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The Red Beach, by B.Đukanović

Dear Reader,

We are happy to reach to you with a new issue of the Magazine 007, bringing further insight into developments in education internationally.

Teacher-related topics, different aspects of teachers' role in a contemporary education system, and the importance of professional development of teachers for social inclusion are in the focus of this edition. The attention is also paid to exploring democratic participation of children from early years, followed by topics on diagnosing motor performance in pre-school and primary grade children, and on the pedagogy of free-time.

The themes of our interest remain to be those of significance worldwide. We shall continue to explore areas of lifelong, intercultural and non-formal learning, challenges in reaching education for all, and to promote creative and innovative approaches in education.

The beauty of Montenegro is something that we also want to bring to you through this publication.

Editors

The Teacher as Professional - a Dichotomy of Understanding

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Abstract

Teachers subscribe to professional standards and expectations. During pre-service education, the budding teacher is exposed to professional expectations at their academic institution and at their placement schools. Research carried out by the lecturers in the Graduate Diploma of Teaching (Secondary) at Massey University College of Education, revealed that students were picking up on a definition of professionalism related to the neo-liberalist model of managerialism, rather than the idealist model the lecturers in their academic programme believed they were imparting. Further analysis made it clear that explicit messages pertaining to expectations of the teacher's role, overrode the intended, but implicit, messages of 'professionalism' expected of the new teacher. A discussion of how this dichotomy evolved, and suggestions for overcoming it in future teaching completes the paper.

Introduction

Recruiting and retaining good teachers for all sectors of the school system are worldwide concerns. New Zealand faces the same pressures for teacher recruitment and retention as do other modern economies. Potential candidates for teaching courses not only need suitable personalities, but also requisite skills and knowledge. This is particularly so in the area of secondary education where teachers are required to teach specialist subjects.

In New Zealand, a Graduate Diploma of Teaching (Secondary) provides one qualification pathway to becoming a registered secondary school teacher. An applicant for such a programme must already have a degree or degree equivalent comprising substantial study in at least two teaching subjects e.g. English, Mathematics. This criterion determines that applicants are being recruited to become specialist teachers. Alongside these subject specialisms, Graduate Diploma programmes also provide theory and practice in generic teaching theories, skills, and competencies. In New Zealand, particular emphasis is given to implementing the Key Competencies (Rychen & Salganic, 2001, Rychen, 2003) developed for New Zealand as set out in The New Zealand Curriculum (Tki, 2005; Ministry of Education, 2007; Barker, 2008), implementing the Treaty of Waitangi principles (Massey University, 2008), literacy and numeracy skills, and use of information technology skills.

Student teachers are also expected to operate within professional standards (Code of Ethics) both with regard to teaching and to personal appearance and behaviour (Massey University College of Education, 2008).

Models of professionalism and teacher training

Over recent years academic staff working in the Graduate Diploma of Teaching (Secondary) programme at Massey University realised there were some problems around both the concept of 'professional', and students' understanding and interpretation of the concept.

'Professional' is a term that is used frequently and often uncritically in literature when discussing teacher education, identity and performance (Dillabough, 1999; Munthe, 2001; Locke, 2001; MACQT, 2005; Hanak, 2008). On reflection, Massey staff realised that the definition of 'professional' had never been questioned by themselves as programme lecturers involved with the writing and teaching of material presented to students in the Graduate Diploma programme. This lack of critique was highlighted by an incident where a student teacher received feedback from a school practicum suggesting that the student was not totally professional in terms of fulfilling expectations with regard to expected teacher competencies. Their definition of the concept of professional conflicted with the student's own understanding of the term which expressed a belief that the term professional signalled more surface aspects of teacher behaviour such as punctuality, personal appearance, attendance at meetings, etc. This mismatch alerted us to the existence of a problem where none had been evident before.

Reflecting on this incident we realised that we had tended to present the idea of the professional teacher as a commonly understood notion rather than providing a clear explication of what we understood the term to mean. It was taken for granted by us that *professional* covered **all** aspects of teaching i.e. the deeper features such as effective planning, effective classroom management etc. not just the superficial 'look good' aspects. Moreover, we wondered if this rather uncritical 'taken-for-granted' approach to the terms *professional* and *professionalism* had inadvertently caused us to miss a cultural and economic change in society where the previously shared understanding of a idealistic (democratic) model (Sockett, 1993) had been replaced by that of a managerial model springing from a demand for accountability, efficiency and economic imperatives, such as market driven demands (Sachs, 2003, p.25)

In the attempt to understand the nature of the schism regarding interpretations of 'professional/ism' lecturers in the graduate programme undertook research to examine both students' understandings of the terms, and the process of the change that had driven the meanings in two different directions. The earlier lack of a general definition of 'professional/

ism', particularly in education, has been problematic. The term has been high-jacked for common usage and can cover services ranging from 'Adult services' to those provided by doctors and lawyers. To that extent Sockett's (1993) definition can cover them all:

Professionalism describes the quality of practice. It describes the manner of conduct within an occupation, how members integrate their obligations with their knowledge and skill in a context of collegiality and ethical relations with clients (Sockett, 1993, p.9). Sockett's definition covers the idealist model applied to the teaching of professional/ism within the teacher education programmes at Massey University College of Education (MUCE) (Vossler, 2006). The Graduate Diploma of Teaching (Secondary) programme has been influenced by the New Zealand Ministry of Education's requirements (Ministry of Education, 1999 a, b) and subscribes to the New Zealand Teachers Council's Graduating Teacher Standards. There are seven of these standards fitting into the following three categories, each of which is prefaced by the term 'professional'.

• Professional knowledge
• Professional practice
• Professional Values and relationships
• (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2008)

As a group of teacher educators we became interested in what the term, used so glibly, and so universally in education literature, really means to us. Moreover, we were keen to explore what message the students were really picking up about 'professional/ism' from the course material/teaching. Many of the students accepted into the Graduate Diploma programme are recruited from a variety of professions, such as medicine, law and accountancy, each with their own professional standards. Some students, however, are newly graduated from other university courses that are not grounded in professional standards of any sort. This multiplicity of backgrounds will affect how the information about 'professionalism' is filtered by individual students.

The survey of the pre-service teacher students

In order to evaluate what graduate students believed to be a working definition of 'professionalism', one cohort was surveyed to gather data about their definitions of professionalism. At the time of the survey the students were near the end of the one-year programme. They had finished their subject studies papers and had completed practicums in three different schools where they had received input from a variety of practising teachers, as well as from their university lecturers, as to their performance in the teaching role. The participating students were given an open brief: that is, to write down as many or as few definitions of professionalism they wanted to. The choice of vocabulary was their own. Each response sheet was numbered to enable an analysis of whether particular definitions of professionalism were co-related. Five domains were established from the definitions given by the students.

Domain 1: Time management, paper management, knowing/following established rules, grooming/presentation. Example of response: Punctuality, keeping deadlines, well groomed.

Domain 2: Learning, teaching and professional development. Example of response: Lesson preparation, life-long learner.

Domain 3: Relationships with colleagues and with students. Example of response: Team player, respects confidentiality,

Domain 4: Character. Example of response: Tolerant, reliable, self reflective.

Domain 5: Content, professional knowledge. Example of response: Good content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge.

The definitions given by the students were tallied within each domain to establish how many students defined 'professionalism' in a particular way.

Table 1: Students' definitions of 'professionalism' (n=58 students participating)

	Domain					
	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Number of definitions	140	23	60	80	18	321
Percentage	43.61	7.17	18.69	24.92	5.61	100

The range of responses given by the students ranged from 2 to 14, with a mode of 5. The two students giving the fewest definitions defined professionalism in domain 2, domain 3 and domain 5. The student giving the largest number of definitions missed out domain 2 altogether, with most definitions in domain 1 and the rest in the other domains.

The two domains most closely associated with learning and teaching (domain 2) and with the professional content knowledge of the profession (domain 5), were defined least often by the students as being part of professionalism in teaching. This is counter to Sockett's definition of professionalism (Sockett, 1993), and with the Teaching Council's *Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions* Domain 1 was most often used to define teacher professionalism, with domain 4 and domain 3 the only other domains making up more than 10% of the total responses.

The message from the student survey is clear: the students have picked up on the message about managerial professionalism (Sachs, 2003).

The journey from the idealist (democratic) professional model to the managerial model

In the quest to understand the process that underpinned the shift in perception of the professional model in the latter part of the 20th century, which seeded the thinking of the students coming through the graduate programme, an exploration into the history driving the societal shifts was necessary. In summary, liberalism was paramount in the nation state after the second WW. Under liberalism the rule of government was to defend individual freedom as part of a social contract in exchange for educational institutions reproducing the culture of the society (Grimmett, 2008)

In the 1960s the neo-liberal movement started, but liberalism with its social contract did not break down completely until 1989 and the end of the Cold War. Up until 1989 universities were safe as they were thought to be essential to cultural reproduction. After 1989 they were seen as social security appendages. The change was driven by a fear that individualism rendered people ungovernable. Thus, while emphasising individual rights and privacy rules, market driven policies were enforced. Universities were required to access targeted funding. Managerial structures were imposed, increased administration and reduced collegiality as competition, rather than cooperation became the key operator (Hodkinson, 1997; Sachs, 1997; Hargreaves, 2000; Cochran-Smith, 2004; Grimmett, 2008).

In New Zealand, with the introduction of 'Tomorrow's Schools', schools became self managing and more competitive and were encouraged to compete for students. Many schools remodelled themselves on a business model. This new agenda was inspired by neo-liberal policies promoting marketisation, school self-management and centralisation of control (Codd, 2005 p.193).

Neo-liberalism led to hierarchical pyramids of leadership and increased the importance of League Tables. Achieving more with less became the catch-phrase and the education sector became peopled with leaders closely focused on the profit motive rather than education. This further transformed New Zealand schools in the 1990s and led to the de-regulation of pre-service teacher training providers (Ministry of Education, 1989, 1999a,b, 2001; Vossler, 2006).

The neo-liberalist message of professional managerialism is reflected in the professional model expressed by the students in the MUCE graduate programme. This model also drives an expectation of 'check-points' and value by auditing i.e. an output and grade driven model with expectations of increased payment for 'good' teachers. Thus there has been a removal of power from practising professionals to auditors (Drudy, 2008). This raises further questions: Is it appropriate to have systems in place that externally evaluate the degree to which a teacher is 'a professional'? (Beyer, 2000, 2001). Sachs (2003) in her book *The Activist Teaching Profession* raises

the question about 'professionalism with regard to teachers and their role'. Who defines it? Who monitors it? And why?

Professionalism as defined by auditors and the use of specifically targeted language

Cochran-Smith's (2001) three competing agendas, professionalization, deregulation and over-regulation, have also been seen as driving the reforms of teacher education in New Zealand (Vossler, 2006). Education was no longer seen as a public good, but as an economic investment in 'productive units' where government investments were to be accounted for in terms of 'profitability'. That transformation increased the demand for accountability and quality assurance (Codd, 2005 p.201).

The Professional Model that lecturers believed was implicit in what was taught at MUCE, disappeared under the managerial message that the students heard spoken in the media and in the schools. This shift can be explained by Austin's concept of 'Performativity' (Hall, 2000) which states that it is in the declaration of an outcome that the outcome is achieved i.e. that the outcome is not verified in terms of truth, but that the utterance of the words creates and completes the act. Thus 'you are a professional because I say you are' and 'I can say you are because you have said 'yes' to a series of questions I have'. In other words: using performativity, professionalism is defined in terms of professionalism as it is defined by managerialists and assessable by narrow rubrics. The de-regulation of teacher training providers and exposure of teacher education to market reforms led to greater regulation of teacher outputs (Cochran, 2001: Codd, 2005; Vossler, 2006) and thus to tighter definitions of 'professionalism'.

