad and do not feel guilty of their misdemeanour. A disproportionate social understanding leads to recurring aggressive reactions of some individuals. The reason for this is the fact that they are probably not able to decode the behaviour of their classmates in various social situations (Vágnerová, 2001, p. 285).

The most important goal of education is to gain humanity in behaviour of children. Its core creates education of individuals by means of positive influence. To be a human being means to be a morally developed individual. Moral ideals and moral values are understood as real phenomena *sui generis* of the mankind's social and historical evolution. They are connected with the past, present as well as the future of humans, as well as with the socio-spiritual development in spheres of natural, historical, material and cultural development. The moral progress of mankind is possible only if each and every human personality is developed and if the goal and meaning of life is the development of human spiritual and creative powers. Moral ideals which integrate permanent as well as changeable moral values serve as a stimulating power which prevents people from staying in position „*status quo moralis*“. They give an impression of dissatisfaction, quest and further effort to become perfect. One's personality is formed in the complex structure of the educational process. The process of moral education has a universal position in this structure. Further, it has an impact on the whole personality and leads it towards moral maturity. It creates the essential humanistic and cultural value of human's education.

The process of value formation is characterized by active search, discovering, acceptance and identification (Žilínek, 1997, pp. 61-68). By acceptance of these attributes, process of interpersonal communication and education of the youth of today becomes more real. This fact is proved by the practice of those who experience it in everyday self-actualisation.

3 Conclusions

Isolation, egocentrism, egoism, degradation or hostility are a part of today's society. On the other hand, there are altruistic attitudes, in other words inclination to voluntary care for the others and their welfare, as well as expressions of benignancy. Man, by means of subjective feelings, is directed to isolation, which finally helps in the process of individuality formation and the common good. Many times modern development psychology points out that a child perceives other persons who are in its nearness before it is able to perceive its own personality. Therefore, it is important that the openness to other people

should be a part of human nature. Interpersonal communication enriches people and allows them to become fully-fledged human beings. Moreover, interpersonal communication is also understood as an exchange of moral and personal values. Every single human needs somebody to interact with, i.e. he/she needs other people. Therefore, problems of interpersonal communication should not be overlooked in the process of youth education.

Moral ideals and moral values are understood as real phenomena *sui generis* of the mankind's social and historical evolution. What is more, they are connected with the past, present and future of humans. Searching these values and ideals is typical for discovering, acceptance and identification. In conclusion, we can claim that by acceptance of these attributes, the process of interpersonal communication and education of the youth of today become more real.

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Contemporary Education – Changes of the System, Research Reports and the Dimensions of Real Social Expectations

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Abstract: The article attempts to analyze transitions which have occurred in education system in Poland during last years. The authors reveal numerous changes of the system on the basis of various reports, research results, public speeches and legal acts which have been put into practice. These changes are shown from teachers', pupils' and parents' point of view, and are corrected through the prism of social expectations. Moreover, the dilemmas of contemporary teacher are revealed, as well as expectations of the society which participates in constantly transforming reality of global world.

Key words: system of education, contemporary education, teachers, social expectation.

1 Introduction

Many changes have appeared in the field of teacher training. These transformations result from social expectations towards teachers' role as well as from the changing reality in which contemporary people participate. On one hand, the number of changes brings chances for everyone preparing for a professional role, but, on the other hand, it is an opportunity for creating such a reality when the implemented changes bring only superficial effects for a small group of people.

The education system in Poland has undergone a number of changes resulting from transformation of the political system and expanding knowledge in the field of children and youth upbringing psychology.

Changes in the balance of power prevailing in families and the image of contemporary families, transition from post-figurative to pre-figurative culture, or individual expectations towards consumer system of values have brought the need of change inside education systems which arise from the growing requirements towards teachers. Changes introduced in Poland were assessed in a positive way and Poland indeed is heading in PISA 2012 (<http://www.ibe.edu.pl/pl/o-instytucie/aktualnosci/293-pisa-2012-wyniki>,

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viewed on 23 June 2014) and Talis 2013 (<http://eduentuzjasci.pl/badania/110-badanie/599-talis-miedzynarodowe-badanie-nauczania-i-uczenia-sie-2.html>, viewed on 23 June 2014) report as it comes to education.

2 Discussion

In 2010, when the European Higher Education Area – EHEA office was officially established, essential structural, curricular and organisational changes appeared in education systems of the countries which had signed *the Bologna Declaration* in 1999 (Bologna Declaration, 2004). The area of international cooperation was reinforced, which is apparent, be it only, in the significant increase in the number of countries assimilating the Bologna declarations.

Nonetheless, the process of the introduction of changes was characterised by a certain kind of dynamics in particular countries (despite of comparable framework of general performance conditions), in which the attachment to native traditions remained in lasting conflict in policies stipulated by the European Union. Drawing up temporary balance of the transformations instigated in the practice of Poland's higher education, we may surmise that the process aroused the most of controversies in the area of teacher training and further development.

Such a circumstance has its roots in multiple phenomena, such as correlation of resolutions of *the Bologna Declaration* with the postulates related to the preparation of teachers to work in the reform system¹. Poland-specific demographic phenomena and the requirements of the labour market played an equally consequential role, leading to the final acceptance of one type of solutions over another. For deeper insight into the state and manner of teacher training in Poland and into the country-specific dilemmas, we need to be able to perceive a broader context of the undergoing transformations, such as general alterations being instigated within Poland's higher education or the status quo and the levels of practical implementation of the Bologna Process in Poland's academic institutions.

It seems to be essential to pay attention to the expectations towards teachers resulting from micro-social context, i.e. from people who are most interested in introducing changes in the field of teacher's professional training – pupils' parents. Despite the fact, that these groups are the least aware of the changes

¹ The reform of the education system was introduced in 1999. The main objectives delineating the direction of changes were as follows: popularisation of secondary and higher education, provision of equal chances in the access to education and integral incorporation of skills training and acquisition of knowledge into education. The adopted attitude entailed the undertaking of simultaneous efforts meant, on the one hand, to prepare the already employed teachers to the implementation of new objectives instituted in the wake of the reforms, and on the other hand, to prepare new teaching personnel.

which are being made in the area of teachers' higher education, they have their specific expectations towards the awaited shape of the teacher training system.

3 The structure of teacher training

In Poland, teachers constitute the most numerous business functions. Since the 1970s, they have been required to complete higher education and undergo constant self-improvement (cf. Zawadowski). Teacher training for different types of schools is instituted by means of double-track procedures: within the system of higher education and within the system of general education. The newest legal act concerning teacher training at higher schooling institutions is the 2005 decree *Higher education law*, and there is the *7 September 1991 decree on education system* with relation to teacher training colleges².

Within the system of higher education, teacher training is conducted at institutions which are authorised with the right to award the best of their graduates with a PhD. degree, such as universities, polytechnics and academies, but also vocational higher schooling institutions which are not authorised to award the PhD. degree to their graduates (Organizacja system edukacji, 2009). The following types of studies prepare for the teaching profession:

- undergraduate studies (BA or engineering),
- graduate studies (MA),
- uniform MA studies,
- post-graduate studies.

The recruitment to teacher training faculties fails to take into consideration the superimposed recruitment quota. Particular institutions are autonomous in this respect and the educational policies of the state are applicable through the stipulation of qualification requirements to undertake teacher training, as well as the introduction of minima curricula.

Teacher training at higher schooling institutions is predominantly executed on faculties preparing specialists for a particular profession, e.g. the faculties of Chemistry prepares specialists to work in factories, research-scientific institutions, but also teachers of Chemistry; accordingly, the faculties of Classical Philology prepare specialists to work at publishing houses, at research institutions, but also teachers of Latin and Greek.

Students may select the teachers' profile within many faculties and, consequently, acquire pedagogical preparation in the course of their studies, or complete a given course without a specialisation and supplement the teacher qualification at postgraduate studies or qualification courses. Higher schools had previously trained teachers in merely one specialisation, but in recent years,

² The detailed principles concerning the functioning of colleges are stipulated by the *12 August 1997 resolution of the Minister of National Education concerning teacher training institutions*, which has the status of an executable law to the Act of Education System.

according to the binding standards of teacher training, studies of two specialties have been introduced (two-course studies), which, similarly to other countries of the European Union, merge kindred specialties, such as: Mathematics and Chemistry, History and Social Studies, English and German, etc.

Curricula and courses of studies at higher educational institutions are autonomously stipulated by the authorities of particular institutions. The General Council for Higher Education, which is an establishment superior to all higher education institutions in Poland, stipulates minimal curricular requirements for particular faculties, as well as minimal time load for particular subjects. A minimum load for the undergraduate studies is 2 200 hours, and for graduate 5-year studies the figure is 3 000. However, in principle, teacher training is not limited to minima and typically encompasses from 2 300 to 2 500 hours for undergraduate studies, depending on the faculty, and from 3 300 to 3 500 for five-year graduate studies. The scope of qualifications and the minimal number of hours for pedagogical preparation are stipulated by the Minister of National Education. According to ministerial regulations, pedagogical preparation must encompass the following:

- in the 3-year cycle for a single specialty: 510 hours (330 of theory and 180 of practice);
- in the 5-year cycle for a single specialty: 480 hours (330 of theory and 150 of practice);
- in the 5-year cycle for two specialties: 600 hours (390 of theory and 210 of practice);

At colleges preparing future teachers for teaching two subjects, there are the following instruction standards in force: requirements related to curricula, types of subjects, the form and extent of pedagogical practice, curricular content and required skills. Instruction at teachers' colleges is executed for specialties that have their equivalents in subjects taught at schools. Similarly to higher education institutions, the Minister of National Education stipulates the qualifications required from teachers, as well as the minimum number of hours allotted to pedagogical preparation at teacher training colleges, which are:

- at 3-year teacher training colleges preparing in two specialties, there are 540 hours of pedagogical preparation in force (360 of theory and 180 of practice);
- at 3-year language teachers' colleges there 510 hour of pedagogical instruction (360 of theory and 150 of practice).

The profile of a graduate has been stipulated in the recent regulations in the form of the following competencies:

- preparation in the selected specialties,
- preparation in psychology and pedagogy,
- practice in the didactics of the selected subject,
- computer skills,
- command in at least one foreign language at B2 level,

- cooperation skills in relation to pupils, teachers, pupils' family members and the external community in terms of execution of common educational objectives,
- skills of undertaking educational tasks surpassing the taught subject,
- skills of designing own activity and undertaking initiatives desirable for pedagogical practice.

Those who have higher education with appropriate pedagogical preparation or have graduated from a teachers' college may commence teaching at a selected institution on the territory of the whole country as fully qualified teachers. The final on-the-job qualifying phase, which involves attaining formal qualifications in the workplace, is not present in the Polish system. Novice teachers are employed for one year as interns in order to be promoted to the status of contract teachers. Accordingly, teachers –interns may not be placed in the category of people supplementing their qualifications, but are rather placed at the lowest rank in the hierarchy of professional advancement³. Teachers are employed by head teachers by means of open recruitment procedures.

At the beginning of 2012, the Minister of Education, Krystyna Szumilas, signed the decree on educational standards for the teaching profession, submitted by the Minister of Science and Higher Education. The decree was signed on the 17th of January 2012, according to authorisation in the art. 9 c of the act from the 27th of July 2005 Law on Higher Education (Dz. U No. 164, pos. 1365, as amended). Due to the law, the minister competent for higher education was obliged to issue an agreement with the minister competent for educational and pedagogical matters to specify standards of training for the teaching profession.

