PEDAGOGY IN EDUCATION PRACTICE

edited by
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PREFACE

Social changes that are accelerated and are difficult to predict, and the redefinition of (social) values and norms generate new educational challenges. Quality pedagogical answers require scientific and systematic research of new social situations, especially within the framework of the public education system. The system of educational institutions is determined by public policies that define approaches and expected educational outcomes. In addition to school institutions, they necessarily include institutional early and preschool education (hereafter ECEC), extracurricular organisations, but also all other institutions whose (re)formation and education are (one of) the core activities (for example, reformation institutions).

These Proceedings are a contribution to the analysis and understanding of the education system and quality responses to development processes. They were created by the synergy of scientists from three higher education institutions. With these Proceedings, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Split (Croatia) joined the Faculty of Social Sciences and Arts of the University of Applied Sciences in Nowy Sącz (Poland) and the Faculty of Education of the University of Belgrade (Serbia) who had already established traditionally good cooperation through 16 annual, jointly published, books of proceedings. The editorial board of Proceedings was joined by two more members, prof. Alicja Renata Sadownik from the University of Applied Sciences of Western Norway, Bergen (Norway) and prof. Milena Ivanuš Grmek, Faculty of Education, University of Maribor.

The proceedings bring together the paper works of scientists from 10 higher education institutions from four countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Poland and Serbia. Transcending geographical boundaries and pedagogical practices, the scientists-authors point to universal pedagogical paradigms by analysing the difficulties observed in practice in their papers. At the same time, possible high-quality application solutions are generated based on scientific knowledge and research.

The papers are arranged in (presumed) order of application of pedagogy in practice. Each individual paper makes a unique contribution to the understanding of pedagogical practice and different pedagogical paradigms.

Based on the analysis of available research, authors Monika Terlović and Danijela Blanuša Trošelj provide an overview of ECEC public education policies. Public educational policies, as a reference framework for pedagogical practice in ECEC, determine the quality of the educational process and outcomes for children. Cooperation between ECEC and the local community can also contribute to quality. Authors Marijana Miočić and Ana Molt Demo analysed the opinion of preschool teachers about the modalities of this cooperation. The quality of the ECEC process, which can contribute to the mental health of early and preschool children, was analysed

by author Zbigniew Ostrach. The author recognizes social games as one of the quality tools for enhancing children's well-being. Instead of shifting the responsibility (and some kind of guilt) to the media and computer games, the authors point to the educational potential of social games.

Authors Nikoleta Dobrosavljević and Zorica Cvetanović write about the importance of pedagogy in the system of primary education. They analyse the importance of using a reading diary from a teacher's perspective. The need to develop methodical instructions for teachers was recognised. This would contribute to the uniformity of the structure of the reading diary and, possibly, the development of student independence as a predictor of the quality of the process.

The higher education of ECEC teachers can be interpreted as a particularly significant dimension of all educational systems. Only highly educated teachers who recognise the value of upbringing and education can systematically develop personal competencies and thus stimulate the learning and development of those they work with. Authors Adrijana Višnjić Jevtić and Višnja Raić analysed the development of new professional competences of ECEC teachers in the ECEC system. Having examined the opinion of future ECEC teachers, the authors point to the need for development of competencies for human rights and active citizenship education. They recognise the problem of insufficient representation of these contents in the existing curriculum of higher education for future ECEC teachers. The importance of communication competences is examined by the authors Julia Klapa and Jolanta Rybska-Klapa. Special attention is paid to the communication competences in a foreign language of students with dyslexia. Based on processed data that was collected by researching students' opinions, the authors analyse facilitating and aggravating factors. Systematic analysis of factors is the starting point for generating recommendations for the development of quality practice at the academic level. Author Katarina Šimić examined the preferred style of students - future ECEC teachers. Based on the survey of ECEC students' opinions the author concludes that students prefer independent learning. At the same time, the author observes the connection of learning styles with certain areas (e.g., the connection of kinaesthetic style with music education).

The last, particularly important and interesting chapter brings together new pedagogical approaches generated by contemporary social processes and lifestyle changes. This topic is introduced by the author Marek Mierzynski, who gives an overview of the anthropological perspective of contemporary pedagogy. The author analyses the conditions and anthropological inspirations. Through the presentation of three directions of philosophical anthropology, he analyses possible answers (theses) about the nature, structure, development and education of human beings. Aleksandar Tadić provides a pedagogical insight into the interpersonal style of teachers. Analysing the interpersonal style of physical education teachers, the author argues for their autonomy. In this context, it is possible to analyse the pedagogical implications of physical activities of young people. The authors Tonća Jukić and Dora Mimica present a study of the mental strength of young people who play sports, considering their age

and length of training. Author Miroslava Ristić proposes a model for evaluating the quality standards of open educational resources.

