EDITORIAL BOARD

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

Dear Colleagues, Scientific Workers, dear Readers!

The Editorial Board of Acta Educationis Generalis (AEG) has prepared the third, winter issue of the journal, which can be, based on the number of pages, considered a double issue. It is rich in news and various views on the field of education. This issue is polythematic again and all our authors are from EU countries. We and our authors have got used to the new title of the journal Acta Educationis Generalis very quickly and the professional public is satisfied with it, too.

What does the new issue consisting of three scientific studies and six scholarly articles bring? I will introduce it to you. The papers of the authors from the Czech Republic are mostly monothematic. They deal with the issues of providing students – teacher trainees – with a high-quality education and the preparation of student teachers for their future work: Preventing future kindergarten and primary school teachers form experiencing "reality shock".

The first scientific study by Jana Doležalová (Czech Republic) entitled "Development of Interest in Reading on the Part of Students and Future Academics" provides information on the specifics of the creation of interest in reading in the course of future academics' lives based on data gained by means of readers' biographies and interviews. The investigation was repeated and the participants (teachers older by one generation) showed a distinction in their conception of readership and readers' activities which were affected by their experiences from childhood, adult life and their professional roles. It is interesting that during the repeated investigation, no significant changes were found compared with the trajectories of students in the same period of professional preparation.

Hana Navrátilová and Barbora Petrů Puhrová (Czech Republic), in the second study - "From the Theory of Play into the Practice in Kindergarten: Verification of the Original Didactic Toys for Preschool Children", deal with the phenomenon of play, specifically playing with toys in the pre-school environment. They verified a set of toys for children at pre-school age in kindergartens and gathered information on how teachers perceive play and how they work with the available toys in preschools. The authors have come to the view that it is not enough to focus exclusively on the toy as such, but it is increasingly important to support the didactic thinking of kindergarten teachers.

Children do not choose a toy for the purpose of conscious development of fine motor skills or with the aim to strengthen their social relationships with other children. Children just play. The authors claim that the selection of age-appropriate toys and activities for children may be challenging for experienced teachers, too.

In their study entitled "Is Education for Using Humour in Nursing Needed? (Slovenian Case Study on Sociological and Ergonomic Aspects of the Impact of Humour on Nursing Professionals)" by Jana Goriup, Jadranka Stričević and Vida Sruk, the authors deal with the issues of the university preparation of future nurses and point out that humour contributes to physical health. As nurses spend a lot of time with patients, a good sense of humour adds to the quality of their work as well as to the nurses' satisfaction with their work with patients. The aim of the study is to contribute to a

better understanding of the significance of teaching humour in nursing both for the employees and for the patients and to discuss humour within the framework of the nursing profession in Slovenia.

The group of authors Alena Jůvová, Tomáš Čech and Ondřej Duda (Czech Republic), in their scholarly article "Education for Entrepreneurship – a Challenge for School Practice" focus on the degree of implementation of entrepreneurial education/skills in the learning process in schools by means of innovative methods and strategies which can contribute to the fulfilment of the goals of entrepreneurial education. From the aspect of youth's preparation for the labor market, it is a topical issue.

"Pupils' questions in dialogic teaching from the perspective of pedagogical research" represents the next topic addressed by Hana Lukášová and Marie Pavelková from the Czech Republic. The aim of their paper is to present the findings of research on the interactions in the classroom and the teacher – student communication in primary schools, including the issues of pupils' questions. They pay special attention to the perception of dialogic teaching and pupils' questions. Do teachers use them sufficiently?

Comics represents a modern pedagogical strategy and that is why Marta Koutníková (Czech Republic) focused on it analysis and the possibilities of their use in kindergartens. Her scholarly article is entitled "The Application of Comics in Science Education". The findings show, that comics can be very helpful in making science concepts interesting and comprehensible for a preschool child. Teachers play an important role in this process and this paper can be a source of inspiration for them.

Jana Majerčíková (Czech Republic) takes the reader from the school environment to the family environment. She solves a very topical and sensitively perceived problem from the teachers' perspective – the possibility of joint custody after divorce, in which parental responsibilities are equally distributed among parents. The paper is entitled "Joint Child Custody as a New Kindergarten Teachers' Experience". It must be noticed that the teachers' attitude to joint custody was negative, they more leaned towards the opinion that joint custody is not an optimal solution and it cannot substitute normally functioning and complete families.

In the centre of attention of the Czech researchers Barbora Plisková and Petr Snopek, there are pupils suffering from chronic diseases, which are integrated into regular classrooms. A teacher should possess some specific knowledge regarding the particular disease and working with these children. This is the focus of the scholarly article "Primary School Teachers' Awareness of Chronic Diseases of Children". It is undisputedly a topical issue as an increase in the number of chronically ill children can be observed and all teachers should have at least basic awareness and knowledge about selected chronic diseases. What is the reality?

In the paper "Teacher as an Amateur Speech Therapist – Current Knowledge in the Field of Speech Therapy Prevention in Kindergarten", Jana Vašíková (Czech Republic) mainly focuses on speech therapy prevention, anchoring of speech therapy prevention in the legislation and education, and the teacher as an actor and direct mediator of the primary speech therapy prevention as well as his competences. In this case, the teacher is an amateur speech therapist.

Dear Readers, we have filled the third issue of the journal with interesting and inspiring papers (several of them introduce the outcomes of grant projects of universities and faculties, especially Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Faculty of Humanities). There is a lot of scientific work – analysis and formulation of recommendations for practice – behind them. We find them motivating for all those who work in any field of education and they may also open new discussions.

Viola Tamášová
Editor-in-Chief

STUDIES

Development of Interest in Reading on the Part of Students and Future Academics

Jana Doležalová*

Abstract:
Introduction: Interest in reading and reader activities cannot be developed efficiently without deeper knowledge of the effects of relevant factors.
Purpose: The aim of this paper is to provide information on the specifics of the creation of interest in reading in the course of future academics' lives.
Methods: This knowledge was obtained from second-year teacher students in the bachelor program at the University of Hradec Kralove by means of readers' biographies and interviews. After six years, the investigation was repeated. Participants' written records about their development of interest in reading were analysed, open-coded and category coded.
Limitaions: The results apply to only a sample of university-educated persons in the field of teaching.
Conclusions: Realized experiences encourage interdisciplinary discourse and cooperation in deepening the knowledge about this topic and its follow-up application in teacher training at universities in all teaching specializations.

Key words: interest in reading, reader biography, students, teachers, future academics

1   Introduction

For a long time, we have been hearing that children do not read and prefer sitting behind their computers. This fact is unfortunately proved also by the research of experts. Causes of children's lack of interest in books include the time spent behind their computers (for example Trávníček, 2008), insufficient time spent talking about books (Lepilová, 2014), and even a lack of inspiring literary education (Gabal & Helšusová, 2002; Garbe, 2008, Pazonyi & Bodonyi, 2013). Children also have many other opportunities of spending their leisure time. Concerns about a loss of interest in reading are justified. A serious danger exists that they will be deprived by the influence of reading both on the development of their personalities and on their relationships withothers. Reading and readership can bring new skills and experiences for creative and thoughtful work with textual information, which is necessary for coping with the actual demands of the information society. Regular readers equipped with these abilities learn more efficiently

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(Anderson, Hielbert, Scot, & Wilkerson, 1985, as cited in Bell, S., M. & McCallum, R., S. et al., 2008, p. 245) and use media more competently.[1]

So, there are compelling reasons why it is really important to get to know the factors, structural elements, and dimensions of readership comprehensively and study their development.

Readership is a social and multi-dimensional phenomenon. It represents the structure of readers' interests, customs and habits, preferences and attitudes to reading and literature. It is manifested in the readers' behaviour, for example selection of a book and the cognitive and emotional processes associated with reading – understanding the content, intensity of immersion in a book and interpretation of reading (Trávníček, 2008). It is necessary to get to know this comprehensively so that actions in this area are adequate and efficient.

Interest, as one of the most significant components of this phenomenon, is raised by a number of stimuli, and, on the other hand, it also affects many processes. It facilitates the understanding of the text and takes part in creating a relationship with reading and, retrospectively, strengthens this emotional aspect.[2] A model of a wider conception of reading with its reflective and interactive dimensions, when discussions about the read books take place (Groeben & Hurrelmann, 2002, as cited in Garbe, 2008, p. 10), supports the understanding of texts, but also the interest in reading and attitudes towards it.

Readership, and also an interest in reading, is dependent on the social context – on various factors and on special social situations. It is affected by the stimulating effect of the environment, in particular by the family and the school and, further, by peers. Cultural conditions and value systems of the society, which is subjected to many changes as well, have a mediated effect on readership.

Every person processes external effects in his/her specific manner that corresponds with his/her individual dispositions, age specifics and experiences. The permeation of individual and social aspects cannot result in identical states of readership in different individuals, however, it can evince a number of specifics and distinctions. That is why it is necessary to come to realize them and respond to them adequately.

1.   Discourse on the conception of a reader

A person who reads or likes reading is called a reader in everyday communication. He/she is defined according to various criteria in professional discourse, most often, according to the number of books read in a certain period, of time, attitudes towards reading, etc. Very often, just readers as the opposite to non-readers are mentioned. We assume that this cannot correspond with the reality owing to the above-mentioned knowledge. It is stigmatizing and determining for a child reader, since in addition to his/her specific development profile, every child also has distinctive reader's characteristics (Homolová, 2008, p. 52). So, differentiation into more types of readers can be assumed.

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[1] Proficient readers are also better TV viewers – they remember much more, know how to capture the main thought better (Bonfadelli & Saxer, 1986, as cited in Garbe, 2008, p. 8).

[2] We usually call reading "reading for enjoyment". It represents reading for joy and pleasure.

2. Discourse on the actual research results

Research on readership using quantitative methods is, of course, beneficial. However, due to the generalization and concentrating on average results, much information can remain concealed. A method using reader biographies discovers more realistic and detailed knowledge, specifically regarding development. It was confirmed through this method, for example, that reading at all stages of individual development depends on the direct influence by persons, such as family members, teachers, librarians and booksellers, who can give readers individual and competent advice (Garbe, 2008). Other researchers also revealed some critical periods of readership development in the course of readers' socialization, in which primary and secondary initiation dependent on social needs takes part significantly (Graf & Schön, 1993, as cited in Garbe, 2008). They also gave evidence of social support at higher stages of readership development. There is no research focused on this topic[3] in our conditions, and that is why we intend to fill this gap.

Readership cannot be presented only by the description of the "traditional" stable reader's characteristics, but rather as a variable structure reflecting the dynamics of the reader's life (Poslední, 2005). The interest in reading can change at various stages of a person's development. We assume that it can also be different in periods due to the changing social and cultural conditions in the society.

We wish to gain information on real, unique and variably developing courses (paths) of readership development, their causes and consequences for a person. Discovering the specifics of the creation of interest in reading can bring the possibilities of a more efficient formation of readership. The gained information can then be applied to the education of future and existing teachers of all teaching qualifications and education stages and future academics, since all of them can contribute to the development of students' skills for working with texts.

2   Methodology

The objective of this paper is to discover and describe the distinctions in the development of interest in reading (readership), as well as to deepen and update the available information on this process for students of the teaching profession and for teachers older by one generation.

Intermediate objectives:

1. Discover the specificity of the impact of factors on the readership of participants and the uniqueness of participants' individual reactions to them in various periods of ontogenetic and social development.

2. Compare the development of readership in student teachers in the 2nd year of their studies with a group of second-year student teachers, but four years later. Simultaneously perform a generation comparison – this means to compare the outcomes of the students of the teaching profession with the characteristics of readership development in teachers older by one generation in order to discover the distinction of the impact of factors on readership at that time.

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[3] J. Trávníček in the publication Knihy a jejich lidé (Books and their People), Čtenářské životopisy (Reader Biographies), (2013) does not deduce any research conclusions from narratives.

We ask a question: What specifics will we find in the way in which students of the teaching profession and teachers older by one generation subjectively see the development of their interest in reading?

Research methods: We obtained the necessary information through reader biographies. Readership unfolds in the course of time, it has the attributes of a process and therefore it can be captured with recounting. The reader biography appears to be an adequate method of research of its development, as a form of narrative method. The biography's advantages consist of its authenticity, depiction of specificity and uniqueness of the described phenomena (readership development), which cannot be reached by quantitative methods. The objective of a narrative is to describe life stories and life experiences, to explain the actions of a person under research. The narrative method ranks among the interpretative methods. It concerns the complexity of the analysis of a narrative and its structuring from various perspectives and hierarchical levels within the meaning of Geertz's "thick description" (Geertz, 2000). A researcher analyses and interprets a narrative. A participant mentions the milestones (key events, storylines) that have affected him/her and changed his/her behaviour (Bruner, 1991). When he/she describes his/her reactions to them, he/she directly or indirectly reveals his/her motivation to action and experiencing (Gavora, 2006). The researcher is interested in all of this and gains another perspective: specific, but real contents of knowledge that fill the gap in the knowledge received using qualitative methods. It allows the research of an issue (in our case it is readership – interest in reading) at its development (Miovský, 2006; Švaříček, 2011). The reader biography represents a suitable method to discover readership factors (see Graf & Schön, 1993, as cited in Garbe, 2008).[4]

Characteristics of the research group: At the first stage of the research in 2012, the research sample was formed by BA students of the teaching profession for primary schools and secondary schools in the 2nd year of study at the Faculty of Education at the University of Hradec Králové (PdF UHK). In total, 34 students (29 women, 5 men) – marked as A group – participated in it. At the second stage of the research in 2016, the group of participants consisted of 27 students (10 men and 17 women) – marked as B group. They study or studied various specializations.[5] The C group consisted of practicing teachers taking part in supplementary pedagogical study program within lifelong learning at the Faculty of Education at the University of Hradec Králové (PdF UHK) at the time of research in 2016. This group consisted of 12 persons (5 men and 7 women), mostly older by one generation (the youngest person was 36 years old and the oldest person was 50 years old)[6]. They completed their university studies both in natural scientific and humanities disciplines. We assume that our participants, owing to their age and education level, have the ability to self-reflect and to provide relevant information on the development of readership, specifically interest in reading.

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[4] We did not monitor the popularity of literary genres corresponding to age periods and trends.

[5] Most of them attended primary schools in the second half of the nineties of the 20th century. The so-called "Harry Potter mania" occurred during their school attendance. They attended secondary schools in the period when PISA international research of readers' literacy took place.

[6] School attendance took place for persons at the age of forty and older mainly in the eighties during the socialist era, when the so-called new conception of teaching was introduced. The syllabus was uniform and literary education in primary education meant contemporary literary education (using active participation of pupils, texts of contemporary authors were to be worked with). The extent to which these purposes were fulfilled was not the objective of our research.

3 Research procedure

Data collection: Students of the teaching profession – participants in the A and B groups – were asked at the workshop of General Didactics to record the development of their interest in reading starting from their birth until today in written form, and to mention the factors influencing their readership. We monitored the continual development of their readership from childhood until adulthood through the narratives of the participants under the title "My way to reading and readership." Through interviews with the selected participants of the survey, we completed the data on the preschool period. Participants in the C group worked on their statements on the same topic in the form of homework.

Data processing was performed in this sequence: open coding was performed firstly and then it was followed by the categorization of codes. We created an analytical story (Rabušicová, 2012) from the generated information, which represents a very simplified model of the development of interest in reading. We compared individual stories and compiled five trajectories of the development of interest in reading with similar courses of interest and other common features. They corresponded to the categories we created and that defined the individual types of readers. In constructing these categories, we actually reconstructed the principles, which are the basis of consideration and experiences of our players (Doubek & Levínská, 2016). We repeated this procedure also at the second stage of the research conducted after four years. We performed a comparison of the results from both stages and determined the identical and different moments.

4 Results

We generated topics from the analysis of the stories to be further presented. The results of the A and B groups will be mentioned collectively, since they evinced identical characteristics. We will point out sporadic distinctions. We will publish the results of our comparison of the A and B groups with the C group separately.

4.1. Topics
The statements of participants proved some generally valid features of readers during individual age periods, for example interest in stories during the preschool period (Tamášová & Šulganová, 2016, p. 26) and a crisis of readership in primary and lower secondary education. At the same time, we revealed many new interesting connections and a lot of distinctions in the effect of factors and reactions to individual topics.

First memories – positive and negative emotions (1.)
The first memory is always important in narratives, since it indicates an important determinant of further development (Chrz, 2007). Most of our participants commented firstly on the preschool period, when their parents or grandparents read to them or told fairy tales before sleeping. These moments left positive feeligs in them and that is why they recall them after so many years.
"A long time before school attendance my sister and I would wait in our beds in the evenings looking forward to the moment when our mum would come to our room, take

one of the beautiful books of fairy tales from our library and start reading another story…" (J/A)[7]

We assume that moments of affinity and sharing of experiences with close persons had a simultaneous effect on them. This meant the first contact and experiences with stories and literature through which the primary reader's initiation, which is so important for the reader's socialization, occurred (Garbe, 2008; Gavora, 2017). However, it turned out that the positive effect of these first enjoyments and experiences on further development of readership in our readers was confirmed only partly. This effect was not enough in some participants to ensure a permanent motivation and a positive relationship to reading.

The emotions associated with the first memory were not always positive. Those who mentioned their first memory from as late as learning at primary school, always associated it with the displeasure of reading. They answered yes to the question whether their parents read them bed-time stories. However, these memories were obviously drowned out by the negative emotions evoked by the difficulties with reading in the first classes at primary school. They disrupted their desire to read, however, the time periods varied with different participants.

Social factors in favour of readership (2.)

The statements of participants proved that the social factors played the most important role on their way towards readership. That is why they were most often mentioned in narratives. They mentioned firstly their parents (very often also grandparents), teachers at school age and their same-age peers while growing up in chronological order. Other persons, for example librarians, affected them sporadically, nevertheless significantly. All of them played the role of the initiators of the readers' activities, represented a pattern for children and played an important role of supporting factors during the period of difficulties and in the process of decision-making in crisis situations. They formed the so-called supporting and communication contexts (Garbe, 2008; Rossenblatt, 1987, as cited in Bell & McCallum, 2008; Beers, 2003; Short, 1997), however with diverse frequency and extent. We found an interesting circumstance. Readers showing a permanent high interest in reading most often mentioned the effect of family on the deepening of their interest in reading during childhood and the influence of teachers at school age. It is interesting that they did not mention their peers. On the contrary, same-age peers provided support to persons who did not like reading, or had reading difficulties up to lower secondary school. Thanks to them, their readership was supported and further developed. We can find the explanation in their need for belonging with their same-age peers, but also in the theory of cognitive consonance – they needed to share the same topics (in our case it was books and reading) and in this manner, they confirmed their attitudes (self-confirming).

Some participants needed these stimuli for several times at various periods of their lives (as late as at secondary school) from other persons, too. They maintained their interest in reading.

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[7] Note: The first letter in bracket means the first letter in the participant's name, the second letter marks the participant's group.

Inner factors (3.)

Inner factors evince quite naturally an important role. In particular, motivation forms a basis for readers' activities, for positive expectations from reading and attitudes. We identified a number of kinds of motivation for reading books. The cognitive motivation for the satisfaction of the need for learning in various areas of life, in the areas of professional interest or hobbies, was concerned for some participants. Emotional motivation was concerned for other participants – they were searching for reading material to induce enjoyment associated with fantasy and imagination. Many of them were motivated to read for relaxation and rest, or possibly to escape from the reality. Often, several sources of motivation occurred at the same time. They evinced social motivation (they read to have the opportunity to talk about a book with their friends) or performance motivation (they wanted to succeed at the secondary school leaving examination) sporadically.

"…At secondary school, I started to recognize that diving will not support me… and that I will need to do something with myself. I ended all sport activities, started to learn and started to read gradually. I never read more than I had to for my secondary school leaving examination or for some papers, but after all I made some progress." (K/A)

We recorded performance motivation or motivation with a social subtext in readers who started their way towards readership later. It was arisen by their teachers or same-age peers.

On the contrary, a loss of interest in reading was caused by difficulties with reading and "compulsory" literature (we will discuss this further below) for a small portion of participants in the first classes at primary school. The interest in sports or computers prevailed for some participants during pubescence. Their negative effect on readership, however, was not massive in our group. Most of our participants, students of grammar school, probably spent their leisure time by various activities of interest and by preparation for school.

The permanency and the depth of the interest affected the dynamics of readership and differentiated between groups of individuals. We identified a range of characteristics of interest as for the origin/expiry and lasting of interest: permanent interest during the entire developmental period, later on gained interest (permanently), gained several times, gradually lost interest and non-created interest. The depth of the interest also corresponds with its permanency. The features of interest are not uniformly represented among individuals. A deep interest was created based on the experiences with reading in a stimulating family environment. It is typical for readers with cognitive, emotional and esthetical motivation for reading.

Reader's crisis and turns – dynamics of development (4.)

A changing interest in reading appeared during certain crisis periods or turning points. They were developing a positive or a negative position. Readers' crises, unlike turns, had long-term existence (transition to another interest – to sport) and meant a gradual loss of interest in reading associated temporarily with forced reading. The first reader's crisis associated with difficulties in reading at primary school ended up differently. Only a negligible number of participants were beaten by it. The second reader's crisis at pubescence did not affect those for whom we monitored a permanent interest in reading. A negative attitude towards reading in other individuals at primary school was overcome

at lower secondary school. On the contrary, the beginnings of readership appear to be positive in others, but they did not overcome a crisis of readership in pubescence.

The turning points were associated with a positive change. They took place quickly and were very varied – formed by a certain book (most often Harry Potter)[8], events (a book given as a gift from a friend) or certain situations (when mum laughed while reading a certain book or when a friend kept talking about the same book). The decision-making processes were applied mainly by readers gained for reading several times at these turning points.

Perception of reading – "compulsory" reading is the biggest disaster (5.)

Participants distinguish in their stories between reading materials they like and read voluntarily and the so-called "compulsory" reading materials which are selected by teachers or recommended in pedagogical documents. All participants, regardless of their interest in reading, commented on it. The experiences and attitudes of the participants towards reading varied, they can be expressed on the scale: they hate it (it discourages) – they consider it "necessary evil" – it does not bother them – they like it. The relationship to reading is changing over time. They re-evaluate their relationship to it and recognize its significance. Men, even if enthusiastic readers, are rather ironic in its evaluation.

"I developed my reading abilities better at primary school, and before I realized it, the first disaster came. This disaster, officially called "compulsory reading", was to my infinite sadness practised at all schools… only a look at that list of books induced my feeling of the "Grandma" book slightly." (O/A)

Perception of reading, interest in it and the attitudes towards it depend on the level of emotionality. Positive experiences induce an esthetical enjoyment, deepen one's interest in reading and strengthen the attitudes towards reading.[9]

Evaluation of reading and readership, in him/herself and in others (6.)

The quality of readership (permanence and depth of readers' interests, attitudes towards reading, experiences) is reflected in the orientation of evaluation (what is evaluated) and in the manner (how it is evaluated). The type of evaluation indicates the individuals' self-conception, self-efficacy and his/her level of independence/dependence. Some of them comment on the significance of reading in general and evaluate themselves at the same time. Other readers evaluate only themselves or pay attention to other people and their readership. They are distinguished also by the manner in which they currently evaluate reading, how significant it is for them and whether they have internalized the need for reading. The found variants of the concepts containing evaluation are as follows:

1. Reading is a matter of course for participants, it is highly appreciated, and they cannot imagine their life without reading. They read more and more demanding literature. Positive attitudes evince maturity and independence in fulfilling the requirements of institutions.

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[8] In most cases, children like reading currently published popular titles.

[9] If recommended reading does not satisfy the readers' preferences of pupils, the conception of literary education does not reflect their individual needs; situations when a book does not speak strongly to readers occur. If the reader is not satisfied in terms of the content or the aspect, the expectations regarding the content and the emotional level are not satisfied and the child reader does not experience esthetical enjoyments (Chaloupka, 1982).

2. Reading is evaluated positively, the attitude towards reading is currently positive.
3. Reading was not always their inner need. Their opinion on reading is influenced by institutions (school, media); they would like to satisfy them.
4. They comment on the significance of reading in the sense that "I know I should do it, but I am not convinced about it". They cast doubt upon the influence of reading on their development (they probably know that they do not satisfy the requirements imposed by the society.).
5. Reading was had not been internalized by the members of this group, they do not have any need to read. They "resisted" the pressure exerted by institutions. They are actually independent. They do not comment on the significance of reading.

Modality "I would" relates to interest in reading, self-conception and relation to requirements imposed by institutions (7).
Variants of modality "I want – I can – I would like – I should – I do not want" often occur in narratives. Important information and connections can be learnt by reading them (Chrz, 2007). In our case, it is an indicator of the depth of interest in reading, self-conception and the attitude towards the requirements imposed by institutions. The forms "I want" and "I can" are a sign of high self-efficacy (Alverman, 2001[10], as cited in Vacca et al, 2011, p. 169; Wiegerová et al, 2012; Bell, S., M. & McCallum, R., S. et al., 2008). In this case, the participants regret that they do not have more time for reading a lot, however, they always make time for reading, which represents their inner need for this activity and habit. Modality "I would like" relates to the past and future. Relevant participants recognize lost opportunities. They make time for reading, when they have suitable conditions for it. The form "I should" depicts knowing that "I should read, but I have no time for reading," similarly to the case of the form "I do not want." They do not like changes, they are satisfied with the current state. These manifestations are completed also by the degree of independence/dependence on institutions, e.g. the requirements imposed by the school and also by the family.

Development line of interest in reading (8.)
The line of interest in reading differs with the intensity of interest and its position within the positive or negative zone during development. We could identify the following tendencies: 1. direct line of interest on the positive level, 2. ascending line, 3. variable line with the fluctuation of interest, 4. descending line and 5. direct line, however on negative level. For illustration, it is graphically displayed in Fig. 1.

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[10] Self-efficacy contributes to the reader's (literacy) identity of pupils (Alverman, 2001, as cited in Vacca et al, 2011, p. 169).
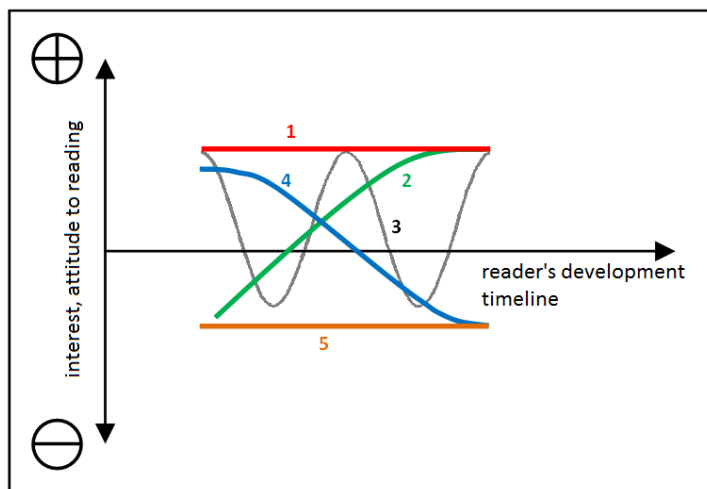
Figure 1. Development line of interest in reading.

Clue: The numbers of individual lines correspond to the types of lines (trajectories) of interest development.

4.2 *The differences between the data obtained from the participants at the same stage of the teaching profession preparation and in the time interval of four years, and the differences in the comparison between generations.*

The results of students of the teaching profession in the A and B groups did not change significantly. Only the B group prefers film adaptations of books and some of them needed a longer time period to internalize reading. Contemporary factors – computers are also recorded, however for the time being not to such a high extent.

Stories of readership development in teachers and individuals older by one generation (C group) differ one from another in some attributes. They rather emphasize the conditions of the home environment at childhood (libraries at their home, their parents read a lot and visited libraries). They do not allude so much to particular factors, crises or events during childhood or growing up. They do not mention "compulsory" reading or the secondary school leaving examinations at all. Currently, they recognize, when they play their new life roles and professional roles, the significance of readership for the development of their own children and pupils. They comment much more on the significance of reading and readership and highly appreciate its benefits for the development of children's and young people' personalities. They not only re-evaluate their relationship to reading, but also change their reader's behaviour in favour of the development of readership in children and pupils. They read books to their children, even if they themselves have not been big readers. Due to the effect of the experiences from childhood and of said attitudes, they copy their parents, who paid attention to them in this regard, represented role models for them and supported them in reading. Thereby they ensure the so-called generational transmission and continuity.

So, the concept of reading and readership in C group differs mainly regarding the attitudes to reading, their evaluation and reading behaviour, which they transformed into

a positive level due to their experiences from childhood. These manifestations prove that readership is a long-term and dynamic phenomenon that can change over the entire life period due to the effects of various events and changes in life.

4.3 Analytical story – a model of development of interest in reading that integrates topics extracted from the collected data

Almost all participants underwent primary initiation in their family. Depending on the social stimuli from the environment, a higher or smaller interest in books and reading was established. Further, their interest was developing in various directions. If it persisted from childhood until today, it was associated with cognitive, emotional and esthetical motivation. However, if there were difficulties with reading in the first class of primary school, the participants lost their interest in reading at that time. It was renewed in some of them at the end of primary school and persisted also in the next period. If the interest in reading was raised as late as at lower secondary school, it was thanks to same-age peers. Reading allowed them to get into contact with friends who liked talking about books. The teachers managed, for a part of the participants (non-readers at that time), to initiate interest in reading as late as at secondary school. It means that, in some students, it is possible to initiate the interest in reading again. Some participants needed to have their interest encouraged repeatedly. However, a certain group did not succeed in returning to readership. The interest that they manifested at primary school was gradually lost at lower secondary school due to other hobbies. An interest in reading was not developed at all in several cases.

4.4 Trajectory of readership development

The construction of five types of trajectories was performed based on the narratives of the participants – stories reflecting the development of interest in reading. They were profiled by the distinctions in the above-mentioned topics. Each trajectory has similarly variable dynamics of development of interest in reading, but also of the reading activity, enjoyment, attitudes to reading, orientation and manner of evaluation associated with reading. They differ also with regard to self-conception.

4.5 Typology of readers

Trajectories are presented in newly established categories naming various types of readers: 1. eager reader, 2. gained reader (in A group), lukewarm reader (in B group), 3. reader from compulsion, 4. holiday reader and 5. "non-reader."