Regulations of the decree specify:

1. effects of education in the scope of
 - content-related and methodological knowledge,
 - pedagogical and psychological knowledge, including pedagogical matters as well, taking into consideration teachers' preparation for working with pupils with special educational needs,
 - training to apply information technology,
 - foreign language level
2. duration of studies and postgraduate studies,
3. dimensions and organization of practices.

According to the new standards, on the basis of the last amendment to Law on Higher Education, two-specialty education, compulsory so far on undergraduate studies, was rejected. Professional teacher training is based on modules and its

³ According to *the Teacher's Charter* amended in 2000, Polish teachers may attain the following stages of professional advancement: junior teacher, contract teacher, appointed teacher and certified teacher. Also, it is possible to award some distinguished certified teachers with the honour title of professor of education.

realization will be possible during undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate studies.

Nursery school teachers and I-III grade primary school teachers will be trained in both scopes simultaneously.

Teachers' professional training will be conducted in three obligatory modules including subject teaching training (conducting classes), psychological and pedagogical training, and didactical training. It would be broadened with optional modules such as training to teach another subject (conducting classes) or training in the scope of special needs education.

Above all, teacher training should be focused on gaining practical skills crucial in the teaching profession. Theoretical knowledge is about to support the process of gaining these skills and to give a scientific synthesis of the gained experience. Therefore, regulations of the decree increased the role of practical training, particularly in the field of childcare education competence and diagnosing student's individual needs.

An important change is also the requirement that future teachers preparing for working in I-III grades of primary school, should demonstrate substantive skills in Polish language (creating texts), Mathematics (conducting mathematical reasoning) and Nature (illustrating natural phenomena by means of experiments). Gaining these competencies is obligatory to undertake didactic training, to realise pre-school core curriculum and general educational curriculum.

4 Dilemmas concerning teacher training

In the wake of dramatic systemic transformation, and also as a result of consistent introduction of the Bologna process, teacher training in Poland has faced a certain numbers of key dilemmas.

As we know, in the name of the education law contemporarily in force in Poland, future teachers may attain the required professional qualifications at various types of institutions, such as universities, polytechnics, pedagogical academies, academies of economy, physical education academies, academies of agriculture, higher vocational schools, and last but not the least, teachers' training colleges.

Teacher training at various types of institutions, naturally, has its advantages and disadvantages. A self-explanatory advantage is that teachers walk out with two professions, which enhances their chances for finding appropriate employment in the labour market; one disadvantage would be the comparatively low quality of instruction and no direct link with the changeable requirements of the labour market.

Poland's universities (17 institutions) comprise 400 teacher-training units provide paid and free of charge, undergraduate and graduate, full-time and external study programmes. And together with other state, and especially non-

state higher teacher-training schools, it should not come as a surprise that there is an enormous “overproduction of teachers”. Thus, educational authorities and researchers (including Bologna experts) continually emphasise that the recruitment of candidates for a profession should calculate the market’s demand, as well as demographic predictions, according to which the quota for employing new teachers has already been exhausted until the year 2015 (Kształcenie nauczycieli przez wyższe uczelnie, 2006).

Accordingly, there is a disturbing phenomenon present in the Polish educational market, where graduates of teacher-training institutions have scant chances for employment in their area of expertise and consequently commence employment randomly, typically in the area of broadly understood service industry.

The majority of experts and head teachers maintain that the concentration of teacher training at universities is decidedly favourable, as they provide relatively higher quality levels. However, the scope of institutions entitled to teacher training is highly dependent on their decision of adopting particular recruitment and selection procedures. In Poland, unlike in Germany, where selected faculties are governed by the principle of *numerous clauses*, there exist no forms of central limitation of access to any type of instruction at the higher level of education. In this respect, higher education institutions are autonomous, and the educational policy of the state is implemented by mere stipulation of qualification requirements for the teaching profession, as well as by the introduction of curricular minima for teacher training studies.

Free access to higher education institutions is undoubtedly beneficial to all those who wish to be educated at later stages of their lives. For obvious reasons (personnel, finances, organisation, logistics) many institutions, especially the state-owned ones, introduce the selection of candidates. Thus, highly differentiated forms of preliminary recruitment are stipulated by particular institutions. As a consequence, future teachers are recruited on the basis of highly differentiated criteria, frequently, especially in cases of private institutions, with no preliminary requirements at all (apart from the secondary school leaving examination certificate), which is dangerous as such, and perilously deepens the extent of negative selection of the teaching profession (Wilkomirska, 2004, pp. 3-4).

There is an urgent need for the redefinition of the profile and the role of teachers in the society of knowledge and in the conditions of lifelong education. In other words, to create a new balance of teachers’ competences in the “Europe of Knowledge”, i.e. a broadly advertised idea among the leaders of the European Union. Some endeavours, meant to lead us in this direction, have already been undertaken together with the initiatives towards standardisation of teacher training. It is of utmost importance that teachers who graduate from higher education institutions are optimally prepared for their didactic/pedagogical work in the school of the 21st century. They must also become “teachers who are ready

to be subjected to life-long education”, as the knowledge acquired at the university is characterised by the ever-shrinking range of duration.

Life-long learning constitutes a basic element in the European Space of Higher Education. Teachers must attain the skills of continual self-improvement during the whole span of their professional career, with special attention paid to up-to-date orientation in the dynamic development of new technologies. The precondition must be acknowledged, accepted beforehand and in consequence, relevant measures must be taken to undertake appropriate forms of self-improvement and participation in the process of professional development (Furmańska, 2005, pp. 14-17).

Moreover, should teachers only want to upgrade their qualifications with the sole aim of their professional advancement, they will fail to attain satisfactory results; graduation from yet another postgraduate faculty has ceased to add to competitiveness in the labour market, as creative and leadership skills are playing an ever-growing role. Among the proposals of the improvement of the existing teacher training curricula, there is a more and more dominant opinion that evaluation of these curricula should be processed at target schools, i.e. where teachers find their employment (cf. Rękawek, p. 8).

Another dilemma is reflected in the diversity of the teacher training system. The differences are accounted for by the fact that teachers are educated at state and non-state, academic and non-academic institutions, which on top of that feature an assortment of curricula, both in the content of particular subjects, and in the scope of pedagogical instruction (Kucharska, 2005, p. 208). Furthermore, teacher training is instituted separately on particular faculties, which may be conducive to marginalisation of the teacher's specialty and as such, may constitute a sizeable hindrance in the creation of a holistic vision of teacher training, regardless of their content-related preparedness.

Consequently, an illusory conviction is being disseminated that teachers teaching particular subjects, should have a different type of preparation for their professional functions. In our opinion, this conviction is fundamentally erroneous. It is true that teachers teaching different subjects should have different content-related preparation, and to a certain extent, different methodological training, but the essence of the teaching profession in each and every case remains unchanged. Thus, more and more frequently, there emerge proposals of some fundamental organisational changes, such as: the creation of an inter-departmental unit or institute at all higher education institutions, which would deal solely with teacher training and which would integrate all applicable research-didactic efforts. The introduction of such a solution would be a milestone in the development of pedeutological practice and theory (Rękawek, p. 9).

The creation of an effective national system of teachers' professional development requires a deep reflection. Thus, teachers' professional development instigated by higher education institutions should not only take into

consideration the demand of the labour market and employment possibilities, but also be compatible with the requirements posed to teaching-specialty graduates by work in the reformed school (Rękawek, p. 9). Teachers should be equipped with appropriate methodological/practical competence in the process of their training, which is based on knowledge related to developmental and cognitive psychology. The main objective of higher education is preparation of future teachers for making independent decisions and searching solutions to social-educational problems (Włoch, 2005, pp. 221-227). Pedeutological research in this area unequivocally proves that teachers are insufficiently prepared for their pedagogical profession (Wilkomirska, 2005).

An additional quandary results from high tuition fees for postgraduate studies; costs that teachers frequently have to reimburse from their family budgets, which are based on remuneration far below the national average.

The hitherto research related to the teaching profession confirms the perseverance of a certain paradox over many years now. Thus, on the one hand, civilizational and cultural changes, with the dynamic development of new technologies to boot, require from teachers the attainment of new and increasingly expanded competencies in many areas. On the other hand, there has been a steady decrease in the teachers' social prestige, let alone such negative phenomena as negative selection to the profession, relatively low remuneration, record-breaking feminisation on the European scale. In other words, the requirements and expectations directed at teachers do not go hand in hand with economic and social gratification.

Yet another problem surfaces in the need for modernisation of practice provided for the candidates for the teaching profession at schools and other educational institutions. It appears that it is the most neglected area in the state of their professional preparation. It is still a universally acknowledged truth that the only source of knowledge about schools for the graduates of teacher-training institutions is their own experience from the time when they were pupils themselves.

Therefore, among the most urgent postulates related to teacher training, there are the following: extension of time framework for obligatory school practice, execution of the practice at different types and levels of schools, familiarisation with various types of educational institutions. This is meant to familiarise students with all aspects of educational reality. Purposeful selection of schools for the execution of on-the-job training is emphasised and the requirement for methodical cooperation between the school and the higher education institution is accentuated.

Also, the old practice of creating exemplary schools in which it would be possible to nourish and develop, present and propagate patterns of "proper pedagogical work" is postulated to return (Zawadowski, p. 3).

And ultimately, the area of academic research still remains noticeably neglected, including pedeutological research, despite of the fact, according to forceful

prominence attached to it by the *Bologna Declaration*, that at the end of the day, it is research which is going to influence the level of attractiveness and competitiveness of the European Space of Higher Education, which remains in close relation with the formation of the European Research Space, European Educational Space and European Space of Lifelong Learning.

5 Expectations towards contemporary teachers – conditions of social expectations

The profession of a teacher should be redefined through the prism of contemporary social and economic changes. Demands towards future teachers, in the field of higher education, should be unified and realised in a planned way. As far as education of future teachers is concerned, wide process of self-development and shaping appropriate educational models which are oriented towards subjective treatment of the student should be taken into account.

Many research reports reveal that comprehensive education of teachers does not guarantee a better relationship between students and teachers or unfavourable atmosphere at school. The process of teachers' education does not end with higher education diploma. Usually, every teacher who wants to get a pay rise is obliged to start postgraduate education. The most frequent motivating factor to make this effort is external motivation in the form of a higher salary.

In Poland, differently than in 17 European countries (Germany, Estonia, Ireland, France, Italy, Cyprus, Luxemburg, Malta, Austria, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Sweden, Great Britain, Croatia and Turkey), there is no supporting system for novice teachers, who have to deal with various challenges at the initial stage of their careers. In this period, they need special support which would counteract the resignation from practicing a profession.

The consequences of the lack of formal teacher supporting system increase proportionally with the phenomenon of "bubbles of new in a sea of old" (Nowak, 1994). New initiatives, taken by young engaged teachers, face the objections of the "old" teaching staff. As a result, it leads to the absorption of "young" teachers by old structures in a particular school and it is connected with the phenomenon of professional burnout syndrome. Hence, the process of teacher training should head for the appreciation of the teaching profession among the society and pay special attention to the teacher's role in the process of shaping such values that would significantly influence the future of young generation and self-development of teachers.

That is the moment when the role of a teacher, who is responsible for training and the educational process of a young people appears. It can promote or hinder the identification with the responsible attitude of a young man. Why is it the teacher, who should decide about teenagers' responsible attitudes? The answer is relatively simple: responsibility is inscribed in the role of a teacher.