The final paper of these Proceedings analyses a topic that often remains "outside the scope" of the pedagogical activity analysis. Author Krzysztof Jasinski analyses the factors of re-adaptation of persons who are temporarily incarcerated. The author interprets the difficulties of re-adaptation into society by a subjective feeling of the fear of freedom, among other things. The vicious circle of relapse that individuals fall into increases the stress they experience, which encourages a cognitive escape from freedom.

Firmly believing that these Proceedings contribute to the exchange of quality of educational systems and approaches, and encourage reflection on the quality of this system, we proudly submit it for reading. At the same time, we bear witness to the importance of networking and the synergy of joint work.

Editors

PART 1

PEDAGOGY IN THE SYSTEM OF EARLY AND PRESCHOOL EDUCATION AND CARE

Monika TERLEVIĆ, Danijela BLANUŠA TROŠELJ
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ECEC policy – a systematic literature review

Abstract: *Education is accepted as a fundamental resource and a valuable investment, both for individuals and for society as a whole. Educational policies in the ECEC system are increasingly important in the part of public policies in the world. Different countries set different goals for their educational policies, depending on the current strategic documents, value systems of the countries and/or the traditions it relies on. The aim of this research was to make an overview of ECEC educational policy research. The Systematic Literature Review method was used. The open access database of DOAJ articles from 2019 to 2023 was used as the source of research. The papers show different views on the ECEC system and its positioning in education policy. On the one hand, they show the idea of a flexible system in which play-based pedagogy is nurtured, the active participation of the child and the adaptation of work to the child's interests and needs is clearly visible. But on the other hand, the papers give a sense of anxiety and aspiration to structure the work in early and preschool education institutions only for the purpose of standardising school preparation. Implications can be found in the obtaining of relevant results that can contribute to the successful implementation of educational policy in the ECEC system by theoretically understanding it and inspiring the planning process of its implementation by other successful countries.*

Keywords: *accessibility; early childhood education and care; educational policy; systematic literature review; quality.*

Introduction

Globalisation affects all segments of life, including education and care. Educational policy has a hard time coping with constant contextual changes, often offering solutions with an initially inadequate identification of the problem. The processes of education and care are closely related to the public global policy, especially educational policy at the national level (Mundy, 2005). Žiljak (2013: 8) emphasises that "every policy strives to be successful, and educational policy strives to achieve its success most often through educational reforms, even more systemic changes that affect all parts of the system". The educational policy of early childhood education and care (ECEC) is defined as a set of principles and guidelines based on legal regulations for the purpose of improving the quality of ECEC.

Educational policies in the ECEC system are increasingly important in the part of public policies in the world. Since education is one of the factors of successful political socialisation, it is crucial to encourage children to actualise their personal potential

from an early age, which in the future, through active participation, will significantly contribute to political integration and critical thinking (Wasik & Hindman, 2005). Therefore, "education is a powerful means of forming national identity and national integration" (Pastuović, 2012: 171). It is undoubtedly important to think about the importance of developmentally stimulating experiences for children of early and preschool age in their formative years (Blanuša Trošelj & Terlević, 2023: 73), but there is a significant controversy surrounding the way of involving and implementing policies in educational practice.

ECEC policy in the world and in Europe

Different countries set different goals for their educational policies, depending on the current strategic documents, value systems of the countries and/or the tradition it relies on (Engel et. al, 2015; Eurydice, 2024; Korzeniecka-Bondar et al., 2023). Of course, in doing so, all policies should be based on the basic common documents that have been signed and ratified, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948, NN 12/2009) or the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). At the same time, significant differences are also visible in the functioning of the system itself. Many countries struggle with satisfying the basic rights to life or health of individuals, which is why the right to education is in fact insufficiently realised, although on paper it is one of the key rights. At the same time, ECEC is on the periphery of the educational system itself. Even in similar value and cultural systems, such as European countries, there are visible differences in the understanding and functioning of ECEC. Some countries see ECEC as an integrated system managed by the departmental Ministry in charge of all parts of education, from nursery school to college (e.g. Croatia). Others separate ECEC into the so-called *split-system* that are managed and regulated by two ministries, the ministry in charge of health or social care for children up to the age of 3, and the ministry in charge of education for children older than 3 years of age (Visković, 2024). Of course, this is also reflected in the personnel, competences and legal regulations governing the ECEC.

In Poland, ECEC is based on a split-system - ECEC for children from 1 to 3 years of age and for children from 3 to 6/7 years of age. Preschool education in the year before starting school is compulsory. The participation rate in ECEC of children aged 3 to 6 is evidently high, as according to the latest data from the 2022/2023 academic year it is 90 %. As for the initial education of preschool teachers, unlike the initial education of teachers working with children from the age of three until starting school, there is no higher initial education for educators who work in the ECEC system with children up to 3 years of age (Eurydice, 2024). "Since September 2018, all teachers in Poland have had a statutory obligation to undertake professional development… with the goal of improving the knowledge and skills connected with their performed work" (Korzeniecka-Bondar et al., 2023: 93).