When presenting the individual types of readers, the characteristics of the A basic group will be mentioned, because they correspond to the manifestations of the B group. We have already pointed out some small differences.

1. Eager reader. From the beginning, they were internally motivated to read. Their interest in reading is permanent and deep. Reading satisfies them, brings pleasant experiences, and it stimulates their fantasy and desire for knowledge. They received many stimuli for reading from their family (see Tamášová & Šulganová, 2016). Their readership was created naturally. They have a distinctive interest in a certain type of literature and collect a certain type of books. They read demanding literature already at an early age, which is more demanding compared to their same-age peers. That is why they are obviously not that bothered by compulsory reading. Apart from "compulsory" reading, they also manage to read "their own"

favourite literature. They read it during more demanding periods, too. They highly appreciate reading. The interesting fact is that they do not comment on their same-age peers at all, unlike other readers.

The stories of the readers in this group are described with a detached view and they express attitudes towards reading and books. They are stuffed in terms of content and emotions, full of interesting topics, ideas and rich contexts. The trajectory of the development of interest in reading is displayed in Fig. 1/trajectory No. 1.

2. Gained reader. These readers' interest in reading started developing as late as at lower secondary school or maybe at upper secondary school. More impulses in sequence brought them to readership. They read a certain type of books and they still have a distaste for "compulsory" reading.

"I was not very much enthusiastic about reading, also due to compulsory reading, which, at the beginning, consisted mostly of titles like "Lovci mamutů" (Mammoth Hunters) and "Staré pověsti české" (Ancient Bohemian Legends). The forefather Čech or Veverčák with Kopčem (the characters from these titles) did not fascinate me to the extent which woudl change my attitude and become a passionate reader." (D/A)

Readers in this and the following trajectory think about themselves and evaluate their development. They reflect not only on the rigmarole of the development of readership, but also the manner in which they took hold of their readers' identities. They obviously have low self-efficacy and that is why they also comment on other readers and evaluate their reading habits. We can consider it an ideal strategy by means of which they delimit themselves negatively or positively towards other non-readers (readers) in order to strengthen their own reader's identity. The trajectory of interest of readers in this group is displayed in Fig. 1/trajectory No. 2.

3. Compulsory reader. Their first memories are positive, because their parents or grandparents read them bed-time stories. Further, the storyline is very "zigzag," with periods of high interest changing into a disinterest in reading. They read at primary school from compulsion. At lower secondary school, they started reading books recommended by their schoolmates voluntarily in order to have a chance to discuss the books with their classmates.

5. They had a negative attitude towards compulsory reading. Nevertheless, they re-evaluated it. They were motivated by a teacher of literature, or their inner performance motivation prevailed at secondary school – the desire to succeed at the secondary school leaving examinations. Some participants in this group admit that they will never be passionate readers. Their development of readership is displayed in Fig. 1/trajectory No. 3.

4. Holiday reader. Their story begins at preschool age with narration and reading of books by their parents or grandparents. Repeated reading of the same book at primary school and "holiday" reading in lower secondary school have become a specific phenomenon. An interest in reading became evident exceptionally in some students of this group at upper secondary school, however it gradually changed to the current disinterest. Their interest was distracted by computers, interest in sports or meeting friends. They actually became "non-readers" due to a lack of time. They have a strongly resistant attitude towards "compulsory" reading. Their trajectory is displayed in Fig. 1/trajectory No. 4.

5. "Non-reader." The trajectory of this group is simple and without plotlines. The storyline is straight and within the range of disinterest. The participants do not mention the preschool period, they never liked reading. They have not read much, they read magazines occasionally. Utilitarian reading of informative texts of a non-artistic nature is rather concerned. Their story can be very briefly expressed. They mention only the actual state of their disinterest in reading. They evaluate practically their state, do not pretend anything and they are not bothered that they do not read books. The trajectory of their development of interest is displayed in Fig. 1/trajectory No. 5.

More detailed and well-arranged information on individual categories of readers are given in Table 1.

Table 1

Features of reader typologies and their characteristics

Features	*Typology of readers*				
	Eager reader	Gained reader	Reader from compulsion	Holiday reader	Non-reader
First memory	Positive	Negative	Positive	Positive	They do not mention
External factors	Family, teacher at the secondary school	Family, same-age peers; book	Classmates, teachers of literature at the secondary school	They do not state	They do not mention
Motivation	Cognitive, emotional, esthetical	Social, emotional	Performance	Emotional at the beginning, now without motivation	Non-motivated
Interest	Permanent and deep interest	Interest since lower secondary school, or possibly as late as at upper secondary school	Changing of interest with disinterest	Interest only during holidays	Was not created
	Trajectory No. 1.	Trajectory No. 2.	Trajectory No. 3.	Trajectory No. 4.	Trajectory No. 5.
Reader's crisis and turns	None occurred	Difficulties with reading in primary school, external factor as a turn	More crises during childhood	Other interests since lower secondary school	Not mentioned (permanent disinterest)
Experience of reading	It satisfies them, associated with strong emotions	Negative emotions at the beginning, now positive enjoyment	Changing of emotions according to time period of disinterest or interest	Positive enjoyments during holiday reading	Without enjoyment

Evaluation	They highly evaluate the significance of reading in general and for themselves	They evaluate their own development and the reading of others	They evaluate only their own development	They cast doubts upon the significance of reading. They do not evaluate themselves, but explain why the others do not read and why people in general do not read much	They evaluate only themselves, specifically realistically
Self-conception	They do not consider themselves to be big readers.	They are self-assured to be fully-fledged readers.	They say they are not passionate readers.	Reader only during holidays	Non-reader
Modality "I would"	I want, I can Independent of requirements from institutions.	I want, I can Partly independent of requirements from institutions.	I would like Effort to comply with requirements from institutions	I should Partly independent of requirements from institutions.	I do not want Independent of requirements from institutions.
Making time for reading	They always make time	They make time	They make time	They do not make time, do not have time	They do not make time, they do not like it

5 Discussion

We can encounter various conceptions and typologies of readers in literature. The reader can be seen as an active and creative individual, who is interested in the world of literature and is a mental user of books. He/she keeps reader's books and discusses books he has read (Lepilová, 2014). Readers are characterized in this manner only in our first type of eager reader, however we identify as readers also those who are not devoted to reading and other activities associated with reading so intensively.

The commonly used category of non-readers was mentioned only in our eager readers and non-readers. Other types are distinguished from one another by periods when they read or read with dislike. We cannot say that our non-readers did not read at all, however they do not devote time to reading books.

Our classification of readers is not as complex as, for example, Graf's typology (Graf, 1995, as cited in Garbe, 2008, p. 13).[11] In our typology, only from the aspect of motivation and interest, we can identify Graf's first type of "conceptual" reader in our category "reader from compulsion" and his "esthetical" reader who corresponds to our

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[11] W. Graf determined types of readers based on readers' motivation and competences in the area of literary reception in adolescents and adult readers. He set aside a "conceptual reader," who did not read for pleasure, but his/her reading was based on the requirements and standards imposed by school. The type of "emotional reader" is the opposite, with whom children's pleasure from reading persists, however his/her readers' competences stagnate. Classic literature remains inaccessible for him. The third type is the "esthetical reader," who transformed pleasure from reading into esthetical pleasure, and identification competences were replaced with more dissociated competences, however internally engaged receptions (Graf, 1995, as cited in Garbe, 2008, p.13).

type of "eager reader". Due to the distinction in criteria, Graf's other types of readers are mixed in our models and cannot be documented credibly.

6   Conclusion

Based on the subjective reflection of participants, we gained a partial insight into the specifics if the development of readership, and this was our objective. The factors were of various strength and permanence of the effect on motivation, interest, reader behaviour and attitudes of the participants. On this basis, we generated five types of trajectories and a relevant typology of readers that confirm the dynamics of the processes and their variety.

The results might be affected by the fact that they were gained as the memories of adults, who formed a small specific group of university students of the teaching profession and practicing teachers, future academics, where women predominated. Nevertheless, we believe that we revealed some interesting and serious facts (for example, the experiences with reading during childhood are important for a child in terms of the transmission between generations and continuity); and definitely also some unexpected results (young people can be gained for readership also at a later period of life; readership is subjected to lifelong changes). They update the content of the solved issues under changing life conditions and also from the ontogenetic point of view, and indicate topics which must be focused on in terms of the theoretical aspects as well as at the application level.

This issue requires the integration of various fields and interdisciplinary cooperation. Thus, the theory of readership, professional didactics and psychodidactics could be enriched.

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From the Theory of Play into the Practice in Kindergarten: Verification of the Original Didactic Toys for Preschool Children

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Abstract:
Introduction: This study deals with the phenomenon of play in the preschool environment. Based on establishing the links between theories and practice applicable in preschool conditions, the students from study programme of Preschool Teacher Training at Faculty of Humanities at Tomas Bata University in Zlín created a set of original didactic toys for preschool children. The main objective of the study was to verify this set in kindergartens and to find out how teachers perceive play and how they work with toys in preschools. The study also focused on preschool children´s view of play and toys.
Methods: We have chosen a qualitative research design to explore the research problem and to answer the research questions. The data collection in this research was based on participant observation and interviews with the participants who were preschool children and their teachers from four selected kindergartens in Zlín Region in the Czech Republic. These were 12 teachers with secondary or university education (Bc. degree), aged 23 to 48, with a length of practice from 1 year to 25 years at the position of kindergarten teacher. The research study then included interviews and video recordings of 77 preschool children (age 2 to 6 years).
Results: Data gathered by a qualitative research with preschool children in the kindergarten environment represent a partial picture on the importance of toys and playing with them. The results emerging from the observation and interviewing the preschool children and their teachers shows the way of toy selection with the importance of variability of possible modifications of the toys offered to children in the preschool environment. The progress of play with the verified didactic toys was influenced by the need for a partner in the play, the role of the teacher, the chances to freely discover the elements of toys. We found a restrictive perspective expressed by the participating preschool teachers about the dominant influence on selected toys in kindergarten environment.
Discussion: The findings suggest that it is not prospective to focus solely on the toy itself. In agreement with Pyle and Bigelow (2015), it is possible to monitor the impact of playing on the development of children's social, emotional and educational skills. Based on the observation and interviews with both children and teachers, we have come to the view that it is increasingly important to support the didactic thinking of preschool teachers. We also considered the issue in the sense

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of feedback for authors of the toys and for future preschool teachers. Child-based research opens up the opportunity to interpret and analyse their own childhood perspective reflected in their own social worlds, emphasizing the complexity of understanding their experiences through the eyes of adults.

Limitations: We consider important to point out certain limits of the presented research, given the circumstances that a sample of 15 classrooms observed in the total number of 4 kindergartens cannot bring results to be presented for wider generalizability. The intentional choice of toys for preschool children could also belong to the possible limits of this research.

Conclusions: Children do not choose a toy for the purpose of conscious development of fine motor skills or with the aim to strengthen their social relationships with other children. Children just play. And they can play with toys similar to the original products made by students and verified in this research. Choosing toys and activities suitable for preschool children can also be a challenge for experienced teachers.

Key words: play, kindergarten, preschool teacher, preschool child, toy.

1 Introduction

This study deals with the phenomenon of play, specifically playing with toys in the preschool environment. Research shows that teachers often do not see the links between theories and practice applicable in preschool conditions (Parker-Rees & Leeson, 2015, p. 254). The main objective of the study was to verify a set of original toys for preschool children in the kindergarten environment and to find out how teachers work with the play and toys available in preschools. The original set of toys was created by a group of students of study programme Preschool Teacher Training at Faculty of Humanities at Tomas Bata University in Zlín.

2 Theoretical framework

Play is one of the most important phenomena in a child's life but the authors of studies focusing on preschool childhood agree that play is not yet clearly defined (Nutkins, McDonald, & Stephen, 2012; Theobald, Danby, Einarsdóttir, Bourne, Jones, Ross, & Carter-Jones, 2015). Although playing has always been a part of human experience, the theories seeking for the definition, cause, value or meaning, nature and influence on a child are often different and even controversial (Brooker, Blaise & Edwards, 2014, p. 9). In addition, we consider playing to be a natural part of the social, material and conceptual world.

Langmeier and Krejčířová (2006) confirm the most that playing is considered a physical or psychological activity that is performed only because it brings satisfaction without an external target. Playing is a spontaneous activity of a child connected to the child's inner world, it reflects his or her life, it brings satisfaction and children can express their current needs by means of playing (Tomanová, 2006). Children overcome obstacles through the play as they answer questions and solve problems trying to cope with difficulties.

From a child's perspective, the play can also be any kind of activity that is not only based on manipulating or playing with the toys. Almost anything can become the object of playing including the human body. Thus, children can take advantage of every opportunity or incentive to play. The importance of playing in children's world is related

to their motivation and the needs which can be provoked and then satisfied throughout the play. A child does not realize the developmental effects of the play, although the child learns naturally and develops through the play. The play does not represent only a kind of activity defined by the content, but it comprises a form of activity whose content is variable (Mišurcová & Severová, 1997). Children are gifted with the ability to spontaneously create a playful activity from each stimulus (Tomanová, 2006).

2.1 Play as a means of learning, cognition and experience

The play enables to build a bridge across the child's needs, wishes and reality. While playing, the child thinks, decides and acts accordingly. The child gains new experiences. Despite the fact that the play is a means of learning and the development of social, emotional or motor skills, it still remains a free and natural activity. Children usually do not think about the purpose of the play or the toy systematically. It is natural for a child to experience the play/toy and to further develop it or simply to change it for another play or different activity.

In the preschool environment, we often encounter the concept of a play connected to the classification of two types of plays – spontaneous and guided by a teacher. If all the conditions are fulfilled, the play becomes a free activity based on learning (Horká, 2015, as cited in Wiegerová, 2015) and the standard classification of plays is not required anymore.

The play is closely linked to the development of cognitive, social and volitional structures of a child's personality. We can monitor the development of a child through the play in the field of gross and fine motor activity, sensory perception, perception of time and space, but also in the field of child's cognitive level. Therefore, we emphasize the importance of the teacher as an observer of the child's progress. Teachers' have the opportunity to observe the play and to see situations in which the child reflects the reality in his own conception of the play. There is an image of how children perceive themselves, their surroundings, how the family life is reflected in the play and each child's awareness of the world individually construed.

Children of early age are still closely connected with their families and their close environments before entering preschool institutions at the beginning of their education. The first social communication in the group of children is often realised in kindergarten for the first time. The play becomes the indicator of children's current mental and social development. In addition, children attending kindergartens meet an organized activity led by the authority of a kindergarten teacher, they get into pleasant or negatively perceived situations they are forced to solve. The play is a situation, a model in which the child recognizes the relationships between people, and recognizes oneself (Horká, 2015, as cited in Wiegerová, 2015).

2.2 Teacher and child as the main actors of play in preschool environment

Preschool environment is a specific place to support the play based ideally on the child's natural interests and needs. At the same time, it is the space in which the process of intentional learning of a child takes place with the teacher playing an important role. The teacher creates conditions and incentives in the educational process to ensure the optimal mental, motor, emotional and social development of a child (Kolláriková & Pupala, 2010, p. 135).

2.2.1   Teachers' part in the play

Teachers can engage in children's play in different roles (Kontos, 1999). A teacher becomes a partner, a helper, a guide, an inspirer, but at the same time, that teacher can take on the role of a partner who himself will be inspired and lead. The influence of the teacher on the play is reflected in creating the conditions for the play as a meaningful form of life-support practice that is based on the child's needs and respects his/her interests (Kolláriková & Pupala, 2010, p. 135). A conceivable teacher's intervention during the child's play is represented in several forms: from helping the child to solve the problems to questioning, directing the unwanted behaviour or involving children into thematic play.

A teacher's position in the educational process is based on creating the teaching situations, in which the teacher builds on the current experience and knowledge of children. If the teacher develops a higher level of children's thinking, then we are talking about adopting the role of scaffolding by creating conditions for a child to have the opportunity to construct and reconstruct new knowledge, skills and comprehension. The teacher provides support, direction, and basic structure for developing learning through this method of guidance (Rogers, 2011, p. 35). Similarly, Svobodová (2010, p. 101) calls such a teacher a facilitator because the teacher in this role allows the child to become an active co-creator of the play. The teacher only guides the play with the aim of children's development. An equally important role of the teacher in the process of playing concerns reflection and evaluation where the teacher is the intermediator of feedback, providing corrective information to the child.

 2.3 The child – the most important actor in the play

Current research interest mainly abroad is increasingly focused on the view of the issues through the perspective of a child. The research team Hejlová, Opravilová, Uhlířová and Bravená conducted a several-year field research in the Czech environment with the aim to look into the children's mind and their value orientation (Hejlová, Opravilová, Uhlířová, & Bravená, 2013). The project "Child on the Threshold of Education and its World" is an example responding to the current call for focusing research on the child itself. The project was realised by the team of the Faculty of Education at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica in Slovakia (Majerčíková, Kasáčová, & Kočvarová, 2015). The aim is to try to listen to the "children's voices" so that through their experience we can better understand learning possibilities in preschool conditions (Stamatoglou, 2004; Brooker, Blaise, & Edwards, 2014). Thus, the child also becomes an active participant in the research process.

One of the educator's tasks is to provide preschool children with an inspirational, motivating context for the play that will enable them to actively test their own theories, to listen and be heard in a reciprocal process of interaction with peers or teachers (Vujičić & Miketek, 2014).

American and Icelandic studies examining the importance of play from the view of preschool children have shown their preference for an outdoor environment for play activities that allow them to have more free interactions than in the enclosed space in a classroom. They have also been positive about interacting with various items and toys that are a part of their play. The research findings resonated with the children's consensus that their teacher's ease and adult absence in their play contributed to their good sense of play. The children described sadness when their play was abruptly

terminated by a teacher who decided to implement a different planned educational activity. The Canadian research team (Samuelsson & Johansson, 2009) concerned children's perspectives of the situations when they wanted to involve teachers in their play. They identified the five main reasons for it, but rather the need for assistance with a demanding solution, or the need to have a partner listening to one another (Samuel & Johansson, as cited in Theobald et al., 2015, p. 347).

The play can be initiated by a child as well as an adult/teacher, but it should always be remembered that each child creates his or her own agenda of the play rules. Learning to perceive and respect this principle is one of the basic recommendations for an adult/teacher, so that the planned course of play is not always the dominant one (Bruce, 2004, p. 149). If a child enters the teacher's play on a voluntary basis, then the teacher should be willing to reflect on the child's natural need to express him/herself through the play as much as possible without the intervention of an adult (Droppová, 2015). The play as a child's activity with his/her own ideas and choice of toys and other objects or places and roles is defined specifically for the so-called free play (Koťátková, 2005). The research study by Droppová (2015) provides an insight into the views and ideas of preschool teachers in Slovakia on the didactic use of play and it shows that some teachers are still convinced that the child is just a passive recipient of the play as a process prepared by the teacher. These teachers do not respect the child's autonomy in the play (Droppová, 2015, p. 111).

Planning a play for a group of children is not a simple task for preschool teachers if we mean a play responding to their current needs and interests. It is useful for children to place their play in an environment in which they feel comfortable. When creating the opportunity to engage a child in the play, the teacher must think about the desired framework of the play and to follow a set target in the child's development. A clear set of rules should be a fixed component for the child's orientation within the boundaries and the teacher's expectations. However, teachers' thinking about the children themselves should be the starting point for the preparation of play activities. Planning a play means to create a positive atmosphere and to provide enough time, space and erudite support that encourages the child to play (Bruce, 2004). By observing and listening to a child, the teacher gains an important input about the child's interests, possible motivation, needs and experiences outside the preschool environment.

A release in the structure of the play preparation can allow children to:
- choose from several play options;
- negotiate these options;
- involve their thoughts and ideas;
- be physically and intellectually active overall;
- experiment, discover and explore.

Therefore, it is advisable to support an active partnership of the teacher and the child through the knowledge of the child's perspective (Nutkins et al., 2013, pp. 34-35). The risk of building a routine approach to the play in the kindergarten by a teacher is diminished by teacher's interest in monitoring the child's current activities. It means to know what the children do spontaneously.

Being an actor in play situations does not only concern the child's interactions with the teacher. The form captured in interviews with preschool children (Theobald et al., 2015) also includes management and decision making among children. They can describe their own strategies that they use when playing with preschool peers, which usually involve

choosing a play, including the rationale for choosing and then negotiating the rules and course of the play.

2.3.1.1   A child in the play with a toy

The moment of choosing a toy by a child can be integral to the approach to a child as the primary actor in the preschool. Within the framework of didactic strategies, the teacher should respect the child's choice, even in the sense of his/her right to refuse the play or the toy (Havlínová, 2000, p. 59-62). Only one part of the participants of the above-mentioned research by Droppová (2015) expressed the opinion that preschool children should have the opportunity to choose a toy according to their own needs including the environment where the children's toys are freely available. A stimulating environment is one of the basic conditions for the children's opportunities to play, so it should be planned and implemented in their own way. Bruce (2004) describes an example of a kindergarten where teachers, on the basis of the observation of children at play, modified the environment of the class so that the children have always the richest equipment imitating the normal equipment of the house (kitchen, bedroom, room, etc.) This space has also been equipped by means that served not only to play, but also directly to the development of the areas given by the curriculum (e.g. calendar, newspaper, restaurant menu, etc.). Appropriate incentives, including materials and indirect support by the teacher, give children a reasonable opportunity to develop their learning in a process that offers them a degree of independence, thus fostering a common construction of knowledge (Vujičić & Miketek, 2014).

2.3.2   Child as a passive recipient of the play

The importance of the play as an accepted element of preschool education can be reduced by the fact that the teacher sees the play primarily through his/her own perspective. The play then becomes a formal activity structured by the teacher instead of its natural integration into diverse activities throughout the day in the kindergarten (Theobald et al., 2015). It can be assumed that the perspective of the play through the eyes of a child is changing due to diverse circumstances in the life of the child who has access to more sources of knowledge, including digital technologies but does not have enough time and space to play (Holmes, 2012). The difference between the perceptions of preschool activities was the focus of a research conducted by an Australian team (Theobald et al., 2015). The children identified certain activities with the name other than "play". The children expressed displeasure with the management of adult activities during the interviews with the use of video recordings of their daytime activities in the kindergarten. They also described their experiences in situations where only one group of children wanted to manage the others by behaving "as an adult", "as if there was a teacher" (Theobald et al., 2015, p. 352).

An excessive structure and day-to-day management of children's activities in kindergarten, which prevented children from having enough time for the free play, was also reflected by the teenage students observing children's play in Canadian kindergartens. Teachers tried to meet the requirements of the curriculum, but they were unable to meet these requirements appropriately by using child-centred didactic play and creativity in working with a variety of materials (Pyle & Bigelow, 2015).

If we accept the child's passive role by entering a routine in the play based mainly on the instruction and management by the teacher or another adult in the preschool environment

(and it may also consider transferring this experience from family interactions), it will cause that the child expects the authority (in the kindergarten represented by the teacher) to solve the problem offered by the play situation. The frame of play in the preschool environment is fundamentally influenced by the teacher's choice of the underlying theory of a child's learning.

3   Methodology

3.1 Aim of the research

The aim of the research was to verify the original set of didactic toys in the real preschool environment. Therefore, we consider the main research question:
How is the preschool children's play enacted with selected toys in preschool environment?
When considering the possible progress of children's play with the toys and also after obtaining the first data, we divided this main question into several specific research questions. They should capture the central phenomenon represented by the main research question and spread it into several subtopics (Creswell, 2007, p. 109):
How is the toy chosen by a child in a set environment?
What toy modifications occur during a child's game?
How does a child communicate in the interaction with peers during the play?
The partial objectives of this research were to find out how teachers work with the play and the toys available in the kindergarten and how the most important participants of the research, namely preschool children perceive the play and the toys. We chose a qualitative research design to explore the research problem and answer the research questions.
In the context of the research strategy to verify the use of didactic toys in the kindergarten environment, we chose two sets of original toys, one specifically designed for children up to three years of age and the other one for children between two and six years of age. We used a total of 17 original didactic games and toys. These toys were made by student kindergarten teachers in the context of the subject Play and its educational utilisation in the kindergarten. The toys are proprietary works of their authors. Every toy was produced on the basis of a student's design based on a specific didactic objective (development of the child in a certain area). The toys were made from available materials respecting the requirement of safety of the material and the toy handling. The didactic toys are listed in Table 1 below:

Table 1

Description of the didactic toys

Name of the toy	Age	Goal
Teddy bunny	2-3	Development of the child's fine motor skills and recognition of colours and shapes.
Inserted tree	2-3	Development of the child's fine motor skills and visual perception.
Textile pad with shapes	2-3	Development of fine motor skills and recognition of geometrical shapes. The toy may also be used for development of visual perception.
Flower with butterflies	2-3	Development of observation and recognition of colours, development of pre-mathematical operations.
Playful book	2-3	Development of motor skills and encouraging to think. The toy develops speech skills.
Forest teddy bear	2-3	Development of pre-mathematical operations and fine motor skills.
Motor skill square	2-3	Development of the child's fine motor skills.
Colour squares	3-6	Development of visual perception and pre-mathematical operations.
Marble track	3-6	Development of creativeness, patience and concentration. The toy also supports cooperation of the playing children.
Doll box	3-6	Development of cognitive skills, support for creativeness and imagination, development of fine motor skills.
Dressing book		Development of visual and tactile perception, learning of colours, use of handling skills, development of the child's thinking, creativeness and imagination.
Farm	3-6	Development of the child's creativeness and linguistic skills.
Table football	3-6	Development of cooperation, sense of fair-play and fine motor skills.

Glove puppet theatre	3-6	Encouragement of self-expression and self-fulfilment, group work and storytelling.
Animals of the world	3-6	Development of visual perception, encouragement of interest in the animals' habitats.
Interweaving board	4-6	Support for creative work with material, development of fine motor skills.
Music instruments	2-6	Development of hearing, visual and tactile perception. The toy supports rhythmic feeling and improvisation in music.

The research project was created on the basis of the creative students' work. The students – future kindergarten and elementary school teachers studying at the Faculty of Humanities at Tomas Bata University in Zlín are prepared within the concept of study, which combines meaningful theoretical preparation with practical applications of acquired knowledge (Wiegerová, 2015, p. 74). By creating a set of original didactic toys for preschool children, the students tried to demonstrate their ability to link their knowledge from the child's play theory and to undergo practical training in faculty kindergartens.

3.2 Participants

The participants of the presented research were preschool children and their teachers from selected kindergartens. These were 12 teachers with secondary or university education (Bc. degree), aged from 23 to 48, with a length of practice from 1 year to 25 years at the position of a kindergarten teacher. The research study enrolled 77 children of the 2-6 age group from four selected kindergartens in the Czech Republic. We formed both heterogeneous and homogeneous groups of six children per group. The parents of the participating children granted their written informed consent to video recording of the observed play of their children. The children at an early age (from 2-3 years) were observed separately, they were offered different toys, appropriate to their age.

Table 2

Data of children participating in the study

Age of child	Boys	Girls
2 years	1	1
3 years	3	2
4 years	10	9
5 years	8	17
6 years	14	12
Total	*36*	*41*

For the purposes of the research, we chose four different kindergartens in the South Moravian Region of the Czech Republic. Two of the kindergartens are urban schools,

one is located in the outskirts of the city and one school is located in a village near the city. Village schools are set in a quieter environment around family houses, close to greenery and with greater opportunities for outdoor stays. On the other hand, the municipal schools, located near the block of flats and roads, have more space, so there are more classes in these kindergartens.

In the classroom environment of all kindergartens, the classroom was well equipped with games and toys. The kindergartens have both modern toys and still use traditional toys. In all kindergarten classes, we noticed toys from various materials (plastic, wood, natural materials, fabric), didactic toys, themes, creative, design and manipulative games, also board games, social and logical games, books, art supplies and aids, utensils, costumes and backdrops, relaxing elements, musical instruments and natural materials from living and inanimate nature. It was also possible to watch the groups of toys designated for boys (cars, trucks, kits) and girls (strollers with dolls). In the classes, we also noticed interesting game elements – relaxation bags, pools with balls, elevated decks (boat deck), corners of the wild (turtle, snails).

3.3 Methods of data collection and processing

Research focused on children's views on the play has grown in recent years. Child observation and interviewing, both individually and in groups, are the most frequently used methods. These methods of data collection were also chosen for our study, supplemented by interviews with preschool teachers in the participating kindergartens. Data collection took place in the kindergartens within three months.

3.3.1   Participant observation

The research was based on one of the recently most popular methods of involved observation of children. Observation is a classical pedagogical and psychological research method also used in practice. Observation helps the teacher get to know the child and thus, obtain valuable knowledge of their independent and group behaviour (McLachlan, Fleer, & Edwards, 2013). To grasp the details of the children's play, we used video recording. Video recordings offers the options of repeated replay, returning to the recorded situations with the possibility to discover what one cannot notice in the course of a single observation. The presence of the researcher can obviously affect the behaviour of the observed children, and also the use of the video camera may introduce a certain bias. The obtained data, however, suggest that the children behaved as usual with just minor deviations. The children were interested in the camera, sometimes a child waved to it or made a funny face, but the camera did not seem to interfere with the children's play with the toys.

We decided to offer the children two sets of original toys, one specifically used for the groups of children under the age of three, in the second set, the toys were designed for children aged 3 to 6 years. In total, there were 17 toys and games that offered a specific goal or problem to be explored through the play. The child could thus classify, sort, track the parts and the whole, compare, experiment and investigate the cause and effect (Burns et al., 2012, 73). Each of the kindergartens prepared a space for the play which the children knew. The space was big enough to allow the distribution of the toys across the floor in a way that provided enough space for playing in groups with a single toy. Involvement in a play requires sufficient time for playing. That is why the children were given as much time as they needed. The mean length of one recording was 30 minutes,

subject to the age and composition of the group of children. Data were collected in the environment of four selected kindergartens across the time span of three months. The data obtained in the form of video recordings and field notes were transcribed and subjected to qualitative analysis.

3.3.2   Interviews with preschool children

Preschool-oriented research is enhanced by listening to these children (Mukherji & Albon, 2015, p. 55). Interviews with children to help us better understand their own view of the play and toys were a clear choice within the methods of data collection. The interviews were always realized at the beginning of each meeting with children before they picked the toys for the play. This resulted in a total of 14 interviews recorded on the video camera, but the field remarks were also accentuated by discussions with children at the end of the meetings. The children perceived us as "substitute" teachers, and they also addressed us - "we all call Teacher."