"In literature concerning education the following levels of responsibility appear:

1. The notion of teaching profession ethics (A.M. de Tocharzewski) – a teacher is responsible to the society for the effects of the educational work.
2. Responsibility as a positive feature of personality (F. Zawadzki) – shaping responsibility in educational work, in the course of training.
3. Responsible acting as a pedagogical directive (J. Dewey, H. Muszyński, J. Legowicz, K. Tomashevsky) – shaping a model of students' responsibility in the process of moral education.” (Pilch, 2003)

Hence, there are no doubts, that despite the fact that the crucial role in shaping teenagers' identity is moving from adults to peers, it is the teacher who can still play an important role in the process of creating teenage values. Contemporarily, it does not mean that there are no doubts what this role should involve.

In addition, a well-known motive appears, “(...) to educate people in a way, that the overall success (e.g. defensive force or formation of the political system, or an efficient functioning of communication devices and technical devices in general) determines motivation and actions of individuals and their other needs lead towards a decline, or to educate people and create the social system in the way that inside the system and due to its institutions individuals would care of overall success and would find the maximum security of their substantial individual needs.” (Kotarbiński, 1989, p. 24)

It is evident, that the second possibility is more important from the pedagogical point of view and it is about to shape responsibility, which results from subjective treatment of individuality in a young man. Taking into consideration the fact that the educative role is shifting from parents to institutions, i.e. teachers, educator who represents the institution; the observation, that the teacher's role in creating responsible individual is more and more substantial, seems to be correct. Teachers' responsibility “can be considered as a relation between teachers' action and effects, with particular attention to effects of this action. Then, the role is defined as a relation between a teacher's activity and occurrences which were caused by this activity.” (Pilch, 2003)

In the process of teacher training, there is a great flexibility left in choosing topics from the field of psychology and pedagogy which are discussed during classes. Hence, it is the lecturer who decides on which competencies a future teacher should develop. Classes are often only theoretical and consequently treated as an additional requirement for obtaining a course credit to be able to work as a teacher in the future. Teachers to be should receive appropriate professional training, to feel responsible for the process of pupils' education.

The interactive nature of pupil-teacher relationship must be based on a mutual trust according to taking responsibility for their own actions. A responsible teacher, who realizes tasks in a responsible and conscious way, becomes an appropriate partner for a young individual who notices the point in taking responsibility for his/ her life. In the proposed changes in teacher training there are no criteria for the assessment of the acquired skills in the field of social

competencies and teachers' self-development except for revealing the results of studies.

The process of teacher training should be more focused on providing teachers with the so-called "soft competencies". That strategy of work with pupil is included in progressive models of teaching (Bolton, 1979, p. 10, Brandes and Ginnis, 1994, pp. 10-17), in which the teacher motivates, awakens pupils' interest, indicates the benefits from learning, tries to reduce pupils' stress to a minimum, in contrast to traditional models which usually enhance pupils' anxiety and lead to school neurosis.

Progressive models of teaching assume that a process of training must relate to inner motivation. Teacher should not take control over a pupil from outside by means of punishment and awards, which are still very attractive to teachers. Future teacher should be trained to be able to create an inner will to learn in a pupil.

Due to the environmental approach to one's development (Brzezińska, 2000, p. 53), the source of behavioural changes is located inside the system. Hence, the change is generated from the centre. It does not exclude the impact of the environment on human psychical structure transformation. However, according to this approach, it lost a driving force to initiate the process of changes in comparison to the developmental approach.

An appropriate treatment of a pupil as well as an appropriate exchange of information between both parties of interaction - pupils and teachers, i.e. conveying and verifying knowledge, results in a significant increase of pupils' interest in learning and, therefore, a longer knowledge storage period, and the ability to apply this knowledge in practice.

The efforts connected with introducing changes into the field of education should be made on the basis of an appropriate school personnel training. The struggle for a proper educational system is a struggle for subjective and freedom-based treatment of both parties of interpersonal relationships at school. Perceiving the situation in schools as a common ground of solving pupils' and teachers' dilemmas and not as a place which generates problems, gives a chance to create a system based on understanding and cooperation.

Problems of the lack of democratic approach to education come from both teachers and pupils. A "school unit" should be considered through the prism of history and the system. Problems at one system level result from as well as constitute problems at another system level. The perception of conflicts and problems as an opportunity for increasing the training quality and the quality of mutual relationships, is the key to changing the perception of school as an unfavourable place.

In interpersonal relationships, every party should feel free to choose the direction of the relationship in order to feel the sense of engagement and causation. Realizing the fact that various factors, sometimes independent of a person, influence the overall success of the educational process, the paper is

meant to focus on inter- and intrapersonal-dependent values of parties engaged in the relationships, i.e. pupils and teachers.

“One of the philosophers and pedagogues once said, that if we are about to give freedom to pupils, we should give freedom to teachers first.” (Gordon, 2000, p. 326). A healthy relationship is based on the mutual care of the fulfilment of the individual’s own and the partner’s needs. Without an inner balance, it is difficult to talk about the possibility to care for other people. Hence, it is only the care of both parties of intergenerational interaction at school, which can create an opportunity for the creation of an atmosphere based on mutual understanding as well as respect for an individual.

“Teachers are obliged to realize pupils’ needs, even though their own needs have not been fulfilled. Our theory of balanced interpersonal relationships which are strictly based on the rule of mutual needs fulfilment assumes that teachers’ needs must be fulfilled. Otherwise, they would not be prone to try to fulfil students’ needs.” (Gordon, 2000, p. 326).

The most important step towards fulfilment of individual needs is to realize his/her needs. Treating obstacles, which appear during the training process, i.e. as far as it comes to teachers – at their workplace, as a chance to develop instead of treating them as obstacles impossible to overcome, enables teachers to face them in a creative way. Many of the following objective problems, which impede the realisation of teachers’ individual needs, appear in school situations:

1. The fact that teachers also appear as subordinates often involves them in various conflicts and situations in which they cannot act due to their own visions. “The real world in the majority of schools is the world, where conflicts are solved by means of strength and power. In the majority of schools teachers are obliged to implement decisions and seldom are they able to participate in the process of making them.” (Gordon, 2000, p. 327) The above-mentioned approach to teachers sets a general example of solving problems inside institutions.
2. Numbness and resistance to changes. Despite long-term discussions regarding the need for a change in the field of school rules, the majority of schools resemble, as it comes to in-class relationships, the situation from the previous years. Regardless of the need for a change, among teachers and headmasters the resistance can be observed.
3. Imposing homogenous values. Because of various reasons, which most commonly result from the fear of losing control, teachers and pupils are imposed to obey rules and norms without any possibility to participate in the process of creating them in many schools.
4. Pinning the blame to other people. In every school, there is a perfectly planned system of shifting the responsibility for failures from teachers to parents, from parents to the educational system, etc. Seldom, the school unit is able to reveal its weaknesses as a field to introduce changes.

5. Inadequate salary in comparison to teachers' social role. According to the "Key Data on Teachers and School Leaders in Europe" survey, in the majority of countries, including Poland, the minimal basic remuneration of primary and lower secondary school staff before tax is lower than GDP per citizen.

6 Conclusion

Despite such an optimistic report as the Report on the State of Education 2012 TALIS "Outcomes matters" (Federowicz and Woźnicki, 2013), the situation of many school teachers, graduates or students who intend to be future teachers is still unsatisfying. The consequences of deficiency or indolence in the process of rational changes⁴ implementation in broadly defined education are suffered by the last link of the educational chain, i.e. by pupils.

Changes, which are perceived by the authors of reforms as valuable, are interpreted by teachers as an external pressure, because of which they are obliged to report back and on which their professional development is dependent. According to a research focused on primary and lower secondary school teachers from the Greater Poland Province, in almost every conversation, inter alia, the motive of "test dictatorship" appeared.

Test results have become the tool of pressure exertion on teachers, the banner under which schools are promoted. Hence, teachers train pupils due to tests, parents collect copies of tests from previous years, pupils learn an imitative way of thinking. Therefore, the educational system in Poland, regardless of numerous changes introduced "from above", is still a system of traditional teaching and is focused on the effects, as the title of above-mentioned report indicates.

Unfortunately, the expected effects are statistical effects only directly related to the results of school achievement tests. Inside the whole system, unhappy pupils and dissatisfied teachers still exist. In consequence, pupils' education based on preparing them for tests limits the development of critical thinking, leads to shaping passive attitudes. Tests results and statistical analysis outcomes, as the above mentioned reports, are ravishing but still bare results.

Graduates enter life equipped with the ability to solve tests, which is an unnecessary skill in everyday life. Nowadays, an average student is not able to ask questions, analyse facts, draw conclusions or reinterpret the reality. The educational system changes do encourage, since in the nearest future there will be a lack of people willing to change the reality in a deliberate way.

⁴Obviously, we cannot say that there is a lack of changes in education system, since in the last 15 years Law on the Education System, i.e. the constitution of the system of education in Poland has changed approximately once per quarter! Successive ministers of education issued an average of nearly 2.5 regulation/decrees every month.

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The Development of Psycho-Didactic Skills within Special Art Education Projects

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Abstract: The paper presents the possibilities of developing the psycho-didactic skills of students participating in a new pedagogical practicum conducted by the Department of Art of Masaryk University in Brno. Special art education (SAE), a program primarily designed for socially-disadvantaged clients, imposes specific requirements on leading art activities. The students became part of a qualitative research program, which was implemented from 2010 to 2013 and which helped to articulate which psycho-didactic skills each student already had; this was accomplished through the implementation of specific art activities with clients from five participating institutions. The paper presents a part of the results of the research.

Key words: Special Art Education, theoretical background, professional training, teaching practice, pedagogical practicum, art projects, students of Special Art Education, clients of Special Art Education, students' psycho-didactic skills.

1 Introduction

Art education (AE) has fulfilled many goals during its history. Since the beginnings of teaching, when it was mainly a methodological training of fine crafts, it has been gradually changing and emphasizing different priorities which are not only reflected in teacher training at faculties of education, but mainly in the actual implementation of specific art projects. New possibilities of applying art activities even outside the school practice have been reflected within the professional training at the Faculty of Education at Masaryk University in Brno. Since 2007, a new field of study called Special Art Education (SAE) has been accredited there. It carries out an interdisciplinary study which targets the training of experts in SAE, which is primarily focused on working within disadvantageous social conditions (cf. Accreditation materials, 2007).

Special Art Education prefers activities which emphasize creative thinking. If a creative personality is characterized by a number of characteristics, such as curiosity, competence, ingenuity, emotional stability, independence, self-confidence, activeness, self-discipline, determination, perseverance, frustration,

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tolerance, and mental health (Hlavsa and Jurčová, 1978), then SAE must promote creative and specific activities within the designated needs of the disadvantaged clients. Special Art Education can be interpreted as a form of “creativity training” which “expands the sphere of activity of an individual, it improves perception and reaction and teaches activity, concentration, flexibility of action, and dynamic change of views” (Havlík, cited in Fišer, Havlík and Horáček, 2010, p. 99). The development of creativity is crucial because it is connected with the possibilities of solving a variety of problems which the socially disadvantaged clients encountered in their everyday lives; situations in which they should express active behavior and seek possible alternatives in order to resolve the dilemma. SAE can be labelled as a space for education through art, because, as Herbert Read says, “art education is conducive to intellectual, emotional and spiritual growth” (1967, p. 9). The concept of SAE was first theoretically described in the publication by Zbyněk Zicha (1981); its content corresponds with the objectives of art therapy and also with the work of educators in the process of special education (cf. Zicha, 1981, p. 3). SAE prefers the art-philetic approach, which is associated with Jan Slavík. *Arte* refers to the word art (from the Latin *ars/artis*), but also to art therapy. *Philetic* comes from the Greek root word *-fil-*, expressing a positive attitude towards something. SAE is also inspired by the idea of Henry Broudy’s philetic (positive, affirmative) approach towards education, “in which, the intellectual development is closely linked with the emotional and social development” (cf. Slavík, 2011, p. 12).