Norway has a long tradition of decentralised education management, and with it the ECEC system (Engel et. al, 2015; Eurydice, 2024). ECEC is not mandatory, but

children have the right to education from the first year of life. "Kindergarten Teacher Education (KTE) is a three-year bachelor program. This program educates teacher candidates for kindergartens/early childhood education. The addition of one year's relevant further education qualifies pre-primary teachers to work in the first to the fourth year of primary school" (Eurydice, 2024).

The ECEC system in Germany consists of public and private institutions that provide out-of-home education services. The number of institutions that provide care for children from 3 years of age is gradually decreasing. Institutions that provide integrated care for children from the age of one to starting school are opening (Eurydice, 2024). In some regions of the country, ECEC is completely free, while in others it is funded by parents. Parents are free to choose the institutions of their choice. The standard for enrolling children in educational groups is not national, but regional. In the group of children aged 3 to 6, 20-25 children are enrolled, while in the age group 0 to 3, 8-15 children are enrolled. The ratio of preschool teachers to children under the age of 3 in 2022 was 4 (children): 1 (educator), and between the ages of 3 and starting school - 7.8 (children): 1 (educator). "Pedagogic staff in the German early childhood sector does not have the training and status of teachers. The pedagogic staff in the early childhood sector consists mainly of Erzieher/Erzieherinnen (state-recognised youth or child-care workers)" (Eurydice, 2024).

The Netherlands provides ECEC services for children from 6 weeks to the end of primary school (12 years). Education is compulsory from the age of 5. The purpose of early education is to prevent educational differences among children aged 2 to 6 years of age. Four-and five-year-olds attend the first two grades of primary school. Parents co-finance the costs of care and education of their children, and the Dutch government co-finances most of the monthly amount. Primary school education is completely free (Eurydice, 2023).

In connection with the previous statements, the key characteristic of educational policies in the ECEC system of an individual country refers to ensuring the right to education. One of the dimensions of the right to education is access to education itself (Tomaševski, 2006). To provide a comprehensive overview of access to ECEC, the European Commission, EACEA and Eurydice (2019) provided an insight into ECEC access measures for all children in EU member states, in the document *Key data on early and preschool education in Europe - 2019 edition.*

Theoretical conceptualisation of ECEC policy paradigms

To systematise different theoretical starting points and research, Woodhead (2006) points out four paradigms in the ECEC policies and practices:

1. Development paradigm
2. Socio-cultural paradigm
3. Political and economic paradigm
4. Perspective of human rights paradigms

Beginning with the thesis that the early years of a child's life are formative years that determine the child's future prospects in the long term (Blanuša Trošelj & Terlević, 2024), Woodhead (2006) defines the first paradigm as a *developmental perspective*. He states that the developmental perspective includes the child's physical, cognitive, social and emotional functioning, which includes characteristic stages of development, and believes that numerous progressive transformations take place in these areas through a child's development. It defines early childhood as the period of life when human beings are the most dependent on relationships with other people, and it is precisely their development that is particularly sensitive to negative influences from the environment. He also emphasises the importance of formative years of a child's life as part of a sensitive or critical period of development, and concludes that "early intervention is the best, but it is (almost) never too late to intervene" (Woodhead, 2006: 24) at that stage of a child's development.

Woodhead (2006) divides *the socio-cultural perspective* into *developmentally* and *contextually appropriate practice*. Developmentally appropriate practice is based on Piaget's developmental theory, which states that the child must first be at a certain level of development in order to learn something, while the concept of contextually appropriate practice is based on Vygotsky's socio-constructivist theory, in which he claims that the child's learning and stimulating environment affects its development.

The interesting thing about the third paradigm is reflected in the fact that the Woodhead (2006) does not accept *the political and economic perspective* as a positive paradigm in education and considers it ethically questionable. However, just as Bruner (2000) proves, even though it often seems the opposite and you would never even think about education as such, in a broader sense it is really political. Education is accepted as a fundamental resource and a valuable investment, both for individuals and for society as a whole. Indeed, in most countries today, primary education is not only perceived as a right, but also as an individual's duty.

As the last paradigm in ECEC policies and practices, Woodhead (2006) stresses *the human rights perspective*. It can be concluded that the author believes this perspective should be the most represented paradigm in education, given that it is based on ethical and legal principles. The author connects this paradigm with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

On the other hand, authors Ylimaki and Brunderman (2022) try to face the challenges of improving the quality of educational processes in educational institutions located in contextually intercultural environments and apply traditionally oriented teaching with a great departure from pedocentrism. The very core of these challenges is the tension between a neoliberal policy designed for wide-population implementation that is not sensitive to contextually appropriate practice, interculturality and interdisciplinarity and, on the other hand, a progressive approach to democratic education based on humanism, a holistic approach and pedocentrism. The presence of neoliberal policies in educational discourse is associated with the compromising of political freedom at national levels (English & Papa, 2018). For the education system, this can be described through one

public education system. By creating alternatives, i.e. by establishing alternative schools with centralised financing, it ensures the true political freedom of society.