Unstructured interviews with children were focused on the toys that they prefer or wish to have in the kindergarten, how and with whom the play is done in preschool but also other environments that children spontaneously spoke about. Respect for ethical principles in child-centred research as described by Mukherji and Albon (2015) was reflected in the effort to communicate sensitively with children and with respect for their wishes.

3.3.3   Interviews with preschool teachers

Semi-structured interviews with 12 kindergarten teachers focused on their perceptions of a child's role in the play and then on the concept and functionality of toys. Teachers showed interest in seeing the offered original toys. They were also interested in how children would play with them and whether this information would match how they themselves knew the children.

3.3.4   Data analysis

Data in the form of field notes and video recordings were carefully transcribed into a text format. The analysis was processed cyclically using the open coding approach first. With the increasing number of records from observations and interviews, the coding was refined, and clear concepts emerged and formed the basis for the development of main categories.

4   Results

4.1 Toy selection

Toys offer the basis for the promotion of the development of problem solving strategies and they are active elements of the play. A toy offers an opportunity for social play and play with other children (Blakemore & Centers, 2005). And if a toy becomes the play, a play becomes the toy, then the play functions as a target, instrument and means of communication at the same time. The toys being verified caused a wave of questions from participating children. The questions were directed not only at the researchers but also at the children in the observed group. We can state that they did not need to name the toy with a certain exact word, they mostly called them "this, it, or that". During the process of toy selection or in following play, children were not interested in the name of

the toy. Most often, the children asked about the nature of the toy, and they were interested in the purpose of the toy. Since the aim of the research was to verify a set of toys according to a supposed didactic goal, the researchers did not deliberately interfere within the observation and did not explain to children how to play with the toys. Therefore, inquiring questions naturally arose:

G[1] : Teacher, how should I play with this?
R: There's another box there, well, maybe somebody will advise you.
G2: I advise you (another girl responds).

We consider this short part of interview as a good example of mutual cooperation between children, a certain level of social learning and mutual help. We noticed that the toy selection by children under the age of three who were also included in the observation, was limited by their level of social level of development (shame, surprised expressions, uncertainty) and by a communication barrier (they were not speaking, rather silent). This limitation is explained by the short time for getting acquainted with the children, the way the research was conducted and a certain disturbance of their day-to-day regime in the kindergarten. Children did not see the toy in advance or ask questions and, basically, they just chose the first toy.

4.1.1 The way of toy selection
The process of toy selection passed really spontaneously. As children were enjoying new, other toys, their joy was reflected in their approach to these toys. In some groups, children were more open to improvised play. We noticed that many children first wanted to explore what toys they were offered, they approached them and observed them and then they left them freely to access another.
Other children who were influencing the children's choice also entered the toy selection. There were more moves, somehow from toy to toy. We perceived the joy of discovering the toy as a real, unprejudiced emotional situation that arose whenever a child discovered a toy that allowed it to transform into something completely different. Fontana (2003) confirms the importance of emotions at the early child age when feelings of joy should be perceived as highly desirable. Children stayed spontaneous when they were deeply immersed in the play. Their emotionality was enhanced not only by their voice but also by their movements. The play means a serious activity for the child, accompanied by feelings that are true. Play activities bring joy, satisfaction, even happiness to a child (Mišurcová, Fišer, & Fixl, 1980).
When observing a child's toy selection, we identified several factors that influenced the interest of children.

- Toy versus friend
We also focused on the observation of children who watched the other children playing in the group. Children learn not only by cooperation but also through observing and imitating others. They try and play observed situations. The ways of acting are then tested on children themselves or even on other peers. We noticed that children conformed to friend's play preferences.

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[1] G= girl, B = boy, R= researcher, T= teacher to indicate participants' recorded statements

G: *I don't want to play with it anymore.*
G2: *Neither do I.*

- I must know how to play

Both the follow-up of the play and the toy selection were limited by whether the child felt confident about the ability to understand the principles of the play. Some children verbalized the conditionality of selection. This approach corresponds to children's initial questioning about the rules and possibilities of the presented toys. We assume that this learned mechanism could be the result of their teachers' or parents' approach.

G: *I will try to play with this.*
G2: *We will play with this if we know how to do it.*

The above-mentioned toy selection ends after the moment when the girls watch the toy. One of them strongly pronounces that they cannot play with it.

G: (She rotates the magnetic board from the "Animals of the world", and finally places the selected magnet on the white back surface). *We will not play with it!* (She puts the board back into the wooden box.) *We cannot do that!*

- The need for a partner in the play

A kindergarten is the place for children to meet, to share their learning and to experience a substantial part of the day. We noticed that the participating children were adapted to play naturally in the group. Children were used to playing together, talking and sharing compromises. Their need to play together with someone else prevailed.

CH: *I know that we have it at home, but we always play it in pairs.*

We found examples of interesting solutions for playing with toys made by the children. But we also observed contrary situations. The little girl picked up the playbook and she was so intrigued by the toy that even though the teacher had come into the view, other children spoke loudly, reflecting the play with all toys, she still continued to compose and stick the paper clothes into the book. The aspect of full concentration on play is determined by the child's own interest and inner motivation to play regardless of the surroundings.

4.1.2 Progress of toy selection

Throughout the observation, we noticed that children mostly played with more toys because they moved to another when the toy could not be used in various forms. These situations lead us to the assumption that children's free play with didactic toys is effective when the toy itself offers the possibility of further variations and transformations. In such a case, the child is forced to think and look for a different solution. Otherwise, the toy would only fulfil its primary goal, without any innovation and creativity.

- Teacher in the background

Since the beginning of the observed play, children have been struggling to get support from the researchers, who have been asking questions about the functions of toys.

D: *Mrs…teacher? What should we do with this toy?*
V: *That's what you want to do.*

Children are used to asking the teacher for help, they can ask when they need to share their experiences, joy or discovery. We conclude that in the presence of the teacher, the child feels the authority and respect. At the same time, it is necessary that the teacher puts forward a proposal to resolve disputed situations, conflicts among children, but not to interfere before it is needed into the children's play. Looking for teacher's strategies to act as a guide and facilitator of the play is increasingly discussed issue in preschool education. Playful pedagogy, based on the involvement of teacher and children in joint learning (David, Goouch, & Powell, 2016), is accentuated in the current theory of play.

The process of toy selection by a child depends on many factors. The research shows that the quality, visual aspects, and purpose of the toy are not enough. The data indicate that there is more than the need for comprehensive thinking about the use of toys in kindergartens. Differences in children's individuality, not only gender, but also their own character and temperament and many other aspects influence the possible progress of playing with the toy and its effectiveness.

4.2 Progress of play with the selected toy

Not only the first choice of the toy, but also the progress of play, can be partly influenced by children's gender. Children at age of three readily distinguish between males and females, and associate certain objects more strongly with one gender (boys) than with the other one (Osaďan, 2012, p. 25). In line with Oncu and Umluer (2012), we observed obvious boys' preferences for toys characterized by a joint play in a group of more children together, the play was more dynamic with a frequent physical contact. There was also a dominance manifested in decision making and determining the rules. The girls' preferences of the play were characterised as being calm, more conscious and persistent in the time spent with the selected toy. At the same time, the girls turned more to the researcher, they expressed the need for adult proximity and they often controlled the group.

The progress of the play with the toys was obviously affected by interactions among the children. Especially in groups of older children (5 - 6 years of age), shorter concentration on a single toy was manifested; the children often changed positions and partners in their play and moved from one toy to another, eventually returning to previously abandoned toys. Thus, they were more demanding "clients," but, at the same time, did not investigate the toys down to such a level of detail as younger children did.

4.2.1 Discovering a toy element

First, the selected toy was perceived as a whole by children and then they gradually explored its use, individual possibilities and elements. If the toy did not catch their interest enough or one of the children decided to explore the new toy, the children did not even finish the toy exploration. Due to missing specific instructions from the

researchers, it was up to them to decide whether and how to discover the principle of a given toy.

G: I'll do it right, ok? I'll give you the big ones. I will give the car there.
B: No, that must not be so (Another child puts the ball in a different place than it is intended). *You must do that* (He gives the ball at the marked point).

Discovering toy elements also happened during the individual child's play. It was interesting to observe the discovery of the play principle especially with toys when the children really had to identify the functions themselves. In other cases, however, the children intentionally did not want to use some of the elements. Preschool children give new meanings to play (Fleer, 2011, p. 249). The observed children created various modifications to the original plan intended by the authors.

4.2.2   Modification of toys

A total modification that transformed the toy into a completely different subject was also used by children from the group of the youngest participating children, i.e. those who only reached the age of three in the given school year. Therefore, it can be assumed that it may indeed be useful to let the children first examine new objects according to their own scenario.

Most of the offered toys were presented in their dismantled state, for example the marble track was presented as a plain board where the individual obstacles needed to be placed. If the teacher told the children that the obstacles must be put in the track, the children would not look for other options, at least when first playing with the track. As we intentionally avoided interfering with the play unless the children asked for help (for example when they need someone to read the instructions they discovered for the game), we could observe variant uses of the toys. The marble track was used by a group of girls without an interest in the obstacles for making the route more difficult. Instead, the girls violently pushed the marbles across the empty track as if playing football. Even when they discovered the box with the obstacles, and although they knew how to use them, they did not show any interest in them. In another case, the girls played with the track as if it was a house for guinea pigs. Thus, they adapted the toy to their current interest in pets.

A child's need to get at least partial instruction for a toy or play can be influenced by the child's character and by the examples outside the kindergarten. At the same time, we believe that the teacher, who offers the play as an externally managed activity, plays an essential role here. As stated by Opravilová (as cited in Kolláriková & Pupala, 2010), a whole number of such structured teacher materials is presented prematurely or even unnecessarily to children, because children can actively discover the principles of the play.

4.3 Discrepancy between the view of a teacher and a child

Considering that toys or plays in kindergartens are usually chosen by the teachers and parents, it is undoubtedly interesting to ask directly the children what toys they prefer, what they would like to have in the kindergarten classrooms. In addition to common toys found in the classrooms and children's rooms, some of the children expressed less usual wishes. A tree as a toy that is missing in the kindergarten could give a surprising

impression. However, participating children in that group did not show any surprise (unlike the adult researcher present), on the contrary, they developed the idea, describing how they would actually play with a tree in the classroom. The children's wishes outside the assortment of regular toys included also live animals.

In the children's expressions of toys as unfulfilled wishes, there were objects which appeared to be undesirable from the point of view of preschool teachers. The children wished to have a gun or a rifle in the classroom. A child chooses the theme of the play based on his/her own experience, although gives a new dimension to this experience. A play is not a mere reproduction, but the child creates a whole new reality (Vygotsky, 2004). In contrast to the often declared zero tolerance for the toys imitating weapons, Holland (2003) has a different view. Instead of a strict refusal, it is possible to use the teacher's sensitive guidance to experience some play situations (e.g. being a superhero).

We found a restrictive perspective expressed by the participating preschool teachers about their dominant influence on the selected toys in the kindergarten environment. If children play for too long with one toy (e.g. slide or cars), they solve the situation by not allowing children to use toys for a few days. Children are so forced to find other toys, playing differently than they prefer. Teachers explain their intervention as an effort to boost child development through a wider range of toys for children.

U: When they´re playing with cars for a whole week, we offer something different to them, or we are foisting them wooden figures to add them into the play.

5   Discussion and limits

Preschool is a specific environment in which teachers are important actors in initiating, supporting and developing the play, in particular by what conditions to offer concerning the organization and the quality of play materials and play environment for children (Martinsen, 2015). The research interest focused on children, who had a simple instruction – "Kids, you can play with these toys". This impulse was enough to open the world of play.

Data gathered by a qualitative research with preschool children in the kindergarten environment represent a partial picture on the importance of toys and playing with them. We consider important to point out certain limits of the research, given the circumstances that a sample of 15 classrooms observed in the total number of 4 kindergartens cannot bring the results to be presented for wider generalizability. Even though we have introduced a research that originally aimed to verify the toys for preschool children, we offer arguments for discussion on pedagogical theory and practice. Another recommendation for future preschool teachers is to be open to children's play, as children's views on the play differ from those of adults (Theobald et al., 2015).

An intentional choice of toys for children could also belong to the possible limits of this research. The criteria for choosing toys were set rather subjectively. However, the efforts to refrain from classifying toys according to material, children's age or from a didactic point of view was reflected as a successful starting point. Toys were verified in terms of their primary function and purpose.

The findings suggest that it is not prospective to focus solely on the toy itself. In agreement with Pyle and Bigelow (2015), it is possible to monitor the impact of the play on the development of children's social, emotional and educational skills. Based on the

observation and interviews with both children and teachers, we came to the view that it is increasingly important to support the didactic thinking of preschool teachers. We also considered the issue in the sense of feedback for authors of the toys and for future preschool teachers. Child-based research opens up the opportunity to interpret and analyse their own childhood perspective reflected in their own social worlds, emphasizing the complexity of understanding their experiences through the eyes of adults. It was crucial for us to not set up toy rules for children in this research (except for safe toy handling and respecting the basic rules of the class), so no instructions or demonstrations were provided to children about how to play or how to use the toy. In parallel with the verification of toys for children, we felt strongly about the discourse that the research space offered us. Children are perceived as reflective participants, competent producers of knowledge about their lives and everyday learning experiences (Christensen & James, 2008).

The limits of openness in children's play are based on the school system itself and the traditional day care in kindergartens, which is adapted to the day-care regime. As shown in the study by Bilewicz-Kuźnia (2016) from the Polish educational environment, also the Czech educational system focuses on specifically-directed activities by a teacher in the classroom. A teacher´s role in free play is more of a control character. Considering play from a childhood perspective allows children and teachers to construct and build knowledge and skills together.

6   Conclusion

Children do not choose a toy for the purpose of conscious development of fine motor skills or with the awareness of strengthening their pro-social relations with other children. Children just play. And they can play with toys similar to the original products made by students and verified in the presented research. Choosing toys and activities suitable for preschool children can also be a challenge for experienced teachers. Effective toys are not only safe, they are appropriately chosen according to the child's age, abilities and interest. But, above all, they are provided as a possible challenge. The toy becomes a ticket to experience, their performance and experience. If we do not provide instructions on the play and toy, children will keep asking what to do with it for a while, but they gradually become used to finding their own path, building creative modifications.

A careful observation of children in diverse activities helps the teacher to understand the motives or intentions of children concerning the selection strategies in the play. Therefore, teachers' observation skills belong to the pedagogical competencies that help to use efficient educational strategies (Bruce, 1996). In addition, if a teacher prepares or creates an original toy, it will be interesting to learn how children discover the principle of the toy and whether the teacher can even predict what toys will be of interest to children in his/her kindergarten classroom.

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Is Education for Using Humour in Nursing Needed? (Slovenian Case Study on Sociological and Ergonomic Aspects of the Impact of Humour on Nursing Professionals)

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Abstract:
Introduction: Although there has been considerable discussion regarding the presence of therapeutic aspects of humour in the nurse educational programme and syllabus, little is known about the use of humour in the nurse – patient relationship and the needed topics in the Slovene educational system for nurses. From educational and medical perspectives, humour is anything that evokes laughter and it has been proven that laughter contributes to physical health. A sense of humour in nursing has a conformist, quantitative and productive importance which is manifested through the essential elements of humour: meta-communication sensitivity, personal affection for humour and emotional admissibility. As nurses spend a lot of time with patients, humour adds to the quality of their work as well as to the nurses' satisfaction with their work with patients. The aim of this paper is to contribute to a better understanding of the significance of humour in nursing both for the employees and for the patients and to discuss humour within the framework of nursing profession in Slovenia. The specific objective of our study is to explore the attitudes of Slovenian nurses towards humour and their actual use of humour during their interaction with patients.
Methods: For the purpose of this study, a quantitative research methodology was adopted. A questionnaire was used to collect data on the topic and a set of statistical analyses (frequency distribution method, the χ^2 and Spearman rank correlation test) was performed on the data obtained.
Results: Our study shows that Slovenian nurses are prone to the use of humour in their work and they welcome it as an integral part of their work with patients. We found that humour also enhances their sense of belonging to the nursing profession and serves as a tool for socialization.
Discussion: Humour, employed in nursing can help overcome certain difficulties which nurses face in the workplace as they also try to fulfil some social objectives and get socialized via humour. These psychological-sociological features of humour stand out as cognitive and social benefits of the positive emotions of joy, the use of humour for social communication and their influence on the release of stress and coping, which draws from the ergonomics of humour as social interaction. Therefore, topics of humour in nurse education are required.

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Limitations: 279 Slovenian nurses with different levels of education participated in the study.
Conclusions: Humour should be used by nurses since it is important in their professional interaction with patients. It can be used as a bridge between individuals and can serve as a means of individual's integration into groups, cultures and, consequently, into the society as a whole.

Key words: education, humour, nurse, nursing, patients.

1   Introduction

Humour is most frequently defined as the ability of a person to understand funny contents of some situation. It is explained as the (co)experiencing of happy, funny situations and events as well as human imperfections and weaknesses in an inoffensive and funny form. The most frequent communicative competences assigned to humour in everyday life are: conveying important or sensitive messages, maintaining social contacts and reducing tensions among people. Sociologists are convinced that humour functions as a socializing agent either for an individual within a group and/or for a group in the global society because it also represents social relations in the social environment in which it occurs.

As nurses spend a lot of time with patients, humour is an important factor of the quality of their work. It is either a factor which has an impact on the quality of their work or a factor which influences the relationships within a medical team. In addition, it is an important factor having an effect on the nurses' satisfaction with their work with patients.

Humour is very important for all participants in nursing. Its importance is shown in different development areas such as personal development, aesthetic development, intellectual development and, most of all, social development. Humour is almost obligatory and practically self-evident, and is usually subconsciously used by everyone in the society. It teaches us how to become integrated into the society. As such, humour is more than just a means for good communication of a nurse with a patient and a means for the socialization of the patient since it also affects the nurses' abilities, persistence, self-confidence and resourcefulness as well as their work environment and (even) their health. Doctors, psychologists, sociologists and psychiatrists have proven that laughter contributes to physical health. It releases endorphins, i.e. the hormones which reduce stress, relieve the feelings of disappointment and trigger an overall feeling of comfort. Scientists know that endorphins are a natural analgesic which inhibits pain. Researchers have also found that laughter causes the inner lining of blood vessels to expand, which increases blood flow and triggers the feelings of good physical health. Last but not least, laughter relieves the body of the stress hormone cortisol.

From medical perspective, the word humour stands for that which causes laughter. The word itself stems from Latin with its original sense being "moisture", "bodily fluid" and its secondary sense being in "good mood". The shift in the meaning of humour from a bodily fluid to merriment is based on Hippocrates' theory of medicine which states that "a person's well-being depends on the proportions of four bodily fluids, i.e. blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile. If these fluids are in correct proportions, then a person is in a good mood, otherwise he/she is not" (Žagar, 2004, p. 111). Humour is something which causes laughter, it fills us with joy and helps us get into and stay in good mood, be joyful, virtuous and happy. It is a form of entertainment and, at the same

time, a form of human communication, purpose of which is to make people laugh and consequently, to cheer them up.

Investigating the use of humour in nursing is thus very important because nursing is a profession in which a lot of social interaction (and communication) takes place. This paper thus discusses humour within the framework of nursing profession in Slovenia. The specific objective of our study is to explore the attitudes of Slovenian nurses towards humour and their actual use of humour during their interaction with patients.

The remaining part of the paper proceeds as follows. In the theoretical part, we present the main theories of humour and discuss the use of humour in nursing. In the empirical part of our paper, we give and discuss the results of our quantitative study on Slovenian nurses' attitudes towards humour and their use of humour in their work. We also address the relationship between the nurses' education and their sense of humour and their love of work. The final part of the paper draws together the key findings of our research with the implications for the nursing profession education.

2 Theories of humour

There are many (albeit less known) theories which deal with the definition, the features and the significance of humour. For the purposes of this contribution, we present only a few classic and a few contemporary theories of humour. Some of the classic theories of humour are as follows:

The social theory of humour defines humour as the means for the establishment of better interactions within a group and for the transmission of cultural mores (Coleman, 1992). The key function of humour is socialization: to acculturate knowledgeable, understanding, compassionate, and empathic new members to the society (Callahan, Clark, & Kellough, 1992, as cited in Pollak & Freda, 1997, p. 177). In essence, this theory recognises the purpose of humour and the fact that humour does not only have an impact on the society as a whole, but that humour performs important functions in smaller social groups, too. In a way, it connects the group and controls the behaviour of individual members of a certain group, which strengthens the bonds among individual members of that group. Alternatively, it can cause conflicts among the group members because of different perceptions of humour or because of making fun of other members of the group.

The superiority theory of humour traces its origins to Aristotle and Plato (6th century B.C.). This theory got its more developed version in the 17th century with the works by English philosopher Hobbes, who stated that humour stems from the attainment of superiority over someone else. This theory addresses the relationships between the speaker and the receiver of humour (Raskin, 1985, p. 40). Humour can be used to make a group of people or an individual feel ridiculed and undignified.

According to Kant, *the incongruity theory of humour* defines laughter as the emotion which appears as a result of a surprise related to a strained expectation of something, and then actually nothing or something completely different from what was expected happens. This theory does not search for the origins of laughter within the motives of people who laugh, but tries to find these reasons in the incongruities in the environment which provoke laughter (Billig, 2005, p. 57). Here, humour appears as the result of the incompatibility between discourses which are socially constructed and learnt (Mills, as cited in Creeber, Miller, & Tuloch, 2011, p. 63).

The relief theory of humour was advocated by Freud, who stated that humour functions both socially and psychologically as a relief of suppressed emotions and feelings which would otherwise remain hidden. In this way, an individual indirectly challenges cultural norms. Humour can be defined as a physiological mechanism of managing stress, as a model for relieving tensions by releasing excessive (emotional) energy and transforming this energy to the physical one – to laughter. This theory deals only with the feelings and thoughts of the person who interprets humour (Raskin, 1985, p. 40).

Biological, instinctive, developmental theories of humour point out that the proverb "laugher is the best medicine: (in Slovene, "laughter is half one's health") indeed holds true since it has a positive effect both on one's physical health and on one's general wellbeing. That is, "laughter and humour are built in nerve mechanisms and they perform an adaptive function. Laughter establishes homeostasis, maintains normal blood pressure, increases the supply of oxygen into the blood, it massages vital organs, stimulates circulation, relaxes and maintains good mood" (Peštaj, 2006, p. 5).

The incongruity theories describe situations when a person tells a joke that is then associated by another person with another joke, which has different contents, but is related to the first joke in a funny way.

The surprise theory of humour emphasises the psychological aspect of incongruity. The main concepts of this theory are surprise, shock, unexpectedness, suddenness; they deal with humour which can be found in jokes or situations when a person says something completely normal and the other person replies with something funny which the first person did not expect.

Modern theories of humour most frequently stem from the current social and private life. That is why humour changes both as for its form and its contents. Nevertheless, the primary function of humour is still the same – to laugh and to make somebody laugh. Among modern theories of humour, Peštaj (2006, p. 5) highlights the following:

- *Developmental theories of humour* study the phases in the development of laughter and, thus, most often remain at the descriptive level. The only holistic cognitive-developmental theory of humour was developed by P. McGhee, who is a leading theoretician in the field of the study of humour development in children.
- *Physical, physiological and neurological theories* have encouraged the performance of a large number of experiments. The theory developed by D. Berlyne explains humour with the principles which can be compared with curiosity and research-oriented behaviour.
- *Psychoanalytical theories* are the theories which are based on the theory of S. Freud. His followers aim to connect his findings with modern physiological theories.
- *Socially-oriented theories* have encouraged experimenting because they study the changes in experiencing humour in the context of its dependence on social factors, or the function of humour for an individual or a group.
- *Cognitive theories* study cognitive processes triggered by a humorous stimulus and, related to that, the nature of humorous stimuli.

The core concept of these theories is incongruity. However, the expected (and desired) result of humour is always laughter, which is a natural phenomenon and a mere physiological reaction to humour. Humour is characterized by a series of gestures, the production of sounds and the psychomotor reactions of the person who creates humour and also of the person who experiences it. However, Martin (2007, p. 230) points out

that laughter and humour are not the same thing. Humour can be the result of satisfaction, an expression of sympathy, irony, excitement, comfort and satisfaction, even sarcasm (black humour); it can be an expression of suffering and a means for releasing tensions, dissatisfaction, even sadness. Humour has been researched within social sciences (by sociologists, philosophers, psychologists, etc.) as well as within medical science (psychiatrists, physiotherapists, etc.). All these specialists, including gelotologists (specialists studying laughter), perceived some healing properties of humour. It is medical specialists who predominantly state that laughter is initially triggered in the centre of cerebral cortex where endorphins (i.e. happiness hormones) are released and which results in one's relaxed state, emotional ease and good mood.

3 Humour and a nurse

Humour is a form of communication, it is a conversation with oneself and other(s); it can (even) be a lifestyle. In nursing, the "five rights" rule, which stands for the right dose of the right drug in the right form to the right patient at the right time, is universally applied. Kersnič (2002) changed this rule into the "5H" rule, i.e. humour in the right dose, humour in the right form, right humour for the right patient, and humour at the right time. Based on the research into humour, Peštaj (2006, p. 6) states that a sense of humour has three meanings: a conformist meaning (i.e. a person with a sense of humour laughs at the similar jokes that we do), a quantitative meaning (i.e. a person laughs a lot and can easily be made to laugh), and a productive meaning (i.e. a person makes other people laugh).

A nurse has a sense of humour when she can make a patient laugh very fast, when she laughs at the same things that are funny to the patient and when she has a treasury of jokes and anecdotes. She creates humour, accepts jokes and does not mind jokes at her own expense. Also, a nurse with a sense of humour is capable of seeing herself and others from a distance. It should be noted that a nurse should know the three core dimensions of humour:
- meta-communication sensitivity (i.e. the ability to recognise humour in a given situation);
- personal affection for humour; and
- emotional admissibility (i.e. free expression of emotions).

If the nurse is aware of the fact that humour is a multidimensional construct, as stated by Peštaj (2006, p. 7), she can produce humour, can be playful and entertaining, can use humour for the attainment of social goals, can recognise humour and see herself as the transmitter of humour, can enjoy humour and can laugh at problems as well as deal with problems with the help of humour. Humour also helps the patient deal with certain problems he/she is confronted with. It helps the patient become integrated into the society and become socialized. It also helps the patient deal with his/her health-related problems more easily. Of course, both the patient and the nurse must first enjoy humour, must get to know it, must master it and, subsequently, use it. Most of all, it is important that they recognise its limits and its quality as well as its purpose. As burnout frequency in the nursing profession is high, "nurses must deal with more or less serious problems, intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts, stressful situations, and other adverse circumstances" (Leskovic, Vukovič, Leskovar, & Goriup, 2016, p. 51). Humour can help both the patient and the nurse solve different problems they face in the course of medical

treatment. However, not all nurses have "preferences for humour", which is a more accurate term than "a sense of humour".

Humour can also serve as a defence mechanism as it protects against disjunctive events. During a conflict or in a situation of humiliation or insult, humour eases this social situation and calms down tensions and aggressions. The nurse has to be very careful in her use of humour, she has to be considerate. Her careless use of humour, with the addition of her inappropriate behaviour, can often hurt the patient who comes to her with serious problems. Humour can also distance the patient either from the nurse or from the intention of aggressive behaviour or from any other opposition. The nurse should also not exaggerate in her use of humour, but should use it to alleviate a certain situation. Most of all, the nurse should not use humour just to be funny at any cost.

All theoretical approaches to humour indisputably show that there are many types of humour. Humour also occurs in the relationship between the nurse and the patient; however, they perceive it in different ways and express it in the ways which are inherent to them. It is particularly important to make sure that they do not use jokes which can be misinterpreted, due to their banal contents, by either of them (or both of them). On the one hand, the generally known forms of humour are jokes (plays with language and word plays), body expressions (funny and entertaining body postures, funny faces and gestures, etc.), buffoonery (funny situations with unexpected outcomes), and jokes in a wider sense (they entertain because they show familiar situations from shows, parodies, etc., in a new and usually funny context). On the other hand, there exist less frequently used types of humour – also in the context of nursing. These forms are irony, farce, metaphor, hyperbole, satire and sarcasm. Even though these types of humour are less frequent, we would like to draw attention to them (with the best intentions in mind).

The nurse only rarely uses irony as humour when in contact with the patient. Irony might be used in situations when she wishes to "remind" the patient because the literal meaning of the contents is the opposite of the intended meaning (e.g. "It's so wonderful to be on a sick leave." – but the patient would like to return to work as soon as possible). The nurse uses farces and hyperboles only exceptionally, too. While the former ones are characterized by mental humour, the use of deliberate absurdity or stupidity and stylistically elaborate shows, the latter ones are used as a motivation: to encourage strong emotions or to create a strong impression, but not with the intention that they are to be taken literally. Hyperboles are exaggerations that create an emphasis or an effect. Metaphor, as a type of humour which focuses on a subject which is different on some point of comparison to an unrelated object, is also rarely used by nurses. The Encyclopedia of Health Communication defines metaphor as a figure of speech which is "usually used to denote a particular language device or a characteristic of language; when used in this sense, metaphor is a language property observed in written or spoken language and is properly called "linguistic metaphor" (Thompson, 2014, p. 870). According to the same source, a metaphor can refer to three additional perspectives in health communication, i.e. a cognitive process, a structure inherent in mental entities, and a cultural model (Thompson, 2014).

The nurse tends to use satire more frequently. Satire is an aggressive type of humour because it makes fun of social institutions and social policy (Martin, 2007, p. 13). By using satire, the nurse discloses herself. But humour attracts us more because, as stated by Žagar (2004, p. 111), it is full of jokes and laughter. However, when we are in a bad mood or when we become serious, we reproach satire for its banality, its impropriety or

carelessness – which are, as the author states, the characteristics of satire. Sarcasm as a type of humour is very rare in nursing because it is an aggressive form of humour which focuses on a particular person (Martin, 2007, p. 13). For example, if a nurse said to a drunken patient that he was drunk, he would reply that this was true and would add that she was ugly and old and that he would be sober the next day, but she would still be ugly and old. Irony, which is seldom used by a nurse, is a humorous rhetorical figure which is used for an indirect communication of the message that is the opposite of the literal meaning of the sentence. As stated by Gibbs (1986, p. 3), the language used in an irony is bitter, caustic, and this ironic language is usually directed against an individual. Irony and sarcasm are closely related because ironic statements can also be sarcastic. However, a nurse who is skilled in using humour and is able to make complex linguistic and social conclusions, can use irony not only as a form of criticism but also as giving praise indirectly.