The artphiletic approach is one of the current approaches to art education. It is characterized by intense activity and an emphasis on creativity, expressiveness, experience in art activities and subsequent reflection (cf. Slavík, 2009, 2011). Other approaches of art education, including human-centred art education concept (originally in the Czech language: “animocentrismus”), are connected with spiritual and sensory education and with principles of humanistic education as well as with art-philetics. The human-centred art education concept emphasizes the role of the object of the educational activity, regardless of whether it is a child or an adult. This attitude is based on experience and strong emotion which motivate art activity. An interest in each person who is seen and respected as an individual, is also associated with humanistic psychology. There are two leaders who represent this idea, Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. The idea of Maslow, who believed in the ability of self-realization as a way to discover and improve personally, is still relevant to us. The author regards creativity as the most important component of self-realization. Rogers emphasizes an update tendency in each individual, i.e. the tendency to growth, development and implementation of positive possibilities (cf. Krivošíková, 2011, pp. 81-82). SAE integrates other art forms and deliberately merges art with dramatic or musical means of expression. Therefore, it can be described as interdisciplinary. Creative expression thus becomes a place for the client to express his/her own experiences, feelings and wishes. Many of the socially

disadvantaged clients have had traumatic experiences and harsh living conditions and that is why SAE encourages mental strength and the prevention of social failure. In general, the society should be looking for ways to mitigate stressful situations and pressures which clients have been exposed to.

Special Art Education therefore offers an opportunity to develop the positive personality traits of each individual and, thus, can become a space for preventing and tackling issues of the socially disadvantaged, but primarily the self-realization of monitored groups of clients.

2 Research methods

Between the years 2010-2013, a project called Special Art Education (SAE) was conducted with the support of the Department of Art of Masaryk University in Brno. It offered an opportunity to students of art fields to implement art activities at chosen institutions, with which cooperation had been established.

The professionally-led teaching practice brought about many interesting experiences and specific outcomes; one of them was the inclusion of the results in the following specialized publications issued in 2013: Eisenhammerová, B., Strakošová, Z. et al. "CREATIVE HELP: Creative Workshops for People with Disabilities" (in the Czech language: *Tvůrčí dílny s lidmi se zdravotním postižením*), Kovářová, M., Poláková, J. et al. "CREATIVE HELP: Creative Workshops with Roma Children" (in the Czech language: *Tvůrčí dílny s romskými dětmi*), Nováková, M., Landová, M. "CREATIVE HELP: Creative Workshops with Children from the Diagnostic Department" (in the Czech language: *Tvůrčí dílny s dětmi z diagnostického ústavu*), Stadlerová, H. et al. "CREATIVE HELP: Creative Workshops with Seniors" (in the Czech language: *Tvůrčí dílny se seniory*), and Kamenický, P. et al. "CREATIVE HELP: Creative Workshops with Refugees" (in the Czech language: *Tvůrčí dílny s uprchlíky*).

These articles present the results of an action research conducted within preparation for and during the creative workshops. This paper presents a part of the results from the SAE research project. The paper also tries to further define which psycho-didactic skills should be characteristic of leading art activities of the socially disadvantaged clients. The term "psycho-didactics" emerged in the early 90's of the 20th century. This is the "*new interdisciplinary approach linking theory and knowledge of general didactics, psychology of learning, cognitive psychology and other branches of knowledge, its core is the realization that educational processes (not only in the school setting) are also necessary to explain the psychological considerations.*" (Pedagogical dictionary, 2003, p. 192) As stated by J. Škoda and P. Doulák, "educational practices must ultimately respect the individual learning characteristics of individuals, in particular their individual learning styles." (2011, p. 143) SAE should respect, among others, the individual characteristics of each personality as well as their drawing typology.

Psycho-didactic skills can be seen as part of a student's competencies which include a psychosocial component (human), a project component (designing of an educational situation), and an implementation component (Slavík, cited in Hazuková, 2000, p. 22). The psycho-social components presuppose the mental stability of the teacher, his/her social intelligence, social responsiveness and motivation to work for others. A project component is defined as the motivation and readiness to create a psycho-didactic project (designing, preparing and planning it). The implementation component of a psycho-didactic competence is characterized by the motivation and readiness of teachers to implement an instructional model and achieve the intended goals within the current conditions. The feedback component of a teachers' competence is reflected in their motivation and readiness to remember, analyse, structure, describe and evaluate the progress and results of their own teaching (cf. Slavík, 2000, p. 22).

As mentioned above, the research was carried out at selected institutions as a part of teaching practice, which took place at those institutions. The course of the project was studied by direct observation, without intervention, and the results were enriched by the notes from pedagogical journals and written reflections of practicing students (two hundred and six texts). In addition, interviews were conducted with a psychologist who led reflexive seminars and discussions with the project leader of Special Art Education. Some valuable information was also obtained from the interviews with selected clients.

The materials were analysed by the method of open coding (cf. Švaříček and Šed'ová, 2007) which brought about important conclusions. These conclusions could improve the content of the SAE program, but more importantly, improve the experience of students in the pedagogical practicum and offer other benefits to other social workers who offer art activities to their clients.

3 Research results

If we want to identify the special psycho-didactic skills in a student of art, it is necessary to notice the students' core art skills which are also prerequisites to be accepted to study at the Art Department. According to the research, there has been a shift in the priorities of skills of students. The psychologist, who works with students in a reflective seminar, analysed and concluded that students understand their future job (teacher or social worker) as a helping profession. Art abilities and art self-realization are also important areas for them, but it is not the main goal (i.e. to be a great artist who also teaches). They mostly perceive the development of their art abilities as a way of how to name their real talents, limits and identify starting points for future art projects focused on a specific group of clients. According to the psychologist of this project, "the target group of clients with special needs is the professional goal the students are aiming to serve". The students' art skills and experiences should be as varied as possible in order to offer clients as many of approaches as possible. This also confirms the

idea of I. Zhoř, who highlights the risk of learning “according to myself” in the sense of a transfer-only personal model of creativity (1998, p. 16), “The teacher should not promote only himself or herself, showing students just his/her subjective ideas and showing personal methods of creation. Rather, he/she should probably see a different individuality in their students and respect the different types of art orientation; also find a relationship to each of them; find a positive attitude, understanding and wisdom.” The research also shows that students of SAE exhibit acts of sincere interest in promoting and developing the creative activity for “other” individuals. They respect their situation, health status, etc., which often led (individuals) to social disadvantage. They realized that “being a socially disadvantaged individual is a result of their social status brought on by a restricted access to certain social and material goods.” (Pedagogický slovník, 2008, p. 216). Students of the SAE program can be described as empathetic individuals with prosocial feelings which are not trying to exploit the situation for their own self-promotion. As the psychologist comments on the project, “students are not narcissist, they do not need to prove anything.” This description is typical especially for those students who benefit from the experience of undertaking pedagogical (teaching) practice and have a clear understanding of the SAE studies and its content.

There is also an interesting comparison of the results of reflections by the students who completed the SAE studies to when they were studying it; at the beginning of their studies, students usually prioritized art education more, learned art skills and experienced their own creative fulfilment. As time went by, and as students started participating in pedagogical (teaching) practice projects led by experienced instructors, they focused more on the process of creative activities for others, building a creative environment, etc. New knowledge and point-of-view was also brought to theoretical courses where they had the opportunity to learn the specifics of different institutions (i.e. retirement homes). They were apprised with the characteristics of the clients, with the system of leisure activities, progress and the results of already implemented creative activities.

In their own projects, students also benefited from the experience of their colleagues. It should be noted, however, that it applied primarily to students’ own ideas which were creatively seized. They were open to the suggestions of other employees, but also to the clients of institutions. Openness and cooperation of students were not always automatic. They encountered situations where cooperation with more students was stalled because each individual insisted on following his/her idea by championing his own concepts and opinions. This kind of situations subsequently became the subject of reflection, analysis and generalization. The clients should always be seen as the centre of interest, including their needs. The completed projects also showed that even the best possibly planned and scheduled projects brought some unpredictable moments, in which students found themselves with clients and these needed flexibility. As

activities were always optional (for clients), the input motivation played an important role in motivation which awakened an interest to create.

One of the factors affecting participation was the attractiveness of the activities. They were designed to awaken the interest of clients to try something new and unknown. To do that, students drew their inspiration from their own creative experience, but also equally from the stimuli of contemporary art or new knowledge obtained from the course of new media. It should be emphasized that art creation wasn't done only with the purpose to make fancy outputs. We appreciate that the students offered to clients many activities which were enriching because of their process and procedure. Project outputs were: video recordings, photos, audio recordings, etc. Projects like these required a high degree of communication skills of students and their ability to listen and be patient to guide the clients. The students' reflections also showed that it was difficult to connect, to gain a client's trust; their willingness to "open up" is not commonplace. Therefore, the projects which responded to clients stories of their life required the establishment of a closer relationship between the participants of the creative activities and leaders. It should be mentioned that the psychologist (therapist) required being present to encourage the professional relationship between a client and a special art teacher. Due to the presence of a therapist, it was easier for a special art teacher to keep a particular perspective and distance, protecting him/herself from burnout, unhealthy sympathy towards the problems of the clients, or identifying with his living situation, etc.

This phenomenon threatened students while leading activities with clients who they were close to in terms of age (e.g. children from diagnostic facilities, foreigners in refugee camps). Communication with seniors was also demanding, where respect for the patients sometimes conflicted with their elderly unexpected emotions (moody, moodiness, self-centeredness, etc.). It was often difficult to convince elderly people to overcome their initial scepticism and concern that activities can be done and they had a purpose. Therefore, students especially appreciated activities which were accepted by the clients and it was obvious that the act of creation brought intense experiences to them. It also often encouraged other clients to participate in subsequent art projects, to overcome stereotypes or fight an initial reluctance to participate in the events.

We can say that the realised projects of Special Art Education were a valuable opportunity for the implementation and the development of psycho-didactic skills. Additionally, it upheld the needs of creative activities and their importance, especially in institutions like retirement homes or refugee camps, where creative programs are not often considered an important part of a care.

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A Cross-Cultural Examination of Curriculum and Sexuality Outcomes in Primary School

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Abstract: In this paper, sexuality will be examined with regards to the parental attitudes as well as the public curriculum of various countries across the globe at the primary school level. The outcomes will be explored in relation to the type of education and dissemination of information provided to children and conclusions will be made based on these outcomes. The countries of Canada, the United States, Kenya, Australia and Ghana will be studied in detail. The outcomes will be looked at within some global comparison and proportions.

Key words: sexuality, outcomes, cross-cultural, parental attitudes.

1 Introduction

Sexuality is a topic that is often taboo in many cultures and families, especially when it comes to childhood. Many parents regard sexuality as a private topic that requires private discussions. In some families, it is often not explored enough or at all. Yet other parents provide meaningful information to their children when the topics arise (Parsons, Butler, Kocik, Norman and Nuss, 1998; Sunder, Ramos, Short, and Rosenthal, 2006). There is a recent shift for social changes within some countries which includes addition to the curriculum to include younger age groups and exploring ways in which to present and share that information with children.