Education is constantly changing in line with the change in economic conditions, demographics, technological advances and political debates. It is these drivers that will change the way politicians and researchers will conceptualise and ultimately construct future curricula and curricular reforms and determine which paradigm will be particularly emphasised in that process. Funding of public education is an important indicator of society's priorities and an obvious indicator of future educational trends. Thus, the ECEC educational policy today occupies a significant place in global and national educational policies, with an emphasis on their important values, most often presented in strategic documents, and articles.

Research aim

The goal of this research was to make an overview of research on the ECEC educational policy currently available to the authors in the DOAJ open database. Regarding this aim, the following research questions were selected.

RQ_1: What methods are used to research ECEC educational policies?

RQ_2: What are the key topics that appear in analysed works, and how do they concern ECEC educational policies?

Method

The Systematic Literature Review method was used. The open access database of DOAJ articles was used as the source of the research. The time frame for the analysed published works was 5 years, from 2019 to 2023.

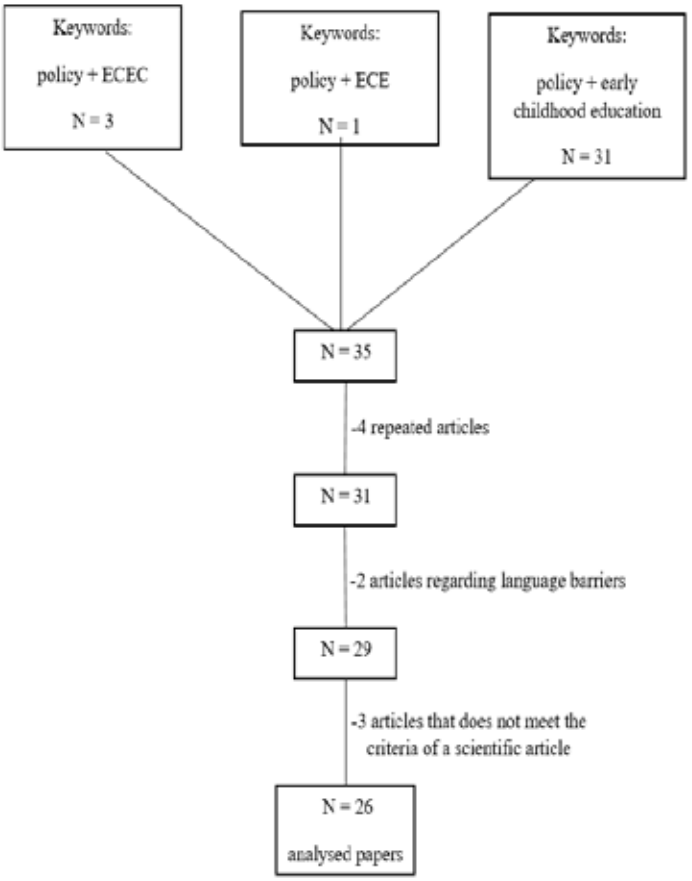
The criteria for inclusion and exclusion of articles in the analysis (Maričić et al., 2023: 230; Terlević, 2022: 205) are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 *Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria*

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Keywords	Policy + ECEC or ECE or early childhood education	All other
Subject area	Education	Not education
Language	English	Non-English
Timeline	2019 – 2023	Everything until 2018 (and 2024)
Literature type	Peer Reviewed Journals, Single article in regular number	Conference proceedings, journal articles that are not published in Peer Reviewed Journals, Editorials, Special numbers, Books
Content	Research; at least one of educational topics and at least one of educational level	Not Research

In the first step, keywords are entered. In the combination of keywords: *policy + ECEC*, 3 papers were published in the specified period, 1 of which was published in 2019, and 2 in 2023. Only one paper was published in the combination of keywords *policy and ECE*, in 2019. In the DOAJ database, 31 papers were published with the keywords *policy and early childhood education.* Of that number, 6 were published in 2019; 5 in 2020; 8 in 2021; 2 in 2022; 10 in 2023.

Graph 1 represents further steps that arrive at the final number of papers for detailed analysis. In the end, a total of 26 articles from the DOAJ database were analysed.



Graph 1 *Identified articles in the systematic literature review*

Results and Discussion

ECEC educational policies research methods

To answer the first research question, the papers and their methodology were studied in detail. The countries and continents from which the research originated, the index of

the quartile of journals in which the papers were published, and the methodology of obtaining data were determined.

In Table 2, the topic of ECEC education policy is more present in research in the areas of Europe and North America. Australia follows, while South America, Asia and Africa are represented with only 2 scientific papers each. Although it can be inferred that there are many countries on these continents that do not yet have a regulated ECEC system, as well as an associated educational policy, it would be interesting to study whether they use different terminology or publish in local, less accessible magazines, or in other languages. Special value is given to international research that connects scientists from different countries. In this research, three such papers were found.