The dilemma of pre-service teacher training providers

Teacher Education is now predominantly located within universities in New Zealand. Universities are also increasingly influenced and driven by audit and performativity cultures (Drudy, 2008). Research, and access to research funding, are predominantly determined by 'usability and saleability'. Education (and teaching research) has less currency and struggle to access funding and is seen as less prestigious.

The idealistic (democratic) model of professionalism, with its emphasis on trust, collegiality and collaboration, does not fit comfortably with the performativity culture. In the neo-liberal climate teachers' performance is measured by particular indicators. These tend to become technocratic in their approach to teaching. Such teacher attitudes are seen as desirable as they can be easily regulated and, by inference, controlled (Reynalds, 1994; Codd, 1999; Locke, 2001). Attempts were made to embed regulations in standards and teacher ethics, which are, in reality, Codes of Conduct (Snook, 2000, 2003). Other attempts to evaluate teachers' worth have been based on relating the teachers' competence to the outputs or achievements of the students of those teachers (Hattie, 2003; Cochran-Smith, 2004). This is all in accordance with neo-liberal ideals of 'governability' (Grimmett, 2008).

Meta-narratives are the total philosophies of a particular time within history which make ethical and political prescriptions for society, and generally regulate decision-making and the adjudication of what is considered truth i.e. equate to the understanding of the principles the particular society is founded on (Lyotard, 1984). The problem is that when these narratives are concretely formulated and implemented they seem to go awry (Halbert, no date). Thus the meta-narrative loses its legitimacy and society falls back on the 'little narratives' and each person becomes defined by 'what he/she does – this is the post-modern condition. Knowledge is therefore legitimised in 'how well it performs or enables a person to perform' in particular roles i.e. performativity. Thus, the cultural change swell that pre-service educators have to navigate, also has a

component where the agent with the influence to manipulate consumer choice in the education system, will be the focus towards which power (and money) will flow. This philosophical dilemma will have to be grappled with.

The eclectic mix, mentioned earlier, of undigested 'professional' definitions that the students bring to a teaching course, are carried into a variety of school cultures and student teachers are asked to perform their teaching tasks in the practicum school, never knowing exactly through which lens their behaviours are viewed for the examination of their ability to teach and behave professionally. As teacher identity is central to the teaching profession, how it is formed will be crucial to how the teacher performs their duties, how they see their role in society and how they see their students (Sachs, 2003). If the individual is forced to 'conform' to an inflexible set of standards and is evaluated only in terms of those standards, genuine professional reflection may not occur and further development may be stifled to the detriment of education as a whole.

Summary

The neo-liberal culture has spawned managerialism and performativity (where language defines its own outcomes) within a post-modern setting where the language of efficiency and effectiveness paralyses the ability to think about education ends and purposes (Race, 2000). The discourse about professionalism is presently cloaked in language of managerialism which colours student teachers' perceptions of what professionalism is, and affects their perceived identity as a teacher. Staff in the Massey Graduate Diploma of Secondary Teaching programme realised that we need to be explicit and signal clearly that the idealist model of professionalism is the intended and preferred outcome. Failing to do so may result in a generation of new teachers who will follow the managerialistic ideal, where the cost of everything is known, but the value of nothing is recognised.

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Importance of Educating Teachers for Social Inclusion

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Abstract

The goal of the article is to focus on the importance of training and professional development of teachers for social inclusion in the process of education, and to stand as a reminder of the connection between the development of mind, process of gaining knowledge and skill, and respect for others throughout the whole life. When a teacher reaches the mindset which enables him/her to enjoy the work with different pupils, only then it will be possible for him to realize the social inclusion through every contact and not only through specific teaching situations. However, in addition to the good will of a teacher as a person, it is also necessary to have a well-planned and continuous training with positive impact on the development of all skills necessary for efficient reaching of all the goals the teacher strive for.

Changes in global plan demand changes at schools

Children attending pre-school institutions and elementary school will be encountering social changes, changes of the environment, changes in science and technology, in industry, and impact they have on the employment and lifestyle throughout their entire life. It is because of this that the developed world is again emphasizing the important role of education and demanding its faster response to changes in life. School, as an institution, hardly ever responds, adjusts or prepare for the needs of the modern lifestyle and new type of pupils. In this aspect, we are still coping with the education system which does not provide for understanding a correlation between studying and life, which is rather necessary for the comprehensive studying. We are to be aware of one of the greatest changes in social structure that the world has been going through, and these changes will have the strongest impact directly on the educational institutions. This is creating a constant need for the training and adopting new knowledge and skills within the field of their competence. They will be more and more familiar with new methods and mechanisms for diagnosing, monitoring and evaluation which will, in a detail manner, establish starting levels, children's needs and approach to the studying process. An individual work of a teacher will be replaced with an intensive team work; more and more time will be devoted to preparation process, planning of the development, its monitoring and results.

Core changes in the plans for teaching and initial education of teachers in general, are still underway in most European countries. Special attention has been paid to resolving the problem of lack of highly qualified teachers by providing specific incentive for future teachers and measures which will manage to keep the teacher at schools by presenting them special awards, having them work less hours and by attracting teachers who have left school due to previous unfavorable working environment. Reforms in the system in general reflect on many aspects in the profession of teaching: profile of education, acquiring of teaching license, training and employment conditions. It has been clearly established that the initial education cannot possibly prepare a teacher for all the necessary roles and tasks in the field of teaching and that additional training is necessary.

Professional development of a teacher

During the process of reform of the Montenegrin education system, one of the key issues which demanded a comprehensive analysis and a precise planning was the initial education of teachers, as well as the process of their continuous training. At the same time, an issue of teachers' motivation and affection for working with children was raised along with working environment at teachers' faculties and colleagues which constitutes their initial education for future engagement. Quality of teaching programs, following and applying new pedagogy methods, introducing new teaching methods, intensifying practical pupils' work, following innovative projects, are only few pillars which support the process of education and professional training for teachers. Nevertheless, it is also important to take into consideration teachers' status in a society, how it accepts them, the way they are treated by the relevant institutions, material and professional logistics. As Oljaca says (2001), out of many theories which deal with a problem of motivation of adults for studying, as many as six important factors which influence this process can be highlighted: attitude, needs, stimulation, feelings, skills and incentive. Thanks to numerous requirements and roles which are expected from a teacher, the education reforms have to cover their further education and training for the purpose of having work performed at a highest possible level in a new working environment.

In addition to the initial teaching, which has to be rehabilitated, it is necessary to establish continuous monitoring of teachers' work and a uniform system for pursuing career. Teachers have to be able to take proper decisions on their own. It is at least at the level of some key principles, proclaimed by some strategic reform documents which imply focusing on goals and processes with a genuine professional independence of a teacher.

Professional training of a teacher is also influenced by introducing a practice teacher in the process of reform, not only through short education workshops and seminars, but also through a well planned and specific action. Through this process, a teacher becomes a tailor and active in practice and independently changes and models the education process on the basis of his/her own evaluations and checking. The innovation and development of quality of work of the teaching staff implies their learning about new requests and demands in the area of applying an open curriculum, different methods and working system, creating ever more open working environment which ensures a complex interaction, mutual communication, individualization and differentiation of the education process, as well as the social inclusion of pupils. A systematic reform of training for teachers requires a close connection between a research and development process in education, initial education of teachers and a specific work at schools. In the light of that, it is necessary that the main actors in the field of education from different positions and levels do get involved in a unique community for studying. This helps them leave the traditional models in the process of taking decisions and establish a professional cooperation in both educational and social system. The process of the continuous professional development encompasses: initial education, initial issuing of licenses or certificates, introducing a teacher into a teaching process, additional education during work, further education for career advancement, educational research and advance training.

However, on many of the above mentioned requirements neither a teacher nor science are in the position of influence, except to appeal with concrete arguments to a ruling power in education to cosider changes and upgrade teaching profession and working environment. A teacher may improve his/her professional engagement by an overall insight into his/her personal work and by correcting it in line with the obtained information. A professional portfolio is one of those ideas which have become very popular lately as it can be a very important trigger of a professional reflexion of the teacher on the practice. Some of the criteria for evaluation cannot be considered directly, therefore it is necessary to think carefully the evidence which could

be cosidered as a ralizaton of a sepcific criterium. Collecting products in a presonal portfolio can help us achieve this goal. In this manner teachers should sort out all the materials for thier portfolio in line with the criteria which products of his/her work best suport his/her work and respond to the established criteria and/or standard. Creating of a personal portfolio by a teacher alters his/her attitude towards work, especially if following evaluation criteria established beforehand.

For the purpose of doing a reserach in the field of professional development of a teacher, in addition to direct monitoring of a lesson and insight into his/her portfolio, there can also be situations where the teacher communicates with pupils' parents and environment, and where a feedback may be asked and received from pupils and colleagues. Katz (1993) talks about five different perspectives which can be used for monitoring the quality of a program and which are transfered into the field for assessing the teacher and the quality of his/her work as following:

- From upwards to downwards (from a perspective of an outside observer),
- From downwards to upwards (from the childres's perspective and their experience),
- From the inside (from the teachers' perspective),
- From the outside to inside (from the parents' perspective),
- From the outside (perspective of the common intrest).

Concrete activities which can be applied in practice by a teacher at a school and pre-school level and which represent indicators of their professional development and advancement are as following:

- analyzing strengths and weaknesses in the practice of teaching and laying out a plan for improvement;
- Experimenting with new ideas while laying out a working program for a teacher;
- Taking notes which are helpful when contemplating practice which refers to both individual subjects and projects which connect different fields from a curriculum;
- Action research, through cooperation with researchers who study pedagogy practice;

- Searching for advice and feedback in informal and formal discussions from colleagues upon monitoring lessons and/or joint checking of pupils' work;
- Following current research and applying innovation in both content and manner of work;
- Analyzing information from meetings and informal conversation and discourse with children, parents, other family members and colleagues from school.
- Analyzing children's achievement for the applying of adequate pedagogy procedure;
- Continuous searching for new information on children's development characteristics;
- Continuous monitoring of the level of participation in regard to personal cultural origin, prejudices and values which may have impact on a teaching process;
- Using professional literature, seminars and other opportunities for acquiring new knowledge;
- Through an open cooperation with colleagues from the team, through exchange, support, advise, feedback, positive criticism, respect of personal contribution of every member of the team;
- Through mentoring work with trainee teachers at pre-schools and schools, etc.

Professional development of a teacher requires continuous professional training through different types of knowledge and skill development which are necessary for working with children who are in a period of the most intensive development of their personality on many levels. Therefore, teachers should get familiar with new findings coming from pedagogical disciplines and its related types of science; apart from theoretical development, it is necessary to implement self-reflection of the teaching practice. This approach will enable teachers to work with children who grow along with all the changes which follow contemporary life and with its characteristics improve the quality of teaching process.