This paper will examine the literature around parental attitudes towards sex education in some countries. Moreover, the public school curriculum will be looked at on a large scale, with regards to sex education. Finally, the outcomes will be considered based on different methods of information sharing with children and youth.

2 Discussion

It should be noted that the differences in cultures vary vastly by individual and this section in no means exists to stereotype people by culture or country, but simply to examine the differences between population and federal regulations.

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Since there is a going consensus that family values and public education should be on the same page and work together for continuity and effectiveness in children's lives as well as to dissuade confusion for them, then the differences and similarities on a wide scale will be looked at. For purposes of clarification, the word culture will be synonymous with country. This is presented for the purpose of statistical analysis and measurement in the population that will be contrasted against the public education attitude in the topic of sexuality in childhood.

Within the Kuria community in southwestern Kenya, the principles of sexuality are defined through the purpose of procreation and child-bearing (Prazak, 2000, p. 82). Advocating reproduction as a chief goal, grandparents serve as educators, mainly stressing the girls' duties to husbands. A young girl growing up in a community of Kenya is educated on the basic skills mandated for eligibility of marriage, which include cooking, hygiene, cleaning, and motherhood. All of these skills are communicated in the Home Science classes taught in school, yet the lack of sexual instruction in schools remains a present-day dilemma (Prazak, 2000, p. 82). The details of what happens between a man and a woman are usually shared to the girls by a married woman (Prazak, 2000, p. 82). The majority of men in African societies do not talk about sex because discussion of it is viewed as diminishment in manliness and control (Prazak, 2000, p. 85).

In a study conducted in Ghana of 100 parents from various backgrounds, the results indicated that about 58% of parents have an unfavourable attitude towards sex education at the primary level (Nyarko, Adentwi, Asumeng and Ahulu, 2014, p. 25). Of the parents who held favourable attitude; 81% indicated that children are exposed a lot these days, 17% admitted that sex education will be helpful to the children and 2% said children ask questions about sex anyway and needed to be provided with answers (Nyarko, Adentwi, Asumeng and Ahulu, 2014, p. 22). The Ghanaian government's attitude toward sex education is best described as ambivalent because, though the subject is officially part of the school curricula, it is not "effectively taught" in practice (Osei, 2009). There was no document found guiding principles on sex education in Ghana, rather documents to call for sex education to be put into place by various community leaders.

In a study conducted in some rural communities in Canada, parents filled out a questionnaire regarding sex education. Most parents (82%) were also in favour of school-based sexual health education that begins in the primary grades and continues through the senior grades of high-school. Parents took a pluralistic approach to teaching about the moral dimensions of sexual health with 81% strongly agreeing or agreeing about the importance for sexual health education to recognize and respect the different moral beliefs about sexuality that may exist in their community (McKay et. al, 1998). Studies conducted in different parts of Canada showed consistently that 85% of parents agreed with the statement that sex education should be provided in schools. The curriculum

varies across the country. Four out of ten provinces require the curriculum to be very detailed and structured into age groupings beginning at the grade one level and continuing through until high school (Ophea, 2010).

In the United States, the majority of parents believes that some sort of comprehensive sexual education program should be taught in the schools, ranging from 89%-95% approval; this support has been found across all demographic categories of parents (Eisenberg et al., 2008; Kirby, 2007; McKay et al., 1998). Many parents who support a comprehensive sexual education believe that most topics regarding sexual health should be first introduced either in the primary grades or during middle school (Eisenberg et al., 2008; McKay et al., 1998). Across the states, there is considerable variability in requirements for education as well as funding provided for programs. Almost all students in the U.S. receive some form of sex education at least once between grades 7 and 12; many schools begin addressing some topics as early as grades 4 or 5 (Landry, Singh and Darroch, 2000). There was no information found to corroborate any promotion of teaching sexual education before grades 4 or 5.

In Western Australia, the Parent Sexual Health Resources project was conducted and statistics measured regarding parents' attitudes towards sex education. Some indicated that they had discussed human sexuality with their children from a young age, and were open to answering questions, while others waited until they thought it was the 'right time' to raise the subject. Those who waited tended to express the view that they would only answer questions when they arose, and were concerned about protecting their children from too much information about sex. This approach was recognised as problematic because some children never ask questions (Department of Health, Western Australia, 2010).

The Victorian Department of Education (in Western Australia) policy guidelines state that sex education is compulsory for school students from Prep to Year 10. Sex Education Australia (SEA) is an organization which provides programs to public schools that are devised in accordance with the Victorian Education Learning Standards (VELS). The primary sessions cover topics for year 5 and 6 students in an age appropriate manner. The SEA can also provide younger students with education that is appropriate to their age (Walsh, 2011, p. 44).

Now that some countries are discussed, the outcomes will be looked upon based upon current research, statistics and global policies. Talking about sexuality in primary grades openly enables children to be more confident in discussing sexual matters (Wellings et al., 1995, p. 417). Offering comprehensive and flexible sexual education programs has been found to delay the age when young people become sexually active (Wellings et al., 1995, p. 419). A recognized public health society in Canada found out that children whose parents discuss values and attitudes towards sexuality and who receive good sexuality education at school are more likely to delay sex and less likely to have an unplanned pregnancy or a sexually transmissible infection. Reducing these negative outcomes is not the only purpose of sex education but it is an important one

(Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada, 2008). Another positive outcome of early sex education is that when young people do become sexually active, they are more likely to protect their sexual health by choosing fewer partners and using contraception (UNAIDS, 1997).

Yet more research has shown that parental communication with the child, particularly between a mother and daughter, will not only delay sexual intercourse and create negative attitudes regarding pregnancy, but also decrease the likelihood of the youth having unprotected sex and decrease the number of sexual partners (Parsons, Butler, Kocik, Norman and Nuss, 1998, Sunder, Ramos, Short and Rosenthal, 2006). Thus, the content and quality of parent–child communication may have an effect on delaying or accelerating the time line for sexual initiation (Bersamin et al., 2008).

A correlation often exists between the amount of education and the rate of teen pregnancy. A study from the National Survey of Family Growth showed that students are half as likely to get pregnant between the ages of 15 and 19 after going through a sex-education class. In Germany, where there are comprehensive sex education programs put into place, there is the lowest birth rate among 15- to 19-year-olds – only 11.7 per 1000 people, compared to 27.8 births per 1,000 people in the UK, and 39.0 births per 1,000 people in Bulgaria, which incidentally has the highest birth rate in Europe (Spiegel magazine, 2006).

3 Conclusions

A number of countries seem to recognize the importance of discussing sexuality with children in primary grades. The outcomes show that it is advisable and necessary to provide children with comprehensive, regulated age-appropriate information. In their book “Diversity and Difference in Early Childhood Education”, the authors call for recognizing children as important contributors to society, which means arming them with information they can use in the everyday world (Robinson and Jones, 2006, p. 9). As we live in complex times, new frameworks are needed in education in a multi-faceted world (Yelland, p. 5).

In 1986, the World Health Organization (WHO) stated that sexuality is an integral part of everyone’s personality: of man, woman and child. It is a basic need and aspect of being human that cannot be separated from other aspects of life and it influences thoughts, feelings, actions and interactions and thereby our mental and physical health (Langfeldt and Porter, 1986).

Based on all of these facts, research, statistics and recommendations, it is fair to state that to promote the sexual health of every child, they should be exposed to sex education which is age-appropriate and regulated to enrich their lives from a young primary-age. Enrichment of physical and mental health by preventing teenage pregnancies, STDs, etc. and promotion of the positive attributes aforementioned. It is also fair to state that parents should be involved in the decision making process and also educated on the positive outcomes that

regulated sex education may bring. Finally, parents need to be involved and educated on the ways of handling and initiating discussions with their children regarding sex education since it should be a cohesive process for the child.

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REVIEWS

**Učiteľ a hodnoty. Európske hodnoty a kultúrne
dedičstvo - výzva pre vzdelávanie
[Teachers and Values. European Values and
Cultural Heritage – a Challenge for Education]
(Tomáš Jablonský – Silvia Matúšová et al.)**

*Ružomberok: VERBUM, 2013, 487 pp.
ISBN: 978-80-561-0089-9.*

Erich Petlák*

To write a review on an almost 400-page publication with 25 contributing authors from Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Poland, on a topic, which is, from the aspect of the present times, extremely important, is not an easy task. But the team of authors is a guaranty of a really high level of the reviewed publication.

The monograph is the outcome of the solution of the project KEGA 042KU-4/2011. A compact piece of work of such an extent is always an evidence of a responsible and creative approach to the solution of a research task.

As the title of the monograph suggests, and the authors accentuate it in the foreword as well, the aim of this piece of work is to describe and to point out the diversity of values and cultures reflected in education. Of course, the present times (often called e.g. postmodern) are not an era, which would promote the values established and appreciated in the past, what is more, usually the opposite is true. We are the witnesses of various pathological changes in the field of values. We must admit, that schools cannot resign, they cannot retreat from their educational work in relation to the creation of attitudes towards values. But, and we probably do not realize it enough, they are often helpless, because the system of values and attitudes is being influenced by the whole society, and, at schools, willingly or unwillingly, the current state of the society is reflected to a great extent.

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As for the content, extent and the focus of the individual chapters and subchapters, as well as the number of authors, I take a complex approach to the monograph in my book review.

Before I mention some of the points of view on selected fields, I find it important to “introduce” the aim of the publication. In the foreword, the authors emphasise the following points:

- education should promote pupils’ and students’ cognitive, affective and moral development;
- focusing the attention on the acquisition of cultural values and patterns of behaviour, which, if fostered by schools, become pupils’ and students’ internal norms;
- from the aspect of the discussed tasks, it is necessary to pay attention to pedeutology, which is, in a certain sense of meaning, a messenger of current ethical, moral and cultural values, as well as future challenges;
- the crisis of the postmodern word shows the failure of traditional philosophy and the theory of education, therefore, education must be focused on emphasising the ethical, cultural and collective values of the ecological environment and civilisation, including preservation of life on earth, more intensively.

The studies included in the publication (6 chapters and 22 subchapters) can be divided into the following fields:

- philosophical-ethical and moral aspects of values education from both the historical and current aspects (chapters 1 and 2);
- educational possibilities and requirements – schools and families (chapter 3);
- value orientation and the present view on the current problems, e.g. finding values in occultism, Satanism, etc. (chapter 4);
- a historical view on the first teacher training institution in Slovakia and Catholicism’s contribution to values (chapter 5);
- present, the possibilities and the need for paying more attention to value orientation (part 6).

This division is only a rough classification and view on the scale of the described fields by the authors, on the chapters and subchapters. In spite of the fact that several authors worked on the monograph, supervision by the leaders of the collective of authors is evident. The written monograph, respectively its chapters and subchapters, form a coherent piece of work. If we compare the content of the first and the last chapters, we can observe a certain gradation of the described and analysed aspects of values.

The monograph is not written in the form of a textbook, in spite of that it can serve as excellent study material for teacher trainees, as well as practicing teachers, because it explains several aspects of values in the past, at present and in the future. For sure, it will become a sought-after piece of literature for those, who intend to get a deeper insight into the given field from the viewpoint of

theoretical understanding of values, but also from the aspect of the possibilities and needs of education. Besides the above mentioned philosophical-ethical and other aspects, which are dealt with in the monograph, I positively evaluate a certain appeal, a call for paying more attention to the issues of values in the following studies: “The Ten Values of a European Christian Teacher”, the third chapter “Occult and Satanic Symbolism: the Values of Contemporary Youth?”, “The Global, European and Psychological-Pedagogical Dimensions of Values and Culture” – I would like to emphasise that by mentioning only some of the chapters, I do not intend to depreciate the value of the other ones. Of course, all the chapters and subchapters are written at a high professional level with a theoretical insight into the discussed issues. This contributes to a global understanding of the discussed fields.