Table 2 *Countries and continents present in the papers*

Continent	Countries	Number of articles
Asia	Hong Kong; UAE	2
Africa	South Africa; Nigeria	2
North America	USA; Mexico	7
South America	Brazil; Colombia	2
Europe	Italy; Finland; Norway; UK; Hungary; Croatia; Spain; Turkey; Germany	13*
Australia	Australia	4*

*Two papers involved Finland and Norway; one paper involved Australia and UK; one paper involved Australia, Croatia, Hungary, Spain and Turkey

Table 3 *Quartiles of the journals that published analysed papers*

Quartiles	Number of papers
Q1	5
Q2	10
Q3	7
Q4	1
Non quartile	3

Table 3 shows the quartile of journals in which the analysed papers were published. It shows that the majority of papers were published in journals that are in Q2 quartiles (N = 10). This aims to show the quality of analysed papers and high quality of each research.

Table 4 shows that the ECEC educational policy is mainly researched using qualitative methods, or possibly quantitative when they are combined with some form of qualitative research. A broader picture of the studied issue is given this way. ECEC is an interdisciplinary field whose specificities correspond to the principles of qualitative methodology, and its practice (along with policy) is also researched this way (Bogatić, 2024). The variety of different methods used is noted in Table 4, but it can be determined that review papers of scientific research and analysis of documentation, content or other

sources and interviews, independently or in combination with other methods (scales, observations, focus groups) are predominantly represented in this research.

Table 4 *The methodology nature of analysed research papers*

Methodology	Instrument	Authors	N
Qualitative	analysis of the public hearing	Lazzari & Balduzzi, 2023	20
	qualitative content analysis	Višnjić-Jevtić, Varga Nagy, Ozturk, Şahin-Sak, Paz-Albo, Toran & Sánchez-Pérez, 2021	
	iterative analytical process, extractive	Neumann, Anthony, Erazo & Neumann, 2019	
	qualitative content analysis	Thacker-King, 2023	
	document analysis	Heiskanen & Franck, 2023	
	longitudinal research	Kóger, 2022	
	semi-structured interviews	Haugset, 2021	
	focus groups	Luthardt, Schröder, Hildebrandt & Bormann, 2020	
	ethnographic	Alstad & Sopanen, 2020	
	evidence-based	Melhuish & Gardiner, 2019	
	observations and video recordings	Porterfield & ScottLittle, 2019	
	literature review	Paananen, Kuukka & Alasuutari, 2019	
	Delphi methodology;	Chung, 2023	
	review of international literature and interview	Adamson & Skattebol, 2023	
	ethnographic approach - hermeneutic	Anzures Tapia, 2020	
	phenomenological approach	Farewell, Powers, Maiurro, Scarbro, Quinlan & Puma, 2020	
		Buskqvist, Johansson & Hermansson, 2023	
		Skattebol, Adamson & Blaxland, 2023	
		Axelsson, 2023	
		Guerrero & Camargo-Abello, 2023	
Quantitative	(only in combinations with qualitative methodology)		0
Mix methods (qualitative and quantitative)	Document analysis, non-participatory classroom observation and semi-structured interviews and thematic content analysis	Sherfinski, Hayes, Zhang & Jalalifard, 2019	6
		Koloti & Jita, 2021	
	interview and analysis of documentation	Little, Cohen-Vogel, Sadler & Merril, 2019	
	interview and questionnaire	Verma, Hearn, Zahran & Alowais, 2022	
	semi-structured interviews, with scale	Williams, 2021	
	focus groups, observation	Vieira, Meirelles & Emmendoerfer, 2023	

Key themes of ECEC educational policy research

Differences in the ECEC system

There are as many different systems and policies of ECEC as there are countries. Maybe even more, given that in some countries the ECEC system is governed by regional policies. Many countries do not have universal early and preschool programmes, and they vary according to the obligation to access the system (Williams, 2021). Certain countries have a long-standing tradition of the ECEC system, while in others the same has only recently been discussed. In recent years, the countries of the European Union have been trying to set common goals, and in accordance with this, they have been adopting documents and creating policies that harmonise the position of the ECEC system and the (initial) education of staff.

However, the global picture of ECEC policies raises many questions and debates. While, on the one hand, some countries do not have a sustainable basic quality ECEC system, from lack of qualified workforce, insufficient institutions, equipment, care for children's health, poverty, to the entire educational policy and ECEC monitoring (Aguh & Olutola, 2023; Verma et al., 2022), in other countries, further steps in raising children are being considered, as a kind of upgrade in accordance with the promotion of children's rights in all segments (Axelsson, 2023; Chung, 2023). Differences between countries in terms of the ECEC system are visible in the historical segments of ECEC development, the reasons for establishing kindergartens and the speed of development. However, even in more developed countries there are significant differences visible in fundamental issues, such as accessibility to the ECEC system, which entails socially important issues, such as children in poverty or distance (Guerrero & Camargo-Abello, 2023), i.e. the isolation of certain regions (Axelsson, 2023; Skattebolet al., 2023, Višnjić-Jevtić et al., 2021). Deepening of differences occurs in crisis situations, which was proven in the conditions of the recently experienced COVID-19 pandemic (Skattebol et al., 2023; Višnjić-Jevtić et al., 2021). Education policy responses to COVID-19 have opened dialogues about the consequences of the closure of educational institutions and the current chronic educational gap for minorities and children living at the level of poverty or extreme poverty (Thacker-King, 2023). Reactions to Covid-19 have generally led to significant changes in ECEC policy and funding mechanisms. Skattebol et al. (2023), note that this situation has led to reflections on the level of *competence* in the Australian ECEC system as sustainable, inclusive and effective for all families. Similar questions have arisen in other countries.