Martin (2007, p. 269) claims that it is important to assess the significance of humour not only as a socially desirable personal characteristic but also as an important part of one's mental health. Apart from arousing strong positive feelings and preventing negative states such as depression and anxiety, humour also acts as an important mechanism for the control of stressful situations in life and is a significant social skill needed to start, maintain and strengthen satisfying interpersonal relationships. This is confirmed by the research on the psychology of humour which has, in recent years, focused on the relationship between humour and different aspects of mental health. That is, one of the components of humour is a positive emotion of joy which emerges when the nurse and the patient joke and laugh. They thus feel more relaxed and happy and less depressed, restless, irritable and tense. This leads us to the conclusion that humour enhances positive mood and prevents negative feelings.

4   Nurses need to be educated for ergonomics in the workplace

An educational package of common ergonomic training as well as behavioural training and training for humour was implemented in nursing education (Balantič & Fležar, 2014, pp. 2-4). Teaching methods were also applied with the aim to increase students' awareness of the importance of total work environment for the prevention of back injuries. The experimental group was, on the whole, more pleased with their education than the control group. The experimental group assessed their ability to analyse the work environment better than the control group did. Observations in some practical work-related tasks showed that students from the experimental group worked in physically more favourable positions with less strain on the body (Olendorf & Drury, 2001, pp. 1341-1367).

Ergonomics is especially important in the caregiving setting, where many patients rely on staff members for mobility (Choobineh, Movahed, Tabatabaie, & Kumashiro, 2010, pp. 74-84). Medical professionals suffer the highest work-related injury rates of all employees. To reduce injuries, caregiving institutions provide special equipment to assist employees with patient care. While these tools help, employees ultimately create a safe work environment, as reported in the blog on ergonomics in nursing (http://online.adu.edu/blog/bsn/articles/ergonomics-in-nursing/).

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), medical personnel suffer the most injuries among all US workers – with every 68 hospital workers, 107 nurses and 174 EMTs per 100,000 fulltime employees injuring themselves on the job, primarily while

maneuvering patients (Balantič & Fležar, 2004, pp. 2-4). Healthcare institutions estimate $20 billion in losses due to employee back injuries alone. As a result, the healthcare industry recognizes manual maneuvering as a risk for employees and patients. Ergonomics helps reduce workplace injuries due to physical activity. When an employee's workload is too demanding, this risk increases. Ergonomic practices and equipment decrease the impact work places on the body, preventing injuries before they occur.

Unknown physical stressors create workplace hazards. Many patients rely on healthcare workers for physically demanding mobility services. Each service a medical professional performs can potentially result in harm to the worker and patient, which increase healthcare costs due to worker absences, turnover and shortages. Caregiving facilities that implement ergonomic practices experience fewer employee injuries. Depending on the setting, caregiving facilities may provide ergonomic equipment to assist employees such as sliding boards, lateral transfer aids, transfer chairs, gait belts, full body lifts, standing and repositioning lifts, bedding modifications, geriatric chairs. The occupational safety and health administration (OSHA) demands from employers to maintain work environments that are safe for employees and patrons (SPHM, 2016). In caregiving settings, this includes providing equipment to minimize or eliminate manual patient lifting.

OSHA regulations require employers to document policies that can prevent work-related injuries. Healthcare administrators must then continually educate and monitor medical personnel regarding policies such as proper patient lifting and transfer methods. OSHA also requires caregiving facilities to implement procedures to report the first signs of work-related physical duress (Linton & van Tulder, 2001, pp. 778-787).

Workplace analysis is a tool that healthcare administrators use to identify and prevent current and future safety hazards by evaluating task duration, repetition, environment and other factors to determine if work responsibilities present injury risks to employees (Rainville, Hartigan, Martinez, Limke, Jouve, & Finno, 2004, pp. 106-115). To accomplish this, healthcare administrators observe, communicate with and poll current staff members. Administrators also review past injuries and worker compensation reports to identify chronic safety hazards (Yip, 2004, pp. 430-440).

Healthcare administrators update and teach safety procedures regularly based on their ongoing evaluations. Administrators make sure that employees receive and understand updates expeditiously and encourage feedback from staff members concerning safety issues. Basic safety policies outline leading back injury causes, risks and symptoms as well as other work-related injury hazards (Park & Shin, 2016, pp. 2761-2766). Administrators teach medical personnel how to recognize and report injuries, and as a preventative measure, encourage employees to maintain physical fitness. Ergonomic training typically includes lifting education. Administrators remind nurses not to lift patients unless they have firm footing and to keep patients close to ease lifting. Additionally, nurses should never lift patients alone, especially if a patient has fallen. Nurses should ask peers to help lift patients or use mechanical assistance and limit how many times per day they complete the task (Santaguida, 2003).

Evaluation and procedures do not make a workplace safe; it is the inclination of workers to follow safety guidelines (Choobineh, Movahed, Tabatabaie, & Kumashiro, 2010, p. 74-84). Therefore, it is important that administrators carefully plan how to train employees, especially if it is a new concept. New initiatives must begin with open

support from the top management. Before institutions install new equipment in the workplace, healthcare administrators must educate stakeholders on what purpose the device serves and how to use it, because employees that participate in the change process beforehand are more likely to support the agenda (Vural & Sutsunbuloglu, 2016, pp. 174-178). Once the new equipment is in place, administrators should measure safety improvements and reward employees for adopting the new technology. Administrators must also determine how to gather measurable safety data from the new devices.

Healthcare administrators make sure that their organizations comply with OSHA standards. These regulations, based on ergonomic principles, greatly reduce employee injuries. In the caregiving field, mechanical assistance is a key component of these principles, which also serve to increase patient safety and comfort. When accidents do occur, administrators are responsible for accurately identifying and managing injured staff members (Yip, 2004, pp. 430-440).

5 Barriers for awareness of humour needed in education for nurses

As noted in several reports, the level of awareness of humour and ergonomic topics is low in the communities most affected by it. Nurses were unaware of the consequences of untreated topics. They had poor knowledge on the connection between humour, ergonomic topics and education for them as they had not yet been coping with these issues. There are some possible explanations for this phenomenon. Curriculum for the education of nurses is (mostly) dealing with other serious health priorities. So, nurses were in conflict over the possible inference with other priority health concerns. In addition, access to health care and healthcare resources are, almost by definition, restricted and under-resourced in these areas. Together with these disparities there are the gaps perpetuated in the training of medical personnel.

Teaching in some countries tends to mimic that, in developed countries, it is unlikely to take into account differences in public, private, and primary healthcare strategies. It is crucial that medical education in developing countries is defined by the needs and services required by the majority of the people. We have recently seen, though, that the importance of integrated primary healthcare services and management of humour and ergonomic topics is gaining momentum and the artificial dichotomy between diseases is slowly receding in favour of a combined approach that will benefit all conditions (Zühlke & Engel, 2013, p. 236). Although nurses report attempts to educate patients on the causes of the importance of humour for adhering to secondary prophylaxis, patients still have very low levels of understanding humour regarding the specifics means of it. Language also plays a very important role. Therefore, nurses need to recognize the importance of performing these explanations in the local language observing cultural particularities and levels of literacy and understanding. Even complex concepts of using humour can be clearly understood, given appropriate communication strategies. Awareness of the patients' needs and cultural background should take precedence in the conversation around expectations of adherence and follow-up. It is known that nurses' explanations and the level of patients' understanding significantly affect treatment adherence, treatment outcome, and patients' satisfaction. Therefore, nurses need to be critically aware of these issues when communicating with patients in humour, select humour contents that are appropriate to the patient's level of understanding, and employ a systematic approach utilizing a variety of mechanisms (e.g. printed material, displays, videos, and discussions) to educate and improve awareness and stress motivating

principles, cultural relevance, and feasibility. The importance of education for using humour in the subtle way is emphasized, as well as utilizing lessons learned from other. The identification of key priorities a priori and setting realistic and focused goals are crucial for the success of using humour. Education for using humour in health care must be directed at all levels, and multiple channels should be used to disseminate information. Clinical care should be also addressed with the incorporation of clinical care coordination, standardized delivery methods, and case-finding activities. The primary objective of this educational program should create a simple, modular, but comprehensive model for using humour when dealing with patients and other nurses, as well. Strategic design is the key element for such successful educational health program including humour topics. To improve it in a lasting and significant way, it is critical to initiate cultural promotion strategies that are collaboratively designed, locally adapted and implemented on multiple levels and comprehensively understood. The overarching component of an effective educational health communication program, which incorporates humour topics, however, remains a powerful, well-articulated, long-term vision. This needs to reflect the core values and beliefs of the nursing team and the shared scenario for the future. It should stimulate teamwork and inspire a concerted, committed effort in creating constructive conversations around the core messages.

6   Some Proposals

As the most significant developments affecting nursing education in Slovenia regarding the use of humour, the proposals for restructuring the syllabus of health care education should have particular regard to:

- contemporary and anticipated needs of humour in health care;
- the outcomes-based approach to humour for practice;
- a sound assessment humour practice and its integration in theory;
- the nature of and standards for the training of nursing;
- positioning humour topics in relation to possible inter-syllabus subjects approaches where appropriate;
- overcoming the lack of opportunities between nurse's entry qualification for using humour and its need which is required in practice;
- stating standards of using humour topics;
- a growing emphasis on prevention, yet a great demand for therapeutic use of humour; and
- supporting nurses in enhancing the quality of witty contents.

We suggest that the educational topics for nurses might apply the contents of humour in their education to their everyday practice, contemporary syllabus does contain Sociology of Health and Illness subject, for example, which has its roots in the discipline of Sociology thus presenting an attempt to make sense of using humour. We nevertheless emphasise that the syllabus in general should pay attention to the control over the events in nursing and the learning environment, as it is preferable to consider the contribution of this subject as helping nursing students and nurses to use and interpret humour situations rather than just avoid or except them, and thus influence events occurring in the learning or in professional environment. As nurses hold a "world-view" about their professional work, the literature of Sociology of Health and Illness can help them re-evaluate and re-interpret the topics of humour and hence influence their future practice. Nurses' critical understanding of using humour implies that, during their education,

future nurses should adopt a critical approach to a range of sociological theories, identify inconsistencies and contradictions between them, and assess the quality of evidence supporting each theory and practical application in their education. Learning theories have attempted to provide explanations about learning that apply to nurses in general; however, in health care system, there are no nurses in general, because every nurse is individual and unique. At best, general approaches can provide insight into some of the phenomena that are likely to be associated with learning to use humour in their practice, but nurses as individuals should (and will) differ in the degree of using humour to which such phenomena manifest themselves.

As claimed above, the current Slovenian educational system in nursing has a number of weaknesses as for humour topics and using them in practice, it fosters the feeling of dependence and assigns them a passive role in learning and it may reduce their motivation as well as cause resentment or hostility about them. On one hand, the subject Sociology of Health and Illness does rely on the students' previous knowledge about using humour as well as on the key role of the facilitator very much. There should be a synergy attempt to capitalize on the best features of both Sociology of Health and Illness and nursing syllabus for professional training by making use of expert knowledge about using humour and in the same time, encouraging active involvement of nurses and students to learn from one another through structured interactions. Observational learning is potentially a powerful tool for nurses in practice and for students because of a wide range of applications. Therefore, we recommend problem-based learning of using humour as a strategy in teaching nursing and define it as learning that results from the nurse's process of working towards understanding the proper use of humour when dealing with patients and their relatives. In problem based learning, which (usually) starts with the problem how to use humour in dealing with patients, students and nurses have to find a proper resolution, be under intrinsic or extrinsic conditions. The adoption of humour can take some time to come to fruition as it depends on the establishment between all persons involved, their feelings and values, and the aspects considered crucial in the humanistic approach which focuses on the relationship between nurses and patients, each considered to be individuals.

7   Empirical part

Based on the theoretical foundations concerning humour and previous research into humour, and taking into account humour in nursing as the focus of our research, the study presented in this paper sets out to answer the following research questions:

Research question 1:   *What is the relationship between Slovenian nurses' level of education and their sense of humour and love of work?*

Research question 2:   *What is the frequency of the use of humour (verbal jokes) by Slovenian nurses?*

Research question 3:   *What is the frequency of the use of irony as type of humour by Slovenian nurses?*

Research question 4:   *What is the attitude of Slovenian nurses towards the need for humour at work and what is their perception of the presence of humour in nursing?*

7.1 Study participants and study design

The aim of our research was to contribute to a better understanding of the significance of humour in nursing both for the employees and for the patients. In the empirical part, we focused on the attitude of nurses towards the use of non-standard forms of humour in their work. We adopted a quantitative research design and our study was conducted in the form of a survey. The data were gathered via a questionnaire, which was administered to 350 nurses; a total of 279 questionnaries returned were suitable for further analysis. We applied the frequency distribution method (f, f%), the χ^2 test to compare the differences and Spearman rank correlation test (rho) to measure the degree of association between two ordinal variables. All analyses were carried out using SPSS. For the purpose of this paper, we report and discuss only a part of all empirical data gathered within our survey. The results of our study are presented and discussed below.

7.1.1 Research question 1

The first research question addressed the relationship between Slovenian nurses' level of education and their sense of humour and love of work. The responses by survey respondents are reported in Table 1 and Table 2 below.

Table 1
Survey participants' level of education

	Level of education	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Valid responses	Upper secondary	46	16.5
	Higher vocational college	69	24.7
	University (undergraduate)	73	26.2
	University (graduate)	91	32.6
	TOTAL	279	100.0

The acquired empirical data show a realistic picture of the education structure of nurses in Slovenian nursing.

Table 2

Spearman rank correlation coefficient – education, sense of humour and love of work

Spearman coefficient (rho)	Sense of humour	Love of work
Nurses' level of education	0.537**	0.893**

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

7.1.2 Research question 2

The second research question focused on the frequency of the use of humour (verbal jokes) by Slovenian nurses (see Table 3 for the results).

Table 3

Frequency of the use of verbal humour (verbal jokes)

Valid responses	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Never	37	13.2
Once	23	8.3
More than once	89	32.2
Often	35	12.7
Very often	95	34.4
TOTAL	279	100.0

As Table 3 shows, 13.2% of study participants have not (yet) used verbal humour (verbal jokes) and 8.3% have used it only once. Verbal humour was used more than once by nurses taking part in our survey (32.2%) and similar results were observed with nurses who stated that they have used verbal jokes often 12.7%). The highest percentage of nurses used verbal humour very often (34.4%). The mean value for this statement was 3.75 with standard deviation of 1.17.

7.1.3 Research question 3
The third research question investigated the use of irony as a type of humour by Slovenian nurses. We give the frequency and the corresponding percentages of the use of irony by Slovenian nurses in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Use of irony as a type of humour

Valid responses	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Never	150	53.7
Once	34	12.3
More than once	21	7.5
Often	64	22.9
Very often	10	3.6
TOTAL	279	100.0

So many negative responses are not surprising, and this confirms the fact that nurses have never accepted irony as a form of communication let alone as a type of humour. That is, 53.7% of all respondents in our sample stated that they had never used irony as a type of humour. 12.3% of the respondents had experienced irony only once, whereas 7.5% of them experienced irony as a type of humour more than once. Only few respondents stated that they used irony often (22.9%) or very often (3.6%). The mean value for this statement was 1.57 with standard deviation of 1.07.

7.1.4 Research question 4
The fourth research question looked at the attitude of Slovenian nurses towards the actual need for humour at work as well as their perception of the presence of humour in

nursing. As FOR the need for humour, we were interested in establishing whether nurses need humour in interaction with patients in the course of their work. The results are shown in Figure 1.
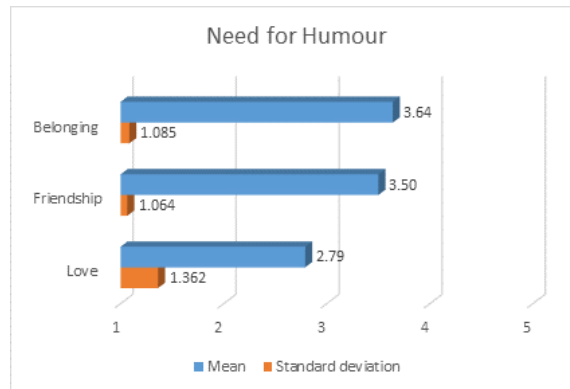

Figure 1. Need for humour by Slovenian nurses.

Regarding the need for humour during their work with patients, nurses participating in this survey showed the highest degree of agreement with the statement "belonging to the nursing profession" with 3.64. For this statement, standard deviation was 1.085, which means that the respondents' answers were relatively uniform. The second need for humour (in terms of the level of agreement) was "friendship" with the mean value of 3.5 and standard deviation of 1.064. The lowest degree of agreement regarding the need for humour at work was established for the statement "love of work". Here, the mean value was 2.79 and standard deviation was 1.362, which signifies that the responses given by the nurses were not very uniform.

In Figure 2, we show how Slovenian nurses assess the presence of humour in their professional context.
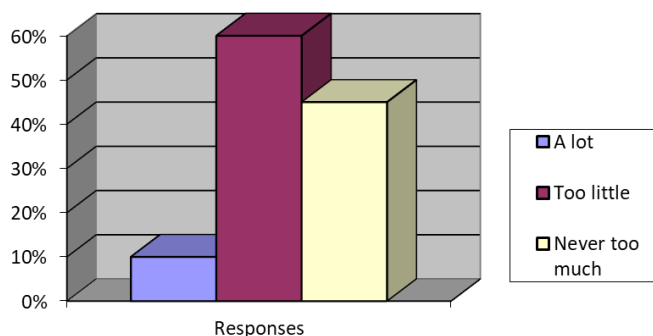

Figure 2. Assessment of the presence of humour in nursing.

The vast majority of nurses taking part in our survey indicated that there is too little humour in nursing or that there is never too much humour in nursing. Only a small percentage of nurses stated that there is a lot of humour in nursing.
Table 5 below shows the attitude of Slovenian nurses concerning the inclusion of humorous contents.

Table 5

Attitude of respondents towards the inclusion of humorous contents.

Statement	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	g	p
Humorous contents should be included in the nurse's work with patients.	279	3.31	0.741	22.617	425	<0.001

The average value regarding the agreement of the survey participants with the statement that humorous contents should be included in the nurse's work with patients was 3.31. This score was above the middle value of the four-point scale, which is 2.5. The t-test for this statement was statistically significant ($p<0.001$).
To summarize our findings presented in this paper, the following observations can be made. This study has shown that Slovenian nurses are prone to the use of humour in their work. Moreover, they welcome humour as an integral part of their work with patients. This is supported by their belief that humour also enhances their sense of belonging to the nursing profession. Slovenian nurses, as was determined by our research, acknowledge the presence of humour and the important role it plays within the context of their work. Our study has also demonstrated a clear positive link between the nurses' level of education, their sense of humour, and love of work. Despite the fact that this paper presents only a small segment of our research into humour in nursing, the findings reported here provide a valuable insight into this topic.

8   Conclusion

This study provides initial support for the need of the topics of humour as a therapeutic strategy in nurse's education. We are aware of several limitations, some of them are inherent in the investigation caused by the lack in the education of nurses. As nurses tend to see humour as healing, humour should be integrated into the educational programme that teaches health care promotion. Without the presence of sympathy and affection, nurses and patients could not define humour as emotionally supportive and caring.
The following conclusions can be also drawn from the present study. Nurses used humour to care for patients and to attain therapeutic goals. Humour elicited positive responses providing compassion and increased the patient's ability to perceive incongruity as amusing. Nurses used humour therapeutically as they perceived humour in this way, as they were conscious that humour must be perceived as kind. Nurses themselves are one of the factors that have to be considered when researching the use of humour in their work. In their interaction with patients, nurses are not only professionals,

but they also have a big social power. The needed intimacy is achieved when nurses and patients are able to take on each other's roles. Nurses have to develop their own type of humour, they have to learn how to plan it and how to recognise the need for its use on the one hand, while on the other hand, they have to be aware of the traps and dangers of using humour and how to avoid them. Nurses also strive to moderate their humour in serious situations and they try to find the balance between the needed silliness and sternness. Before using humour, nurses usually use several non-humour therapeutic communication methods, such as careful listening, touch, eye contact or appropriate verbal remarks, as they are aware of their lack of needed knowledge, as they are not trained to use humour in contacts with patients. A nurse can play with language and thus create puns and other types of verbal humour and look for double meanings in words and incongruities in everyday situations with patients and their relatives, as well. A variety of resources are available, including humorous health care journals, humour organizations, and catalogues. Many nurses believe that they need the skills of a professional comic, even if many people believe nursing is a serious business and humour will make it frivolous and undignified. Improving a nurse's sense of humour requires her active participation.

Nurses' work and tasks are related to their work with people. That is why it is important to be aware that in order to manage changes in nursing efficiently, it is necessary to focus on a person, to use human resources reasonably and efficiently, to train, motivate and develop nursing staff, to introduce modern forms of management and to aim for an efficient internal communication.

As an old saying goes, "laughter is the best medicine", and this still holds true today. It has been proven that laughter increases the supply of oxygen and the release of happiness hormones, relieves stress, reduces pain and lowers blood pressure. If laughter is the elixir of life, humour can be a medication; it can protect the body and the soul in the times of crisis. The physician and comedian Eckart von Hirschhausen (2011) is convinced that "humour helps heal". He promotes the importance of therapeutic laughter – in medicine, in the world of work, in public. Humour introduces trust into a relationship and it provides a feeling of connectedness. It is, and it can be a facilitator of social interaction. Humour is a creative way of overcoming life obstacles in general. One only needs to be aware of this and needs to use it (sensibly).

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ARTICLES

Education for Entrepreneurship – A Challenge for School Practice

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Abstract:
Introduction: Education for Entrepreneurship can be seen as one of the contemporary themes of current school and out-of-school education and has also become one of the priority topics of the European Union's education policy. In this article, we focus on the definition of entrepreneurial education and the context of the terms liminality and in-betweenness that are closely related to entrepreneurship. In the theoretical part, we focus on broader context and complexity of entrepreneurial education and characterize the competence as a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship (Malach, 2008). All defined terms are related to the implementation of entrepreneurial education in the process of school education.

Purpose: The aim of the article is to analyse the ways and methods of applying the main ideas of entrepreneurial education in school education. We concentrated on finding the context and characteristics of innovative methods and strategies through which the objectives of entrepreneurial education are achieved.

Methods: To describe and understand the phenomenon of entrepreneurial education, the qualitative content analysis of the examples of good practices was used in this article. We developed codes in relation to the causes, conditions, opportunities and environment of entrepreneurial education.

Conclusions: The aim was to determine the degree of implementation of entrepreneurial education/skills in the learning process in schools.

By using the Content Analysis method, we determined the following questions:

1. What is entrepreneurial education?
2. What are the aims of education for entrepreneurship?
3. Why do we learn entrepreneurship?
4. Who and where teaches entrepreneurship?
5. How to learn entrepreneurship?

Four main categories have been identified for the analysis of the complex concept of entrepreneurial education:

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Category 1: The roles of teachers and pupils in entrepreneurial education
Category 2: Teaching methods and activities of pupils
Category 3: The diversity of the aims of entrepreneurial education
Category 4: Competences for entrepreneurship
At the end of the article, we summarize the content analysis of the phenomenon of entrepreneurial education. There is a complexity of issues, goals, methods and social relationships that lead pupils/people to qualitative transmissions for/to create an excellent life. It involves preparing the pupil for practical everyday life, developing self-efficacy, self-confidence, independence, and support for critical thinking, flexibility, creativity, risk taking and problem-solving abilities.
In addition, we provide an overview of inspirational methods and effective strategies used by entrepreneurs in entrepreneurial education. Given that entrepreneurial education is a comprehensive discipline, a sufficient team of people needs to be provided to put its ideas into practice. In this education, both the whole society and individuals such as teachers, social educators, parents, family, pupils/students, environment outside school, inside school/class find the place and purpose. The KEY TOPICS to turn ideas of entrepreneurial education into action are discussed in the conclusion of the article.

Key words: entrepreneurship, education, activating methods, self-regulated learning, intercultural understanding.

1   Introduction

Education for Entrepreneurship can be seen as one of the contemporary themes of current school and out-of-school education and has also become one of the priority topics of the European Union's education policy. The concept of entrepreneurship is not always understood correctly in Czech or Slovak terminology, and is often confused with the concept of business. How can we define entrepreneurship then? According to the definition of the European Union, entrepreneurship is the ability of an individual to translate ideas into practice, which includes creativity, innovation, sense of initiative and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects with the aim of achieving certain results (The Council of the European Union, 2015). In the context of the development of an advanced European society, it is a development of key competences to promote economic and social welfare and to increase employability. Entrepreneurship education is about enabling young people to develop the skills they need for life and work. These crucial skills are teachable and must be integrated into educational subjects at all levels. It is the development of key competences to support economic and social prosperity and skills supporting "employability" (European Commission, EUR-Lex).
According to Malach (2007), the main objective is to change attitudes towards entrepreneurship and all social, commercial and political aspects, especially in East European post-communist economic systems. Entrepreneurship of an individual who can convert ideas into practice is creative, innovative, able to take risks, plan and manage projects to achieve certain goals, is and will be beneficial to him/herself in his/her everyday life, at home and in/for the society. Entrepreneurship allows to seize opportunities and is a good foundation for entrepreneurs who are heading into the education field or are engaged in social business.

2   Theoretical background

"Developing entrepreneurship is closely linked to the educational content of several educational areas, the key competencies and cross-curricular themes. Entrepreneurial education aims to help pupils become familiar with the labour market, the economic and business sector, effectively communicate and solve problems and efficient use of ICT and foreign languages. As a result, educating future entrepreneurs should contribute to reducing unemployment and increasing the competitiveness of the Czech Republic.

Young people can build confidence in their abilities and become entrepreneurs in the future, which is also the result of a variety of entrepreneurial activities carried out through education. Activities in the context of entrepreneurship education are the real tools for developing skills in other subjects. Education enables future employees to be more successful as a result of understanding the activities of small businesses and the problems of their managers. Entrepreneurs are found in all occupations and career groups. Opportunities for pursuing entrepreneurship education are important at all levels of education. Entrepreneurship education starts with teaching children at primary level schools and ends with the development of the skills of existing entrepreneurs (Marešová et al., 2014).

Malach (2008) sees the key goal of education for entrepreneurship in shaping the complex key competence "Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship", with its structure reflected in the following scheme.
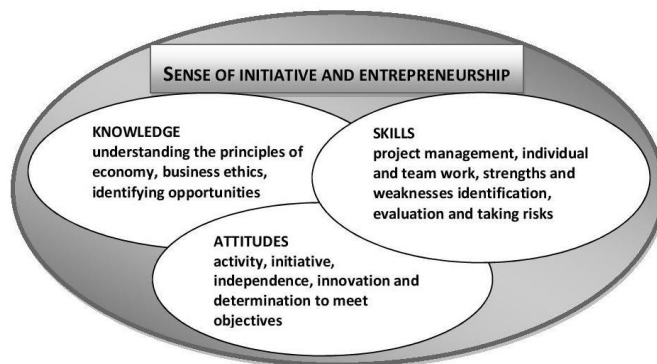

Figure 1.   Structure of Key Competence "Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship" (Malach, 2008, p. 42).

2.1 Liminality and in-betweenness in entrepreneurial education

In addition to entrepreneurship, liminality is another significant concept, which is very closely related to entrepreneurship. We understand liminality as a situation where the individual is at the threshold of new opportunities. The word liminality originally comes from Latin and could be translated as "threshold". The concept is the topic from various disciplines: Anthropology, Urban Design, Urbanism or Culture Geography. Arnold van Gennep (1997) introduced the concept of "liminality" to describe the time in which people are on the threshold of entering a new phase in their lives, leaving the previous one behind. Ceremonies marking this transition allow people to experience this liminal phase, losing and then recreating their identity. Rites of passage or transition states

between two periods or worlds are logically linked to the concept of boundaries (or threshold).

How to work with liminality in education? We need to use the interdisciplinary content of the concept and to implement it in subjects in school teaching (art, geography, biology, history, economics etc.), also in the course of teaching, we have to point out the potential of rituals and transition stages. Through activating and non-traditional didactic means, we must show the pupils a way to gain new social status, step out of anonymity, help them overcome barriers and make them leave the comfort zone.

The liminality concept is also related to the in-betweenness of liminality. How to explain the in-betweenness then? We can approach this term from various points of view. Primarily, it is connected to liminality and we can talk about space for expectations, transformation, motion and adaptation. The creation of future is based on reflection on current state which is a starting point of change (Goins, 2013).

Waiting for a change is one of the main terms. Important phases of individuals' lives are connected to common social rituals (baptism, first birthday, first day of school, transition to lower-secondary level of school, first job). Mobility – the decision and moving to change is another key concept. We can talk about the inner and outer mobility of a human. In case of the inner mobility, there is a fluid phase (treshold) between two important landmarks – see liminality in an anthropological sense (Gulbrandsen, 2005). In case of the outer mobility, we follow the motion of people among environments or in geographical space – see liminality in the urbanism and cultural geography (Franks & Meteyard, 2007). It is necessary to accept the change and create a new reality after the change. Among the life's phases that are bordered with the rituals or situations and experiences, an individual moves into a semi-space or inter-phase that is filled with expectations and images of upcoming events. This requires the individual's active participation on the presumed qualitative change.

In-betweenness of liminality and education? In order to understand the transitions and related situations, it is necessary to intervene to benefit the individual (a chid as well as an adult). It is primarily about helping children in the puberty phase when they search for their own place in society and the meaning of life.

- Creating a positive school climate and atmosphere.
- Supporting self-management, individual personal development, self-efficacy, soft skills.
- Working with gifted pupils and pupils with other special needs.

2.2 Ideas and opportunities for education
- Help for young people to find the best position in society/community.
- Share inspirational ideas and experiences from parents and other people, a between-generation transfer.
- Show children and young people the best way to a successful life.
- Work with dreams, imaginations, and self-reflection.
- Help to be resilient and confident.