On the basis of the above mentioned, I can declare, that all the authors of the monograph not only deal with demanding themes being the topic of many debates in an interesting, easy to read way, but bring solutions as well. After reading the publication, I can state that these are the fields, which, in a certain sense of meaning, “outreach beyond the school environment”, because they touch the school but also the society-wide reality. Therefore, higher attention must be paid to these facts by us pedagogues taking part in the young generation’s education.

Thanks to its form and the selection of the fields of the educational but also society-wide reality, this publication will certainly find its readers not only among pedagogues. I can state that the discussed topics are thoughtfully organised into chapters, taking into consideration the current educational reality. At last but not least, I would like to point out the high professional level of the text and its intelligibility. I am sure about the publication’s contribution to both educational theory and practice. Therefore, I believe that this piece of work should be a part of each teacher’s personal library.

Másodkézből. Magyar Ifjúság 2012
[Secondary Source. Hungarian Youth 2012]
(Ádám Nagy - Levente Székely (eds.))

Budapest: ISZT Foundation - Kutatópont, Budapest, 2014, 302 pp.
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Réka Majsai*



This project was proposed and evaluated by the Hungarian National Rural Network's Presidency (HNRN), co-financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and approved by the managing authority of Hungary.

The collection of academic studies *Secondary Source - Hungarian Youth 2012* was published as a sequel to *Hungarian Youth 2012*. This volume analyses the life situation and quality of life of Hungarian youth aged 15-29 along the lines of different research topics. The study was based on a data collection completed 2 years ago, which was a part of a large-sample youth survey repeated every 4 years since 2000. The target groups and the test questions are always the same, for an easier comparison with previous data and to help describe the changes in trends.¹ Replies from almost 8 000 interviews were evaluated, yielding studies

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¹ This survey has a history of 12 years (Youth 2000, 2004, 2008). Since 2012, it has been carried out by Kutatópont Ltd. Previously, the surveys were conducted by the National Youth Research Institute, and "Mobilitás"- National Youth Administration, Institute of Labour and Social Policy

that provide more information and help better understand the sociological trends and problems of youth in our present time. The editor of the volume Levente Székely (Head of Research at Kutatópont Ltd., responsible for the survey) said that the purpose of the studies is to paint a comprehensive yet detailed picture to the decision makers about the young generation's situation and possibilities. The current research analyses the data collected in 2012 "from a secondary source" and points out new correlations.

In this volume, the reader can find 12 analyses that can be sorted into 5 distinct thematic categories. The authors of this collection of academic studies – mostly young researchers – investigate the chances of today's adolescent generation for school, work and independent career start amidst the current social and economic situation. In addition, we can also get a picture of their free time activities, cultural interest as well as social and political activities.

1.

Levente Székely outlines the main characteristics of this generation in his introductory study.² He labels this group of young adults born between 1982 and 1996 as "the quiet generation". After analysing all the answers, it turns out that, in most cases, these young adults – between the age of 15 and 29 – are much more likely to exhibit higher levels of conformity, uncertainty and passivity in comparison with the similar target groups of previous large sample surveys. The most thought-provoking result of this research is that these young people are not only careless about their private lives, but are also likely to refuse forming opinions about their narrow and wider environment. Their social and civil activity remains in a "neutral" field, they let questions regarding their society and closer community pass without making a stance.

Ádám Nagy analysed³ the article "*Ifjúsági rétegek az ezredfordulón*"⁴ (*The different strata of youth at the millennium*) using the current, updated data collection of "*Ifjúság 2000*"⁵ (*Youth 2000*). This present analysis attempts, among other things, to model the re-stratification caused by the social changes generated by information technology.

2.

The second part of this book explores urban and regional disparities and their effects. The vast economic and social gap between different regions determines the low prospects of youth living in regions that are falling behind. The current

and partly the Institute of Political Science and Sociology - Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Due to these changes, the priorities of the questions have changed slightly.

² "The new quiet generation", pp. 9-29

³ "Social stratification of youth in 2012", pp. 29-45

⁴ Székely, L. (ed.). *Hungarian Youth 2012 survey (collection of studies)*. Budapest: Kutatópont Ltd., 2013.

⁵ Székely, L. (ed.). *Hungarian Youth 2012 survey (report)*. Budapest: Kutatópont Ltd., 2012.

data clearly show that the inequality has not diminished since the democratic transformation of 1989; in fact, it is at a stagnant high level. The question is how much the future plans and prospects of youth depend on these variables and to what extent the public education (higher education, vocational training and adult education) system could reduce the gravity of the situation. The significance of this issue is stressed by the fact that the Hungarian school system is the most segregating among OECD countries. Three studies in this volume analyse the differences in prospects of Hungarian youth by comparing territorial, economic and social indexes.

Ibolya Czibere's research⁶ shows the situation of youth over 18 along with the urban and residential dimensions. The most serious effects of the factors examined by the study are incapability to plan their future, lack of objectives and significant unemployment.

Márk Birinyi and **Diána Szabó**⁷ examine school dropout tendencies among youth belonging to marginal groups – mainly Roma or disabled – according to the type of institution and settlement structure. Participation in public education is the first step towards successfully tackling social life. As a result of this investigation, we can clearly see the differences between the school dropouts, the labour market left-outs, and the NEET subgroup's marginal youth in terms of participation ratios in different types of institutions, while regional differences in selection processes can also be observed.

In their study, **Eszter Bogároni** and **Miklós Péter Múder**⁸ also explored the issues related to the employment possibilities and labour market options of youth. They sought new possible ways that could prove successful in the shifting labour market. The study projects a society open towards private entrepreneurs, ideas created with efficient problem-solving and adaptation skills, able to adequately respond to the shifts in current times. The question is, whether the analysed young generation are able to stand their ground in this new situation, whether they are able to creatively grow into adults against this background of social disadvantages.

3.

The third part of the book examines the quality of life of youth and their satisfaction with their situation.

Zoltán Csizmadia and **Péter Tóth**⁹ analyse various social and economic inequalities and the conflicts they cause, with special regards to their discernible impact on how young adults evaluate their own quality of life.

⁶ "Local and regional disparities among youth in ages 18-29 years", pp. 45-73

⁷ "Marginalized youth groups odds in education", pp. 149-175

⁸ "Towards self-employment", pp. 175-195

⁹ "Conflicts and quality of life in individual life situations among young people", pp. 91-113

The study of **Tamás Dömötör Szalai**¹⁰ is more loosely related to the topic, analysing the relationship between the body mass index and sexuality, friendships, and drug use.

4.

The fourth part of the book examines the dimensions of time spent in a community in terms of free time activities. These provide an insight into the interrelations of sporting habits (recreational activities) and culture consumption with regard to different statuses.

The study of **Klára Kovács** and **Szilvia Perényi**¹¹ investigates the categories of sports and the subjective wellbeing related to it. **Anna Fazekas**'s¹² analysis acquaints the reader with a framework of different lifestyles and financial situations on the one hand, and the matching possibilities for active pastime on the other hand. **Mariann Fekete** and **Gergő Prazsák**¹³ explore youth participation in cultural life, analysing how this is influenced by family background and social environment before conducting an impact assessment of the use of info-communication devices.

The research paper by **István Balcsók**, **Lilla Becsei** and **Tibor Szarvák**,¹⁴ who examined the retention rate of towns or cities and communities, is related to this topic as well. The research is based on the fact, that the retention capacity and development opportunities of a town or city have a strong socialising and cohesive force. In this relation, it becomes important what kind of possibilities and services a given town or city offers to its residents as alternatives to free time activities in front of a TV or computer screen. The inquiry of this research is all the more justified of the lack of community spaces and social life further increasing the effects of unfavourable social phenomena. Without an active social life, the creative class, considered as the instigator of economic development, cannot evolve.

5.

Besides tendencies of passive behaviour exhibited by young people in various fields, the emergence of extreme political views also appears as a strong contrast. Recently, several studies have been attempted to analyse this characteristic generational phenomenon, as does the study that concludes this

¹⁰ The connection between BMI index and social relationship, sexuality, friendship and drug abuse among young people", pp. 113-149

¹¹ "Sports and Health", pp. 245-263

¹² "Status detection and spare time", pp. 219-245

¹³ "Cultural cast-system. The role of autonomy and community in the cultural activity of young people", pp. 175-195

¹⁴ "The role of urban environment in the life of young people", pp. 73-91

volume. In their research, *Anikó Félix* and *Anikó Gregor*¹⁵ examine the radical right-wing with a relatively new approach, from the aspect of gender. Although a gender gap is apparent from the study, that is that boys are more likely to vote for the radical right, such as Jobbik, than girls, but their motivation does not show much difference. As the study indicates: it is the notion of community that bears a power of attraction which motivates young people to undertake extreme views. According to their analysis, behind the reasons there lies Jobbik's active online and offline campaign, as well as their social community building activity. The collected data let us conclude that this kind of community participation can fill such emptiness in young people's lives for which they find no cure elsewhere, or if they do find another strong ideology, its impact on them is typically less intense.

All in all, the volume's content and structure fulfil the goals it has undertaken: investigating relevant issues, their analyses provides a better view of the problems that affect the everyday lives of young people.

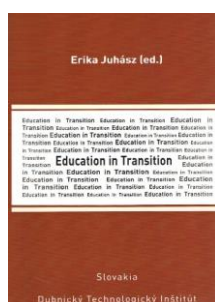
The volume lacks some aspects though, for instance, studies analysing the participation of youth above the age of compulsory education following the introduction of tuition fees in higher education, with a view on the social impact of the problem. However, the issues analysed in this volume contribute to the system-level apprehension of the possible reasons. Several social phenomena can already be detected among young people, such as the deterioration of social wellbeing, weakening and almost non-existent democratic participation, the phenomenon of alienation and increasing chances of social exclusion. All of these are signs of warning for youth experts that the current educational system is incapable of adapting to young people's existing needs, while often struggling with deficiencies that affect its very function.

¹⁵ "Need a team? - Research about young supporters of the Hungarian radical right-wing party (Jobbik- The movement for a better Hungary) with a special focus on gender differences", pp. 245-263

Education in Transition (Erika Juhász (ed.))

*Dubnica nad Váhom: Dubnica Institute of Technology, 2012, 246 pp.
ISBN 978-80-89400-52-2.*

Silvia Barnová*



The book entitled *Education in Transition*, edited by Erika Juhász, contains 18 scientific studies all written by Hungarian professionals. It introduces some interesting results of Hungarian educational research, which reflects the process of transformation that has been undergoing in Hungarian education for the last two decades.