Since the school curriculum which can entirely meet the needs of all the students in the process of teaching, interests and potentials of every pupil in a system of a collective learning and teaching, cannot be produced in advance, certain adjustments are necessary through individual and/or programs created for a certain group of pupils. Most frequently,

the adjusted programs are created for pupils with certain specific features in development which require a special treatment. This kind of individual education programs is created by a team of experts from a school and other institutions and they are realized in classrooms with a limited number of pupils and teachers trained and educated for the execution of the working program with pupils who need special treatment and attention in the process of teaching. This presumption requires more of our time as to avoid any kind of misunderstanding. Given the fact that we have all along discussed the process of individualization as a key motto in the process of realization of the contemporary system of teaching, the following question may be raised: in that case, are we to understand that all the children have the need for specific treatment in the process of teaching? And the answer is-yes, all the children are unique individuals and have different dimensions of individuality, but it is also an objective circumstance – the factor of collective teaching which has to be a starting point when organizing lectures. Collective lecturing understands a simultaneous work of a teacher with a number of pupils, and the Law on elementary education in Montenegro regulates maximum 28 pupils per class. Regardless of the fact that both a teacher and a pre-school teacher jointly execute lectures at the first year of elementary school, an **absolute individualization** of the teaching process is impossible to organize due to a large number of pupils. This is the reason why it is important to continue looking for the manner of teaching which could ensure the most balanced education process by different approaches, types of work, modern teaching tools and all in all by different strategies of learning and lecturing. The process of producing such programs takes into account differences in pupils' community, supports respect and acceptance of differences among people, including gender, race, ethnic origin, mother language, religion, social status, family structure and physical and cognitive capabilities.

Social inclusion of pupils

Due to evident consequences of social and cultural differences, numerous programs and institutional concepts started being developed which focus their

intervention on reducing deficit caused by family and/or environment circumstances, that is consequences, but not on the process itself and conditions. Attempts to overcome different types of neglect children face have had opposing starting points, but they still had in common the intention to balance starting positions in knowledge and level of action in the teaching process. The selection of compensatory strategies depended on psychological interpreting of the problem dealing with denial and theoretical assumptions regarding development and studying. The common feature of these programs is ignoring the fact that it is necessary to encompass some of the formative components of the reality. A broader understanding of life, ecological conditions that children are brought in were missing at the very start. The widespread programs, "the programs for enriching", were selected in a way aimed to stimulate, dominantly social and emotional development in an environment of a free playing and relaxed interaction between a teacher and children. Pesic (1987) noticed that not a small number of compensation programs starts from the Bernshtain theory on more or less operational language code, which corresponds to a social class level of children's origin. These programs, unlike previously mentioned (programs for enriching), deems Pesic (1987), start from an identified deficit first of all, caused by the environment which lacks adequate incentives and where an interaction within family has no communication abundance, which is part of higher social classes. However, theoretical frameworks of designed compensatory programs directed a strategy of compensating for the missing part in the domain of cognitive and articulation development rather dominantly. Even the Bernstine theory on the language code served as an outcome of many compensatory ideas and program interventions, Pesic (1987) mentioned that the interpretation road often led to drifting away from the main goal and redefining of key mottos of this outline of the theory. These ungrounded interpretations led to a rigid or perhaps, even a discriminatory standpoint towards language characteristics of lower classes and ethnic minorities. Even Bernstine himself distances from such interpretations of language differences, advocating certain adjustment of the cultural environment to this abundance of class, ethnic-specific features. Much later an idea of cultural difference was launched as an obverse to the previously men-

tioned direction of compensatory impact based on the thesis of cultural denial. The results of these different approaches were tested in practice and interpreted in broad theoretical elaborations. "During the time of making a concept of a starting compensation programs, according to some scientists who analyze efficiency of these compensatory interventions, there was no well-grounded theoretical base which would anticipate an appropriate pedagogic solution" (Pesic 1987, p.46). Some compensatory ideas and along with them well modeled pedagogic interventions are available in numerous attempts made today for children to reach the expected, socially desirable model of behavior at a certain level. In addition to this, what appears as a convincing effort of transformations in pedagogy is to accept the differences and simply accept an exception and personality in creating a program and educational interventions. Inclusion of children into the process of education respecting all the specific characteristics they bring from their families becomes a goal of contemporary school and society.

Social inclusion in a class needs an open mind of a teacher and only after that planning and execution of teaching units which treat problems caused by difference in a society, offer a possibility to children to meet people of different origin and to establish contact with them in a manner agreeable to children. In addition to lessons where teaching is executed and where it is planned to draw conclusion and morals of stories, informal situations also give an opportunity to show positive sides of being different. These are the situations where children in a certain way exclude other children or people, and it is then where they should be given a chance and ask from them to think about ethic issues and conflicts from different perspectives, to recognize and react to discrimination and exclusion from the society and to advocate for the rights of other children and people. A game can be planned as well as other activities which help children to develop skills which are necessary for life in a democratic civic society, for example, respecting different ideas, separation, settling of problems and disputes. Teachers cannot possibly know the rules, values and expectations of all the social and cultural levels from which the children come, but understanding and respecting their origin and families can help significantly in interpreting

the children's behaviour, feelings and expressed and unexpressed needs. As Katz and McClellan (2005, p.59-60) state, "cultural difference between the children and colleagues offers teachers an opportunity to learn from others certain skills, dispositions and attitudes. When a teacher at a kindergarten has a respect and understands cultural norms and values in accordance to which social relationships that the children bring to kindergartens from families are governed, it can help the children to feel comfortable and integrated into their generation group and into norms and values of the educational institution culture." Teachers give contribution in this respect by equipping classrooms with materials which reflect differences among people in a way which implies respect for differences, but to have all the materials equally available for all the children in the classroom. Using different sources of writing, including those written by people who were traditionally excluded from the society, the children are given equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and how good they are at expressing themselves on the topic on differences. Teachers work with children on developing the skills in advocating from the field of social inclusion, social community, human rights and children's rights, and in their working environment, on creating culture of acceptance of differences and inclusion. Informing the families on how to defend and ask for their and the children's rights to be treated equally, and in the addition to the availability of a good education for their children, the teachers also give their contribution by engaging everyone into social affairs, as, without proper participation of marginalized families or families who have a child who needs a special care into education and school activities, we cannot hope to build a society based on democracy.

* * *

Education of teachers is actually a process where a person learns from person, and professional development of a teacher in the field of social inclusion is the process of opening mind of individuals for differences and self-acceptance. In addition to such a great gain, a teacher who has an open mind and continuously thinks about his/her work takes the work with different children as a challenge. This kind of engagement offers the possibility to a

teacher to express his/her personal psychological and social maximum and his/her open-mind represents a space with no limits together with the differences the children live with.

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Children as Citizens „Here and Now" - Democratic Participation as a Core of Citizenship Education in Early Years

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Abstract

For the past ten years citizenship education has been an important part of social studies at the Department for Preschool Education of the Faculty of Education in Ljubljana. The author's basic premise is that children's democratic participation represents a core of democratic and active citizenship in early years. The article summarises some of the knowledge and experiences gathered from the research studies as well as from practical projects aimed at promoting children's participation in Slovene kindergartens. The research evidence indicate that children's influence on decisions is limited; particularly low is children's participation in shaping their own environment and influencing the conditions for learning and play. At the same time promoting children's democratic participation represent a top priority to Slovene teachers. Increasing number of projects in Slovene kindergartens demonstrate ethics and philosophies such as children's involvement, decision-making, empowerment, respecting human rights, listening to children's perspectives; they enable the development of citizenship competences such as social competence, action competence, intercultural competence, active learning competence.

Introduction

Children's participation rights play a crucial role in conceptualisation of education for democratic, active citizenship in early years. It represents a core of pre-school citizenship and can be regarded as a necessary condition for realisation of children's citizenship roles. Pre-school setting offers many opportunities for practicing citizenship. Being a 'citizen' for children of 3 to 7 years means, first and foremost, experiencing democratic relationships, equality among people inside institutions and democratic ways of making joint decisions. Democratic and active citizenship is also about children learning through participatory learning strategies, having an opportunity to be active in relation to their surrounding: influencing their lives inside the kindergarten as well as in local community.

In my opinion education for citizenship has to be conceptualised primarily as education for present time. In other words: as 'education for childhood within the period of childhood' rather than as preparation for future citizenship roles in the period of adulthood. Children are *already* citizens of their societies, members of their kindergartens, peer groups and families. Therefore, the role of early childhood pedagogy is not focusing primarily on preparing children for future citizenship roles but to create conditions for children to contribute in meaningful ways to quality of (their) lives *here and now*. Kindergartens should be places where preschool

Photo 1: *Children's corner for resting and enjoying privacy (Krek, 2007)*

children feel part of a classroom community, stir up lively discussions on how they should spend the day, learn to negotiate with others and respect their opinions. These conditions fulfilled, citizenship education can 'move further', towards learning how to improve the 'outdoor' world. Education for citizenship always involves experiences 'here and now'. Even though the competences learned in childhood are important for exercising later adult citizenship roles, they can merely be regarded as a 'positive side effect', not as a primary goal.

The new sociology of childhood

Children's democratic participation is a part of 'new sociology of childhood' which considers children as active subjects, citizens with rights, experts in their own lives as well as active participants in research. It challenges the traditional developmental paradigm which regards childhood as a stepping stone to adulthood and children as incomplete, as going through a process of linear progress. It represent a shift away from childhood perceived as a state of immaturity, incompetence and inability to understand the world, as well as adults being perceived as solely and fully responsible for children, since they know best what is good for them and assumed as always acting in the best interest of children. By introducing 'philosophies' and concepts such as *child's participation, involvement, decision-making, empowerment* etc, democratic and critical pedagogy contribute to the perception of children as a social group with a potential to make a valued contribution to society (Kirby et al, 2003).

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The children's participation rights defined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child introduce for the first time in international law an additional dimension to the status of children by recognising that children are *subjects of rights*, rather than merely recipients of adult protection, and that those rights demand that children themselves are entitled to be heard. At the core is Article 12, which insists on the '*visibility*' of children. Its implementation involves a profound and radical reconsideration of the status of children in most societies and the nature of adult/child relationships. It requires us to begin to *listen* to what children say and to take them *seriously*. It requires that we recognise *the value of their own* experience, views and concerns and to question the nature of adult responsibilities towards children. It is implied by the Convention, and its philosophy of respect for the dignity of children that adults need to learn to work more closely in collaboration with children to help them articulate their lives, to develop strategies for change and exercise their rights (Lansdown, 1997).

The key theoretical concepts

The participation rights have been strongly developed within social work. The *ethics of participation* (Hoffman, 1994) and the *strength perspective* (Saleebey, 1992) brought significant changes in relations between professionals and users; they indicate a post-modern shift towards sharing responsibility - between professionals and 'users' of the institutions. The ethics of participation obligates professionals to renounce the power over the 'truths' and final answers, i.e. the power that does not belong to them. Instead, they (the teachers) should *create* opportunities for dialogue with children in order to find joint solutions. The *strength perspective* emphasises that professionals should mobilise one's (children's) strengths, talents, abilities and personal sources in pursuing their own personal goals.

For the past ten years '*the pedagogy of listening*' (Rinaldi, 2005) has become an important paradigm in early childhood education. For Carla Rinaldi listening is a 'tool' for identification and recognition of the child's perspective. In pedagogy of listening, learning is regarded as a process of developing 'interpretative' theories generated through sharing and dialogue. Listening to children's theories enhances the possibility of discovering how children think and how they question and develop a relationship with reality. According to Carla Rinaldi 'our theories need to be listened to by others… in order to exist'.

Listening is not only about verbal communication; it also means being open to others and what they have to say, listening to the hundred (and more) languages, with all our senses. Listening enables the '*pedagogy of relationships*' as developed by Loris Malaguzzi (1993) is not only a technique but a way of thinking and seeing ourselves in relationship with others and the world. It is a philosophy dealing with issues of ethics, moral education and social justice as expressed in Levinas' '*ethics of an encounter*' (Egea-Kuehne, 2008).