Quality of ECEC system

The quality of the ECEC system is the most frequently mentioned topic in the reviewed papers. It is obvious that this is a current topic of education policy regardless of the country. Very diverse areas are discussed within quality, such as staff qualifications, accessibility to early and preschool education, innovations to improve quality, etc.

However, it is difficult to talk about the ECEC quality in conditions where the main concern are fundamental human rights. Thus, for example, the ECEC system

in Nigeria faces many challenges that Western society does not. These include poor infrastructure, employment of unqualified personnel, low salaries of employees, inadequate implementation of the early education curriculum, corruption and poor funding of ECEC programmes, etc. (Aguh & Olutola, 2023). Education and care in poor parts of certain countries have many disadvantages, and in these regions preschool teachers are often less informed and qualified, and their role is significantly different (Anzures Tapia, 2020). Issues relating to poverty, availability and quality of ECEC are being discussed in Nigeria, Mexico, USA, and Australia. Many countries lower the limit of compulsory education to early age, as one way of overcoming differences and giving opportunities to children from poor families or environments (Guerrero & Camargo-Abello, 2023).

Melhuish and Gardiner (2019) indicate that the presence of highly qualified staff can have greater impact on the quality of ECEC than the ratio of staff to children. Thoughtful and purposeful policy change can directly affect children's development, contribute to improving their well-being and the future development of adults (Melhuish & Gardiner, 2019). Competent practice has been verified many times and the authors refer to direct connection with contribution to society. Of course, what is deemed competent also depends on the culture in which it is discussed. Process-based and culturally competent practices are the foundation of high-quality early and preschool education in general and should be encouraged and built upon by meaningful policy changes at the ECEC level (Porterfield & ScottLittle, 2019). The same authors emphasise the need for policies and resources to invest in capacity to implement culturally competent practices with carefully considered professional development, and steps should be taken at the system level to ensure a cohesive approach to regulating and promoting culturally competent practices. (Porterfield & ScottLittle, 2019). Communities are those who should define their ECEC needs and the types of services that best fit those needs (Adamson & Skattebol, 2023), which naturally calls into question the applicability of a universal quality assessment system for all societies and all nations.

Perhaps the most common and universal question related to ECEC quality includes the question of availability. There are significant differences between countries that discuss this topic from different positions. For example, the availability of ECEC is associated with the possibility of choice, which according to Paananen et al. (2019), is currently part of the dominant political discourses in the field of early and preschool childcare in many Western societies. At the local level there are often certain restrictions, which are given lower or higher priority, depending on the geopolitical context. Policies intertwine and merge with various interrelated entities. Some of them have stronger influence on educational policy than others, and apart from the spatial segment they themselves can change with regard to social contexts and values that prevail in a certain period of time. Among others, these can be entities such as access to ECEC services (availability, distance of services, fees), parents' assumptions about ECEC services, working conditions, legislation, other types of different resources available to families, and family characteristics, the needs and

wishes of children and parents (Paananen et al., 2019). In practice, access to ECEC remains the top priority. In his work, Motiejunaite (2021) advocates the need for clearer guidelines to promote quality ECEC and proposes complex indicators for monitoring the integration of ECEC systems based on integrated management, higher education, educational guidelines and place guarantees. As stated earlier, the availability of ECEC is a particularly topical issue for poor children and children in more remote areas. Families with young children facing economic and related difficulties are the most likely group to miss out on the benefits of regular and continuous participation in high-quality ECEC, as policy does not ensure that all families can use high-quality ECEC services (Skattebol et.al., 2023).

Innovations can be a significant contribution to ECEC quality, but the path from the creation of changes in educational policy to the implementation of changes in practice is not always easy. Luthardt et al. (2020) points out that in order to positively contribute to changing interactions in practice it is necessary to establish a discursive agreement on the central concepts of the topic at the policy level and connect them with the actual working practice realities, to implement social innovations in education and connect it more closely with existing ideas in practice. This requires certain support measures.