The book consists of two parts. The studies are divided based on their focus. The first part of the collection is oriented on the changes in primary, secondary and higher education. It consists of ten studies dealing with both Hungarian and other European educational institutions. Six of the studies are focused on the issues of higher education; four of the researches were undertaken at the University of Debrecen. In their research, András Buda and his colleagues inquired about the level of student and graduate satisfaction as a part of quality control practices and in his contribution he reveals the most important research results. Judit Herczegh deals with the use of ICT and its impact on communication, she highlights both its benefits and drawbacks in her paper. The respondents participating in Gyöngyvér Pataki's research were the university's residential students. She shares an overview of their activity structure and their value preferences. Zsuzsa Zsófia Tornyai introduces the results of gender research

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targeted on the women's role in science and education. The research sample consisted of female university teachers and the researchers were trying to find out what these women did differently compared to other women having similar conditions in their lives. The issues of lifelong learning are being currently discussed among professionals, Ágnes Engler studied it from the aspect of the return of the investment of time and money spent from the viewpoint of mothers participating in higher education while being on a maternity leave. Her research sample consisted of female students of the University of Debrecen and the College of Nyíregyháza. Ilona Dóra Fekete and Szilvia Simándi show a comparative study on the international academic relations in Europe. The rest of the papers deal with the issues of primary and secondary education. Katinka Bacskai brings an overview of the educational values of reformed secondary schools in Hungary from the point of view of teachers. Another author, Ildikó Laki, studied the educational integration of disabled students, their living conditions, quality of life and their social status. Ibolya Markóczi Revákné and Beáta Kosztin Tóth present results focused on the problem solving strategies of 9-10 year old pupils. Erika Szirmai briefly points out some characteristics of selected prevention and intervention programmes and summarizes the findings of a research carried out in Hungary.

Eight papers are included in the second part of the book; all of them concentrate on the issues of adult education and culture. The first two studies by Erika Juhász and the collective of authors Judit Herczegh, Orsolya Tátrai and Zsuzsa Zsófia Tornyi deal with the issues of autonomous adult learning. Attila Zoltán Kenyeres shows a comparison of Hungarian, German and Austrian newsreel as for the appearance of the informative function. Edina Márkus studied some Czech, Latvian, Polish, German and Hungarian non-profit organizations serving cultural purposes and, in her paper, she offers the answers to the questions whether these non-profit organisations are capable of meeting the expectations, what problems and obstacles they have to face and if there are any differences between the organisations in East Central European cities. The next two papers deal with adult education from different aspects; Márta Miklósi pays attention to quality control and accreditation in adult education, while Szilvia Simándi and Tímea Oszlánci inquired on the role of previous knowledge in adult education. Ágnes Szabó describes the process of development of the Grundtvig-style folk high schools in Denmark and their adaptation especially in Hungary. The final study in the book was written by János Zoltán Szabó, who analyses four categories of conformity that could be classified on the basis of a survey of festivals organised in 2007.

This publication may be useful for all the professionals or anyone who is interested in the current issues of education and the results of educational research not only inside the Hungarian borders but in the entire European context as well. It can serve as a source of inspiration for further educational research.

INFORMATION

Professor PhDr. Ľudovít Višňovský, CSc.

*Erich Petlák**



In the summer of 2014, the Slovak educational society commemorated the jubilee of an outstanding pedagogue, who has dedicated all his professional life to pedagogy and teacher training. There is probably not a single teacher in Slovakia who would not know the name of our outstanding pedagogue professor PhDr. Ľudovít Višňovský, CSc.

Professor Ľudovít Višňovský was born on the 15th of July, 1939 in Zombor, district of Veľký Krtíš. After finishing his studies at the Pedagogical School in Lučenec, he began to study in Bratislava, where he graduated in the field of pedagogy and Slovak language. As a young university graduate, he joined the Pedagogical Institute in Banská Bystrica, where he has worked since then.

Before mentioning his personal characteristics, I would like to point out, that his professional profile is closely connected with the field of pedagogy, which he has been dealing with since he started working in education. In 1969, he was awarded the degree of PhDr., successfully defending his dissertation in 1972; in 1976, he habilitated and received the title of docent in the field of pedagogy and then, in the same field, he became a university professor at Charles University in Prague.

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Everyone who has at least something to do with pedagogy knows the name of professor Višňovský, whose work has had a significant impact on Slovak pedagogy. His professional and educational work is recorded in 21 monographs and university textbooks, many other important collective works, in more than 300 scholarly articles in educational journals, and, lastly but not least, his active contribution to 70 conferences both in Slovakia and abroad. To all of the above mentioned, in addition, he has written hundreds of reviews on rigorous, doctoral, habilitation and inauguration theses. I have had the opportunity to study several of them and I am happy to note that they were written with pedagogical optimism with an attempt to draw the students' attention to the current issues of the topic they had dealt with, but also with interest, good will and motivation for future creative work. This attributes to a certain charm of professor Višňovský's personality, too.

Listing his publications taxingly is not enough, however, it helps to elucidate the professor's overall profile. It is more important to emphasize that all his books and studies are full of pedagogical optimism, humanism and a warm relationship toward people. They have been written for teachers to be and practicing teachers. Among them, we can mention, e.g. *Obsah, formy a metódy práce s mládežou* (The Content, Forms and Methods of Working with Youth), *Triedny učiteľ* (The Class Teacher), *Základy rodinnej výchovy* (Fundamentals of Family Education), *Výchova detí v rodine a mimo nej* (Child Education Within and Outside the Family), *Vybrané kapitoly z teórie výchovy* (Selected Chapters of Theory of Education) and a whole range of other publications. The same applies to the previously mentioned studies. Writing for real pedagogical-didactic practice is typical for his pedagogical work; that is the main reason for the popularity of his books among both students and practicing teachers.

All these activities have been closely related to his pedagogical, scientific and research activities and, of course, training of the scientific youth within doctoral programmes. During the years, he has participated in science and research, in APVV, KEGA and VEGA projects, which were preceded by state plans of research.

The list of the names of the doctoral students, who have successfully completed their studies under the leadership of professor Višňovský, would be very long. Many of them are not only university teachers but also docents and professors of pedagogy. This is the proof of his professional erudition transformed into tangible pedagogical-didactic work.

Besides the above mentioned, he has worked on many scientific boards of universities, editorial boards of journals, used to be a member of the Accreditation Committee, etc. Even nowadays he holds membership of several editorial boards and actively works in committees for the development and qualifications of university teachers. For his conscientious and creative work, he has been decorated several times, e.g. he was awarded the "State Award for Outstanding Work", a medal for his contribution to the development of

university education in Banská Bystrica, he is the holder of the award for “Exemplary Teacher” and of many medals awarded by universities both in Slovakia and abroad. It is necessary to add that he belongs to those pedagogues, who have paid special attention to the issues of leisure time. In spending it meaningfully he saw huge opportunities for the development of a child’s personality. Besides the general pedagogical and didactic questions that he has been dealing with, leisure time has been another field of his scientific work.

For validation, it is necessary to mention his important managerial activities as well. In years 1974-1976, he worked at the Ministry of Education and participated in the creation of conceptual materials for school development. Later he worked as the Head of the Department of Pedagogy, then as the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Education in Banská Bystrica and from 1983 till 2002, with a short break, he was the Dean of the Faculty, and consequently the Head of the Department.

It is really only a brief list of the activities of the pedagogue celebrating his anniversary.

I would like to add a friend’s view on the professor’s personality as well. It is clear from the above mentioned, that professor Višňovský is an exceptional personality. He is a humanist – he is generous and has a very good relationship with students, but, at the same time, he has high expectations. For this, he has been extremely popular among them. He is a friend. He is open-hearted, affable and always ready to help, but with a sufficient level of strictness. He is typically tenacious, strong and disciplined for the assigned tasks. Thanks to these and many other personality traits, such as taking responsibility not only for himself but also for his colleagues, students and the tasks that he himself created for the welfare of the school that he led, for the development of pedagogy as a science, has professor Višňovský’s name been written into the history of Slovak pedagogy.

There are many other things to write about and we could make a long list of the various activities of professor Višňovský. We believe that his accomplishments known by the whole Slovak educational community, portray his personality, character and his life path best. We can only wish him a world of excellent health, contentment and, above all, optimism, which has been characteristic for him. It is his optimism that helps him to cope with demanding tasks and adverse situations when facing challenges.

Dear colleague, dear professor Ľudovít Višňovský, on behalf of the whole “educational community”, I am sending you our warm congratulations with the wishes of prosperity and exceeding joy in your family for the years to come. We are looking forward to your ideas, opinions and suggestions for Slovak pedagogy and we hope that will have the opportunity to listen to your euphonious and specific rhetoric for many, many years. All the best.

Professor Zdeněk Obdržálek – An Outstanding Slovak Pedagogue

*Viola Tamášová**



Professor PhDr. Zdeněk Obdržálek, DrSc. is a highly respected personality among the Slovak educational community. He celebrated a life anniversary this year – his 85th birthday. He was born on April 18, 1929 in Tovačov in Moravia. He finished his studies at the Teachers' Institute in Kroměříž in 1947. Then he worked at several schools in Karviná District, in Nový Jičín, Olomouc and Bratislava. He completed his university studies at the Pedagogical University (Vysoká škola pedagogická) in Bratislava, in 1957. Since then, he has lived and worked in Bratislava as the director of several secondary schools, then as a university teacher at the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports, Comenius University in Bratislava (1967-1987). He held several leading positions at this Faculty, but also at university level; he was the Vice Dean and the Vice Rector for Educational Affairs. He worked on improving his pedagogical and scientific qualifications; he was awarded the following titles and degrees – CSc. in 1964, PhDr. in 1967, Docent in 1968, DrSc. in 1982 and Professor in 1983.

In 1964, his monograph *Výchova, technika a všeobecnovzdelávacia škola* (*Education, Technology and Comprehensive Schools*) and in 1967, the monograph *Riadenie výchovno-vyučovacej práce na škole* (*Management of Education in Schools*) were published. From publishing the first edition of this monograph dealing with the issues of school management till today, Professor

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Obdržálek has paid attention to this field, he has penetrated into the substance and the depth of school management by means of research and has introduced the newest educational trends in professional literature.

Professor Obdržálek started working at the Faculty of Education of Comenius University in Bratislava in 1987. He used to be one of the leading academic officials; in years 1987-1991, he was the Dean of the Faculty, the Chairman of the Academic Senate of the Faculty, a member of the Dean's Collegium, of the Scientific Board and the Head of the Department of Education (1987-2004). Among all the other leading positions and his activities, we can mention his work as the chairman of habilitation and inauguration committees or as a reviewer of doctoral dissertation, habilitation and inauguration theses. As a supervisor of doctoral students, he directly contributed to the education of the young pedagogical generation, which currently forms the basis of modern Slovak pedagogy. In 2005, he was awarded the title of *Professor Emeritus*.

The scientific research work of Professor Obdržálek has international dimensions, e.g. he participated in the international UNESCO research project - Science and Technology Education Unit and Participation Programme (1994-1997). As for his research work in Slovakia, he has been an investigator of several national research and grant tasks, e.g. he participated in the preparation and publication of a terminological dictionary of school organisation and management - *Organizácia a manažment školstva (School Organization and Management)* within a KEGA project (Cultural and Educational Grant Agency of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic) in 2001. The scientific erudition of Professor Obdržálek is evident from his contributions at international scientific conferences, seminars and other fora both in Slovakia and abroad. He has collaborated with colleagues from other countries within international projects and published a number of papers on this topic.

His membership in the editorial boards of scientific journals (e.g. *Pedagogická revue*), as well as his membership in Slovak and foreign pedagogical associations, e.g. The European Association for Research on Learning –EARLI, belong among the important activities of Professor Obdržálek.