Children's democratic participation involves two aspects: *involvement* and *decision-making*. It means children belonging to a group of peers, feeling included when resolving problems, being involved in planning daily activities in kindergarten. It also means making decisions - children being consulted by the teachers on daily basis and exerting significant influence on issues concerning their well-being within institutions. It appears that kindergartens live their own 'self-sufficient' lives; for children, reality of institutions is often conferred upon them. Adults are those who can break the existing patterns and accept children as competent, as partners and co-creators of institutional life as well as actors who are capable and willing to act towards better societies. An increasing number of projects based on the philosophy of participation implemented in Slovene kindergartens demonstrate that many pre-school teachers share those beliefs. Children's democratic participation is a necessary condition for democratic and active citizenship; it is a core of citizenship in pre-school age.

Research on children's participation

Research studies in European countries indicate a general conclusion that children's participation in pre-school settings is rather limited. In most cases children are allowed to decide about 'children's things', while having no meaningful impact on overall organisation of institutions.

In Swedish kindergartens Sonja Sheridan and Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson (2001) interviewed children asking them about their wishes and expectations regarding decisions-making. They questions were the following:

- What would you like to do in pre-school if you could decide for yourself?
- Do you believe that your teacher knows what you like to do most of all?
- How do you make decisions; who decides in pre-school?
- What can you decide together with the teacher, what yourself?
- Where can you decide most, in pre-school or at home?

The study showed that the participation in decision-making is of vital importance for children in Swedish kindergartens. The interviews revealed that children are allowed to decide about their personal belongings, their own play and activities, and to some extent make decisions about themselves. However, the authors conclude 'it seemed children seldom participate in and influence the overall organization, routines, content and activities that are initiated by the teachers' (p. 188).

A comparative survey in Slovene and Finnish pre-schools (Turnšek, 2007) confirmed those findings.* The study focused on more 'demanding' areas of decision-making indicating higher levels of participation. We were interested in investigating the level of children's participating in shaping their own environment and influencing the conditions for learning and play. The teachers were asked to *estimate to what extent the children exert influence on decisions in kindergarten,* such as:

- purchasing toys and didactic materials,
- furnishing and decorating pre-school classrooms,
- deciding about the organisation and content of kindergarten celebrations/events, choosing 'their own' teacher/activity,
- choosing their 'own teacher' or the activity
- planning daily activities in day-care centre.

* In the Slovene representative sample, there were 422 early childhood teachers working with children of 1 to 6 years. In the Finnish sample, there were 230 teachers mainly from the central and northern regions of Finland, working with the same age groups.

Table 1: Slovene children's influence on decisions
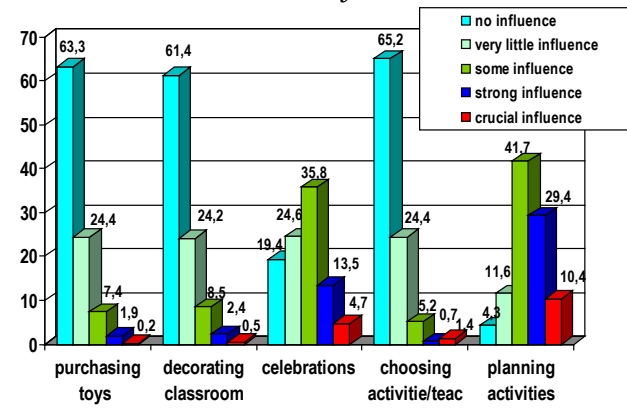
According to the Slovene teachers' estimations, the children's participation in decision-making in kindergarten is mostly low. Less than 5 percent of children exert crucial or strong influence on decisions such as, which toys and materials should be bought and how their classroom should be decorated; about the same percentage of children have an opportunity to choose the activity or the teacher initiating it. Two fifth of children are involved in planning of daily activities and less than one fifth can contribute ideas regarding the ways of celebrations (such as birthdays or mothers' day) and other important kindergarten events.

Table 2: Levels of children's decision-making in Slovene and Finnish kindergartens
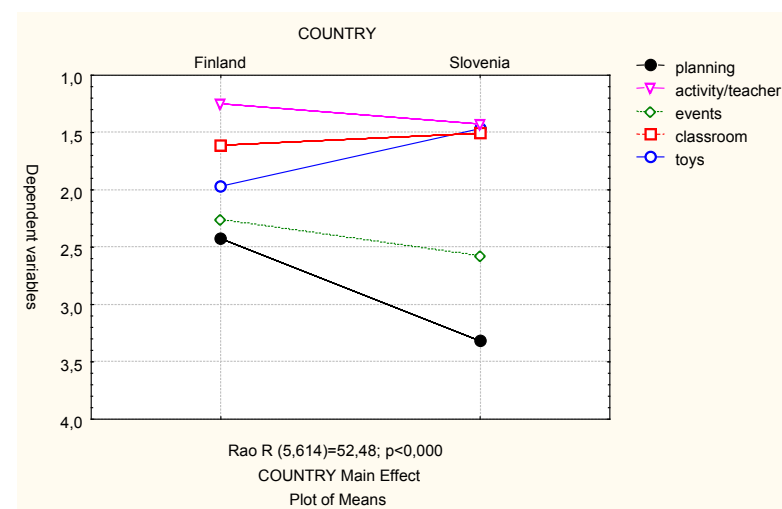
Surprisingly, children in Finnish kindergartens - living in a pro-democratic oriented culture - have no more say in pre-schools. However, the differences are in the areas of decision-making. In Finnish kindergartens the children seem to create their immediate classroom environment to a higher extent, while in Slovene kindergartens the children exert stronger impact on the planning of the daily programme.

The comparative study of pre-schools in 17 countries (Weikart, Olmsted and Montie, 2003) offers indirect conclusions about children's institutional participation opportunities. Observations of an ordinary day in preschools all over the world indicate several universal characteristics of preschools: in most preschool settings there prevail adult-centred interactions, especially during learning activities, as well as negative child-management approaches and a lack of adult listening behaviour. The patterns of interactions among adults and children indicate that children's involvement and participation is unlikely to be promoted. However, the pattern of adult-children interactions found in Slovene kindergartens represented an exception; the researchers observed significantly more child-oriented interactions and positive child-management practices comparing to other countries.

Decision-making is literally about making choices: interviews with children in Slovene kindergartens

Few years after the Swedish research study interviewing the children, a similar study was performed in Slovene kindergartens with the children of 5 to 6 years. Its emphasis was on teacher's self-reflection; we hoped that the teacher's discussions with children would stimulate self-reflection of the teacher's role. For that reason the teachers interviewed the children of their 'own' classes; after the interviews they were writing essays reflecting on what the children views and opinions tell them about the possibilities of promoting children's participation in kindergarten.

The first lesson the teacher gained was quite a gap between their self-perception and the children's expectations. When answering the question "Who decides in pre-school?" almost all the children responded "You, of course« or »You two are the bosses«. Even though the interviews were conducted with the teachers who were democratically oriented and confident about giving the children a lot of participatory experiences, that kind of a feed back from children came as quite a surprise. Many teachers had more positive image of their practices and had expected children to recognise the opportunities for making decisions.

Another important experience for the Slovene teachers was a significant difference between the teacher's and the children's interpretations of the concept of 'making decisions'. For many teachers the meaning of making decisions was about giving children a chance to choose among several options adults offer to them. A very common example would be consulting children how they want to spend their out-door time: going out for a walk or staying on the play-ground… For many children that kind of choice was not satisfactory; referring to the previous example, for children making decisions had to be deciding to stay inside if they want or inventing other alternatives … A lesson for all was that decision-making is *literally* about *children making their own choices* not merely choosing among the adult choices.

Kindergartens as (nice) hotels

If I would try to answer the question, whether there is enough space for children to co-participate, an image of *a kindergarten resembling to a nice hotel* comes to my mind. I should explain that statement: all the systemic indicators show that contemporary Slovene public day-care provide very good living standards, nutrition and health care; in fact, better than in many other European countries. We could say that the protection and caring aspect of the Convention on children's rights has been very carefully deliberated; the question is how much children participation is respected, as a third aspect. In other words children are very well 'taken care for'; however, they are not often consulted on the subject of their expectations, ideas and wishes. The latter is in most cases a matter of a teacher's personal style rather than a general institutional policy.

If I would caricature a bit I would say that many kindergartens today still resemble more to hotels - treating the children as guests - than to children's homes or *children's places* (Dahlberg and Moss, 2005, Moss and Petrie, 2002). The curriculum is mostly pre-planned by adults and in many cases rather structured or school-like, as the research studies showed in the nineties (Weikart, Olmsted and Montie, 2003).

Referring to Norwegian preschools Anne Trine Kjørholt (Dahlberg and Moss, 2005, p. 167) draws similar conclusions. She describes pre-schools as being

'…*designed in a particular architectural style, with particular toys and furniture representing values and norms concerning how to behave as a child in the institution. […] Placing children in this age-related social order clearly imposes many restrictions on the choices that are available to them. For example, they are not able to choose to participate in an intergenerational relationship and interact with age groups other than preschool children; they cannot participate in working activities, or decide to engage in activities together with their parents or older siblings; nor can they choose to go outside the institution. It is important to bear in mind, therefore, that the children's voices that the discourse requires staff to listen to are produced within this particular social and ideological space'.*

The teachers' impact on decisions inside pre-schools

In Slovene kindergartens children spend eight to nine hours per day in institutional care. Therefore, it is important for teachers to consider whether children are given enough opportunities for creating their institutional life. It is very optimistic though, that children's democratic participation is of top priority to Slovene teachers. We have asked the teachers (Turnšek, 2005, 2008) *which democratic changes would contribute the most to the quality of kindergartens;* the survey has shown that for more than half of the teachers children's participation is among three top priorities. In that regard, the Slovene teacher's beliefs are more progressive to those of Finnish; children's participation is important only for one third of Finnish teachers.

However, the teachers themselves exert very little impact on decisions regarding their working environment and their professional development. The study (Turnšek, 2008) showed that teacher's influence on decisions is limited and restricted mostly to implementation of the curriculum, to pedagogical practices or issues concerning 'inside classroom life'. The obvious question is are teachers who do not buy toys for their children and do not decide what seminars they will attend, able and willing to provide experiences of decision-making to 'their' children?

Children's democratic participation as a core of citizenship education in early years
The purpose of looking closely at children's democratic participation in pre-schools is in a belief that children's participation plays a crucial role in conceptualisation of education for democratic citizenship in pre-schools. Children's democratic participation understood as a culture of living and pedagogical practice, in my opinion, represents a core of early childhood citizenship. Ethics and philosophies such as children's involvement, decision-making, respecting human rights, listening/expressing, empowering etc, enable the development of citizenship competences such as social competence, action competence, intercultural competence, active learning, etc.

Graph 1: Children's democratic participation – a core of citizenship education in early years

Citizenship education projects in Slovene pre-schools

Social learning and the development of social-emotional competences is an important component of citizenship education in Slovene kindergartens. At the beginning of the twentieth century Dewey (1916) argued for importance of education for the development of democracy, stating that it is through education that children become part of humanity's social development. He emphasised the importance of dialogue, undisturbed communication and a shared judgement between equals, testing the relevance of various standpoints and views in a diverse society. In Slovene kindergartens the teachers are very inclined to social learning. The goal of such projects at the individual level is learning social skills on behavioural, cognitive and affective level. In the group context we try to improve child acceptance in peer-groups and promote group identification and cooperation.