3   Methodology and research objectives

The method for research on text materials can be chosen based on various criteria. In this research, we chose the method of content analysis. The method can be viewed from the perspective of a quantitative method of observation (Kerlinger, 1972, pp. 528-532), as

well as a method of a qualitative design. Qualitative methods are used to focus on for example the frequency of occurrence of words, or topics in particular written documents and their length. Other methods try to determine for instance clarity, difficulty, value orientation, intensity (emotional stress), or semantic differences. In terms of qualitative research coding, it is possible to use the analysis of the word, clause or sentence as mentioned by Strauss and Corbin (1999, pp. 58-69). Furthermore, in academic sources, several types of content analysis are distinguished according to the approach to the research area. Blaumeiser (1996), according to Mayring, determines the following:

- Explicit content analyses illustrate misunderstood places in the text and paraphrases using other sources (dictionaries, supplementary texts, speaker backgrounds).
- Comprehensive content analyses reduce the data set to smaller text sections (short summaries – brief content, categorization, generalization).
- Structured content analyses abstract aspects and types in the research material as a whole (key concepts, categories, coding rules).

The selected research method was a structured content analysis (Kerlinger, 1972; Mayring, 1993; Gavora, 2010).

Kerlinger (1972, pp. 528-532) mentions other aspects of content analysis, including research material specifications, which may be either a commonly available text material or a material created for research purposes. In this case, we used the set of 20 good practice examples of the Liminality and educational entrepreneurship (LEEN) project, for more information see www.l33n.eu.

The materials under investigation are:

- Entrepreneurship Education at School in Europe by Eurydice (2016);
- The construction of social concept of entrepreneurial education (Malach, 2007);
- Good practices of the LEEN project.

The aim was to determine the degree of implementation of entrepreneurial education/skills into the learning process in schools.

Using the content analysis method, we determined the following questions:

1. What is entrepreneurial education?
2. What are the aims of education for entrepreneurship?
3. Why do we learn entrepreneurship?
4. Who and where teaches entrepreneurship?
5. How to learn entrepreneurship?

Through the content analysis, we have identified the following categories:

Category 1: The roles of the teacher and pupils
The teacher should be positive, and he/she should involve the pupils/students in the project through motivation. The teacher's role in the process of implementing entrepreneurial education has changed, though. Teachers, in accordance with the modern concept of teaching, have become pupils' counsellors and activity coordinators, through which pupils learn not only autonomy but also teamwork, responsibility, develop their ability to flexibly respond to problems. Through entrepreneurial education activities, pupils also develop communicative, decision-making skills and functional literacy. They are encouraged to be able to take the necessary risk and try to find the optimal solution in situations where they do not do the way they expected.

Table 1

Changing the role of teacher and pupil

The teacher's roles	The pupil's roles
Coach for pupils/students' supervisor, co-organizer	Learner
	Problem solver
Facilitator, communicator observer	Communicator, debater
Leader of the pupils/students	Team leader
Activity coordinator and class manager	Team member
Creator of positive school and class climate/learning environment	

Teachers who teach in the examples of good practice use innovative learning forms and methods. They try to creatively prepare a learning environment and create a positive atmosphere throughout the classroom/group so that pupils are motivated to take part in entrepreneurial education activities. See tab. 2 and 3.

Category 2: Teaching methods and activities of pupils
In the examples of good practice, teachers used progressive teaching methods and strategies. They are encouraged by pupils' ability to apply ideas to practice through creativity development, using opportunities and risk-taking. It is also important to have contact with various organizations outside the school and have them involved in school projects.

Table 2

Teaching methods and strategies used by teachers and pupils' activities in entrepreneurial education

Progressive teaching methods	Pupils' activities
experiential learning	Inquiry, individual work
Experiment	Problem solving exercises
Critical thinking	Working with information, Developing critical thinking
Brainstorming	Problem thinking
Integrated learning/teaching, transfer and interdisciplinary linking (CLIL)	Complex understanding Group work Working in and for multidisciplinary teams
Project method	Create project frameworks (work plan, Suitable materials and schedule/time management/task distribution, project work, project evaluation) Establishing fictitious companies Planning and project management in order to achieve goals Collaboration, cooperate within the team Making own ideas relevant to the team Team leadership

	Finding innovative solutions for specific issues
	Being resilient
	Learning from mistakes and failures

Entrepreneurial education is also related to the 21st Century Skills (also 21 CS), which can be an inspiration for designing a progressive design of the learning environment that supports the development of the necessary competencies (for example, Wagner, 2008; Hanover Research, 2011; Neumajer, 2014; Jůvová et al., 2015; Jůvová, 2017). "It is a set of such cognitive skills and soft skills that allow individuals to react flexibly and promptly to the more difficult, substandard or critical situations that may occur in their life" (Jůvová et al., 2015).

Entreprise skills overlap with the Key Competencies identified by the Mayer Committee (retrieved from: http://www.slideshare.net/gwsis/key-learning-21st-century-skills)

- Accepting responsibility.
- Communicating.
- Initiating ideas.
- Negotiating for successful outcomes.
- Planning activities.
- Taking and managing risk.
- Being flexible.
- Evaluation own and others' performance.
- Making decisions.
- Organising and managing resources.
- Solving problems.
- Thinking creatively.

Category 3: The diversity of the aims of the entrepreneurial education
In the analysis of Entrepreneurship Education at School in Europe by Eurydice (2016), the construction of the social concept of entrepreneurial education (Malach, 2007) and the LEEN project of examples of good practice, we identified the aims of entrepreneurial education. In addition to general goals, such as "development of creativity, use of opportunities, critical thinking", which are a prerequisite for achieving entrepreneurial education-specific goals, we can also identify goals with a specific relationship to entrepreneurship education, such as "innovation and risk taking, planning and managing projects to achieve certain goals, finding an innovative solution for the specific case or combining knowledge of care & technology", see tab. 4. From this diversity it is clear that the concept of entrepreneurial education from the point of view of teachers requires a thorough knowledge of the subject, openness to innovative teaching practices, and flexibility in dealing with non-traditional situations.

Table 3

Diversity of entrepreneurial education

General objectives	Objectives specific to entrepreneurial education
Development of creativity	Innovation and risk taking
critical thinking	Plan and manage projects in order to achieve certain goals
Find a focus in dialogue with each other	Find an innovative solution for the specific case
Learn to make good decisions	Combine knowledge of care & technology
comparison of the information	Strengthen the ability of pupils to convert ideas into practice
Flexibility	Use of opportunities
	Understand the complexity of the work
	Have contact with more organizations outside the school

Category 4: Competences for entrepreneurship
In the analysed examples of good practice, we identified the activities of pupils that contributed to the development of competences that can be considered as fundamental in entrepreneurial education, see table 5.

Table 4

The development of competencies for entrepreneurial education

Competence	Pupils' activities
Communication	Controlled discussion and dialogue
	Argumentation and discussing
	"Expert" talking (likes Oxbridge debates)
	Discuss new ideas
	Creative writing and drawing
	Find the goal in the collective dialogue
	Exchange of experiences
	Enforcing own ideas in a group
Decision	Learn to make right decisions
	Using opportunities and risk-taking
	Distribution of assignments
Collaboration	Learn from each other
	Cooperative problem solving
	Learn together as a team
	Experience exchange
Self-development	Self-evaluation, self-reflection

4   Phenomenon of entrepreneurial education

To describe and understand the phenomenon of entrepreneurial education, we needed the qualitative content analysis of the examples of good practice. We developed codes in relation to the causes, conditions, opportunities and environment of entrepreneurial education.

We asked the following questions:

WHAT is entrepreneurial education?

There is a complexity of issues, goals, methods and social relationships that lead pupils/people to qualitative transmissions for/to create an excellent life. The life is unique for everyone - people need to respect freedom, autonomy, individuality, cultural capital and right to find their own way. It is a very important part of the lifelong learning/education.

WHY to teach/learn entrepreneurial education?

It involves preparing the pupil for practical everyday life, developing self-efficacy, self-confidence, independence and support for critical thinking, flexibility, creativity, risk taking and problem-solving abilities.

-   To be successful in the competition at the market.
-   To develop social relations.
-   To improve/make better the competitiveness on the labour market.
-   To find life's stability, confidence in/for future. To find stability in life and trust in the future.
-   To have more opportunities for own independent work.

How to teach (about)/learn entrepreneurial education?

The teachers use attractive, non-traditional and active teaching methods and effective strategies (simulations, role play, brainstorming, creative writing, graphics, storytelling, self-regulated learning, enquiry, experiment). For support of pupils, they also need career counselling for pupils, help in making decisions about profession, tutoring, mentoring, coaching, support and supervision. For the development of entrepreneurial competence, financial literacy and soft skills, modern technologies and learning tools (ICT, social networks, edu-clips, MOOC, see www.l33n.eu) are used. Teachers try to find and use the institutional memory and knowledge and experience of excellent top management, progressive leaders and seniors. Inspiring personalities could also be used in the narrative autobiographies.

-   Through attractive, progressive and activation methods.
-   Use valid strategies of professional help for pupils, benefit from the decision of choosing the profession, mentoring and coaching.
-   Developing entrepreneurial competence, financial literacy and soft skills, by using modern technologies (ICT, social networking, EduClips, MOOC).
-   Develop the 21st century skills.
-   Use knowledge and experience of professional managers, progressive leaders and seniors through institutional memory.
-   Use narrative autobiographies of inspiring people.

WHO and WHERE teach/learn entrepreneurial education?

Given that entrepreneurial education is a comprehensive discipline, a sufficient team of people needs to be provided to put its ideas into practice. In this education, both the whole society and individuals such as teachers, social educators, parents, family, pupils/students, environment outside school, inside school/class find the place and

purpose. Environment in/outside the school also plays a key role. Teacher should have a positive attitude, motivate pupils to learn and be part of the learning process. There are several KEY TOPICS to turn ideas into action (see tab. 5):

Table 5

Several KEY TOPICS to turn ideas into action

Entrepreneurship as a key competence	The transformed knowledge into life skills by implementing the ideas. Experience in the 21st Century Answer to real life situations. Innovative thinking Solve problems to give solutions Adapt the results Team Work spirit
Implementation ideas from theory to practice	To turn ideas into action Implementation theory/ideas of one of their solutions Integrate their ideas into their daily lives Lecturer is the coach and supports the learners
Initiative and creativity, entrepreneurial spirit	Alternative conceptions, ideas or experiences Collaboration and communication among each other Organize workshops - content of workshops, organization, finance, communication To create a real-life situation
Seize opportunities, risk taking	To organize their work in terms of content, time control, preparation, team work, creativity and imagination
Project planning and managing oneself	Organized training firms to focus on the different talents of entrepreneurship: creativity, working together, Being innovative, independent, assertive, dealing with stress, flexible, etc. To communicate well to start collaboration
Self-efficacy development	Environmental protection classes

The teacher's role	Teacher's role is one of a mediator, a facilitator who is providing assistance and guidance
	The teacher is managing the activity of the students
	The teacher is just a coordinator, a facilitator, a coach, a guiding helper, manager of the project
	Gives feedback
	The teacher should be innovative, dynamic, communicative and critical
	Should explore different ways of teaching through experiences, simulations, researches in order to develop critical thinking, reflection but also creativity and curiosity for learning.
	The tutor explains to the students the real economy process and stimulates Entrepreneurship in Education (Primary School).
	To create a real-life situation
	Work together

5 Conclusion

A teacher is a mediator, a facilitator who is providing assistance and guidance. Teachers are managing the activity of the students, they are just co-ordinators, facilitators, coaches, guiding helpers. They give feedback and correct pupils. Teachers should be innovative, dynamic, communicative and critical, should explore different ways of teaching by experience and simulations in order to develop critical thinking, reflection but also creativity and curiosity for learning. The teacher as a tutor explains to the pupils the real economy process and create situations like in real life.

How would you describe the learner's role? Learners are managing their own business, organizing the entire activity, cooperating with other learners, coming up with different ideas. They are seeking for the solutions and they are trying to do it. They should be active and critical. They are concentrated, pay attention to the problems, participate and study hard. Pupils try to share their experience and answer the questions, choose the strategy they will develop. School gives feedback on pupils' work, evaluate them, and introduce pupils to the world to create change. "Clear guidelines are important in order for teachers to have a common understanding of what methods are appropriate for entrepreneurial education and which methods will most effectively contribute to the successful teaching". (EURYDICE, 2016)

The entrepreneurial education is the way to the valuable and full-fledged life that presents a chance for the next generation. Entrepreneurship is based on a set of knowledge, skills and attitudes of a personality – a quality individual who is successfully employed on the labour market, able to build and defend his / her position in society and

is satisfied in personal and family life. This is, among other things, also the task of today's modern school.

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Pupils' Questions in Dialogic Teaching from the Perspective of Pedagogical Research

*Hana Lukášová – Marie Pavelková**

Abstract:
Introduction: In our conditions and in the world, there is a tradition of the sequence of sequential communication exchanges in the interaction of a teacher and pupils, which was examined in the analysis of the processes and structures in educational communication. This tradition can be continued from the perspective of research at the 1st stage of elementary school education.
Purpose: The aim of the study is to present the findings of a research on the issues of pupils' questions. The research question is whether the existing results of educational research on the educational interaction and teacher-student communication in the educational process at the first stage of elementary schools also capture the characteristics of pupils' questions. We will investigate the perception of dialogic teaching and pupils' question in educational research. The sequence of sequential communication exchanges in the interaction between teachers and pupils, which was examined in the analysis of the processes and structures of educational communication, has in our country and in the world a tradition which can be followed in terms of research on teaching at the first stage of primary schools. One of the aspects of research on the interaction and communication in the classroom are the views of teachers who are discovering what a learner knows, and what he/she thinks about the communicated content and curriculum. But we are mainly interested in the results of educational research from the perspective of the pupil and his/her questions in the classroom.
Methods: In our research, our intention was to analyse pupils' questions which are to supplement their knowledge, or to find out more information that would help them deal with learning tasks. We were interested in previous investigations and were seeking for clarification whether the pupils' questions are inconsistent, which would reveal misconceptions and wrong ideas in the understanding of the teaching content.
Conclusions: The most frequently, pupils' answer to the teacher's questions were detected. The conclusions show the current results of pedagogical research in the context of dialogic teaching, they do not capture the characteristics of pupils' questions in teaching at the 1st grade of elementary schools.

Key words: dialogue in education, educational research, pupils' questions, pupils' participation.

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1   Introduction

In the introduction of our paper, we will describe the views on pupils' questions in selected pedagogical research.   The studies that were selected correspond with the position of a pupil's questions in the teaching dialogue. Pupils' questions can never stand alone in pedagogical research because it is logical that a pupil's question is a part of a communicative interaction with the pupil's participation in the pedagogical communication (Šeďová, Sedláček, Švaříček, & Šalamounová, 2014; Šeďová & Sedláček, 2015; Šeďová, 2015; Šeďová, Sucháček & Majcík, 2015; Navrátilová, 2017). In general, we can state that pupil's questions are being omitted in current scientific discourse based on F. Tůma's overview study (2014), which we would like to extend by our overview study, critically analyses of 21 studies published in the span of 1990 - 2012. The author selected the main thoughts of the studies in his overview: communication in the form of a dialogue in education – a majority of scientific studies from the selection focused on teachers' questions, their evaluation and the following questions from pupils. The author presents dialogism from the view of the differences in the approaches to the character of interaction between the speaker and the role of the context. The author presents his finding that six of 13 selected empirical studies analysed focused on one stage of the IRF structure only. Simply put, communication exchanges initiated by teachers predominate in education, which is why the author reflected on whether it is advisable to consider such studies as examples corresponding to the dialogic structure. For our purposes, it means that when there is a one-way IRF structure[1], there is no space for a pupil to ask questions. In the overall evaluation, the author states that in the period examined (1990-2012), it is possible to derive from the analysis of those studies that monologism[2] prevails. This is where Tůma entwines his overview with Mareš's overview (1990) and states that the author's criticism points to the absence of searching for a wider context and relations in communication, and that here is a segmentation of activities into disjunctive categories – at least prior to 1989, but continuing to some extent in years 1990 2012.

Jiří Mareš (2016), in his extensive overview, reflects on the pedagogical research on interaction and teacher – pupil communication in education in the period from 1968 to 2015. Similarly, he discusses such communication structures as IRF/IRE[3] and tries to view the development of the mentioned structures as it changes in time. Nathan, Eilam and Kim (as cited in Mareš, 2016) showed that the communicative structure changes remarkably during education focused on collective problem solving with the

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[1] It is a communication based on the IRF structure - teacher initiation - student replica – pupil feedback from teacher (initiation-reaction-follow-up), see Mareš (2016).

[2] An individual is the key unit for a monologue. The individual is viewed through a coupling metaphor, which implies understanding the interaction as a one-way process. Simply put, a passive role of the listener is assumed here (Tůma, 2016).

[3] The IRF structure is perceived as an initiation performed by the teacher - pupil replica - teacher feedback for the pupil. Communicative exchanges that the teacher initiates prevail (Mareš, 2016). IRE stands for initiation – response – evaluation. Further, Mehan (1979, as cited in Mareš, 2016) developed I - initiation, he distinguished between: directive initiation; informative initiation; the choice of the pupil the teacher calls upon; product elicitation; process elicitation; metaprocess elicitation. R, i.e. pupil's replies – reaction, acceptance of something, choice of possible answers; process of responding, metaprocess of responding and non-reacting to teacher initiation. The author points out that the key role in this structure is primarily played by E, i.e. the way of evaluation.

participation of both the pupils and the teacher. Here, the middle part of the IRE structure transforms into D (demonstration); the teacher establishing the problem motivates some pupils to express themselves more extensively, initiates a process in which they demonstrate their way of thinking. According to the above group of authors, the new structure IDE arises (initiation - demonstration - evaluation). The pupils have enough space to express their views (demonstration) and to discuss them with the teacher (evaluation). From our researcher's view, there can be a space for a pupil's need to ask questions. It is especially about breaking the traditional IRF structure, and as Šeďová and Sedláček (2015) state in their research, in dialogic education it is necessary to give pupils space for frequent and long responses. For our purposes, the following authors' finding is very important, "Our analysis proves that if there are shifts in the communicative behaviour of pupils, it is caused by shifts in the teacher's behaviour" (Šedová & Sedláček, 2015, p. 53).

2 Teacher and Pupils in Dialogue

In her research, Šeďová (2015) also focused on the position of a pupil's question in the education process from the point of view of power in an educational dialogue. She argues that power in a classroom is not automatically attributed to a teacher because a pupil can influence other pupils' behaviour as well. Preference of power in educational communication leads to shifting the dominance between the teacher and pupils in the way that both groups pursue their goals. Samuhelová (as cited in Mareš 2016) states that on the basis of the relationship of dominance and subordination, the direction of communication can also be vertical (downwards, upwards). The author presents her empirical research, a study in which she identifies 18 communication structures on the basis of an analysis of 22 classes at the second stage of elementary schools (meaning from the 6th to the 9th grade of elementary school in the Czech educational system). The most frequently occurring structures were: a) a two-way vertical communication structure during which there is a dialogue between the teacher and a pupil, including feedback, b) a one-way vertical structure between the teacher and a group or the whole class without feedback and c) a one-way vertical structure in which the teacher addresses a particular pupil but there is no feedback from him/her. For our purposes, the two-way vertical communication structure is important as there is a space for pupils' questions. Švaříček, Šeďová and Šalamounová (2012) extend that two-way communication structure by mentioning the pupils' productive involvement in the communication in education, which basically means that pupils speak aloud, teachers listen to them and answer their questions; similarly, pupils ask questions themselves and comment on others' reactions, speak about things or comment on the results of their work. The team of authors Šeďová, Švaříček and Šalamounová (2012) from the Department of Educational Sciences at the Faculty of Arts at Masaryk University published a book in which they elaborated and presented their original research which included long-term observations and video recordings of classes at the second stage of elementary schools. It is concerned with the nature of both teachers' and pupils' questions. Here, we present a typology which is crucial for our overview. The authors specify pupils' questions by trying to answer the following questions about the context in which the questions were asked:

1. Finding out necessary information, or "need to know" questions. A pupil called *Mark asks: What is the pronunciation of this name?*
2. Questions out of curiosity, or "I'd like to know" questions. *Mark asks: Did you buy it for your own money?*
3. "I don't understand" questions or questions requiring explanation, i.e. in the words of the authors, autonomous questions, when the question seeks details of a problem. *Adeleide asks: Was it indecent or what?*
4. Polemic about a problem is expressed by questions like "Isn't it different", or by confrontation with the understanding. *Tony asks: Miss, is "What have I not seen in my life" the first sentence?* (Švaříček, Šeďová, & Šalamounová, 2012, p. 148).

Those types of pupil's questions are perceived by the authors as the most frequently asked questions in the teacher-pupil educational dialogue at the second stage of elementary schools. Asking questions is also connected to a pupil's willingness and desire to ask questions. In this field, Šeďová and Šalamounová (2016) present the so-called Pygmalion effect, in which teachers in some way notice the pupils' characteristics and draw conclusions regarding their abilities, further, on the basis of such a subjective conclusion, they then lead pupils by asking them more difficult or, on the contrary, more trivial questions. For the pupils, it is basically a definition of themselves; they accept such definitions as their own and they adjust their behaviour accordingly. Other researches react to this situation (Šeďová & Sedláček, 2015; Šeďová & Šalamounová, 2016) and specify that patterns of pupils' participation are influenced by the teacher's evaluation and a subsequent teacher's reaction to a remarkable extent. In fact, such an evaluation is basically a label. The authors suggest that if we want to avoid labelling[4] and making a particular pupil's label a reality, it is easier to engage all pupils in the class in communication, even those whom we perceive as weak. According to the authors, the results prove that pupils engage in communication primarily via their teacher's question (2 pupils in the case of Šeďová and Šalamounová's research (2015)) which is a typical way of pupil participation. From this finding, we can derive a conclusion that there is a lack of space for communication offering pupils' an opportunity to ask questions. The results also show that a pupil's participation is a product of social interactions[5] and we can see that even weak pupils can participate adequately and become involved in a difficult and cognitively demanding discussion. We can see a match in the research by Šeďová and Šalamounová (2016) and Šeďová and Sedláček (2015), who argue that when teachers ask any type of questions, the mechanism of their treatment of pupils' responses stays similar. In addition, the analysis by Sedláček and Šalamounová (2015) demonstrated that the presumption, "If pupils are supposed to talk a lot, the teacher has to ask a lot" is not valid. The real situation is described by Šeďová, Šalamounová and Švaříček (2014), which present the results of their research, where it is clear that the Czech teachers are trying to teach in accordance with the principles of dialogical teaching, they use dialogic activities, but the real dialogical form at the second grade of

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[4] Labelling is described as an indication of the pupil's behaviour, and the pupil fixes that designation for that type.
[5] While it is certain that the importance of pupils' attributes such as shyness or assertiveness cannot be underestimated.

elementary schools appears only sporadically (Šeďová, Šalamounová, & Švaříček, 2014, p. 283).

3   The actual presence of dialogic and participative education in pedagogical interaction and communication

Dialogic education is a type of education which is about a mutual exchange of communication sequences between a teacher and a pupil. The position of dialogic education is clearly explained by Mortimer and Scott (2003, as cited in Lehesvuori & Viiri, 2015) as a dimension of educational communication: interactive vs. non-interactive, authoritative vs. dialogic. Empirically-based pedagogical research (Lehesvuori & Viiri, 2015; Šeďová, 2017) state that the goal of dialogic education is to make it possible for pupils to express their thoughts beyond gathering and memorizing facts: it is not primarily about pupils speaking more often or for longer, but is rather about them taking the initiative and being autonomous in education. Authors view dialogic education as participation of those involved in the process of education because, as Šeďová and Šalamounová (2016) state, participation is based on the sociocultural theory presented primarily by Vygotsky (1976, as cited in Šeďová & Šalamounová, 2016) while each psychological function appears twice in a child's development:

1) on the social level - interaction with other people; and

2) later, on the individual level – internalization of psychological processes. The authors lean towards the term commognition[6] as an emphasis on the inseparability of these two terms. In his overview, Mareš (2014) focused on the interaction in communication as well. He characterizes it as a dialogically interactive approach (D/I): a teacher brings about a discussion which makes him or her an initiator, pupils present their own opinions and life experiences, the teacher does not evaluate their opinions and he or she only moderates them[7] (Mareš, 2016, p. 275). Šeďová and Šalamounová (2016) state in their research that there is a complementary assumption that various degrees of participation are evoked by the interacting behaviour of the teacher, and, further, that they present a proportionality of pupils' engagement in education. They state that successful pupils engage more in education, or rather speak more often, but they emphasize that it is caused by the fact that these children raise their hand more often. We can present their finding as an often-criticized direct proportion, such as, "If a pupil raises his or her hand more often, the teacher calls on him or her more often". If we focus on the balance in the participation of both groups, there is also a direct relationship, "In case of a pupil's incorrect answer, the teacher is more likely to criticize the unsuccessful pupil". The authors interpret the results as follows: teachers, apparently unintentionally, encourage actively the participation of mainly those pupils on which they place high expectations.

We can approach operationalization from the aspect of pupils as a component of dialogic education, with a focus their engagement in a form of participation in the educational communication (Šeďová & Sedláček, 2015). The authors say that the level of a pupil's

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[6] The term commognition originated as a composite of communication and cognition.

[7] Mareš (2016) mentions Scott (2006) as the author of this approach, who described it as IR-P-R-P, where P means insinuating, signalling (prompting).

focused participation[8] in education can be increased by a directed employment of the components of dialogic education. This approach was also investigated by Mueller, Yankelewitz and Maher (2014), who point out the need for developing the awareness of situations in the classroom which support discussions about the teacher's role in the classroom. In their study, the authors analyse and discuss specific teacher approaches which lead to the creation of conditions for pupils and teachers in which they constructed mathematical methods together. The research showed that creating favourable conditions supports thoughtful education in Mathematics. The activity includes a combination of the following:

a) active pupils;
b) observant and involved teachers who pay attention to the development of their attitudes towards pupils and their development;
c) suitable and creative tasks which encourage pupils to widen their knowledge about how they can build their results;
d) pupils' cooperation which enables an exchange of ideas, and
e) creating a respectful climate and welcoming pupils' ideas, discussion and finding alternative ways of work.

Under such conditions, even young children can develop trust in their ability to solve problems and create arguments for solving tasks (Yackel & Hanna, 2003 as cited in Mueller, Yankelewitz, & Maher, 2014). Another point of view is presented by Rojas-Drummod et al. (2016, p. 46), which find it preferable not to use bound or confined queries for a productive dialogue, but to provide extensive possibilities for reasoning. The study by Norenes and Ludvigsen (2016) features a research that focused on Wiki computer programs and encouraging verbal interaction between pupils and teachers. The authors discuss that day-to-day technology can serve as a means of transforming discourse and student involvement into dialogue, and the teacher deliberately creates this dialogue (Norenes & Ludvigsen, 2016, p. 68).

4   Research questions and methodology

Our intention is to critically evaluate the results of pedagogical research in the studies which were focused on dialogic education research and pupil participation in the education at the second stage of elementary schools, and also to find out how the studies could inspire the pedagogical research of pupils' questions in dialogic and participative education in elementary education.

Research questions:

1. Do the current results of pedagogical research in the context of dialogic and participative education capture the characteristics of pupils' questions as well?
2. In what way is dialogic and participative education understood in pedagogical research and can we use the mentioned characteristics for an analysis of education at the first stage of elementary school?
3. Which classes have been involved in the research on dialogic and participative education up to now?

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[8] In the above-mentioned research, the participation was operationalized as 1) class time which pupils use for discourse; 2) the opportunity of pupils to elaborate discourses; 3) the triadic interaction, namely the communication among more agents than one pupil and a teacher.

We selected Mareš's (2013, p. 432) taxonomy, which can help us to create an overview of scientific studies, gather, sort and evaluate the results of up-to-date efforts in research on dialogic education. We intend to answer our research questions in this study. On the basis of the studies listed in the overview, we will then propose how the findings about the appearance of pupils' question might be used in our research methods and for the selection of a research sample in the future.

We will choose scientific studies concerned with dialogic and participative education in the context of pedagogic interaction and teacher-pupil communication. Tůma's (2014) overview analysing research in this field from 1990 to 2012 will be crucial for us. We would like to extend this study in a way that we will respect previous findings regarding pupils' questions in education from 2013 to 2016. In our overview study, we will include the analysis of findings from the studies reviewed in scientific magazines, especially Pedagogická orientace, Pedagogika and Orbis Scholae and also the scientific magazine Studia paedagogica. The crucial criterion in the selection was the thematic connection of dialogic education and pedagogic research, which we realized by manual selection and selection of studies, whose title contained the following key words: dialogue, questions, interactions, communication and participation in education. A high quality of the scientific studies reviewed in these magazines and the fact that they are indexed in international databases (Scopus, ERIH)[9] was also an important factor for us. The actual selection of scientific magazines emerged from the finding that, in 2012, the group of authors Švaříček, Šeďová and Šalamounová from the University in Brno published a book Komunikace ve školní třídě (Communication in classroom) and its reviews were published in significant Czech periodicals, such as Pedagogická orientace (2/2012), Orbis Scholae (3/2012) and Pedagogika (1/2013). Additionally, in 2016, the authors of the book reacted to J. Mareš's review of the study, which is an interesting dialogue that deals with the topic we are researching right now (see Švaříček, Šeďová, & Šalamounová, 2016). We are aware of the methodological limits which emerge from the fact that there were a number of research outcomes on one research task. To minimize the risk, we present the research aims from the studies whose outcomes differ.

Because of our decision to extend Tůma's study (2014), we presented the results of analysis in similar ways as in the already-mentioned overview studies (for further details, see Table 1).

Table 1

An overview of research to the topic of a pupil's question in dialogic and participative education

Author	Research aims/questions	The level of education	Subjects	Locality
Dina Yankelewitz Mercy College Carolyn Maher Rutgers University	Describe specific teaching steps which lead to the formation of pupils' ideas,	High school	Mathematics	The United States of America

[9] See: List of reviewed non-imprinted periodicals published in the Czech Republic Approved by the Research and Development Council on 20 June 2008.