Innovations and interventions in the analysed works talk about the possibilities of digital technology in ECEC (Buskqvist et al., 2023; Neumann et al., 2019), interventions related to obesity issues (Farewell et al., 2020), moral education (Chung, 2023) and others. These are topics that can be discussed within the educational policy in developed countries that have an organised ECEC system, where the issues related to accessibility, poverty, etc. have been overcome. For example, Farewell et al. (2020), write about the identified changes in policies, systems and environment, and interventions in ECEC with the aim of implementing sustainable changes related to healthy nutrition and physical activity, improving the quality of different kindergartens and promoting healthy behaviours in early childhood, in order to prevent obesity (Farewell et al., 2020). However, according to Buskqvist et al. (2023), digitisation is not only achieved with a computer and projector, cables and lights, nor all this in combination with other physical materials such as floors and chairs; it is also achieved with institutional documents, curriculum plans and the ways in which children and teachers interact with each other. The authors advocate for understanding digitisation as a relational process in educational environments, rather than as an instrumental and deterministic implementation of technology (Buskqvist et al., 2023).

Despite the possible initial feelings of discomfort towards innovations arising from educational policy, preschool teachers are ready to implement given policies, even when they do not have sufficient knowledge about them (Koloti & Jita, 2021). This may be the reason why many data handled by institutions, even informally, are handled very variably (Little et al., 2019). Nowadays, data privacy is a sensitive and burning issue that education policy must take into account.

In a society where nations and religions intervene more and more, and migration changes the needs of society, the issue of linguistics and the use of language comes

to the fore in Western countries, which are the most common goal during migration. Language orientation, according to Alstad and Sopanen (2020), in ECEC policy is rather vague and open. On the one hand, multilingualism is seen as a resource, and on the other, multilingualism is seen as a challenge. Although Finland is bilingual, it is still based on monolingual norms. The ECEC curriculum in Finland does not have the same level of political engagement as in Norway, as Finnish teachers have more autonomy than teachers in Norway (Alstad & Sopanen, 2020).

As ECEC policy changes, so do the policy requirements. The very current issue of documentation and the function of documentation in ECEC was discussed in the work of Heiskanen and Franck (2023), who indicate significant differences in understanding of and approach to the same issue, even when it comes to countries that are close in location, such as Finland and Norway. However, it is certain that it must be ensured the documentation does not interfere with the implementation of child support. The aforementioned study sheds light on the complex nature of the development of educational systems, with emphasis on documentation in ECEC. At the same time, previous experiences also influence further changes, so the Finnish system that previously had no requirements for administrative practices of documentation for child support saw more documentation as the correct policy solution. Conversely, in the Norwegian system, problems caused by rigid documentation practices led to calls for simplification of documentation (Heiskanen & Franck, 2023).

Economy, private sector, and ECEC system

Economic orientations of public systems, including the ECEC system, are increasingly the subject of much research. In the work of Haugset (2021), private and corporate service providers emphasise organisational autonomy, show their internal quality systems, refer to municipal ECEC centres as competitors and propose stricter national quality guidelines than municipal, social ones. According to Vieira et al. (2023), a policy for educational management based on economic management includes innovation, proactivity and risk-taking. These dimensions are determined by organisational characteristics such as management support, discretion/autonomy, rewards/recognition, organisational boundaries and time availability (Vieiraet al., 2023). However, the same authors emphasise that despite the potential and possible strategies, the segment of the ECEC policy is still insufficiently researched in this area.

According to Guerrero and Camargo-Abello (2023), the benefits of public and private investment in ECEC are recognised internationally. There is a consensus that investing in ECEC not only benefits them directly, but the returns are seen throughout their lives and even in their offspring. Practice has shown that educational institutions for early and preschool age become more adapted to the special needs and contexts of children through meaningful implementation of educational policy. Preschool teachers proactively position themselves within the implementation of the program or curriculum by resisting, negotiating and creatively adapting to respond to the needs of children and the main goals of ECEC policy for the purpose of integrated child

development (Guerrero & Camargo-Abello, 2023). The same source emphasises that ECEC includes not only teaching, but also socialisation and fostering a culture of learning in children (Guerrero & Camargo-Abello, 2023).

Limitations

The limitations of this study can be seen in a contextual barrier of countries that the studies were conducted in. We can never fully understand and interpret their systems regarding all the cultural, socio-economic, language, and geographical differences. Furthermore, analysed studies were published in open-access journals (or DOAJ database) which could potentially limit this systematic literature review. Nevertheless, two researchers with different educational level backgrounds ensured the research validity.

Ethical principles

There is no ethical doubt to report regarding the nature of this research.

Conclusion

The results of this systematic literature review provide different views on the ECEC system and its positioning in education policy around the world. On the one hand, the idea of a flexible system in which play-based pedagogy is nurtured, active participation of the child and adaptation of work to child's interests and needs is clearly visible. But on the other hand, analysed articles give a sense of anxiety and aspiration to structure the work in ECEC institutions only for the purpose of standardising school preparation. Furthermore, it is noticeable that the quality ECEC system is at the core of the ECEC policy in all countries. Results regarding the methodological part of this study show that most studies were conducted in European and American countries. These are high quality papers due to the fact that the majority of them were published in Q2 quartile journals. ECEC is obviously an interdisciplinary system with specificities that correspond to the principles of qualitative methodology, and its policy and practice is mostly researched by that paradigm.