Based on the lifetime's work of Professor Obdržálek and his recent scientific work, he is considered to be a pioneer in developing pedagogy, especially its two fields - *theory of education (didactics)* and, in the second half of the 20th century, he constituted *theory of school management* as a pedagogical discipline. Since that time, this field has been elaborated until reaching the current shape under the name of *Organization and Management of Schools*. His monographs, e.g. *Škola, školský systém, ich organizácia a riadenie (Schools, School System, Their Organization and Management)* (1996), *Riadenie školstva v SR (School Management in Slovakia)* (1999), *Škola a jej manažment (Schools and Their Management)* (2002), *Aktuálne otázky školského manažmentu (Current Issues of School Management)* (2007), etc., are focused on this field as well.

For his scientific, publication and pedagogical work, Professor Obdržálek has been awarded many medals and prizes. Among them, the most important ones are: Exemplary Teachers (1962), Silver Medal of Comenius University (1985), Medal of J. A. Komenský (1989), Golden Medal of Comenius University (1989), Golden Medal of Faculty of Education, Comenius University in Bratislava (1996).

He is tenacious, hard-working, with a high degree of integrity, he has high expectations regarding his own performance but also the work of his colleagues and students (he is still active academically at the Comenius University). A strong sense of responsibility for the development of the pedagogical science belongs to the basic personal traits of Professor Zdeněk Obdržálek as well. This all contributed to making the Slovak educational theory known among the international scientific community.

This short evaluation of Professor Obdržálek's life and work would not be complete without mentioning his talents in reciting poems by Czech poets by heart and joy from singing Slovak and Czech folk songs and evergreens at the informal social meetings of the members of the Department of Education of the Faculty of Education, Comenius University in Bratislava, which had a very good reputation in years 1989-2010. Many of its members look back on those times and Professor Obdržálek with love.

Dear Professor Obdržálek, on behalf of the Editorial Board of *Acta Technologica Dubnicae*, I wish you optimism, an excellent health and contentment for the days to come.

**International Scientific Conference &
International Workshop
Present Day Trends of Innovations 2014
22nd-23rd May, 2014
Brno, Czech Republic**

*Ladislav Várkoly**



The fifth International Scientific Conference Present Day Trends of Innovations 2014 (DTI 2014) & International Workshop was held in Hotel Slovan in Brno, Czech Republic on May 22nd – 23rd, 2014. The Conference & Workshop has been held abroad for the second time. The organisational duties related to this year's conference DTI 2014 were shared by Dubnica Institute of Technology and B&M InterNets, s.r.o.; in 2012, Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Informatyki i Przedsiębiorczości w Łomży (State University of Information Science and Technology and Commerce in Łomża, Poland) was the co-organiser of the event.

The international scientific conference Present Day Trends of Innovations 2014 was organized under the auspices of Peter Plavčan, Director General of the Section of Higher Educational Institutions, Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, Radimír Vrba, Director of University Institute CEITEC, Erich Petlák, Rector of Dubnica Institute of Technology in Dubnica nad Váhom, Gabriela Sláviková, Director of Dubnica Institute of Technology in Dubnica nad Váhom, Daniel Lajčín, Director General of Dupres Group in Dubnica nad Váhom and Jaromír Bogr, Director General of B&M InterNets, Brno.

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The main partners of DTI 2014 were: e-learnmedia s.r.o., Dupres Consulting s.r.o. and Dupres s.r.o. in cooperation with:

Kazimierz Pulaski University of Technology and Humanities in Radom, Wydział Informatyki i Matematyki, Wydział Filologiczno-Pedagogiczny (PL),

Institute for Sustainable Technologies – National Research Institute in Radom (PL),

The State Higher School of Computer Science & Business Administration in Łomża (PL),

Czestochowa University of Technology (PL),

Białystok Technical University (PL),

Academy of Business in Dąbrowa Górnicza (PL),

Silesian University of Technology, Śląsk (PL),

Business Economics Academy, Čačak (SRB),

Vysoká škola finanční a správní, Praha (CZ),

Mendelova univerzita, Brno (CZ),

Masarykova univerzita v Brně (CZ),

Evropský polytechnický institut, Kunovice (CZ),

Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně (CZ),

Vysoká škola technická a ekonomická v Českých Budějovicích (CZ),

Ostravská univerzita v Ostravě (CZ),

Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave (SK),

Ekonomická univerzita v Bratislave (SK),

Vysoká škola manažmentu v Trenčíne (SK),

Technická univerzita vo Zvolene (SK),

Trenčianska univerzita A. Dubčeka v Trenčíne (SK),

Univerzita Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici (SK),

Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa v Nitre (SK),

Žilinská univerzita v Žiline (SK).

The event was initiated by its scientific co-guarantors – Jaromír Bogr, Director General of the B&M InterNets, s.r.o. and Ladislav Várkony, the scientific guarantor of DTI 2010-2015.

The International Scientific Conference DTI 2014 was the fifth formal meeting and an occasion for academic debate in the field of information technology and its use in the educational environment. The audience consisted of teachers, scientists, young researchers, postgraduate students and engineers from industry from Slovakia and its neighbouring countries. The Conference focused on the actual use of modern technologies and devices, forthcoming trends, as well as the newest innovations in the field of mobile and media communication.

Within the scope of the Conference DTI 2014 there were the following themes:

- Modern e-learning technologies and information systems;
- Education management, knowledge management, self-learning organization;

- Electronic educational materials and modern interactive teaching aids;
- Modern teaching aids and interactive sensoric modules;
- Virtual laboratories and remote experiments;
- Operational reliability and safety of technologies and applications;
- Internet schools and online courses; and
- Automotive information technologies.

A new field and a new conference section - Education technologies for handicapped people (ADHD, LD) - was introduced.

Many speakers opened new themes concerning the above-mentioned problems and presented some possible ways of their solution. The specialised presentations were very interesting for many guests that participated in the Conference. Large numbers of them were accompanied by interactive demonstrations as well. Garmin company's promotional presentation is such an example, it was dealing with problems closely related to modern navigation systems and modern mobile e-learning applications. There was a possibility to test several features of their navigation systems for everyone who was interested in them, including setting and changing appropriate parameters based on their own requirements. The lecture presented by B&M InterNets' company representatives from Brno dealt with modern e-learning concepts and was considered very interesting too.

The activities accompanying the conference, the final banquet and the international workshop, provided more opportunities for networking and various informal discussions. Most discussions were focused on the possibilities of co-operation between institutions, especially in the process of creating university textbooks, working on scientific monographs and publishing scientific papers in recognised research journals with the aim to share information and facilitate mutual collaboration regarding the progressive and innovative forms of education and also future collaborative international research in this field. The discussions and negotiations related to the preparations of the sixth DTI Conference in 2015 started as well.

The Conference is becoming more and more recognised and has a growing reputation within the scientific and research community and people providing educational and training services.

Conference papers and contributions were published in the form of a reviewed scientific monograph entitled "Present Day Trends of Innovations", which was edited by Várkoly, Bogr and Mareček, and stored on USB pen drives.

Notes:

- 1) A continual collaboration in international scientific-research grants headed by Ladislav Várkoly and other new activities were successfully negotiated by the conference participants.
- 2) The partners of the International Scientific Conference Present Day Trends of Innovations 2014 were: B&M InterNets, Garmin, Strojárstvo – European

Engineering Magazine, Media/ST Publishing House, Stavebníctvo a bývanie, SOVA Digital, CITO Digital, Infoware, PC Revue, konferencie.sk, edumenu.cz, education.sk, TV Považie, Televízia Trenčín, MY noviny Stredného Považia. We would also like to thank the following firms and companies: Smarttech 3D scanners Sp. Z.o.o., Przegląd organizacji, Towarzystwo Naukowe Organizacji i Kierownictwa, Pastel and T-Smaragd.

- 3) To provide the participants with up-to-date information, new web servers www.trendsofinnovations.eu, www.trendsofinnovations.com and www.dti.sk/konferencia2014 were created.



Publication Ethics and Malpractice Statement

The Dubnica Institute of Technology in Dubnica nad Váhom, Slovakia, as publisher of the journal *Acta Technologica Dubnicae* takes its duties of guardianship over all stages of publishing extremely seriously and we recognize our ethical and other responsibilities. We are committed to ensuring that advertising, reprint or other commercial revenue has no impact or influence on editorial decisions. In addition, the Editorial Board will assist in communications with other journals and/or publishers where this is useful and necessary.

Duties of authors

Reporting standards

Authors of reports of original research should present an accurate account of the work performed as well as an objective discussion of its significance. Underlying data should be represented accurately in the paper. A paper should contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behavior and are unacceptable. Review and professional publication articles should also be accurate and objective, and editorial opinion' works should be clearly identified as such.

Data access and retention

Authors may be asked to provide the raw data in connection with a paper for editorial review, and should be prepared to provide public access to such data, if practicable, and should in any event be prepared to retain such data for a reasonable time after publication.

Originality and plagiarism

The authors should ensure that they have written entirely original works, and if the authors have used the work and/or words of others that this has been appropriately cited or quoted. Plagiarism takes many forms, from passing off another's paper as the author's own paper, to copying or paraphrasing substantial parts of another's paper (without attribution), to claiming results from research conducted by others. Plagiarism in all its forms constitutes unethical publishing behavior and is unacceptable.

Multiple, redundant or concurrent publication

An author should not in general publish manuscripts describing essentially the same research in more than one journal or primary publication. Submitting the same manuscript to more than one journal concurrently constitutes unethical publishing behavior and is unacceptable. In general, an author should not submit for consideration in another journal a previously published paper. The authors and editors of the journals concerned must agree to the secondary publication, which must reflect the same data and interpretation of the primary document. The primary reference must be cited in the secondary publication.

Acknowledgement of sources

Proper acknowledgment of the work of others must always be given. Authors should cite publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work. Information obtained privately, as in conversation, correspondence, or discussion with third parties, must not be used or reported without explicit, written permission from the source. Information obtained in the course of confidential services, such as refereeing manuscripts or grant applications, must not be used without the explicit written permission of the author of the work involved in these services.

Authorship of the paper

Authorship should be limited to those who have made a significant contribution to the conception, design, execution, or interpretation of the reported study. All those who have made significant contributions should be listed as co-authors. Where there are others who have participated in certain substantive aspects of the research project, they should be acknowledged or listed as contributors. The corresponding author should ensure that all appropriate co-authors and no inappropriate co-authors are included on the paper, and that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the paper and have agreed to its submission for publication.

Disclosure and conflicts of interest

All authors should disclose in their manuscript any financial or other substantive conflict of interest that might be construed to influence the results or interpretation of their manuscript. All sources of financial support for the project should be disclosed. Examples of potential conflicts of interest which should be disclosed include employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patent applications/registrations, and grants or other funding. Potential conflicts of interest should be disclosed at the earliest stage possible.

Fundamental errors in published works

When an author discovers a significant error or inaccuracy in his/her own published work, it is the author's obligation to promptly notify the journal editor or publisher and cooperate with the editor to retract or correct the paper. If the editor or the publisher learns from a third party that a published work contains a significant error, it is the obligation of the author to promptly retract or correct the paper or provide evidence to the editor of the correctness of the original paper.

Duties of the Editorial Board

Publication decisions

The editor of a peer-reviewed journal *Acta Technologica Dubnicae* is responsible for deciding which of the articles submitted to the journal should be published. The validation of the work in question and its importance to researchers and readers must always drive such decisions. The editor may be guided by the policies of the journal's editorial board and constrained by such legal requirements as shall then be in force regarding libel, copyright infringement and plagiarism. The editor may confer with other editors or reviewers in making this decision.

Fair play

An editor should evaluate manuscripts for their intellectual content without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political philosophy of the authors.

Confidentiality

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