To practice citizenship children learn through **active learning strategies**. An *inquiry* is an approach promoting children's ability to search for information, to organise them and use in order to solve problems. An example would be an inquiry project *Let's discover who lived in the nearby castle from the old time till now, how they lived, ate…?*

The other approach is an **open-ended problem solving**. An important part of citizenship education is independent problem-solving aimed at stimulating the children to generate various solutions, imaginative ideas and answers to various problems. Such projects are called for instance:
- *Christmas is coming; let's make our own theatre performance!*
- *We don't like the name of the class-room; let's invent a new one!*
- *We want to change the ways of sleeping and resting routines!*

A crucial aim of citizenship education is to develop children's ability to take actions. Since the beginning of the nineties, the concept of **action** and **action competence** has attained a central position in a number of educational spheres, most notably in the sphere of environmental health in the work done by Royal Danish School of Educational Studies (Jensen & Schnack, 1994). Action competence can be understood as developing qualifications for being able, jointly and individually, to act to promote one's own and others health, or well-being in general. The concern about the environment, health and peace is coupled with corresponding concern for democracy or with socialisation and qualification for the role of participant. In action competence projects, the teacher and children work jointly towards improving the living conditions in kindergarten, in a local community or wider. What is specific in action competence projects is that children together with adults usually explore democratic ways of making decision; sometimes they even act as a pressure group. If I refer to some project done in Slovene kindergartens, here are some examples. In the project aimed at children's involvement in improving a kindergarten classroom (Krek, 2007) the teachers and children had to negotiate with a headmaster, a housekeeper, to buy the paint, to allow the children to choose the colours of the walls, etc. Similar procedures were necessary in the project aimed at changing sleeping routines in kindergarten by using the children's ideas; the changes also required a lot of discussions with kindergarten staff to persuade the teachers to accept the children's alternative ideas. When the new kindergarten was being built, children were helping with their ideas on how the

***Photo 2:** Children are decorating their own pre-school class-room* (Krek, 2007)

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* In the group involved in the project there were children of 4 to 5 years old.

kindergarten should look like; but they also had to negotiate with the architects to make kindergarten more 'children-like'. Environmental projects usually involve negotiating with local communal authorities, mayors and local residents. However, as Bjarn Brun Jensen points out (Jensen & Schnack, 1994, p 6), 'the task is not to improve the world with the help of pupil's activism….the crucial factor must be what the pupils learn from participating in such activities'.

Participation as "here and now" philosophy of citizenship education

Accepting children's democratic participation as a core of citizenship education has important implications. It enables a shift of attention to issues important for children 'here and now', and thereby enables a transformation of kindergartens from *'self-sufficient institutions'* to kindergartens described by the authors (Dahlberg and Moss, 2005, Moss and Petrie, 2002) as *'children's places'*. The well known slogan "here and now" explains well an orientation towards issues, meaningful and relevant to children themselves. Here and now means dealing with the today's child's world not the future one.

Participation also enables a shift away from the prevailing early childhood paradigm – away from the traditional conceptualisation of (citizenship) education as an adult's project aiming at shaping and re-shaping children, preparing them for an adult roles of 'good citizens' in order to *become* productive members of societies when growing up. In the paradigm mentioned, children are understood in terms of *human- becoming* rather than *human-being*; for many students and pre-school teachers children are the material to be remodelled, and they believe that only in the course of socialisation they finally become 'human like'. As stressed by Dahlberg and Moss (2005), these beliefs are empowered by the dominant Anglo-American discourse on early childhood education influenced by traditional developmental psychology stressing the importance of reaching "developmental stages", "outputs" and "outcomes" and re-enforcing instrumental orientation of pre-schools.

It is not unusual that sometimes citizenship education in kindergartens looks like rehearsing children in adult roles such as 'voters' or skilled 'political negotiators', exercising representative democracy in a parliament. In that cases citizenship education is mainly about **playing democracy in simulated situations** and **imitating adult's world** rather than **living democracy in real situations.** There is nothing wrong with playing and simulating as long as we bear in mind that we need to provide consistency of democratic experiences to children. The primary goal of citizenship education should be *experiencing democracy*, practicing democratic principles such equality, plurality, justice…; *teaching about democracy* can be regarded merely as a secondary aim. Children can learn democratic skills such negotiating, cooperating, finding consensus, voting… inside kindergarten, and with general goal of democratisation of institutional life. The projects in Slovene kindergartens demonstrate that many teachers are becoming aware of the importance of such first-hand child experiences.

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Motor Abilities Profile of Six and Seven Years Old Children

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Abstract

This study deals with diagnostics of motor performance in pre–school and primary grade children, a comparison and an analysis of motor and physical indicators differences between 6 and 7 years old boys; and 6 and 7years old girls, separately. The research was conducted in the period 2007–2008. Subjects were students of 6 nursery schools and 12 primary schools in the East Slovakia Region. As a result, one can state that as early as one year can be considered to be a "development stage" in which changes in the child's organism directly influence individual motor behavior.

Lifelong habits of activity or inactivity are established during childhood. Creating positive attitudes toward gaining and maintaining an acceptable level of physical fitness is one of important objectives of physical educational program. Developmental physical education enhances cognitive concept and perceptual-motor development by engaging children in motor activities that involve them in the decision-making processes of learning. Not all children are at the same level of cognitive development upon entering school. Cognition is a process influenced by both maturation and experience and proceeds at the child's individual rate. Because readiness is a prerequisite to success in school, perceptual readiness is an important aspect of total readiness for learning. As educators we need to continue to devise additional opportunities for movement experiences that are often absent from the lives of children. Providing supplementary experiences that children are unable to create, do not receive, or cannot fully utilize on their own will have a positive effect on the development of perceptual-motor and cognitive concept learning.

The process of development moves from simple to complex and from general to specific as individuals strive to increase their competence in the motor, cognitive and affective domains of human behavior. As a result, patterns of behavior emerge that may help guide the selection of movement experiences that are typically appropriate for specific age group, All children, however, diverge from typically expected age-group patterns of behavior at one time or another (Gallahue & Donnelly, 2003; Fleming & Bunting, 2007).

The period of age between 6 and 7 is considered to be so-called maturity level within the basic phase of motor development in an individual. With an appropriate instruction and opportunity for physical activity in educational environment during this period movements may become very efficient and coordinated.

Preschool and primary grade children are involved in developing and refining their fundamental movement skills. Children are active and energetic and would often rather run than walk. Gross motor control is developing rapidly and generally occurs sooner than fine motor control. The many complex movements of older children and adults are little more than highly elaborated forms of these fundamental movements (Haywood & Getchel, 2005; Gallahue & Donnelly, 2003).

The key milestone at the turn of an early school age is the age of 6, which is related to the entering a school. In this phase, the analysis of tactile and kinaesthetic stimuli improves significantly together with the concentration of neural processes. It is possible to enhance children's knowledge of their spatial world by involving them in movement activities that contribute to their body awareness, directional awareness, and space awareness (Malina et al., 2004). Activities designed to enhance these qualities are used in the regular instructional education program but with the primary objective of movement skill acquisition rather than perceptual-motor learning. Body awareness activities are designed to help children better understand the nature of their body and the functions of its parts. Spatial awareness activities are designed to enhance children's awareness of the orientation of their body in space and the amount of space that it occupies. Directional awareness activities enhance awareness of the body as it is projected into space. The concepts of left, right, up and down take on meaning in a relationship context when the child has established directional awareness. The sense of laterality is an internal feel for direction in relation to one side of the body or the other. A sense of directionality usually develops prior to the internal sense of laterality. Temporal awareness refers to the child's development of an internal time structure. Temporal awareness enables people to efficiently coordinate movements of the eye and limbs. The terms eye-hand coordination and eye-foot coordination refer to the result of fully developed temporal awareness (Gallahue & Donnelly, 2003; Oatman, 2007).

In research studies of motor development at preschool age many motor tests have been applied. However, their feasibility is problematic particularly with respect to the specificity of motor development at this age period (Kroes et al., 2004). The essential problem is most probably related to the issue of homogenity of motor "capacity" examined in preschool children. There is an ambiguity in approaches to application of individual test issues within this

age group. It is necessary to stem from the premise that a child is not a smaller model of an adult. Due to these reasons methodological approaches used with this age group are diametrically opposite and their results are difficult to compare.

A variety of tasks can be used to document levels of motor performance. But emphasis is placed on standardized tasks that can be used in the field or school setting, in contrast to those limited to the laboratory. That is considered to be very important point for selection of motor tests in preschool children (Malina, 2003).

It is critical, though, to understand developmental characteristics of children as well as their limitations or potentials. Only in this way we can structure movement experiences for young children that truly reflect their needs and interests and are within their level of ability. The aim of study was to apply selected fitness tests to assess and compare motor performance of children in the period of entering school.

Material and Methods

A group of 64 boys and 60 girls aged 6 years, randomly selected from 6 nursery schools in Prešov, and a group of 175 boys and 195 girls aged 7 from 12 primary schools of the East Slovakia Region participated in the study. Our research sample involved common population of children with standard motor development, so disabled children were not involved in the research in the same way as children that had already been involved in sport preparation system (sport talented children). Selection of motor tests resulted from the thesis that condition and coordination motor abilities represent a complex and their research corresponds with this principle. Pre-school age is a specific developmental period within which gradual maturity of motor centers occurs. With respect to this fact the issue of sensitivity of some tests has to be addressed. Important practical selection criterion of appropriate motor tests at this age includes their feasibility in conditions of nursery schools. Children were subjected to 7 motor tests: *plate tapping (PLT) – frequency speed of an arm*, *sit and reach (SAR) – joint flexibility of a trunk*, *standing broad jump (SBJ) – explosive strength*

of lower limbs, shuttle run 50 (SHR) – running speed with the change of direction. These tests were applied and conducted according to EUROFIT instructions (1993). *Bench turns (BT) – dynamic body equilibrium, run for balls (RFB) – orientation ability, rhythmical finger tapping (RFT) – rhythmical ability* (Měkota & Blahuš, 1983; Raczek et al., 1998). In addition, 3 somatic measurements were taken: *body mass (BM), body height (BH) and sum of 5 skinfolds (SF)–triceps, biceps, subscapular, anterior suprailiac and media calf.* According to the authors the reliability of the motor tests for age range 5-18 years is 0.7-0.9. Student`s *t-test* was used to assess age-related differences between mean values.

Results and Discussion

Compared groups represent in a specific way the "landmark" of two developmental periods – preschool and primary school age, which may be accepted as an early childhood.

Mean values (±SD) of somatic and motor variables studied in a group of boys are presented in the Table 1.

Table 1: Mean values (±SD) of somatic and motor variables in boys aged 6 and 7 years

Variable	Boys (6 years) n=60	Boys (7 years) n=175	t-test
PLT (s)	25.1 ± 3.4	22.8 ± 3.8	*
SAR (cm)	21.5 ± 3.7	20.8 ± 6.2	
SBJ (cm)	116.3 ± 19.2	116.8 ± 17.3	
SHR (s)	24.9 ± 2.4	24.6 ± 2.3	
BT (n))	3.4 ±1.4	4.8 ±1.3	*
RFB (s)	22.2 ± 2.5	24.2 ± 3.5	*
RFT (n)	5.3 ± 1.9	6.5 ± 1.7	*
Body mass (kg)	23.4 ± 3.2	24.8 ± 3.7	
Body height (cm)	122.7 ± 7.2	125.2 ± 6.1	
Sum of 5 skinfolds (mm)	34.5 ± 7.2	39.9 ± 7 .6	*

(p<0.01)

It can be stated that the applied test battery is adequate for this age period. There is observed the homogenity of both groups of boys in strength and speed performance. In addition, there is no significant difference in the level of joint flexibility as well. On the other hand, there are significant differences in the coordination abilities level *(PLT, BT, RFB, RFT)* between boys aged 6 and 7. The higher level of orientation ability of younger boys is paradoxical. Although perceptual-motor abilities are rapidly developing confusion often exists in directional, temporal, body awareness. Physical growth of boys as well as girls is moderate, marked by steady increases in height, weight, but it is not as rapid as during infancy. At this stage of growth, some differences may be observed between boys and girls in terms of height and weight, but they are minimal (Gallahue & Donnelly, 2003). The physiques of male and female preschoolers and primary grade children are very similar when we view from a posterior position. Boys are generally heavier and taller.