2014	strategies and suggestions for solving mathematical tasks.			
František Tůma 2014	Critically discuss the studies dealing with an interaction in the classroom with respect towards how dialogism is applied in them.	Unspecified	Unspecified	Unspecified
Klára Šeďová, Zuzana Šalamounová, Roman Švaříček, Martin Sedláček 2014	The aim was to determine how much the participation in the programme led to an actual change in teacher student communication in the classroom.	The second stage of elementary school	Civics Czech language History	South-Moravian region
Luisa Molinari, Consuelo Mameli (2015)	In what way can connecting structural and emergency components of discourse processes occur, and how can such connections contribute to the creation of opportunities for learning?	Elementary education	Unspecified	Italy
Martin Sedláček Klára Šeďová 2015	What kind of influence do the selected characteristics of educational communication have on subjectively perceived learning of pupils in humanities?	The second stage of elementary school	Civics Czech language History	South-Moravian region
Klára Šeďová	1) Did the level of	The second	Civics	South-

Martin Sedláček 2015	pupil participation rise after the intervention? 2) In what ways do teachers reach higher pupil participation?	stage of elementary school	Czech language	Moravian region
Klára Šeďová 2015	What does the research focused on power relations between the teacher and pupils bring in the ontext of the so-called dialogic education?	The second stage of elementary school	Civics Czech language	South-Moravian region
Sami Lehesvuiri, Jouni Viiri 2015	What are the methods from theory to practice and from the planning of dialogic education to reflection?	lower secondary and higher secondary level of education	Natural sciences	South-eastern Finland
Jiří Mareš 2016	What did the research on processes and structures in educational communication bring in the past and at present?	Unspecified	unspecified	Unspecified
Klára Šeďová, Petr Sucháček, Martin Majcík 2015	Is there an uneven share of pupils in verbal participation? Is there a relationship between a pupil's verbal communication and success at school? How does the disproportion in the participation of pupils of varying school success occur?	The second stage of elementary school	Czech language	South-Moravian region

Klára Šeďová, Zuzana Šalamounová 2016	How did the shift in the style of education take place and what was it caused by?	The second stage of elementary school	Literature	South-Moravian region

We hope that we will manage to contribute to learning about professional pedagogical community via a microscopic view on pupils' questions in elementary education. On the basis of research results, we will try to stimulate teachers' interest in an active participation of pupils by encouraging pupils' questions in elementary education conditions.

5 Results of the overview study and discussion

The answer to the first research question on whether the up-to-date results of pedagogical research in the context of dialogic education capture the characteristics of pupil's questions is "no". As the previous overview table shows (Tůma, 2014), neither of the studies is focused on the characteristics of a pupil's questions at the first stage of elementary schools. Based on the overview focused on the analysis of other studies, we can confirm the lack of interest in pupils' questions in education at the first stage of elementary schools. The only exception is Pstružinová's study (1992), which was focused on the identification of the types and the frequency of a pupil's questions (and answers to them) in selected classes of children at younger school age. The sample reached the 8th year of elementary school. Makovská's study (2011), presenting the answer to the following two research questions, is also interesting: What are the characteristics of pupils' lines in educational communication? and How do pupils proceed in looking for the "right" answer? From the aspect of dialogism, the author of the overview study states that pupils' lines are looked upon separately, they are not perceived in the context, and the focus is on the individual's activity. It is a fact interesting for our research that the authors perceive this interaction as neobehaviouristic[10], by which we mean stimulus → internal factors (organism) → a pupil's reaction → stabilization (Tůma, 2014). It seems that here we can find space for the possible occurrence of a pupil's question.

The answer to the second research question (which was focused on the way we understand dialogic education in pedagogic research) is that the up-to-date results of research in the context of dialogic and participative education do not capture the characteristics of pupils' questions in education at the first stage of elementary schools. The way in which dialogic and participative education is understood in the current pedagogical research is paradigmatically usable and can be inspiring for a further analysis of education at the first stage of elementary schools with respect to pupil's questions. In research, dialogism is understood as a mutual exchange of communication sequences between a teacher and a pupil. The analysed studies also agree on an important thing – dialogic education creates a suitable environment and conditions for the participation and interaction of participants in pedagogical communication and in the construction of various methods in for a teaching subject. It is safe to say that, under our

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[10] E. C. Tolman extended Behaviorism to NeoBehaviorism. Traditional stimulus - the reaction has spread over the body. Thus, S-O-R.

conditions, dialogism is a convenient terrain, and the studies by Lehesvuori and Viiri (2015) and Šeďová (2015) are authoritative for us; the authors state that the goal of dialogic education is to make it possible for pupils to express ideas beyond gathering and memorizing facts, while the primary intention is not that they speak more often or longer, but that they are initiative and autonomous in their education. In a pupil's autonomy, there is space for possible pupils' questions.

The last research question was which classes have been the concern of dialogic and participative education research? In general, we can answer that research was concerned with the subjects at the second stage of elementary schools, and more than one half of them included Czech language and literature, Civics or History[11] classes. One foreign study from our overview focuses on the first stage of elementary schools.

6 Conclusion

The findings answering our research questions can be summarized into the following conclusions.

The current results of pedagogical research in the context of dialogic education do not capture the characteristics of pupils' questions in education at the first stage of elementary schools, which is why it will be useful to focus on this direction.

The way in which dialogic and participative education is understood in the current pedagogical research is paradigmatically usable and it can be inspiring for a further analysis of education at the first stage of elementary schools with respect to pupils' questions.

Up to now, the dialogic and participative education research has been concerned with some selected subjects at the second stage of elementary schools only. That is why we cannot directly use them for a comparison with the results we anticipated in our own research realized at the first stage of elementary schools and on Mathematics.

From the results of our analysis, it is obvious that our research intentions for the future could fill a blank space in pedagogical research. In the studies magazines, there is no research presenting the results of dialogically approached education at the first stage of elementary schools. Our purpose is to describe and characterize pupils' questions in dialogic education at this stage of education. Also, we want to identify what the occurrence of the pupil's questions relies on. In the future, we will be interested in the approaches towards stimulation and usage of pupil's questions teachers apply in pedagogical interaction and communication in elementary education. We will also try to answer the question whether teachers involved in elementary education need the knowledge about pupils' questions for their practice and whether current pedagogical training on these needs fulfils and stimulates the abilities to create space for pupils' questions. In the first phase, we will focus on the possibilities of pupils' questions in Mathematics at the first stage of elementary schools, where the basics of pupil participation can be found in the form of seeking new possibilities for the future.

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[11] We know that this predominance was caused by the fact that the authors Šeďová, Švaříček and Šalamounová from the Institute of Pedagogical Sciences of the Faculty of Arts of Masaryk University presented a research which included a long-term observation and video recordings in the second grade of the elementary schools on these subjects and the majority of these studies drew their data from of this research.

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The Application of Comics in Science Education

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Abstract:
Introduction: This study presents the results of a year-long project focused on analysis and reflection on working with comics by students in the preschool teacher training programme.
Methods: This study presents the use of comics to help pre-literacy children understand certain physical phenomena. The study is based on observations of changing perception of phenomena by children as a result of the use of comics accompanied by concept maps.
Results: Comics are proven to be a modern pedagogical strategy, which is starting to gain its popularity in teaching about nature study. It is used in research-oriented teaching within the psycho-didactic concept of instruction.
Conclusions: Comics can be very helpful in making science concepts interesting and comprehensible for a preschool child.

Key words: comics, teaching nature study, research-oriented teaching.

1 Introduction

Preschool children are at the best age for beginning to explore, mainly because they are in their early life, enter the society and begin to discover themselves and the world around them. They are constantly focused on the questions "What is it?" and "Why?" (Jakabčic, 2004). Exploration activities in preschool are based on discovering, observing, exploring and handling objects. By observing and handling objects, a child gains an impulse for further experimentation and creative activities.

Kopáčová (2003) distinguishes the following phases needed for a child´s exploration:
- Setting a problem: a suitably presented question, the answer to which is found by exploring and experimenting.
- Suggesting an action: children suggest an action for carrying out the given activity.
- Aids: must be prepared in advance.
- Expressing a supposition: expectations are expressed, in our case simple children's hypotheses.
- Realisation: includes several actions; each child can choose his/her own.
- Observation: children must be shown what to focus on.
- Record of observation: in a symbolic form.
- Conclusion: to find out whether the correct answer to the question was found.

These modes of activities suggest that the low level of interest of children in the study of science, as documented by research, can be significantly raised on a life-long basis by

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introducing organised forms of inquiry-based teaching in education of the youngest children.

As an example of inquiry-based teaching, the STEM programme can be mentioned, which is based on development and exploration: Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths. STEM supports the development of scientific literacy. The teacher uses it to help children ask questions, form hypotheses, look for evidence, verify it, communicate together, form conclusions based on evidence, and learn how to defend and argue these conclusions. STEM ranges education from preschool to university in order to make sure the acquired skills and knowledge are not only used in school, but also throughout life (Havice, 2014). It tries to develop knowledge in the fields of communication, problem-solving, data analysis, evidence-based arguments, creativity, constructive and critical thinking.

Research by the NSTA (National Science Teachers Association) of 2014 shows that children of preschool age are capable of understanding concepts in science. Teaching is based on using the children's activity, interest and experience, communication, and cooperation. This requirement is met by the suggestion for working with comics in this publication.

Teachers who try to bring science topics (in practical tasks) into preschools are met with effective feedback from children. This is a very positive phenomenon because research in higher stages of education has proven lack of interest in science, technology and maths, or its perception by pupils as too difficult, or unnecessary, as can be read, for example, in the report "Science education in Europe: Critical reflections" dating from 2008 (thought it must be added that compared to 2009 and 2015, the not too good results in PISA tests according to the conclusions of PISA (2009) Results: Executive Summary and PISA: Results in Focus did improve in these areas).

New opportunities for increasing and supporting children's interest in science and naturally developing their reasoning concerning its constituent parts need to be found constantly, in order for these sciences to appear in later years as quite natural and an attractive area of interest which enables us to understand the world and help it.

A range of effective teaching strategies are available. The basis is the application of constructivism processes when carrying out IBSE (Inquiry-Based Science Education). The use of suitable methods for supporting curiosity and the cultivation of ideas becomes simply indispensable. Experiments are appropriate, as well as comics use. With the latter, asking divergent questions is crucial, as well as initiating discussions in a group of children amongst themselves and with the teacher (whose role differs greatly from someone who knows, explains, describes and teaches, to someone who supports as a partner).

Comics represents an excellent way of encouraging children to think creatively. From the beginning, people have felt the specific power of picture-based stories. Pictures were the first record of history, communicated and shared with news. The mural paintings in caves thousands of years ago tell stories bursting with life; the tombs in Egypt provide details of the life of kings and slaves (and certain depictions can even be described as prehistoric comics). People who cannot communicate due to a language barrier communicate via drawings. In our everyday reality, instructions are often given in the form of images (in health care, road and air transport, in international hotels, in instructions for appliances). There are also numerous board games which are a popular pastime and use the very idea of putting across information and concepts using drawing:

this requires structural thinking from the drawer and percipient. If people want to remember an explained route, they often draw a map. It can be said that pictures are the most comprehensible and richest communication method after language.

The communicative ability of pictures accompanies people in their formal, non-formal and informal education. They provide a quick reaction and communicate comprehensively. Such a didactic means very significantly increases the attraction of the discussed topics and aids concentration. Naturally, comics have a fundamental difference from simple pictures/illustrations, in that their function is not to represent the content of text as an additional part, or to be an accessory to a spoken idea; they are a completely independent bearer of a specific communication. Researchers studying the pedagogical use of various forms of comics (for example Tatalovic, 2009; Cheesman, 2006; Kapinabar, 2005; Wellner, 2016; Wiegerová & Navrátilová, 2016; Svatoš & Maněnová, 2017) agree about their advantages such as an efficient motivation for interest in a topic, an aid for concentration, the parallel development of many types of literacy, helping children discover alternative concepts, as a motivation for discussion, the opportunity to discover the level of real understanding of new knowledge after a previous educative activity and the acquisition of new scientific concepts using a constructivist approach. McClaud's revolutionary (albeit non-academic) publication "Understanding Comics" (1995) aptly outlines the implicitly necessary cooperation between the comics and the percipient, founded on shaping and constructing the reader.

2   On the history of comics

Opinions on the creation of the comic strip as a separate form differ. Researchers most often agree mainly on the fact that the exact beginnings of the comics cannot be dated. Groensteen (2005) labels Rodolphe Topffer's "Stories in engravings" of 1820 as a fundamental historical point in the search for the beginnings of the comic strip. McClaud (1995), who deals with the much more ancient history of the comics, also acknowledges Topffer as the father of the modern comic strip. He presents a comic "fold-up" book from 1519 describing the fate of Duke "the Eight Deer Jaguar Claw", and a comic strip version of the "Sorrows of Saint Erasmus" from 1460. It even outlines the possibility that the comic strip was born as early as in 1,300 B.C. in Egypt, in connection with the possible study of the sequential depiction of life on the grave of the scribe Menny (McClaud, 1995). The label of "comics" can also be given to a series from the 18th century, "A Harlot's Progress" by the English painter William Hogarth (Kruml, 2007). Kunzle considers a sequential pictorial presentation as a comics, beginning with the invention of printing press and maps comics from 1450 (Kunzle,1973). The modern comics in its contemporary form is most frequently dated from the mass development of the daily press in the USA and attempts to acquire as many readers as possible (including from the ranks of immigrants who did not master the language, yet understood the "comic strips" of the picture, and so also bought the newspaper). The expression "comics" is an abbreviation of "comic strip" (Groensteen, 2005). A specific branch, most published in the 1960s and 1970s is the "Comix". It is an American underground form of the comics inspired by the hippie movement with subject-matters such as sex, drugs, rock, social and political problems.

Outcault's comics "The Yellow Kids" from 1894 first used both a new combination of text and image – speech bubbles, and a sequence of pictures, as well as the concept of characters who keep returning. In Europe, the French magazine "L'Epatant" (from 1908)

can be mentioned in the context of the modern history of the comics, with Forton's "Pieds-Nickelés" about the adventures of three scoundrels. In the same year in Italy, the magazine for young people, "Corriere dei Piccoli" started, with a large section for comics. There was a different approach to the text of comics in Italy; until the 1960s, the tradition of short speeches under the pictures instead of bubbles continued. The German tradition of Viliam Busche's pictures from the 1870s continued to have a strong influence in Europe in humoristic series.

At the beginning, speech bubbles in panels did not take on in Europe. The pictures were most frequently complemented with text underneath. Sometimes they remained mute. In the second half of the 20th century, work with speech bubbles was more frequent, nevertheless even today certain writers prefer text outside the panel. In the Czech Republic "picture series" were taken up; text in bubbles did not find their place at its beginnings in the 1890s. It was replaced by text under the pictures. Czech writers also worked without text: "Mr. Ťopásek" by Karel Stroff, Karel Ladislav Thuma publishing in "The Young Reader", some stand-alone stories in the Švanda Dudák weekly from the first years of the 20th century. Most frequently in the tradition of the beginnings of the Czech comics from the beginning of the 20th century, comic strips are commented under each picture. For example, this is how Josef Lada, Konstantin Hájek, Josef Kočí, Josef Ulrich, or Karel Vařina worked (Prokůpek, Kořínek, Foret, & Jareš, 2014).

Comics have also been used in education for over 70 years. In the USA, pedagogical discussions and studies on the benefits of comics in education have been present since the 1940s. However, as a result of prejudices on the abjection or damage of this "genre", it had a difficult path. Alternately, comics were not only rejected as the doom of literacy and a direct threat to moral education, but also celebrated for their strong, educational potential (Sones, 1944). Education curricula were even based on comics. Experimental teaching with the use of comics took place. However, the New York psychiatrist Wertham in his book "Seduction of the Innocent" summarised his opinions on 400 pages dealing with the danger posed by comics of spreading violence, homosexuality, racial stereotypes, rabble-rousing and illiteracy. Subsequent reactions lead to a halt in any state aid to the programme of using comics in schools. It was only in 1970 that teachers found the courage to include once more comics in their teaching. The Pullitzer Price (for journalism) awarded to Spiegelman's "Maus" in 1992 (about the Holocaust in the Second World War) marked a breakthrough. Teaching with the aid of comics spread into all possible fields of school education, and is the subject of university study (History of Comics in Education, 2017).

3   Comics today

Today, specialised and academic writings try to define the essence of the singularity of this media. We can label comics in the words of Eisner (1985) as sequential art, or more specifically as the "deliberate juxtaposed sequence of drawn and other pictures aimed at providing information or causing an aesthetic experience" (McClaud, 1995, p. 9). With his definition Harvey (2001) excludes from the realm of comics works working only with a pictorial form. The majority of the other theoreticians of comics do not share this view (e.g. Eisner), and this does not apply either to the history of the European (and Czech comics). Groensteen (2005) even refuses an exact definition as being impossible and warns of the confusing plurality of varied (and as can be seen even contradictory) definitions. He presents several in his "Theory of the Comics" only to refute them all. He

thus points out the need to define comics only generally as a "narrative type with a visual dominance" (Groensteen, 2005, p. 19). One thing on which the majority of theoreticians and writers agree on is that it is a sequential art narrating an action through image, usually combined with words. The basic difference between the comics and other forms of literature and fine art lies in the quite unique communication with the percipient. It is not a literary genre, or an artistic one, but rather an independent medium, as states McClaud (1995). The authors of the theory further diverge in their concept of the dominance of the picture, text, their interweaving and in the labelling of the component units of comics (panel, vignette, field). There is also a lack of uniformity in the view of single-panel "cartoons". This depends more on the writer's feeling and the way the pictorial sequences of the action are processed (which is also possible in a "single-frame" or exceptionally without a frame). A unified definition does not exist, and the variety of comics almost excludes it. We will always find many author-specific creative approaches, which cannot be excluded from the group of comics, but do not fully meet one of the conditions of a certain definition.

Comics are used in school text books (e.g. Wiegerová, Majerčíková, & Česlová, 2016; Hobbs & Keddle, 2014 etc.), in non-formal education in informal education – instruction booklets, exercises, or behaviour patterns in unusual situations, as well as an environmental means of education for the population in problematic areas of the world. With this changed view, comics are now used as effective methods of education mainly at secondary school level (Trnová, Janko, Trna, & Pešková, 2016), and also at a tertiary level (Green, 2013), sporadically at primary level (it is used more to add variety to lessons by individual teachers trying to make their lessons different using alternative methods). They are also popular for leisure time activities and are used spasmodically in after-school clubs; however, systematic work with science comics in preschool practice (in the Czech Republic) is rarely encountered (Wiegerová & Navrátilová, 2016). Abroad, the educational potential of comics has been confirmed in an ever-growing sphere of educational areas across all levels. It is applied from primary level to the university teaching of medicine (Park et al., 2011; Green, 2013). Cheesman (2006) outlines how comics can be used in all phases of teaching. The properties of comics which support visual literacy (necessary for everyday orientation and reading maps, graphs, tables and for scientific activity in adulthood, X-rays, microscope, scientific images) are used. Comics for teaching foreign languages are popular, for an inquiry-based interest in history, biology, physics and chemistry. Through all age categories of children and students, teachers from the 1st half of the 20th century confirm the high motivational property of the comics.

Websites for creating one's own comics (children and teachers) are well used. It is possible to follow the expansion of the comics in individual educational fields and the growth of opportunities for working with them.

The power of comics in the development of multi-modal literacy is also confirmed (Kabapinar, 2005; Wiegerová & Navrátilová 2016).

The juxtaposition itself of pictures in comics forces the reader to activate multimodal thought processes; this presupposes complicated cognitive work by the reader. The great potential for comics in science education and knowledge can be seen clearly (Cheesman, 2006; Wiegerová & Navrátilová, 2016). In pedagogical strategies, the educational comics can also be a means, aid, pivotal method or platform for building one's own structures. Above all, it can be understood as a complex acquisition method and didactic

means, using visual and literary art and knowledge from pedagogics, pedagogical psychology, development psychology and psycho-didactics for educational purposes (in different phases of education), according to the specific educational needs of children, pupils or students, using different types of solutions.

4   Inquiry-based teaching and comics

A focus on the thought processes of developing inquiry-based thought, the overall cultivation of thinking and support for an interest in science topics combines very well with the wide range of opportunities for working with comics. Comics bring non-traditional didactic strategies into the development of science education, which are, however, complicated in terms of their demands on the didactic concept of a content requiring a transdisciplinary approach.

In the inquiry-based science concept of the comics, children learn to work functionally with developing knowledge in the field of science, in accordance with the principles of IBSE through personal experience, investigation, searching for scientific suppositions, verification, argumentation, discussion and new searching, and thus gradually lead to a development in scientific literary, as well as many other types of literacy.

In order to understand concepts, the child must find their own new path, their own solution: create their own construct. Scientific conceptual comics thus prepare educational situations where the activity comes from the children, via a sensitive facilitation by the teacher: from their questions and communication on how they currently understand the phenomena, with the help of suitably chosen questions by the teacher and carefully prepared comics material on the topic of the problem being solved.

This corresponds with Papáček's (2010) perception of inquiry-based education, as acquisition methods of problematic teaching, where knowledge is acquired by solving problems and asking questions. Children use their natural experience, their ideas, they concentrate better and discover for themselves new information, contrasting them with their understanding and trying to unravel any possible conflict. The teacher tries to make a change in the children's alternative concepts (tries to base himself or herself on them, link to them, and push them towards a scientifically correct understanding).

Alternative concepts are the basis for building new and more complete notions. They show us where to begin to teach as well as information essential for planning further steps. The child's initial understanding is used by the teacher in order for the children to develop a new understanding, in a much easier way, as mentions. Comics incite activity in children and teachers. The activation of both these players in the education process is one of the significant mottos of the comics.

For use in preschool education, comics are prepared with topics from everyday life concealing scientific subjects. There are many types and forms of comics. However, working with them is always subject to the principles of inquiry-based education and uses its method. Certain comics use clear thought processes to acquire new science concepts, and some use the idea of completing the comics, children creating their own comics or working on its preparation with a teacher.

Working with all types of comics can be organised as a main educational block for a small group of children, or left as an optional activity as part of the offer of open classroom activities for children. As Cheesman (2006) describes in his study, comics can be used in all phases of educational activity. Comics can be used to deal with almost all science topics; they only need to be adapted to the specific age requirements of the

student, older pupil, younger pupil and pre-schooler. The area of exploration remains, only the level of knowledge varies.

5   How can we work with comics in preschool?

Working with comics is not a common didactic strategy in preschools. It brings difficulties even if used in elementary schools. It would therefore seem that their use is more complicated in preschools. However, it is not so. At contemporary busy world, a picture has importance, has an information value. Comics are an ideal tool for the support of creating programme environment in preschools too.

Working with comics belongs to the strategies to which a teacher must prepare thoroughly. Obviously, this is not a strategy which would be among shallow activities.

The comics demand a rigorous preparatory phase when a teacher must clearly consider the topic to be conveyed to children. Technical processing of comics makes an important part of the following preparation. Comic image is always integrated into a concrete story. It usually concerns a few characters who debate the situation or phenomenon. It is very useful if comics convey the real situation that provokes, suggests solutions and motivates children to their own thinking about the situation. Comic drawing should provoke, it should lead to reflection and discussion in group among children.

It is inapprpriate if comic drawing is set in a phantasy or supernatural story. Children would create an unrealistic concept of phenomena and such misrepresenting of natural processes has an impact on incorrect approach movement of children´s view of the world around. That is why we should not use a fairy tale in comics although its core is based on the victory of good over evil, but fairy tale does not proceed from real description of situations and is considered to be an appropriate strategy for teaching natural phenomena to children. The current generation of children is different than it was ten or twenty years ago. Even the perception of fairy tales by children is now changing. According to recent British research on childhood, the work with fairy tales reflects attempt by adults to idealize the world of children, but this is not a correct approach.

Conceptual scientific comics must have the following characteristics:
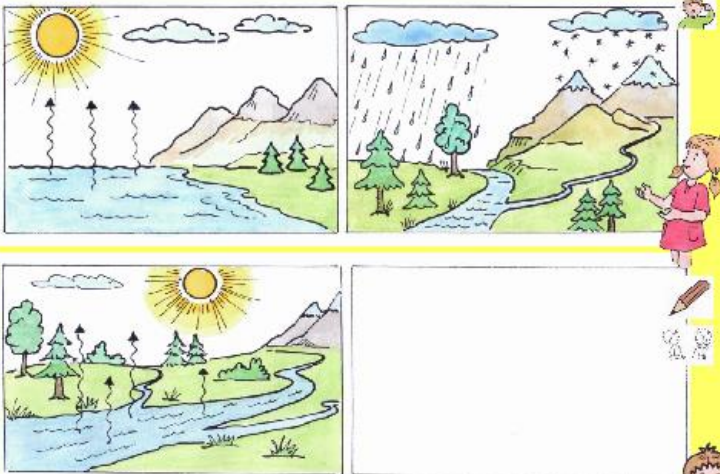- visual representation of scientific ideas;
- a minimum of text in dialogic form;
- equal presentation of alternative views on the situation and scientifically acceptable perspective;
- scientific ideas are applied to everyday situations based on authentic experience of recipients;
- it need not contain only single scientifically correct response – it often depends on defining the variables.

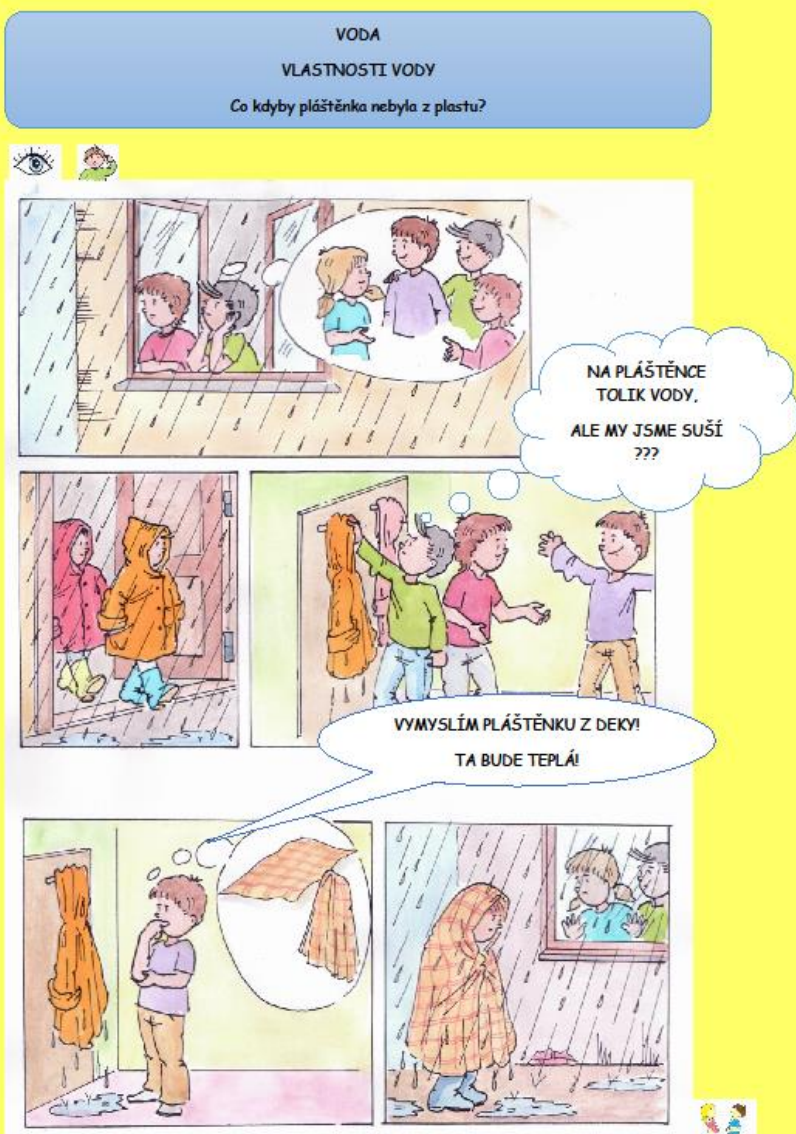*Figure1.* Illustration of comics 1.

Figure2. Illustration of comics 2.

6   Conclusion

In the process of science education, it is important that children learn to develop their thinking, to learn to argue, to actively deduce and create the concepts. Based on his own experience which is important part of scientific discovery from child´s birth already, a child should learn to develop the knowledge through exploration, verification and constant search for scientific assumption and arguments. Comics can be very helpful in this effort. But the teacher has an important role in this process. The teacher is expected to:

- realise possible ways of concept development in the area under consideration;
- be competent to create tasks which stimulate and support educational process;
- have confidence in himself related to personal understanding of the topic, to be capable to accept different opinions and to react on them;
- be competent to organise and to manage the group of children the way that he supports conceptual learning.

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Joint Child Custody as a New Kindergarten Teachers' Experience

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Abstract:
Introduction: The possibility of joint child care after divorce in which parental responsibilities are distributed equally among parents has been implemented in the Czech Republic since 1998. Under certain circumstances, joint custody is considered to be the best solution with regard to further prospects of individual children and also their relationships with their divorcing parents. The solution of joint custody issues happens between parents and/or their family members. Lawyers, psychologists, doctors, and social workers adopt a legitimate attitude to each individual case. Primarily, psychologists provide empirical proofs of the beneficial effect of joint custody concept. In Czech conditions, teachers are the least heard group in this respect.
Methods: A research was carried out in which we utilized the method of thematic writing. Twenty-seven written products, written by the kindergarten teachers were analyzed (the length ranged from 2000 to 2500 words). The content analysis was used with the research aim to reveal their point of view of the joint child custody concept and their experience with children in joint custody.
Results: The teachers' attitude to joint custody was negative, they more leaned towards the opinion that joint custody is not an optimal solution. They perceived the concept of joint custody as beneficial but, on the other hand, as problematic and hardly feasible by divorced people as they often remain in conflict. Based on their experience with children in joint custody, it is fully dependent on the ability of parents to agree on it and to fulfil their children's interests together. However, these are not, according to the teachers, very often taken into consideration in joint custody.
Discussion: In their reflections, kindergarten teachers confirmed the generally accepted controversial conclusions and experience related to primarily practical side of joint custody. They underlined the accepted opinion that it is always necessary to assess joint custody in its relations to a particular case and in respect to its inability to substitute normally functioning and complete families.
Limitaitons: The main research limit concerns the choices of research sample and amount of material based on 27 written products. The first version of the report underwent a participant validation in order to reduce possible distortion during the interpretation of empirical data.
Conclusions: The research results have the potential to introduce further valuable and pedagogical perspective into the discussion about joint custody issues. It can

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even serve as a stimulus to optimize the content of teacher education with the aim to encompass various elements of educational reality of current kindergarten.