Mean values (±SD) of somatic and motor variables studied in a group of boys are presented in the Table 2. There are observed significant differences in the level of speed abilities *(PLT, SHR)*, orientation ability *(RFB)* and joint flexibility *(SAR)* between the group of 6 and 7 years old girls. Younger girls achieved better performance in a majority of studied indicators,

Kroes et al. (2004), Malina et al. (2004) reported the age period 5-8 years to be a transition in the motor development. Basic motor skills start maturing then but the variability among children remains considerable. Applicability of motor tests to pre-school and primary grade children is an important factor together with the ability of children to pass these tests.

Table 2: Mean values (±SD) of somatic and motor variables in girls aged 6 and 7 years

Variable	Girls (6 years) n=64	Girls (7 years) n=195	t-test
PLT (s)	25.9 ± 4.2	22.6 ± 4.0	*
SAR (cm)	22.8 ± 5.6	21.6 ± 5.7	*
SBJ (cm)	105.7 ± 14.6	104.7 ± 16.5	
SHR (s)	23.9 ± 2.4	25.3 ± 2.5	*
BT (n))	3.5 ± 1.3	4.6 ± 1.2	
RFB (s)	22.9 ± 2.3	24.5 ± 3.3	*
RFT (n)	4.8 ± 1.9	6.1 ± 1.7	
Body mass (kg)	20.8 ± 3.2	24.1± 5.1	
Body height (cm)	121.1 ± 7.2	124.7 ± 5.9	
Sum of 5 skinfolds (mm)	33.1 ± 6.2	41.4 ± 8.2	*

(p<0.01)

Conclusion

Differences between children aged 6 and 7 probably reflect the types of activities available for children, availability of suitable role models, for motor skills, and societal expectations for physical activity and motor skill. As early as one year can be considered to be a "development stage" in which changes in the child`s organism directly influence individual motor behavior.

The process of childhood growth and motor development is predictable in terms of universal principles and sequential progressions. However, children show considerable individual variation due to a variety of environmental and hereditary factors. It must be considered the individual appropriateness of the movement activities we employ in the physical education programs. Teachers should reflect this elementary knowledge and try to apply it within the creation of the School Educational Program. Schools may incorporate traditional as well as unconventional physical activities into the educational objectives, whole school orientation, and performance standards. Teachers have the important responsibility of ensuring that children develop movement skills. Schools must offer opportunities for children to develop and apply movement skills that are essential for self-direction in vigorous physical activities.

We simply do not have sufficient evidence to support the claim that improved perceptual-motor abilities will directly affect children's academic performance. It could be argued, however, that one positive result of perceptual-motor-oriented physical education programs may be improved self-esteem for children. Improved perceptions of oneself as capable and competent may carry over to the classroom work of some children.

Although physical activity generally has positive effects on the growth of children, it can have negative effects if carried to an extreme. On the other hand, the critical point separating harmful and beneficial activity is not clear. This is the area which needs further research.

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Free Time as a Condition for and a Factor of Personality Development

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Abstract

The assumption that the quality of human being's spirit and the meaning of life would be more and more defined by free time proved to be true. Scientific and technological revolution demands a versatile man who will be able not only to increase the labor productivity but also to create conditions for its emergence by means of the automatisation of production and shortening working hours. In such manner, a necessary precondition for the versatile development of a human being arises, apart from the process of material production and beyond the borders of the realm of immediate necessity. On the other hand, the rapid development in question brings along the trouble of a modern indifference not natural to a contemporary human being, as Ratko Bozovic (2007, p.14) claims. We should not oversee the fact that the free time went through the process of commercialization in the past century and that it carries the burden of consumer culture.

It is more than clear that free time turns to be an important factor of integration of human time as a whole. It appears to be an integral part of human time and life, not just a mere residue. Following the process of rapid industrialization and urbanization, free time gained on its actuality. On the other hand, free time activities and contents meander, thus becoming harder to be identified and placed within the boundaries of *required* or *freely chosen* free time. It would be naive (almost impossible) to insist on separating and classifying activities within total human time, in which human being suffers rapid changes, even faster than Heraclites used to say of water.

The importance and the development of the free time are determined by socially economic and cultural improvement of the society, so the interest for this topic is increasing. Having in mind that the concept of free time is implied in the concept of work (working time- free time) and it is not implied in the concept of education, andragogists and sociologists expressed their interest for the free time, after sociologists, psychologists, economists, philosophers. From the andragogical point of view, free time represents the frame for the comprehensive development of the personality, for the education and improvement of all abilities and talents, for satisfaction of intellectual needs and tending for the culture and creative development of the person, and in such a manner it would be analyzed.

Quality and meaning of human life is destined by the sphere of free time. It is the sphere which is not directly connected to the socially required work. Individual may use his or her free time for his/her own sake, because it is the time that belongs to the individual himself/

Table 1: Free Time Fund

Country	Vacation	State Holidays	Total
Austria	30	13	44
France	30	11	41
Brazil	30	8	38
Portugal	22	15	37
Denmark	25	10	35
Egypt	21	13	34
Canada	10	9	19
Italy	20*minimum imposed by law	10	30
Croatia	18* minimum imposed by law	13	31
Montenegro	18* minimum imposed by law	7	25
Nigeria	6	9	15
Mexico	6	7	13

Free time is integral part of human time and life. Boundaries of free time are not mapped, they are elusive, and for that reason it is deficient to characterize free time from the aspect of working class and thus exclude all the other categories, unemployed for various reasons. Entire time that belongs to an individual can be conditionally (e.g. for the sake of research) divided into working and non-working time, though we should never neglect the existence of semi-free time.

herself, it is the time in which he or she does whatever pleases him/her, brings joy and rest. Free time is condition for and factor of cultural, creative, and overall personality development. The condition is taken as a free time quantity indicator, i.e. it reflects how much time an individual has; the factor is understood as an indicator of quality, i.e. how the individual spends his/her free time, what activities he/she carries out, and if he/she adequately uses the free time in question for his/her cultural and creative development. The question is: Do we have a clear notion what happens at the level of an individual, is there an integrated and total fund of free time of a working human being?

One of the most prominent proponents of the possibility of precise specifying quantity of free time is Maslow, Todorovic (1984, p. 68) claims. He demanded that all the holidays, Sundays and vacation days should be taken out of the calendar fund. We can perceive the fund in various countries in the following table, issued by the Legal department of The trade union alliance of Montenegro:

Furthermore, the non-working (and/or so-called semi-free) time can be separated into the following activities:
- Time closely related to work, including the time needed for going to or coming home from the work, and all the other duties connected to it (additional professional engagement etc)
- Time needed for home chores: buying groceries, preparing meals, cleaning, doing laundry, heating...
- Time needed for psycho-physical activities: personal hygiene, sleeping, eating...

- Time for other duties: childcare...
- Free time (time after work and all the listed activities within the non-working time).

This taxonomy does not imply that the human being, and his/her time, is comprised of little chunks creating the whole, we are simply trying to show the wide spectrum of activities undertaken by any individual out of working hours.
Free time reflects the character of a society and social relations. The basis for understanding free time can be sought within the mode of production and the relations in society which stem directly from it. It is the foundation upon which lies the character of free time, it is our starting point for further investigations concerning the available fund of free time.

It is important to mention Marx's thesis (as quoted in Kačavenda-Radić, 1992, p. 103) *The richer the man, the richer the society* – social welfare leads toward the greater quantity and quality of free time. And vice-versa: more, versatile and quality free time indicates the richer society and the richer individual in it. We should therefore understand that the welfare of a society would not be measured with the working hours but with a free time". If a society is developed, it is less dependent on immediate necessity, if a society needs less working hours for its self-preservation, then it provides its members with more free time.

As an illustration of the aforesaid, we can use the table below. It shows the increase in quantity of free time, the number of paid vacation days and holidays, the lower age employment limit, and the decrease in working hours of working men in Britain:

Table 2: Increase in quantity of free time in Britain

	50's	60's	80's
Average number of working hours in a week	55	46-47	42
Paid vacation (weeks)	-	2	4-5
Paid holidays (days)	5	6	8
Yearly number of free time hours	1600	2050	2450
Labor age (from - to)	10-?	15-65	16-60/65

The group of authors (Bill, Martin & Mason, 1987, p. 256) claim that there is a trend of increase of free time from 50's onwards, and that it relates to working women in most West European countries.

The economic crisis in our country, Montenegro, emerged during the 80's and had its culmination in the 90's. First steps towards the solution were made in the beginning of this millennium. For this reason, we do not have enough scientifically approved research results which would illustrate the increase in the quantity of free time in our country. We should not neglect the fact that we have just commenced our voyage of European and Euro-Atlantic integrations, which could lead toward an increased need for this kind of research.

The change in social organization led to the emergence of classes, and conditioned huge social differences, and made many to fight for existence and to work apart from the regular working hours thus expanding the working time. Apart form economical and political reasons; there are some objective factors which influence the free time fund, such as place of living, number of family members, number of children etc. Apart from the objective, there are numerous subjective factors as well: gender, age, education etc.

Constant increase in free time, however, does not imply certain human gains, because it is very important how it will be used. Free time does not bring along its profound fulfillment. Free time is a pre-condition for full personal accomplishment, for raising cultural and creative level, for a versatile development of human being. On the other hand, it can turn into a playground for the emergence of various social pathologies. In the future, civilization will be estimated by the quality of chosen activities in the free time.

This issue requires our full attention. In free time, a person is in the position to choose activities. The choice itself depends on various factors which lead toward positive or negative assessment on behalf of society. The factors are numerous, both objective and subjective: economical, educational, cultural... age, gender and the free time fund as well. These factors cannot be neglected when analyzing free time.

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Beside these factors, very important condition is qualification and preparation for the adequate choice of activities. P.Langran (1971, p. 45) illustrates: „Provide people with best conditions, widest possible cultural possibilities, but those treasures will remain useless if men do not hold the key to unlock them. Cities, villages and people hold precious messages which can enrich anyone's life at any point. But those messages need to be deciphered; we should learn the language of paintings, music, poetry and science, and communication in general. People who, due to bad luck, loneliness or tiredness, remain at the threshold of experiencing culture do not know what to do with their free time. They become slaves of their boredom. Is not the boredom lethal and fateful to a soul, as microbes are for its body? "

We can only conclude that we need to hand the 'keys to the treasure' called free time to the people, so that they could access it and rationally use it, within boundaries of social acceptance. Without socially-positive contents, without cultural sense, free time loses its qualities and its social, political and pedagogical meaning. Without positive orientation and capability of choice of activities, the freedom of personality suffers a lot, and free time turns to be meaningless. S. Elakovic (1991, p.59) points out: „Daily routine, as a mixture of symbols, signs and signals can be eventful, full and creative (deep, informative, interesting, tense, challenging etc.), but it can be banal and trivial as well (shallow, nonporous, monochrome and tedious). For this reason, people should be educated to freely make use of it, especially when having in mind the fact that life not related to working place gains in its importance in terms of developing individual and creative capacities of every single person."

There are very clear reasons, at the beginning of this 21st century, which will volens-nolens additionally influent on the active involvement and interest for free time issue by all educational disciplines, especially andragogy. The reasons are the following:
1. The increased role of the tertiary (services) sector compared to primary (production) and secondary (upgrade) sector
2. Tertiary sector even takes over the roles of two remaining sectors (Internet for example)
3. Education which means permanent education as a precondition for the higher quality of life and for participations in social life.

Andragogical sense of the free time especially emphasizes that the education of adults and free time are two social phenomena in the cohesion, especially because free time can be treated in the function of education reproduction: in alienation, self identification of the human being and recreation. That is why is today so important to talk about phenomenon of the education for free time, even more about education in frame of the free time.

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Presentation of the Magazine „Disability Info”,
Published by the Association of Youth
with Disabilities of Montenegro

Association of youth with disabilities of Montene-gro is a non-governmental organization, registered on October 22, 2001. It gathers youth with all kinds of physical and sensor disabilities (cross-disability approach) as well as non-disabled people willing to participate in activities of the future co-existence and integration. It is a non-profit organization, founded firstly to provide psychosocial support, solving numerous and complex problems that disabled youth encounter daily, as well as creation of educational conditions for College and University opportunities. The organization is s member of Network of youth and students with disabilities, together with associations from Belgrade, Niš and Kragujevac (Serbia). Also, the Association is active on a regional level, and is a member of South East Europe Network of Youth and Students with Disabilities (Serbia, Macedonia and Moldova).

The goals of Association of Youth with Disabilities of Montenegro are:
- Encouragement and inclusion of youth with disabilities in all parts of social and economic life and especially in area of education and employment.
- Preparation and development of skills and interest of youth with disabilities in primary and secondary schools in order to achieve higher education, as well as education process through internet.
- Influence on creation of proper attitudes in society related to the needs, rights and potential of youth with disabilities.
- Engagement on providing basic conditions in all institutions of educational system for all young people with disabilities.

DISABILITY info is a new media aiming to promote modern view of persons with disabilities and their rights. Understanding that changes of society's mind and attitude towards the persons with disabilities are rather slow, we have decided to start this project in order to reach a larger group of people. It represents another way of activism of Association of Youth with Disabilities, targeting persons with disabilities, but also broad audience in order to inform them with current events and changes that need to be done in this area. Editorial office consists of young people who, in this way, would

like to contribute to spreading modern philosophy of movement of people with disabilities, and to help to make our society more inclusive.

Since there is no unified term in Montenegrin language for people with disabilities[**], and in order to avoid any possibility for misinterpretation of the term, we have decided to use the term in the English language. DISABILITY, as a term, is most acceptable in international level, when it comes to population who are the target group of this magazine.

A concept of DISABILITY info was developed to cover the most important areas of life and work of people with disabilities, so it consists of the following sections:

1. **QUICK NEWS –** news, events...
2. **TOPIC OF THE ISSUE –** two articles per topic;
3. **INTERVIEW –** thematic;
4. **COOL CORNER –** culture;
5. **WE PRESENT / VISIT TO –** organization/individual…
6. **NEW TECHNOLOGIES**
7. **OTHER PEOPLE WRITE… –** overview of world news - Inclusion Daily Express, Dave Reynolds;
8. **MIXER –** interesting information, jokes... jokes are included to present different attitude needed towards people with disabilities, based on understanding, not pity;
9. **LEX INFO –** every issue will cover some of the rights of people with disabilities included in local legislative;
10. **From Association of Youth with Disabilities –** profile of our organization, news, projects, etc....

Every issue will have a main topic. Depending on a topic, a selection of interviewed people and context of columns will differ: topic of the issue, we present/visit to (columns depending on a topic) – which increases the consistency of the issue. We have taken a step ahead, and we plan to prepare an educational poster with every issue, which will be in the inner part of the cover pages, so once the pages are read, there is a poster, and the reader can put it on the wall.

** Impairment, handicap and disability tend to be used interchangeably in everyday communication

The magazine is registered in the Records of media, at Ministry of Culture, Sport and Media, as well as in the Central national library, with a circulation of 500 copies per issue. Association of Youth with Disabilities distributes the magazine by sending it to international and national organizations and administrative and state institutions. In addition, an electronic version of the magazine is available.

The topic of the first issue was about support services for persons with disabilities. Support services are important precondition for ensuring independence and quality life of persons with disabilities, and for that reason, it was the first topic of the magazine. Since support services are under jurisdiction of Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Welfare, our first guest was the Minister in the said Ministry. The donor for the first issue was CNF/BCIF/FAKT through the project "Psychosocial and legal assistance to youth with disabilities".

As you can see, we have tried to make the magazine and topics it covers diverse and interesting, and modern design and a funny joke here and there about us, are here to make the whole story more interesting to our reading audience. We hope our efforts were successful.

For more information please visit www.umhcg.org.

A Note on Regional Seminar „Inclusive Education in the Contexts of Social and Cultural Diversity"

Pula and Brijuni, Croatia
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In the era of general globalization, contemporary world imposes the need for "diversities' reconciliation" – and there is also the need for mutual understanding and coexistence of cultural and any other diversity, where there can be found the means of prosperity, cultural, scientific and any other creativity and progress. The efforts of Europe in promoting and establishing intercultural dialogue are very obvious – the year of 2008 was celebrated in Europe as the year of intercultural dialogue, and in the same year White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, which is subtitled "Living together as Equals in Dignity" was adopted. Intercultural dialogue therefore is a *cinditio sine qua non* togetherness. It can and must be learned. Because of that fact, education is considered to be invaluable and important means of learning for living together.

Exactly in that context, The Office for National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia together with European Training Foundation (ETF), The Official Agency of The European Union, organized The Regional Seminar "Inclusive Education in Contexts of Social and Cultural Diversity". The aim of the seminar was to raise the consciousness of the key actors of education about the necessity of promoting intercultural dialogue and

social cohesion through education. The education is an opportunity for reaching unity and cohesion in culturally and socially diverse societies in a way that national educational policies will give common European priorities and strategies in this field. The main aims of the seminar were: to clarify strategic dimension of education for intercultural dialogue, inclusion and social cohesion; to summarize the existing approaches in legislation, policies and experiences of education of participant countries; to identify assets and obstacles for learning for intercultural dialogue and for inclusion of minority groups, as well as to strengthen the researches in this field.

During two-days work the existing policies and experiences in the field of inclusive education in the participant countries were discussed - Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro and Turkey. Country teams were made of three representatives, who were chosen by Ministriess of Education, universities, other public institutions, nongovernmental organizations, centres for researches, dealing with in-service and pre-service education and the training for teachers. Montenegrin country team was presented by Professor Vidosava Kašćelan from the Bureau for Education Services, Ms Ljiljana

Garić from Department for Adult Education and Ms Jovana Radović from the Faculty of Philosophy. Beside the representatives of the mentioned countries, the seminar was also attended by: EU Member States including Austria, Hungary, Italy, and Spain; representatives from the European Commission's DG Enlargement including EC Delegations, DG Education and Culture, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities; the Regional Cooperation Council, the Council of Europe, the Roma Education Fund, EU Roma Network, the Open Society Institute, UNDP, UNICEF, OECD, and distinguished international and local experts in this field. Croatia was represented by the Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Education, Office of National Minorities, and other governmental bodies, MPs representing national minorities in the Croatian Parliament, academics, teachers and school managers.

After the welcoming note of Ms. Milena Klajner, Head of the Office for National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, on the first day of the seminar preliminary reports of country teams about the state of inclusive education in the participant countries were summarized. The representative of ETF, Ms. Lida Kita, among other things stated that *in all countries, reforms have made education more inclusive; strategy and policy papers now specifically mention inclusion and diversity, however,* **implementation is still lagging behind***; initial teacher education needs to have a higher status and be more linked to ongoing professional development, teachers need better preparation to work with children and parents from diverse social and cultural backgrounds; individual inclusion initiatives are far from being embedded into the programmes; teacher preparation needs a higher budget allocation and IPA programming could be used to support it, and that reforms are in progress, but more research evidence is needed to inform policies through established research networks.*

Mr. Walter Wolf from DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities in his introductory speech underlined that inclusive education *must be a general practice*, mainstreamed into education, not a specific intervention addressing one disadvantaged group or other.

Within the seminar, on the first day the visit was organized to three educational institutions and to Dante Alighieri elementary and secondary school (Italian school), Primary school *Osnovna Skola Centar Pula* with integrated minority groups and Cultural Society of Montenegrins in Peroj. The aim of these visits was the exchange of information about experiences and challenges that these schools meet in the field of social inclusion. General impression of the participants was that, apart from some problems, these schools solved the question of inclusive education in a very good way.

On the second day, the speakers were Peter Greenwood, Head of the Operations Department of the ETF, Walter Wolf, Alan Phillips, Chairman of the Advisory Committee under the Framework Convention for National Minorities of the Council of Europe, Aleksandar Tolnauer, President of the Council for National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia, Milorad Pupovać, Chair of the Committee for Inter-parliamentarian Cooperation of the Croatian Parliament, Furio Radin, Chair of the Committee for Human and Minority Rights of the Croatian Parliament and Stjepan Adanić, State Secretary, Ministry for Science, Education and Sports. Mr. Allan Philips pointed at the lack of data as a key nutrient for pervasive prejudices pertaining to drop-out rates and lower attainment among minority groups. Data on vulnerable groups *should be collected on a regular basis* and compared to mainstream data, he said. On the second day of the seminar, the discussions of country teams followed, on the basis of already done country background. Also, the current state of policy design for teacher preparation for inclusive education in contexts of social and cultural diversity was discussed, as well at the implementation of measures and actions aimed at teachers' pre-service and/or in-service preparation for inclusive education, capacity development of public and civil society institutions for policy design, effective implementation and monitoring and evaluation. It was stated that, almost in every country inclusive education is usually perceived as inclusion of children with special education needs in regular, mainstream needs, i.e. rather as integrated education. ETF tried to promote wider and more complete understanding of inclusive education – as Keith Holmes from ETF said. He noted that the

discourse has shifted from special needs education to inclusion of *all* learners in schools and society. The critical issue for social cohesion, according to him, is for citizens to learn to become "comfortable with unfamiliarity and to respect difference". Then three working groups were organized to deal with the following topics: Addressing exclusion in education systems, The whole-school approaches to social and cultural diversity and Teacher competences for intercultural and inclusive education. As the motive for discussion within working groups, a few programmes and projects were presented - *The Equal Opportunity Funding Policy Programme in Public Education*, the Hungarian experience; *The Index of inclusive schools: A tool for developing inclusive schools and needed competences of stakeholders involved* and *Master of Advanced Studies (MAS) in Inclusive Education* as an example of in-service programme from The University in Central Switzerland and the projects of OECD, and Council of Europe, *Teacher Education for Diversity (TED)* and *Mapping policies and practices for teaching socio-cultural diversity.* Some of them can already be found on the internet. *

It can be said with certainty that no one of the participants of this seminar, as well as the writer of this report, was indifferent to mutual sincerity and easy communication, regardless of language barriers. This seminar was, above all, a good example of intercultural dialogue that should be present always and everywhere in the world. This example is the best confirmation of the successfulness of the seminar.

***www.szmm.qov.hu
www.izb-e.phz.ch
http://ec.europa.eu/education/more-information/moreinformation139 en.htm
http://book.coe.int/EN
www.oecd.org/edu/ted
www.see-educoop.net/aeiq

Review of „The Construction of a New Profession" by Dr Jan Peeters

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hood education development gains in importance and where the maximal professionalization of the pre-school education is being promoted. On the other hand, as the author notices, societies do not pay adequate attention to the initial education and the professional education and development of the educators. Certain countries in Europe still do not require a university degree for educational profession. In certain parts of Belgium, de-profesionalization of early childhood education can be witnessed. The author poses a question – what is the function of early childhood education, does the function in question have its social nature and includes help to parents while working in terms of providing care to their children, or is the function of early childhood education to help children to develop their potentials, to explore and understand the world around them so that they could bring rational decisions and accordingly model their world.