Key words: joint child custody, kindergarten teacher, research.

1   Introduction

In their profession, kindergarten teachers come into contact with children whose family background is often diversified. The key participants who determine its character are undoubtedly parents. It is becoming apparent that what future teachers are prepared for in the context of cooperation with a child's parents in the framework of their teacher education does not fulfil the extent of possibilities reflecting family character of children coming into education (Cimprichová Gežová, 2015, p. 45). Above all, it is direct and particular cooperation with various types of parents. The initial source of starting teachers' discomfort is often the cooperation and effective communication with children's parents, in the worst cases even reality shock. This includes kindergarten teachers as well.

A child from a divorced family is not rare in school nowadays. The specificity of its family background depends even on the form of child care that is practiced after divorce. The subject matter of this study is one of the possible forms of caring for children after divorce, i.e., joint custody, more precisely a child in such family structure on the lowest education level – a kindergarten (hereafter KG).

2   Theoretical framework

The pedagogical discourse concerning arguments for the development of optimal relationships with parents leads to the conclusion that the development and success of a child at school is closely bound by the cooperation of school and family. This approach is intensified by a child's age peculiarities in preschool age when the joint parents' and teachers' support of a child, and their mutual participation on the child's development is essential. The situation can become complicated in the case of joint custody (hereafter JC) when a school should cooperate with both parents who are often in an after-divorce conflict. In such case, the cooperation with parents who have a child in joint custody becomes complicated for teachers in kindergartens. Equally demanding is the interaction with a child in joint custody.

KG teachers are supposed to cooperate with parents who are assumed to accept and internalize a certain kind of responsibility, the responsibility towards their own child. Parenthood is a commitment of which fulfilment is given by performing many activities that ensure the survival and complex development of a child (Hoghughi & Long, 2004). This commitment is, unlike marriage to which a child is often born, irreversible. Marriage and the partnership of parents can be terminated, parenthood cannot.

In situations in which parents choose divorce, their children are affected by the weakening or loss of the feeling of security. The feeling is related to the inability of parents to live together. These children are affected by a "social disorder" of their primary family background without their own contribution (Alan, 1989). The relative unambiguity of a classical interpretative scheme of family influence and the map of family background of a child thus gains modified, sometimes unclear, hardly identifiable contours for both school and teachers. On the background of individual approach to a child, the school and the teachers are expected to reflect on child's new situation. It is

also assumed that the teacher is able to notice and assess signals indicating the child's problems. At the same time, he/she should reduce possible negative influences emerging from the existing family disharmony or try to influence the parents to consider limiting these negative impacts on their child.

It is recognized that divorce is the second most difficult event in life, after the death of a beloved person. For a child, the divorce means, above all, disorientation based on the disintegration of standard patters of relationships between parents and in his/her understanding frequently also disorientation towards him/herself. For example, between the years 1990 – 2000, more than 340,000 children lost everyday contact with one of the parents (usually the father) as a result of divorce in the Czech Republic. This is almost a quarter of the 1.4 million children born to married mothers – ten years also represents the average length of marriage that ended by divorce in the Czech Republic at that time (Pavlík & Kučera, 2002).

The situation after divorce is difficult for all participants. Generally, the younger the child, the more complicated it is for him/her to handle the circumstances not only in divorce process but also after it when he/she lives in a new environment, most often without the other parent. As for long-term divorce consequences on children, most studies provide great variability among children. In some cases, there were not identified any problems of emotional or psychological nature; on the other hand, some children experienced problems with worse school results, anger management, development of gender identity or psychological adjustment (Lamb, 1995).

However, there is a certain agreement among psychologists that at preschool age, divorce causes higher vulnerability of children, fear of being abandoned by a parent and often even states of anxiety connected to their sense of guilt, disrupted sleep, night terrors, sometimes enuresis (Smith, 2004).

After the divorce, three custody scenarios are possible. The first one is the sole custody of mother, combined with father's visitation rights, the second is the sole custody of father with mother's visitation rights, and the third is the joint custody, when the child alternates between living with his/her mother and father. Because of the attempts to find a way how to decrease the intensity of problems on the side of children, and respecting the rights of both parents, joint custody has been introduced in 1998 in the Czech Republic. It is an alternative to exclusive one-parent custody, when the second parent can visit the child at the weekends.

Joint custody is parental custody in which both parents (who are able to take care of a child and are interested in raising the child and can provide for a healthy upbringing and development of a child) take turns caring for a child in regular time intervals. This arrangement proved to be beneficial for the child. In reality it means that the child "alternates" between his/her mother's and father's places according to agreed plan and rules. Optimal situation includes acceptable distance between homes of both parents and the child should attend just one school. (It is acceptable that the child is educated in two schools when parents live too far away. In this case the time intervals the child spends with one parent are longer, for example half a year, or a year.) Elements of parental responsibility should therefore be divided between both parents. If we ignore the problems caused by material-technical provision of this solution and its financial demands, it is presented as the optimal solution for both parents and the child after divorce. This is, of course, in case the parents are able to communicate and provide necessary conditions.

By taking this step, the Czech Republic made its way among the countries where joint custody has been a viable option for the last twenty years. There are many controversial opinions on joint custody problematics in Czech environment. According to my research, they can be categorized into three big groups. They are the opinions: "for", "against", and "for with conditions", and none of the groups is dominant. Before 1998 the children were automatically given to mothers after divorce in more than 90% of cases and afterwards very little changed in this respect. Only in 2002, less than 90% of divorcing mothers (89.38% to be precise) were given the sole custody of their children. 7.99% of divorcing fathers were given the sole custody of their child in 2002 and only 2.14% of parents were granted joint custody (Pavlát, 2013). Joint custody has been practiced only exceptionally after its implementation in the Czech Republic.

Situation is changing very slowly. In 2007, 2.5% of all divorcing couples with children were granted joint custody (Bartošová & Slepičková, 2009) and the number has been rising only slowly in the following years. The reasons for this seem to be relatively strongly rooted stereotypes that the mother can provide the best possible care for her child after the divorce. Other reasons include the prejudices regarding parental roles of the father and mother in upbringing of their children. Also the inability of parents to agree on the necessary things in order to have a functional joint custody is counter-productive.

The research of this problematics is rare in the Czech Republic, although it is researched as a part of larger researches. There is no study that would reveal how this custody model works, what accompanies it, what is its genesis and consequences for children. It is possible to use partial research results, mostly published experiences of parents, stances of lawyers, social workers, pediatricians and above all, psychologists. Their experiences are rooted in their clinical practice. Even in the Czech Republic, advocates of joint custody prove its pros by referring to classic information sources (Bauserman, 2002), or experience from other countries (for example USA, Canada, Scandinavian countries etc.). Especially psychologists provide opinions and evidence based on their experience about the benefits of joint custody concepts. Positive stance is, however, presented as the least harmful alternative. We can use a very apt analogy according to which no matter how perfect the artificial limb is, it can never be as good as the real thing. In the same way, no divorce solution can give children an optimal alternative to a functioning and harmonious family (Novák, 2013).

The issues of joint custody are mostly discussed among psychologists, lawyers, and social workers. Teachers are the least heard group. The fact remains that everyday reality of a court's decision impacts even teachers themselves. Kindergarten teachers were approached in order to reveal their opinions and experience during the research.

3   Methodology

The research problem I address is the reflection of joint child custody issues under preschool education conditions among their teachers. I have been a part of the kindergarten educational environment as an educator of the teachers. It also includes the education of teachers – professionals who enhance their qualification in the framework of their university studies. Contacts and discussions with these teachers are an interesting source of stimuli for research and provision of background for a relevant expert discussion. It is these contacts that allowed me to carry out this research of which results are further presented.

Considering what research possibilities related to acquiring sources for research data collection were available, I leaned towards the quantitative research direction. It was not only the number of participants that constitute the base source of the research, I was also motivated by the endeavor to research an interesting and not reflected topic that is possible to develop and research with the aim to perspectival optimize even for teacher education.

3.1 Research aims and research sample
In order to argument opinions of kindergarten teachers on JC, the aim of the research was:
  - to disclose the opinions of KG teachers on JC after the divorce of parents;
  - to record and describe the KG teachers experience with children in JC (children in preschool age);
  - to disclose possible differences in opinions among teachers based on their experience with children in JC or the length of their pedagogical career.
My ambition was to use the research results in further conceptualization of the joint child custody (preschool age) relying on the opinions of teachers. The aim also was to clarify other aspects of the KG teacher's work and reflect them in the education process of future KG teachers. Relying on the qualitative research direction, the basic research question was selected: How do KG teachers reflect on the joint child care issues?
My research included 17 qualified KG teachers (all of them female), 2 of whom majored in a non-pedagogical discipline Specify.at the university. Participants were simultaneously students of a bachelor degree that was to ensure them the KG teacher university qualification (up to now, university degree in pedagogy major is not a compulsory requirement for KG teachers). Direct pedagogical experience of participants in KG ranged from 2 to 15 years and all of them had experience with children in joint custody. We chose these teachers intentionally, whilst we combined theoretical selection (teachers met given requirements – they had experience with children in joint custody) and availability – researcher was to have a good access to participants.
In the second phase of my research, I addressed 10 other teachers, who are students of the master's program (age 21 to 25 years) at the moment. These participants had the necessary qualification for teaching at a kindergarten, finished their bachelor study program and did not have direct experience with children in joint custody; their kindergarten teacher experience was limited to pedagogical practice during their bachelor studies. Their experience with JC was bound to random personal contacts with their environment, not from the kindergarten environment where they taught.

3.2 Method of data collection and data processing
I used content analysis of products to fulfil my research aims – written texts (Gavora, 2007). In this case it was thematic writing. Usage of written texts appeared to be an interesting choice when planning the data collection, as it had a potential to demonstrate personal opinion and mediate participants' own beliefs (Wiegerová & Gavora, 2014). We chose unrestricted authorial writing, teachers created texts on a given topic and the extent and time, dedicated to writing, was not limited in order to provide space for personal statement. Researcher selected a topic – "A Child in Joint Custody in Kindergarten – my opinions and experiences". Researcher did not categorize the writing or interfered in writing process.

When processing the data, we used qualitative content analysis of 27 verbal statements. When choosing the method of content analysis (as there are several of them), it is necessary to consider the character of data, which is in my case the texts. In participants' thematic writing there were passages which were thematically connected to several aspects of the given topic (opinions, experience, perspectives). They differed in length and declared opinions. Texts, which ranged from 2,000 to 2,500 words, were divided into segments – units of meaning related to the participant and research aims. Then, by open coding, meanings in segments were identified and given a code. Individual segments were read several times, codes were adjusted and reviewed with the intention to capture the range of data as best as possible. Then the codes were divided into categories with similar meaning, then described and explained. For the purposes of this study we conceptualized the codes into three dimensions.

3.3 Research limitations

In my research it is necessary to reflect on the limitations one must count on in this context. Those limitations include especially the research sample and the amount of data, which is 27 written products. In my research I admit that intentionality of the sample selection can indicate decreased credibility (Gavora, 2015). In such case, the decreased credibility could be caused by the fact that the selected teachers-professionals (enhancing their qualification) were a part of the academic environment, they gained and improved their theoretical knowledge, they enhanced their pedagogical competences in order to work in KG. Teachers to be who have already finished half of the bachelor degree studies and they have not dealt with the problematics of joint custody explicitly. It is admissible that their opinions and preferences regarding the topic, their professional self-confidence and assessment of experienced situations might be influenced by their studies. Regarding the amount of data, 27 is rather a low number. However, given the extent of the written material I captured certain theoretical saturation, as I identified similar patterns in the data from the teachers. Those data served as the basis for the reflection of joint custody problematic.

It is clear that the limitations of each, especially qualitatively oriented research, is the data analysis itself. In order to improve validity of my research and to reduce possible distortion of the results, the first draft of research report was presented to one of the participants, so she could validate it. In order to rectify possible disproportions that may have emerged by data interpretation, I discussed the results with the participant. Consequently, I reflected on her comments and specified connotations of certain statements and I adjusted the research results.

4   Results

27 texts whose length ranged from 2,000 to 2,500 words were analyzed. As was stated above, these data were divided into segments and then processed by open coding. Codes were categorized with the ambition to gain more abstract conceptualization of collected data. Descriptive approach was used. Table 1 contains the list of extracted categories that outline perspectives of researched teachers.

Table 1

An overview of dimensions and categories

Dimension	Category
Teachers personality and professionalism	Teacher as a child and parent
	Teacher as an expert
	Emotions in supposed professionality
Reality of joint custody according to the teachers	Reaction and impact on a child
	Questioning parental competences
	To speak with the child
	Omnipotent communication
Opinion platform as a point of departure	Controversial topic
	It cannot work because…
	It can work if…

4.1 Teachers personality and professionalism in joint custody
In the data collected from teachers I conceptualized three dimensions related to the problematics. The first one touches teachers themselves. In Table 1 three categories relate to it. Problematics of joint custody is reflected by teachers through the prism of their own experience from family. They mixed their own good memories from childhood and the presence of both parents, in contrast to what quality they see in childhood, or how they assess it in case of JC children in kindergarten. The role of a parent, especially the emotional ties to their own children (who are part of this role) served as the filter, through which the teachers filtered their general opinions on JC.
"I grew up in a harmonious family, so, I cannot imagine that I would go from my mother to the father… Simply, I cannot imagine that. I could never do that to my children."
In the work of kindergarten teachers, I identified the manifestations of the maternal approach, and as one of them rightly states, this approach complicates their work to a certain extent.
"The most difficult thing is to stay objective and to think over the optimal approach from the long-term perspective and in the larger framework of a child's prosperity. This is difficult because of protective and maternal instincts of the teacher. A bit paradoxically those things that are her very own in an increased degree and what is also one of the primary motives leading to her choice of employment. Therefore, it is difficult for her to face it – her heart just feels like „squeezed" and wants to hug and soothe the child; at night, she just stares at the ceiling and thinks how to carry out her "mission in life further."
An experienced emotional strain contributes to the stated difficulty. The strain comes from shared feelings and reactions of the children that have to experience changing of two family environments. It is interconnected with one's own parenthood and an unacceptable image of possible suffering of the children if they would be in joint custody.
"Try to answer the child's question: should I do it as my mother says, or as my father says, or if his mother really loves him. It is very difficult sometimes; their shyness and insecurity are utter despair."
The students – participants that had minimum practical kindergarten experience also stated sorrow over a loss, in some cases even suffering, which children get after divorce.

Including even the case or because of their own experience with living only with one parent after divorce. The idea of changing environment was unacceptable for them. It was accompanied even by fear and concerns how difficult it will be to work with a child in JC in a kindergarten.

The role of a child, a parent and requirements resulting from the professional role of a teacher were brought into the perspective of a child in JC through the eyes of the teachers. The work with children in JC requires certain expert skills related to continuous education and consultations with other experts, e.g., psychologists. Listening to "voices of children" is considered to be the means for better understanding of the child learning at the preschool facilities (Navrátilová, 2017). The perceived difficulty in contact with children in JC and their parents is indicated by imbalances in the behavior of these children and parents and collides with fragile professionalism of kindergarten teachers.

"We formulated a report on how a child prospers in parental care. Otherwise, work with children and parents is difficult. We have to prepare for that somewhere, study literature, and consult problems with a psychologist. I am not sure, I am not always able to respond. It is also very difficult with the parents."

4.2 Reality of joint custody according to the teachers

The second dimension that I constructed based on written responses of participants integrates those aspects of joint child custody that origin as a reflection of particular situations with which the teachers are confronted. It includes four more categories in Table 1.

All participants absolutely agree that the importance attributed to communication is great. They consider it as key for optimal functioning of JC in everyday reality. Communication between parents was declared as the most important one.

"Everything is built on communication, how everything is communicated."

They confirm the fact that JC can be implemented only between partners who are able to agree and consequently effectively cooperate (Novák, 2013). The teachers stated that communication has the possibility to become a "magical wand" that can solve many issues. They relate its importance even to the cooperation with school, thus to communication with teachers.

"The basis is effective communication between parents, parents with the child, and us. If we do not inform each other, we cannot help each other."

Attitudes to JC are reflected by the experience of participants with children and parents. What resonates in the minds of participants are observed changes in a child's behavior during divorce. Every day they notice unconcealed wish for physical contact with the teacher, separation from the collective of other children, sometimes attempts at catching attention to themselves, aggressive behavior or intentional breaking of rules and sentimentality.

"I observe tendencies including cuddling. Sometimes, on the other hand, pulling away or aggression and tendencies to show off. Undoubtedly, increased is also the degree of affective responses. I think these responses are related to the situation at home. Every child has its own manifestations of behavior, they are, however, different as most of the others."

What is mostly emphasized by the participants – independently of practice and experience – is confusion. It is some kind of disorientation of the children which is related to the uncertainty in their home environment. They put it in the context even with

insufficient communication and the explanation of the situation in the family by the parents.

"No one talks with the child about the situation between the parents. It is not enough to say that the mother and father do not understand each other. The worst is when parents do not deal with the situation at home, do not analyze what is really bad, and use the child as a means of revenge or manipulation. That is inconceivable."

According to the teachers, parents in JC fail in the ability to reach into the experience, the specific world of their children. The degree of their empathy and cognition of mechanisms that influence the quality of the internal life of the child is in the interpretation of the teachers cover by a personal interest. As they perceive it, it seems as if the needs of the child are sidelined and the rights of the father or mother or put forward. Although their personal interest can be fulfilled at the expense of the child unknowingly, based on the signals coming from the parents, the participants assess this as their parental failure.

"If the parents at least suspected what is going in the mind of their child, they would not act like that."

"I think the child does not know "whose he/she is", thus it is a "puppet" the parents toy with as they see fit. And before he/she grows up, matures and is capable to judge what the real situation is, it is too late. Mothers in most cases cannot get over this unpleasant situation and in this imbalanced relationship change the surname of their children."

4.3 An opinion platform as a point of departure

The last dimension that completed the sketch of the research issues in the perspective of the teachers were opinions related to the practicability of JC. These are the last three categories included in Table 1. Therefore, these are opinions of JC that are based not only own experience but also on theoretical knowledge the teachers were supposed to acquire during their work with children in JC or studies. The opinions of participants-students with minimum practical experience unwind from their overall understanding of what happens in kindergarten. Personal contacts with young parents practicing JC proved to be very strong (friends, acquaintances).

In their responses, the teachers state that the issues of JC are a controversial topic based on contradictory opinions. It is obvious even from the statements of social workers, lawyers, psychologists that are available on the internet. As is shown further, the diversity of opinions is obvious even in the case of researched kindergarten teachers.

"Joint custody is very attractive in the theoretical sense, but very treacherous in the practical one."

The teachers evaluated the JC concept as very problematic, almost impracticable. Their reservations were based on the typical objection related to the issue that a child cannot alternate two homes, cannot manage to go from one home to another.

"The child loses certain and is not satisfied. Altering home is unnatural, like come and go."

"Where does the child belong? Where is his/her home?! I can see only a negative impact on the child. He/she experiences alternations of not only different sets of rules but also of homes, has to respect different rules. At each parents' home, there is a different system. The children do not have certainty, they almost do not know where their home is. Furthermore, I think that the child experiences even fear of disappointing one of his/her parents."

However, there were more rational voices among the participants – these voices tried to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of JC. They evaluated JC as implementable, but parents have to be able to agree and subsequently honor their mutual agreement. The attitude is based on the key idea of JC. The child has two parents and if they are able and willing to participate on his/her upbringing even after divorce, both of them should be allowed to. The teachers emphasized the interest of the child that does not lose love, help, and the influence of the mother and father. As an inevitable condition they declared the ability to cooperate in their partnership which did not end with divorce.

"I am a supporter of JC. Both parents are the most important people for in the life of a child. Children should have the possibility to be with both parents. Absolutely inevitable, however, is their mutual agreement."

The teachers-participants declared as an optimal solution regime in which the parents alternate. However, they quickly add that financial and personality possibilities of parents for this strategy is almost unattainable.

5   Discussion and conclusions

In their reflections, kindergarten teachers confirmed generally accepted conclusions and experiences (which, however, are not a subject of research argumentation in the Czech Republic) regarding JC. Overall, it is possible to consider their attitudes as negative ones, they tended to hold the opinion that joint custody is not an optimal solution for the child of preschool age after the divorce of his/her parents. In this respect, there was an agreement regardless of the length of their preschool education among the teachers. The liberal, smaller part of them supports JC. Thus, they support the basic psychological concept that the relationship between the child and the father, and the child and the mother, is not similar in its nature, but both relationships complement one another. They are different, but congruent (Pavlát, 2013).

The Czech psychologists are in agreement as regards the age range, in which joint custody is a good solution for the child. They agree that for children older than three it is a viable possibility (Novák, 2013; Klimeš, 2009) and the child is capable of dealing with the circumstances connected to alternating between his/her primary environment. At this age the psychologists do not expect fatal negative reactions from the child. The reason for disagreement with an earlier application of JC are not only a close bond and its irreplaceability between the mother and the child, but also a child's inability to understand the abstract concept of time and the change of the environment at mother's and father's place.

The research shows that the teachers filtered their reflections through the interest and wellbeing of the child and paid practically no attention to parents' stimuli, motivations or needs for this kind of post-divorce arrangement. Parents' motivation, behaviour or reactions was disregarded by the teachers, interest and needs of a child were of prime importance for them. In this we can see their relatively close focus on a unique child agent when performing their job. In Czech environment the value of a child and motherhood is considered an emotional investment and it is expected that it will have rather emotional than material benefit (Mareš, 2005).

Empirical data confirmed the main problem of JC according to KG teachers, with regard to the role they play. It is a certain diversity when satisfying the needs of a child after divorce. According to teachers, there are two basic, but opposing requirements in it. Above all, the child needs both parents and stability in a family, which is for children the

source of security. Child in JC has both parents, but on the other hand s/he is deprived of the second important need, as constant changing, disorientation and inability of parents to stabilize the situation causes insecurity. Is it possible to harmonize the needs of both parties? This seems to be a trivial question. The answer is complicated when it comes to the reality of JC. It is quite a dilemma that JC is not for everybody and it is necessary to assess it individually. It is also necessary to consider the fact that it is an alternative solution and it is not capable of supplementing a normal functioning family. Also because of that, JC remains a disputable topic, which proves to be a rich research topic. Undoubtedly, it is one of the possibilities how to care for a child after divorce.

According to the teachers, parents who divorced (and therefore ended a conflict or a problem) are automatically unable to agree on anything, even if it involves their child. This is in agreement with statement (Bauserman, 2002) that is also suggested by the conclusion – that the JC is not a good solution if there is a raging conflict between parents. In our case we can also say that even if we are aware of modern findings on the importance of love and care fathers provide, it is difficult, or even impossible for the child to profit from the care of both parents when those can cooperate very little or there is a conflict between them, regardless of the post-divorce arrangement in which the child lives. It is vital for a child's wellbeing if both parents are able to define themselves not as a divorced couple, but as parents who cooperate in order to care for their child (Pavlát, 2013).

According to the teachers, successful implementation of JC is dependent on parents, however, as they think, parents are not mature enough for such a solution. In this context it is necessary to mention that the situation is even more difficult because according to current laws about JC in the Czech Republic, agreement of both parents with JC is not a requirement (Trávníček, 2015). We can only guess what is happening in families in which one parent does not agree with JC, yet it is approved by the court. Even when the parents try to make JC work, according to teachers, under such circumstances it just cannot work.

The picture of JC drawn by the teachers-participants does not have the potential to be generalized. It is rather a record documenting interpreted particular states, circumstances, situations in families of individual children in JC. The attitudes of kindergarten teachers have the potential to introduce a new perspective into the discussion related to JC. They are also a stimulus to the development of teacher preparation so that teachers are – in educational reality – able to competently respond to all specific challenges accompanying their profession.

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Primary School Teachers' Awareness of Chronic Diseases of Children

*Barbora Plisková – Petr Snopek**

Abstract:
Introduction: More and more children and adolescents suffering from chronic diseases are included in common school education. Unfortunately, teachers do not feel confident enough about how to cope, fulfil and satisfy the needs of these children in the educational, social and emotional spheres. The aim ofp this part of research was to discover how teachers work with chronically ill children of younger school-age. There were three aims. The first aim was to investigate if teachers have basic awareness and knowledge about selected chronic diseases in children of younger school-age. The second aim was to discover what experience and attitudes towards chronically ill children of younger school-age teachers have. The third aim was to discover, how the quality of school care of chronically ill children of younger school-age can be improved.
Methods: We used qualitative research methodology. Data were processed and gathered from semi-structured interviews. Interviews were conducted with 12 teachers.
Results: Our findings revealed that teachers should be acquainted with the disease itself and its consequences in all aspects. In some cases, teachers must be acquainted also with the practical aspects of a chronic disease, e.g. first aid and application of drugs and aids in order to assist children if necessary.
Discussion: The study offers unique insights into primary teachers' views and experiences with chronically ill children, how teachers work with chronically ill pupils of younger school-age and how the quality of school care of chronically ill children of younger school-age can be improved.
Limitations: The research is still being conducted and therefore, it is not possible to provide more detailed results and conclusions. However, our main aim was to draw attention to the very problem from the point of view of teachers themselves and to highlight their vivid experiences.
Conclusions: It is necessary to create interconnected networks of experts and families who will cooperate and communicate and who will participate in satisfying needs of a child together. These networks will ensure that children will be integrated into common school life in spite of their disease without serious consequences affecting their development and education.

Key words: primary school teachers, chronically ill children, inclusion.

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1   Introduction

Depending on the type of a disease, children suffering from a chronic disease are in ambulatory care, in home care or stay in hospitals and sanatoriums for long periods of time. Children with health disadvantages, including ill children, chronically ill or debilitated children (Opařilová, 2006, as cited in Doskočilová, 2008) are mostly educated in a common type of primary schools. If a child is hospitalized, education at hospital or medical facility school is more complicated. It is realized according to the curricula and education program of primary schools, but the health condition of pupils must be taken into consideration.

Children with a chronic disease attend school regularly if their health condition allows it. However, their health condition has usually a negative impact on their school performance, school success and relationships at school. This can provoke fear and even anxiety states, anger, frustration, and depressions in children. Many children suffer from insomnia and side effects of drugs. Teachers should be acquainted with the disease itself, its consequences in all its aspects. In some cases, teachers must be acquainted also with the practical aspects of a chronic disease, e.g. first aid and application of drugs and aids in order to assist children if necessary.

2   Research methodology

We applied qualitative research methodology in the research. We processed data gathered from semi-structured interviews. The aim was to discover how teachers work with chronically ill pupils of younger school-age. There were three aims. The first aim was to investigate what information and knowledge teachers have about selected diseases in children of younger school-age. The second aim was to discover what experience and attitudes towards chronically ill children teachers have. The third aim was to discover, how the quality of school care of chronically ill children of younger school-age can be improved.

The original intention was to obtain data from fifteen teachers but upon addressing participants of the research, three teachers refused to participate. The main selection criterion of the investigated persons was that all the participants had to be teachers at the lower stage of primary school. The second requirement was that, in their professional practice, they had to work with at least one ill pupil, i.e. they had to have the experience.

The questions for the interviews were created based on a literature review using the desk research strategy. Questions were used rather as guides and anchors for the interview. As the research is still being conducted, we will not publish the exact questions but only categories.

The structure of the questions:

1. The first group of questions was related to general knowledge and the awareness of lower primary school teachers about chronic diseases and their occurrence.
2. The second group of questions was related to the knowledge and information sources about chronic diseases. Information is essential for teachers in order to react adequately in case of an acute dis-ease demonstration and for quality of education.
3. In the integration of these children into common primary schools, information from parents is a significant problem. Parents are not obliged to inform the school about the health condition of a pupil, the information is delicate. But teachers need them for their work.

4. School is a significant social environment for integrating children into community. The authority role of parents and teachers is very important when children gradually become independent and their classmates and their opinions gradually become prominent. Peers can be very helpful but also very problematic for the ill children.

5. The fifth group of questions was related to the impacts of a disease on education and on the rela-tionships and teachers' attitudes towards these pupils in relation to education.

The study was conducted with the consent of all the participants. All the participants were informed about the purpose of the study and were asked for permission to record the interview using a voice recorder and assured that their testimonies would be recorded anonymously.

The length of the interviews varied, on average, these were twenty-minute-long conversations. In most cases, the participants did not have problems making a quick contact and creating an atmos-phere of mutual understanding.

In the analysis of interviews, it was necessary to transcribe the interviews, go through the transcripts of the interviews with all the respondents, analyse them and search for important and the most illus-trative message according to the aims of the research. The acquired information were subsequently categorized and described.

3 Research findings

3.1 What do teachers know about the work with chronically ill children?

Teachers' knowledge related to chronical diseases, their impacts and psychosocial aspects is low. We found an interesting fact that most interviewed teachers were "taken by surprise" by the problem itself. Before we started with the interviews, they asked us whether this and that disease belonged to chronic diseases and if their answers were correct. Three teachers did not want to participate in the interview. Four of the teachers responded to the problems in a very qualified and professional way. Two of them were teachers with a longer teaching practice, with experience, which is a great advantage in this sense, and two of them were parents of a chronically ill child and were concerned with this problem. They consider information about chronic diseases to be important because of the common integration of these children and as the number of these children is rapidly increasing.

"At the university, there wasn't a single lecture dedicated to the education of children with chronic diseases and, yet, it was clear that in the process of integration it will be more than necessary. Self-study of individual diseases is a matter-of-course, but for me, the interest of a teacher in the problem presented is the most important…and, you know, …one is interested when he/she is involved, either personally or professionally."

The biggest problem with the education of chronically ill children lays, according to the teachers, in three areas – in acute unexpected symptoms of some chronic diseases, when they are afraid they will not be able to react promptly and provide first aid; in frequent and long absences caused by medical examinations and hospitalisation; and the third problem may be caused by the ignorance and inability to get prepared for an unexpected situation because sometimes they do not even know they have a chronically ill pupil in their class. In spite of that, they do not consider chronic diseases to be such a serious problem.