Dr. Jan Peeter's study „The construction of a new profession: A European perspective on professionalism in Early Childhood Education and Care" (Amsterdam: SWP Publishers, 2008) is a result of a comparative study of the professionalism in early childhood education in England, France, New Zealand and Denmark. Beside these countries, the author also offers insights into the state of professionalism in the early childhood education in Belgium and the Netherlands, and Scandinavian countries as well – Finland and Sweden. The initial thesis of the author accentuates the paradox present in some of the countries in Europe where early child-

The issue of professionalism in early childhood education and care cannot be perceived as unique – it is of rather ambiguous quality. Namely, the discussion concerning professionalism should not lead towards the debate about obligatory or non-obligatory early childhood education. Also, we should not discuss whether the sector of early education should be implemented into the regular educational system and defined as its elementary constituent or it should be created on the market grounds and left out of educational system – pointing out its social-care function. The author thinks that it is impossible to come up to a single and unique solution in the EU,

because the traditions of early childhood education and experiences connected to the level of quality of the initial education of teachers must be taken into consideration. Analyzing the problem of professionalism in early childhood education, prof. Maria Bouverne-De Bie, the author of the book's preface says: „Professionalism in childcare encompasses various dimensions: the professionalization of the staff members, of the activities and of the organizations. These dimensions cannot be separated from each other, but can only be understood in their mutual interaction.

The professionalization of the staff members means that choices are made with respect to the level of training, including the possibilities to allow the short-schooled access to the training courses via alternative learning paths. The professionalization of the staff members must also mean that staff members have the possibility for mobility, both vertically through the influx into higher functions and horizontally through the influx into other functions in the sector. The professionalization of the activities means that training courses must be developed in close relation to the reflection on the practice that is being developed, based on the question of weather or not these practice can (or must) be done differently. It encompasses the precondition of a non-biased look at how a connection can be made between the development of children and the social developments that fundamentally influence the actual childcare sector. One current central point of special attention here is learning to deal with diversity: intercultural activities and gender-neutral training courses also prove to be a stimulus for a more effective professionalism.

The professionalization of the organizations means that the image of childcare is an inclusive one, where diversity of children and parents, but also diversity of the types of care, are present. One point of attention is therefore, in particular, the situation of the family day carers who, in fact, occupy an important place yet, for many reasons, are not well-represented in the debate on professionalization. The professionalization of the organizations encompasses, moreover, a clear choice to take an extremely critical look at the privatization of the childcare sector, because the consequences for both the quality and the sustainability of the childcare initiatives demand a focused

policy, also with respect to commercial initiatives" (Peeters, 2008, p.12).

Upon summing up the results of the comparative analysis of educational systems in the listed countries, Dr. Peeters states: „everywhere in Europe, professionalism in childcare is on political agenda. The 'care concept' is being increasingly set aside and childcare is becoming imbedded in a larger whole in which the parenting and social functions are being given an important place. Because of this, the professions in the childcare sector are being radically reformed in many European countries. Some countries are choosing a social-pedagogic vision, others have integrated childcare into the educational system... The development of action-oriented competencies which give the staff member the ability to deal with complex situations and to develop his/her own practical pedagogic knowledge is a central focus here" (Peeters, 2008, p. 21).

Some of the basic tendencies in the field of pre-school education which the author notices in different countries are: to offer childcare to everyone in the future, to promote the term 'profession' instead of 'occupation', because occupation refers to an activity in which 'manual' is dominant characteristics while a 'profession' is characterized by the intellectual or rational. Great number of theorists of education in the EU agree that „work in the care work domain is becoming more complex and demanding and getting more so... early childhood education needs a professional who is a co-constructor of knowledge, a critical thinker and a reflective and democratically focused practitioner" (Peeters, 2008, p.71).

For the last 10-15 years in the countries of EU and North America, the tendency of big structural and conceptual changes in teacher training has been noticed. The programmes for teacher training are also changing significantly.   One of the most distinguished trends in teacher education in these countries is closening and equalising of teacher education and teacher professional development, regardless of the level of education on which they would be professionally engaged. This should be the way forward.

Worldwide Events in Education

MARCH 2010

THE EIGHTH IASTED INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WEB-BASED EDUCATION ~WBE 2010~
Date: 15 to 17 March 2010
Venue: Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt
This is the Opportunity for those in all areas of Web-based education to convene with colleagues from approximately 50 countries to discuss innovative ideas and research results in the new and exciting field of Web-based education.
Website: http://www.iasted.org/conferences/home-688.html

THE 2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON KNOWLEDGE DISCOVERY (ICKD 2010)
Date: 19 to 21 March 2010
Venue: Bali Island, Indonesia
The aim of the ICKD 2010 is to provide a platform for researchers, engineers, academicians as well as industrial professionals from all over the world to present their research results and development activities in Knowledge Discovery. This conference provides opportunities for the delegates to exchange new ideas and application experiences face to face, to establish business or research relations and to find global partners for future collaboration.
Website: http://www.ickd.org

APRIL 2010

BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR CHILDREN: STRENGTHENING SCHOOL, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
Date: 28 April 2010 to 1 May 2010
Venue: Phoenix, Arizona, United States
The Annual Conference of Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) is a premier gathering of educators interested in sharing innovative practices, cutting-edge research, and unique strategies in areas related to the education of children from birth through early adolescence.
Website: http://www.ACEI.org

MAY 2010

BIOETHICS EDUCATION: CONTENTS, METHODS, TRENDS
Date: 2 to 5 May 2010
Venue: Zefat, Israel
The conference is designed to offer a platform for the exchange of information and knowledge and to hold discussions, lectures, workshops, as well as an exhibition of programs and databases. It is organized by UNESCO Chair in Bioethics.
Website: http://isas.co.il/bioethics2010

THE 3rd INTERNATIONAL ELT CONFERENCE TELLING ELT TALES OUT OF SCHOOL
Date: 5 to 7 May 2010
Venue: Famagusta, North Cyprus, Cyprus
Practicing teachers, teacher educators and teacher researchers are invited to share their 'tales' about learners, learning, teachers, teaching, and innovative practices in their contexts. It is organized by Eastern Mediterranean University.
Website: http://www.elt-emu.org

3rd GLOBAL CONFERENCE: INTELLECTUALS - KNOWLEDGE, POWER, IDEAS
Date: 6 to 8 May 2010
Venue: Prague, Czech Republic
Following last year's successful second conference, the Intellectuals: Knowledge, Power, Ideas Project will hold its Third Annual Conference in Prague in May 2010. The conference is a keystone of the 'Intellectuals' Inter-Disciplinary.Net project that seeks to explore the role, character, nature and place of intellectuals and intellectual work in contemporary society.
Website: http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/critical-issues/transformations/intellectuals- knowledge-power/call-for-papers/

JUNE 2010

CREATIVE CONTINUING EDUCATION: IMAGINATIVE AND DIVERSE WORLDS
Date: 1 to 4 June 2010
Venue: Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada
This national conference of continuing education professionals will focus on the role of university continuing education and its power to inspire, be creative, and to embrace diversity. The theme invites us to engage in how creativity in continuing education can underpin, and be the catalyst for innovative and forward thinking in all aspects of programming; how programs can be inspiring for both instructor and learner; and ways in which we can embrace various forms of diversity. It is organized by Canadian Association for University Continuing Education
Website: http://www.cauce-conference.ca

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8th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE COMPARATIVE EDUCATION AND TEACHER TRAINING
Date: 9 to 12 June 2010
Venue: Plovdiv, Plovdiv, Bulgaria
The conference objectives are: to examine different approaches to the role of Comparative Education as a science, research methodology, and academic discipline; to develop linkages with colleagues who work in education, etc. It is organized by Bulgaria Comparative Education Society.
Website: http://bces.conference.tripod.com/

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IX INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON CURRICULUM ISSUES
Date: 21 to 23 June 2010
Venue: Porto, Portugal
Colloquium will join researchers, related to Curriculum Studies area, to have the opportunity to deepen to share, and exchange knowledge and reflections about their research projects and intervention. It is organized by the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences.
Website: http://www.fpce.up.pt/coloquio2010/

JULY 2010

ICOLACE 2010 (INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LEARNING AND COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT)
Date: 26 to 29 July 2010
Venue: Singapore
ICOLACE 2010 is a meeting point for those interested/involved in nurturing engagement by young people in sustainable development and lifewide learning.
Website: http://www.pecascentres.com/ICOLACE.doc

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ACADEMIC WRITING AND BEYOND IN MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES
Date: 28 to 29 July 2010
Venue: Tel Aviv, Israel
The first international conference on academic writing in Israel will address current issues in first language, second (third, fourth, etc.) language and foreign language writing in multi-cultural and multi-lingual societies. It is organized by: Israel Forum for Academic Writing (IFAW) and the Institute of Research, Curriculum and Program Development for Teacher Education.
Website: http://web.mac.com/michael_dickel/iWeb/IFAWConf.html

AUGUST 2010

2010 THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION
Date: 4 to 6 August 2010
Venue: Bangkok, Thailand
The Conference encourages experts and scholars all over the world to publish and share their research outcomes and learn from each other by exchanging views. It is organized by International Association of Organizational Innovation.
Website: http://www.iaoiusa.org/2010icoi/

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AUTHENTIC LEARNING
Date: 12 to 15 August 2010
Venue: Santa Barbara, California, United States
This symposium aims to develop an inter-disciplinary and multi- disciplinary platform of discussion and understanding surrounding the issue of what constitutes "authentic learning". It is organized by San Roque School.
Website: http://symposium.sanroque.net

The Tara Bridge, by Dejan Dajković

Notes for Contributors

007 offers a space for challenges and new ideas aimed at wide professional and scientific educational audience, starting from preschool to university level. It aims to deal with current topics from educational theory and practice, especially those related to transitional and reform processes in educational systems around the world. The readers are educational policy-makers, researchers, practitioners and students worldwide.

We welcome articles which explore changes directed towards creating educational systems with greater level of inclusiveness, multiculturalism, and larger application of interactive teaching methods, innovating teaching contents, and developed communication in educational process. We also welcome examples of good practice in cooperation between educational institutions and local community, as well as international cooperation in educational field. On a broader level, issues related to the place and the role of education in democratic processes will also be dealt with. **Papers can be accepted for publication if they have not been submitted to any other publication in English.**

Texts should be clear and easy to read. The length of the paper should be between 1000 and 5000 words, and it should contain an abstract of up to 200 words. The papers need to be in English. The title page should include the title, the authors' names and position, and contact information. Bibliographic references should be listed alphabetically at the end of the paper. The references should contain all works cited in the text and only those. They should be listed in alphabetical order of author or editor, with complete bibliographical details. The second line of each reference should be indented by 1.5 cm. When referring to books with more than three authors, within the article, the first name and the abbreviation *et al.* should be used (e.g. Hart *et al*, 2004); however, full reference at the end should include all surnames and name initials, as in the example below. Book and journal titles should be in *italics*, and titles of articles in books and journals in regular font style. Page numbers are to be added in case of articles in books and journals. For internet-based resources, as much helpful detail as possible should be included.

Sample references:
Guba, E.G. (1981) Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries, *Educational, Communication and Technology Journal,* 29 (2), 75-91.
Hart, S., Dixon, A., Drummond, M.J., and McIntyre, D. (2004) *Learning without limits* (Maidenhead, Open University Press).
Maxwell, J.A. (1998) Designing a qualitative study, in L.Bickman and D.J.Rog (Eds) *Handbook of Applied Social Research Methods* (London, Sage), 69-100.

Authors should supply brief autobiographical details, i.e. current position and the field of research, as well as a photo. Illustrations/photos with articles are welcome. Manuscripts with any accompanying material should be sent by e-mail to st_vanja@yahoo.com and/or st_vanja@t-com.me.

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The Canyon of Sušica River, by Dejan Dajković