"Personally, I think that a chronic disease does not have a large impact on teaching common subjects, if we disregard that a child has such a strong cold or cough allergy that he cannot concentrate, and his sneezing and coughing distracts his/her classmates. He/she usually rather stays at school and for the activities in addition to normal classes, for example sports and project days when children meet other teachers than those who are familiar with their health condition. For example, questions like, what are you doing at school when you are coughing that much, we all will catch it from you."

"...I still believe that some colleagues do not know how to react appropriately, for example, in the case of an asthmatic or epileptic seizure and, on the other hand, there are many colleagues who are able to handle any unexpected situation. It would not be bad at all if, with the parents' agreement the treating doctor directly informed the school about serious chronic diseases and explained everything important."

Teachers consider mentally disabled children and children with autism in classes much more problematic and, therefore, their approach to treatment of some diseases is sometimes irresponsible and they either trivialize the disease or are too anxious about it.

"Some teachers trivialize or ignore the disease. They do not realize that they cannot offer a cookie or candy to a child on a diet ...they do not realize that this "just once" may have a devastating impact on the child...and they think nothing bad can happen if it is just once..."

On the contrary, other teachers are too anxious and they do not take such a child to an outdoor school activity or a trip at all. They are afraid of possible complications. It happened to me once that I asked a mum to provide as exact information as possible about the approach to a diabetic child. The Mum described it very precisely, so I was not worried about any unexpected situation at all. But when the school nurse and the headmistress saw it, they decided that it would be very demanding to keep an eye on him and they did not allow the child to go.

3.2 Teachers and their education

Teachers gain knowledge from this area mainly through self-study, from media and from particular cases they encounter themselves at school. This reveals a need for constant education in this field even after finishing studies because of an increasing number of children with a chronic disease and the efforts to integrate these children into the common form of education. After finishing their studies, teachers should have an opportunity to take part in seminars given by doctors and medical staff but also by psychologists in order to constantly expand their base of knowledge. This is essential for all teachers, but in particular for teachers at lower primary schools because, with children at this school-age, the approach, help and support of authorities – parents and teachers at school – are important.

"I have had some training, a two-semester Health Science course at the university and first aid, but I would definitely find more information about that disease if I had a pupil with a disease in my class. Firstly, I would get information from his parents or I would ask directly the doctor for information and recommendations, I would search on the internet or I would ask the doctors I know."

"From the university, I remember that we were informed about epilepsy, but no one warned us about other diseases. In the workplace where I'm working now, there are regularly given first aid courses, which include introduction to first aid in case of various seizures etc."

Pedagogical staff should have information about the nature of the disease, its symptoms, the potential risks of non-compliance to dietary measures and psychosocial aspects of the disease but also how children and families themselves experience the disease so that they can educate the children with appropriate quality, provide feedback to parents and fulfil the potential special needs of children. This information is important especially for the class teacher at a lower primary school when he/she spends with the pupil most of the time, the relationship between the pupil and the teacher is very close and when the teacher is the most significant element in the school environment. All the members of the teaching staff should have information about the disease to be able to act effectively. Medication for children represents a great problem in the practical sphere. Teachers cannot give medicine to a pupil. This problem is significant in the case of different extracurricular educational activities such as excursions, study stays and trips, and all these can be a source of stress for teachers as well as for pupils and their parents.

3.3 Teacher and parent

Gaining information from parents is a significant problem in the process of integration of these children into common primary schools. We focused the questions on the problem of providing information related to personal health conditions of pupils, to what extent a teacher should know them, how important the role and willingness of parents are, how often teachers meet the pupils and parents of ill children individually and how they update their knowledge and information.

The pupils themselves and their perception of the disease, their parents and their knowledge and attitude towards the disease are an important source of information which needs to be continuously updated. However, parents are not obliged to inform teachers that a child suffers from a serious disease. Teachers might not even know they have a chronically ill pupil in their class.

"I found out that a child suffered from epilepsy when we were going on a trip, when the parents gave me a bag with medicine for the child."

It is the parents of ill children who are a relevant information basis and they should try to provide the teachers and classmates of their children with as much information as possible, educate them about the disease and thus, guarantee a safe, informed, helpful, non-discriminating environment for their child.

"A report and recommendation from specialist – doctor and the like – is decisive for a school. But it is also important whether the parents inform the class teacher about possible health problems of their child at all. According to my experience, parents often underestimate the transfer of information or they do not even want to inform the school. Which is the right of legal representatives. That is why a detailed explanation why we need to have the information about pupils' health condition during first teacher-parents meeting works for me."

"Cooperation with parents is certainly essential, parents should provide information about the problem or how they solve it at home, what the recommendations of the doctor are, and, ideally, bring a medical report with the recommendations directly for the teacher to provide detailed information."

"Cooperation with parents is very important in any case of ill pupils. It is indispensable that parents inform teachers about the changes, for example a pupil starts to be tired, irritated, sleeping and eating disorders may appear, etc. This may be related to an

increase in the schoolwork regarding the quality or quantity. Of course, a teacher should inform parents about the same changes of behaviour in the class."

"I'd appreciate if I got as many information from parents as possible (manifestation of the disease, what I can do for the child, if he/she suffers, how he/she copes with it mentally, if he/she wants his classmates to know…), I'd also appreciate a medical report with recommendations."

Teachers must have this information related to the health condition of a child although it is delicate. They try to get the information from parents so that they can intervene professionally. The ability to listen and receive information from parents and from a child is fundamental. They can become a help and a guide for a child, be ready to listen how a child experiences a disease, what he/she is afraid of, how he/she feels about the disease. On the other hand, we must realize that teachers can also be an important source of information for parents. They spend a large part of the day with children, they can observe and draw attention to important changes in the health condition of a child and behaviour changes.

3.4 Ill children and their classmates

Awareness of their classmates is an important factor in the life of chronically ill children as well. Classmates can be, on one hand, helpful and a source of support but, on the other hand, chronically ill children may encounter discrimination and stigmatization from their classmates.

Parents are often afraid that their children may experience exclusion or bullying, especially in the case of some visible diseases and long-term absence. But teachers can inform pupils only with the parents' approval. Therefore, they are constantly making an appeal to parents to communicate with them in order to get information and take a stand and provide an appropriate and safe environment.

We must realize that spreading information about a chronic disease changes also the attitudes of teachers towards the children. A positive teacher's attitude is important because a teacher is a role model, he/she becomes a significant model for classmates' choice of an attitude towards an ill pupil. A teacher can become the initiator of creating a positive, safe, helpful and non-discriminating environment.

"Classmates should be probably carefully informed about a problem because they may not understand why a child has less obligations or has advantages, for instance he goes for lunch at an exact time, has a different meal…or how to react in the case of a seizure – call for help an adult."

"Other pupils should be aware of a classmate's disease in order to be able to react to an unexpected situation in emergency when, for example, the teacher is not in the class for the whole break-time but only one teacher supervises more classes. Or they should make a quick and effective call for help when the teacher has to assist the pupil."

Classmates should therefore have basic age-adequate information of sufficient quality and quantity. Besides creating classroom climate, they can be a great help and support in an unexpected situation. Their knowledge and informedness predict the way they will be able to react and intervene if their teacher is not in the classroom but also when he is in the classroom.

"You know, when you have an epileptic child in the class and the seizure begins, the spasms look scary and the children wet themselves, they start drooling…and the children see that…you have to react and explain the situation…because of the children who were

there…and because of the child, so that they don not mock him or bully him or are not afraid of him…you can have this for your whole life…not only the disease, but also the label, that you wet yourself in class…and fear…"

"Kids can see how you treat a diabetic child for instance. But I think that your attitude influences their attitude even more in the case of a mental disorder. The teacher's attitude has influence…when you make a big deal of it, it is a big deal, but the children have to live with that without making it a big deal because that state is normal for the child and so the teacher has to have a normal approach to it, too."

Teachers' attitude, behaviour, approach and adequate information may change the common stereotypes about chronic diseases. If a teacher ignores the fact that he/she has a chronically ill child in his/her class, he/she sends a message, because keeping silence about a disease and ignoring it is a message that "there is something wrong about the child" and the teacher's behaviour confirms the pupil's otherness and stigma. A teacher should be able to approach the disease of a child as naturally as possible. Chronically ill children should not be defined by their disease, but they should be perceived as children who need to be loved and accepted. A teacher with his/her attitude is a role model influencing the way the group accepts the children and is able to create a helpful environment providing the children with high quality education.

3.5 Reason for education in paediatric topics

The consequences of a disease may have social, psychological and physical impact on a child of a younger school-age. Therefore, we focused also on the quality of life of children with a serious disease when compared with their healthy classmates, on the influence of a disease on school success and the approach of a teacher to the pupils. We were interested in teachers' accessibility and their willingness to approach children individually, willingness to become a tutor, to dedicate extra time to a child and to promote his/her progress at schoolwork.

Many teachers are open to lower requirements on these pupils, they are open to individual tutoring beyond the call of duty when pupils need individual help. They perceive pupils as those who need special help rather in the quality of information than in the quantity. Teachers try to be as helpful as possible and are willing to go beyond the call of duty.

"I definitely support lower requirements for pupils with health problems, for example less homework, easier tests or a different examination form."

"I'm open to lower requirements but only to a certain extent. A task can be shorter, adapted, but the output must be equal to other children. He/she has to learn to list the L words, but he/she does not have to do all the exercises…In physical education, there are special lower requirements given by a medical report, for instance not submerging head in a swimming class…"

"I always grade the child's completed work the same way I grade the others, when it is shortened, then, of course, I grade only the shortened part…Sometimes it is good to grade only the part the pupil managed to finish, he/she feels safer then. But it depends on the situation, the disease, and what we agree on in advance."

"I am even willing to revise with the child via skype, I would probably use the opportunity, via the internet, there are many possibilities, tasks, even when the child was ill for a long time. A mum came to me and wanted me to explain what they should revise

– I was in contact with them, but it depends very much on the attitude of the parents. Some parents come for tasks, and some do not bother."

Many teachers are in contact with pupils thanks to the willing parents, but many teachers also use IT and communication technologies, which provide a large variety of possibilities and contact with pupils and with parents as well.

The most serious problems with chronic diseases are the acute states of the disease when teachers have to react unexpectedly in class, fast and effectively to frequent and long-term absences caused by medical examinations, hospitalization or stays at home.

"...it's important for the children to go to school as much as possible if their health allows that. I have not experienced children's problems with schoolwork, they miss the social element when they do not go to school..."

Chronically ill children should go to school as much as possible if their health allows that. Education in hospitals and at home is justified but there are also some disadvantages – the children are isolated. The children then lose a significant connection with the community and partnership, which are important for the socialization, establishing important contacts and connections and also for children's self-esteem at this age.

4 Discussion

The study offers unique insights into primary teachers' views and experiences with chronically ill children, how teachers work with chronically ill pupils of younger school-age and how the quality of school care of chronically ill children of younger school-age can be improved.

The data have revealed that teachers' knowledge about chronic diseases is insufficient. Teachers must have information related to the health condition of a child, although it is delicate. Teachers should have enough information, they should support children to talk about their disease and experience and they should help and support them in reaching independence in the treatment regimen, in medication and diet compliance. They themselves should obtain information about chronic disease by self-study, from media and from particular cases they encounter at school, facing them unprepared. This proves the need for constant education in this field within the lectures during teacher training but also after finishing one's studies. Teachers must have the opportunity to take part in seminars conducted by doctors and medical staff but also by psychologists and thus, expand their knowledge base.

Parents are also in the role of an information medium for teachers and other employees. But parents are not obliged to provide this information. In spite of that, teachers appeal to them and search for ways to get information from parents so that they can react adequately and educate with quality. Informing teachers, and also classmates about the disease, its impact on every-day life and significance of the treatment and its practical aspects has an impact on supporting the child and also on the self-esteem of ill children. The thing is that in the case of a chronic disease it is important for a child to be informed on his/her cognitive level about the disease and importance of treatment. He/she should also be supported to take an active role in the management of the treatment of his/her disease and thus, teachers and classmates can be a big help.

The teachers' role is though mainly educational when they try to fulfil and saturate the special needs of children caused by frequent absences and acute states of a chronic disease so that the children reach the same educational goals as healthy children. But

teachers can support children in other activities and make it easier for the them by promoting their coping strategies and letting them express their emotions through painting, singing, or dancing.

Knowledge and skills of teachers are not the only way of helping children face the challenges of a disease and adapt better. A teacher is an important role model. His/her attitude towards illness and a child suffering from a chronic disease forms the attitude of the whole class. Teachers and classmates are important determinants of the extent to which a pupil with a chronic disease enjoys going to school and integrates successfully or he/she experiences exclusion, discrimination and stigmatization. Experiencing success at school; and creating a high quality social support and a positive climate where a child is admitted and accepted, has a huge impact on the child's psyche and may help him/her face the challenges and the obstacles given by his/her disease.

Most teachers are very open to help these children and try not to load them with too much information. The question is to what extent they lower their expectations from the pupils because of their disease or whether they are motivated by their fear of overloading them and their families beyond their capacity. On the other hand, school success is very important for these children and it can help them face the disease. Acceptance from the group is also important. The teacher with his/her attitudes is a role model influencing how the group of children accepts the ill child and creates an open environment, providing the opportunity for a high-quality education and to gain from school as much as possible in spite of their limitations.

4.1 Practice implications

When a child with a long-term illness enters school, there must be cooperation between all those who participate in the care, i.e. the child him/herself, the parents, teachers, other school staff, doctors and other medical staff, psychologists, social workers but also academic employees. Teacher trainees should have the opportunity to acquire significant information through an interdisciplinary cooperation with medical academic staff in the course of their studies. These lectures should provide information of sufficient quantity and quality, so that the teacher trainees are able to describe a particular disease and have basic knowledge about the symptoms of diseases but also about their significant psychosocial impacts. This study has demonstrated that there is a need for further continuous education in this field. Teachers must have the opportunity to take part in seminars lead by doctors and medical staff but also by psychologists in order to constantly broaden their knowledge base. They should practise first aid and algorithms so that they can react effectively in the case of unexpected situations. In this sense, interdisciplinary cooperation is crucial.

An emphasis on teachers' communication skills in this field is also important. Parents may not be willing to provide information and also the communication with an ill child is specific. It is up to the teachers how they are able to communicate in these situations and acquire important information. There is also a significant psychological and ethical aspect when teachers are important role models providing children with their attitude and behaviour a helpful supportive environment.

4.2 Strengths and limitations

This study contributes to a limited research related to teachers' own experiences with and views on the work with younger school-age children suffering chronic disease. The

authors of the study are aware of the limitations of this study, especially due to the fact that the research is still being conducted and, therefore, it is not possible to provide more detailed results and conclusions. However, our main aim was to draw attention to the very problem from the point of view of the teachers themselves and to a frequently complicated situation when the presence of a seriously ill child in the class places demands on the teacher. Also because of an increasing number of chronic diseases of children, it will be necessary to solve this situation and investigate it more closely and extensively.

5   Conclusion

The aim of this study was to show the challenges that teachers working with younger school-age pupils with chronic diseases deal with. We believe that more detailed testimonies and research should be conducted in this direction because the teachers and their experiences are an important source of information about the problem of children's chronic diseases. We must always bear in mind that the frequency of the occurrence of chronic diseases is globally increasing and the situation will require a high-quality preparation of teachers from the educational, medical and psychological perspectives so that they are able to cover all the child's needs and create a helpful, supportive environment which will provide a child with a high-quality education and fulfil his/her needs and moderate the impacts of his/her serious disease.

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Teacher as an Amateur Speech Therapist – Current Knowledge in the Field of Speech Therapy Prevention in Kindergartens

Jana Vašíková[*]

Abstract:
Introduction: In our paper, we focus mainly on defining the term of speech therapy prevention, on the anchoring of speech therapy prevention in the legislation and education, the teacher as an actor and direct mediator of the primary speech therapy prevention, and his competence. The research part describes the data obtained by in-depth interviews with teachers in nursery schools in the Zlín region.
Methods: The empirical part of the study was conducted through a qualitative research. We have obtained research data via interviews with teachers from nursery schools in the Zlín Region. The data, after transcribing them into written form, were subsequently analysed and interpreted.
Results: Based on the results of the research, we can identify one of the most significant categories in the survey of the method of implementation of speech therapy prevention in selected nursery schools in the South Moravian Region. It's called "Teacher as an amateur speech therapist". Within this category, we can also distinguish between three types of teachers: teacher - speech therapist, speech therapy assistant as a substitute of speech therapist, teacher - preventionist, and speech therapist.
Discussion: What is the cause of this situation? Poor education? Legislation? Pedagogical practice?
Limitations: The research was realized only in the South Moravian Region (CZ) and cannot be applied to the entire population.
Conclusions: It is evident from the results of the research that some respondents have insufficient knowledge about the competences of individual actors in the speech therapy prevention process as well as about the realization of speech therapy prevention in kindergartens.

Key words: speech therapy prevention, kindergarten, teachers in kindergartens.

1   Introduction

Kindergarten education plays an important role in the system of education of children. The concept of preschool education is focused on the personality of the individual and the satisfaction of his/her needs taking into account the specifics of the child. The education of children in kindergarten is realized on the basis of the obligatory curricular document – Framework Educational Program for Preschool Education. The main

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principle of this document is to respect the individuality and particularities of children with regards to their needs and abilities.

Teachers in kindergartens also rely on children's basic needs and on their basis, they try to satisfy their secondary needs, so the child can develop appropriately all areas of his/her personality, as well as his/her speech. Teachers in kindergartens work with child as individualities which have their needs, therefore, a complete diagnostic of the whole class, as well as of each individual is required. This institution fulfils diagnostic, counselling, social, and preventive functions. The teacher is often the first indicative diagnostician to note that something is wrong with the child and can recommend an appropriate professional who can confirm or reject the diagnosis.

The preventive function of kindergartens includes a broad-spectrum of activities that are aimed at timely prevention, minimizing failures and problems that could have an unfavourable effect on the quality of the child's education. It is focuses on specific areas, depending on the current conditions and needs of children. Preventive activities in kindergartens also include the prevention of impaired communication skills (Lipnická, 2015).

Nowadays, the primary speech therapy prevention program is a part of the educational program of kindergartens. However, it is necessary to specify the content and function of these programs, which are often misinterpreted and labelled as specific for teachers in a kindergarten and not for speech therapists.

The research problem of this study is the lack of information on the side of teachers about their role in the speech therapy prevention process. But they also lack knowledge about the implementation of speech therapy prevention and intervention in the educational process of children in kindergartens.

2 The terminological definition of the issues examined

Speech therapy is a science that deals directly with speech therapy prevention and has a trans-disciplinary character. Lechta says (2003) that it is important to perceive the communication ability in its entire breadth and comprehensiveness. Impairment of communication skills is present when a certain level of human language is interfering with its communication intent.

In its broadest sense, prevention can be understood as preventing and avoiding undesirable phenomena in different areas in all age groups (Hartl & Hartlová, 2009). Speech therapy prevention aims to prevent the development of impaired communication skills. It aims to prevent the formation and development of pronunciation disorders and can positively influence the progress of developmental disorders, such as delayed speech development, developmental dysphasia and other disturbances e.g. stuttering or bloating, voice disorders. Speech therapy is most effective when it prevents incorrect fixation of stereotypes in acquiring the pronunciation (Krahulcová, 2013).

Vitásková and Peutelschmiedová (2005) say that primary speech prevention can have a very small impact in relation to impaired communication skills. Of course, we cannot prevent a certain inborn and acquired organ transmutation, impaired speech development or genetically conditioned specific learning disorders, or disorders of speech fluency. However, primary speech therapy prevention may have a positive effect mainly in the case of symptomatic speech disorders, dyslalia, balbuties or voice disorders.

Speech therapy prevention can be divided into three levels: primary, secondary, and tertiary. In our work, we focus only on primary speech therapy prevention, because it is

targeted at the widest population. Most often, it is implemented via an educational activity, which is applied mainly in the intact population. Education is realized through media, press, lectures, conferences, where reflection and presentation of new knowledge and findings in the current situation take place.

Amongst the primary tasks of primary speech therapy prevention, we include education of paediatricians and pedagogues in pre-school settings. Through the awareness of pedagogues and paediatricians, appropriate information is provided to the parents of children, their mutual contacts are established, and an early search of adequate professionals is made possible (Renotiérová & Ludíková, 2003).

Not only speech therapists or pedagogues in kindergartens have a great share in natural influencing of speech development, but especially parents, grandparents and other people with whom the child most often comes into contact. They take part in developmental process of the child's speech since he/she is born and have a primary influence on the correct speech development.

3   Teachers in the speech therapy prevention process

A preschool teacher has an important and challenging position in a kindergarten. He/She must dispose of different types of abilities and skills, so he/she can develop a child's personality in all its aspects.

The teacher is a communication model for the child and should support his/her development. The importance of the teacher – child communication and their interaction in the kindergarten is emphasized by Navrátilová (2017) as well.

For a pedagogue in a kindergarten, it is necessary to understand speech therapy prevention in its broadest context. It is essential to create stimulating and appropriate conditions for proper and natural speech development. These conditions are external factors, including the influence of the environment and education involved in the development of impaired communication skills of functional character. Besides the external factors, we can identify certain congenital preconditions and the functional status of receiving analysers (auditory, visual, and speech). We also observe the function of motor areas in the brain, of speech organs and the overall physical, intellectual and psychological development of the child (Klenková, 2006).

Speech therapy prevention is part of the daily program in kindergartens. By educating the child throughout the day, the educator unintentionally develops the child's communication areas and monitors the quality of the child's speech (Vašíková & Žáková, 2017). According to Horňáková, Kapalková and Mikulajová (2005), the teacher is a communication model for the child. The child follows the teacher's expressive abilities and learns to respond in a given situation and to understand the teacher's communicative intention.

It is clear from the interviews with teachers that the incidence of children with impaired communication skills in school practice is becoming more common and cannot be excluded from the pedagogical process. This also raises the need for teachers' abilities and skills in this area. Therefore, for a practicing teacher, it is necessary to be capable to understand both theoretically and practically a full range of specific symptoms that appear, develop and change them in a child until the child reaches an optimum level. It is necessary for the teacher to be able to find effective procedures in the educational practice, to help the child achieve the optimal development of communication skill.

3.1 Teacher competences in the process of primary speech therapy prevention

The natural development of speech and language abilities of children falls within the basic competences, besides others, of a teacher in a kindergarten. This is one of the important areas that is also included in the Framework Educational Program for Preschool Education, and from which the teachers derive when practising the content and scope of their activities during day-to-day activities in kindergartens. Further qualifications and special focus are not necessary for the development of the natural evolution of a child's speech.

The definition of teacher competences is covered by several authors but for the area of speech therapy prevention we use the division according to Lipnická (2013).

The above author defines:

1. Teachers' theoretical competences – the pedagogue should be well versed in the field of language-communication education, he/she should be adequately linguistically equipped as he/she is a speech model for the child. He/she should have also knowledge about the developmental stages of a child based on the child's age, he/she should be well versed in the onto-genesis of speech, he/she should know the actual specialized materials in the field of speech therapy.

2. Teachers' communication competences – to openly support the communication skills of the child, to give him/her space in his/her speech, to support the linguistic and speech skills of the child, the teacher should express him/herself competently in the process of pedagogical diagnostics, during the development of diagnostic materials and plans, the teacher should intentionally influence situations in a positive direction via language skills and lead monologues and dialogues with the child.

3. Teachers' didactic competences – it's necessary to apply an individual approach to the child, to communicate with parents and to provide the parents with needed information regarding the level of the child's speech, to handle the diagnostics of speech as a part of the diagnostics of the child's entire personality.

4. Teachers' intrapersonal competences – managing critical thinking in stressful situations, social-emotional stability.

5. Teachers' interpersonal competence – cooperation with the child, teamwork, participation in joint decisions, solving conflicts in a given situation adequately.

6. Teachers' reflective competences – the ability of self-assessment, consistent reflection on one's own work, which is the basis for self-improvement.

3.2 Primary speech therapy prevention in the school system - legislative basis

Circles of speech therapy prevention are arising in the last few years under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports due to the increasing prevalence of communication problems in preschool children. These are being led by so-called speech therapy preventionists. Their activities are based on the Methodological recommendation ref. 14712 / 2009-61 that serves to ensure speech therapy in schools, and, among other things, sets rules and defines the competences of speech therapists, speech therapy assistants, including the competences of teachers in kindergartens and elementary schools in speech therapy prevention.

Additionally, the "Primary Speech Therapy Prevention" course, which is provided by the Association of Speech Therapy in Education, is necessary for the realization and ensuring of proper speech development in the context of speech therapy prevention. It is typical for these courses that pedagogues work in direct contact with five children or

pupils of the appropriate age category for two months. The course can be attended by kindergarten teachers and primary school teachers.

On the basis of this course, the teacher is able to interconnect knowledge in the field of communication skills and competences of the child in the area of pedagogical diagnostics. However, the teacher does not become a speech therapist after the successful completion of the course, which is a common misunderstanding in practice. Therefore, a pre-school teacher work should remain at the level of prevention and natural development of children's speech skills. He/she does not engage in the correction of defective pronunciation or in speech therapy diagnostics and therapy. But, on the other hand, he/she uses his/her knowledge and skills to co-operate with speech therapists in special pedagogical centres and, above all, with clinical speech therapists in health care, whose professional competences and qualifications allow them to work with persons with impaired communication ability.

A speech therapy assistant, who has at least a bachelor's degree with final state examination in Speech Therapy, respectively in Deaf Education from a state university in specialization Special Pedagogy - Speech Therapy, is also involved in the process of primary speech therapy prevention. Speech therapy assistants can engage in targeted speech therapy prevention circles. This education enables them to perform more specialized job (Methodological recommendation ref. 14712 / 2009-61 ensuring speech therapy in Education).

School counselling facilities, i.e. pedagogical-psychological counselling centres and special pedagogical centres SPC are a part of the school system. Speech therapy intervention, by which the presence of specialized workers is required, falls into the competence of these facilities. This includes centres providing services for pupils with speech, visual, auditory, physical, mental disabilities, for pupils with autism spectrum disorders, deaf-blind pupils and for pupils with multiple disabilities. The activities of these centres are defined and regulated by the Education Act ref. 561/2004 Coll., Decree ref. 27/2016 Coll., and especially in Decree ref. 197/2016 Coll. They provide both outpatient and outreach services.

4   Teacher as an amateur speech therapist

In the following part of the paper, we will present a part of the research, which was realized with kindergarten teachers in the South Moravian Region in 2016.

We respond to the facts from large-scale foreign research, such as Nelson et al., 2006, Korpilahti et al, 2016, Klem, et al., 2016, that concern late development of speech and language skills of preschool children, based on data from not very research-covered area of speech therapy prevention.

The main goal of this research was to clarify the way of implementation of speech therapy prevention in selected kindergartens in the South Moravian Region.

The aims of our research are as follows:
  a) to clarify the way of implementation of speech therapy prevention in selected kindergartens in the South Moravian Region,
  b) to find out how aware the interviewed teachers are about the competences of the particular actors in the process of speech prevention.

The research sample was made up of 35 teachers working in kindergartens in the Zlín Region. Of this number, 10 teachers were university graduates, 24 teachers with secondary education and 1 teacher did not have pedagogical education.

Based on in-depth interviews, that were subsequently recorded in written form and encoded, we identified several semantic categories that we then analysed and interpreted. Within a significant category dealing with the teachers' reflection on speech therapy prevention and the way of its realization, we identified a sub-category named "teacher as an amateur speech therapist". In this sub-category, we described three types of preschool educators in the process of speech therapy prevention in kindergartens.

This area is characteristic for interviewed teachers who have fundamental deficiencies in the knowledge of their job description and they intervene in the work of clinical speech therapists. Unfortunately, in practice, we have noticed that this phenomenon occurs very often in the statements of the interviewed teachers.

Within this sub-category, we can distinguish between three other types of teachers:

- The first is the so-called "teacher-speech therapist". We have to say that this type of a teacher is characterized in the context of speech therapy prevention by performing unprofessional interventions in the development of the language and communication skills of preschool children. These are actions focused the rectification or correction of the wrong sound.

- The second type is the "speech therapy assistant as a substitute of speech therapist". We deduce from the realized interviews that there is insufficient knowledge about the work and job description of a speech therapy assistant. When teachers attribute the ability to pursue speech therapy intervention to a speech therapy assistant, they attribute him/her the role of a clinical speech therapist. This is proven by the following statement of an interviewed teacher:

  "Yes. I think all teachers can do it. The one who corrects the sounds and the defects of speech goes to that speech therapy course. I mean there is always at least one teacher like that in every kindergarten who does speech therapy in particular, individually with children. He/she already knows which child has a problem and he/she is practising with the child according to his/her problem".

- The next, third type of teachers is the "teacher-preventionist and speech therapist". As the title suggests, it is a pedagogue capable of speech therapy prevention and he/she performs it with all children in the class, but also interferes with and substitutes the work of speech therapist in the sense of rectification and correction of the bad pronunciation of sounds. These teachers describe the notion of "speech therapy" as a process in which teachers engage in breathing and articulation exercise during the day, but they also strive for proper pronunciation and remedy. Often, they also mention using a speech mirror for these exercises

5   Conclusion

In the conclusion of this paper, we consider necessary to mention that we present and draw attention to a qualitatively oriented research aimed at finding out how to implement speech therapy prevention in kindergartens.

Our findings show that educators representing the semantic category "teacher as an amateur speech therapist" understand speech therapy prevention primarily as a remedy of incorrectly drawn sounds. According to the statements of the participants, speech therapy prevention is realized primarily individually, or it is realized by a speech therapy assistant who has passed a course of primary speech prevention. However, in the decree of Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic, in the job description of speech therapy assistants, the scope of action is clearly defined as aimed at support of

the natural development of communication skills and abilities in pre-school children. Correction of defective pronunciation falls uncompromisingly into the competences of clinical speech therapists or speech therapists in education.

Finally, it should be noted that a lack of awareness and understanding of the meaning and realization of primary speech therapy prevention in kindergartens plays a crucial role. Unacquainted teachers can do more harm in practice than bring benefits for children's speech development. There are also types of teachers that renounce responsibility and specialize in a different direction. They attribute this responsibility to preschool educators who have completed a course of primary speech prevention.

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Key words:	3-5 words that describe key aspects

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