With that said, this study contributes to understanding the theoretical framework of ECEC policy regarding all the contextual differences of aforementioned countries. It brings contribution to science in the field of ECEC system, taking into account that at the global level, relatively little attention is paid to the subject of ECEC policy. Bearing in mind that educational policies at the global, national, and then regional levels decide how the ECEC system will work, it is crucial to pay more attention to this topic in order to make the quality of the ECEC system as efficient as possible. Firstly, it is crucial that national policies direct sufficient resources to the ECEC system, bearing in mind the fact that certain countries have a long-standing tradition of the ECEC system, while in others the same has only recently been discussed. Secondly, within quality, very diverse areas are discussed, such as staff qualifications, accessibility to early and preschool education, innovations to improve quality, etc.

However, it is relatively impossible to talk about the ECEC quality in conditions where fundamental human rights are of concern. With that said, this study reveals a kind of paradox in analysed articles - an overall small number of studies focus on the ECEC policy phenomena, and those studies that do, focus on the quality of the ECEC system. Future research should pay more attention to this paradox and focus on the cause-and-effect relationship between ECEC policy and practice.

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Polityka wczesnej edukacji i opieki – systematyczny przegląd literatury

Zarówno dla jednostek, jak też dla ogółu społeczeństwa edukacja uznawana jest za fundamentalny zasób i wartościową inwestycję. Polityka edukacyjna w systemie wczesnej edukacji i opieki (WEIO) odgrywa coraz ważniejszą rolę w polityce publicznej na świecie. W zależności od obowiązujących dokumentów strategicznych, systemów wartości danego kraju i/lub tradycji, na których dany kraj się opiera, różne kraje stawiają sobie różne cele w zakresie polityki edukacyjnej. Celem niniejszego opracowania jest dokonanie przeglądu badań dotyczących polityki edukacyjnej w zakresie WEIO. W badaniu zastosowano metodę systematycznego przeglądu literatury. Przeszukano otwartą bazę danych artykułów DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals) w celu odnalezienia źródła badań z lat 2019-2023. Wyniki niniejszego systematycznego przeglądu literatury przedstawiają różne spojrzenia na system WEIO i jego miejsce w polityce edukacyjnej na całym świecie. Z jednej strony uwidacznia się idea elastycznego systemu, w którym pielęgnowana jest pedagogika oparta na zabawie, aktywnym udziale dziecka i dostosowaniu pracy do jego zainteresowań oraz potrzeb. Z drugiej zaś strony omawiane artykuły dają poczucie dążenia do ustrukturyzowania pracy w placówkach WEIO wyłącznie w celu ujednolicenia systemu przygotowania szkolnego. Wyniki dotyczące części metodologicznej niniejszego badania pokazują, że większość badań przeprowadzono w krajach europejskich i amerykańskich. Biorąc pod uwagę fakt, że większość artykułów opublikowano w czasopismach znajdujących się w kwartylach Q2, badania te są badaniami wysokiej jakości. WEIO jest bezdyskusyjnie systemem interdyscyplinarnym, którego specyfika odpowiada zasadom metodologii jakościowej, a jego polityka i praktyka są badane głównie w oparciu o ten paradygmat. Niniejsze badanie przyczynia się do zrozumienia teoretycznych ram polityki wczesnej edukacji i opieki nad dziećmi, uwzględniającej wszystkie różnice kontekstowe występujące w wyżej wymienionych krajach. Biorąc pod uwagę, że na świecie stosunkowo mało uwagi poświęca się kwestii polityki WEIO, niniejsza praca wnosi wkład do badań nad zagadnieniem systemu WEIO. Mając na względzie, że polityka edukacyjna na szczeblu światowym, krajowym i regionalnym decyduje o tym, jak będzie funkcjonował system WEIO, niezwykle istotnym jest, aby poświęcić temu zagadnieniu więcej uwagi w celu zapewnienia jak najwyższej jakości systemu WEIO. Zważywszy na to, że w niektórych krajach system wczesnej edukacji i opieki nad dzieckiem funkcjonuje od wielu lat, podczas gdy w innych jest on omawiany dopiero od niedawna, kluczowym jest, aby polityka krajowa przeznaczała odpowiednie środki na system wczesnej edukacji i opieki nad dzieckiem. Należy dodać, że w odniesieniu do kontekstu jakości omawiane są bardzo zróżnicowane obszary, począwszy od kwalifikacji kadry, dostępności edukacji wczesnoszkolnej i przedszkolnej, aż po innowacje mające na celu poprawę jakości itp. Jednakże w warunkach, w których w grę wchodzą podstawowe prawa człowieka, omawianie jakości WEIO jest niemal niemożliwe. Biorąc pod uwagę powyższe,

w analizowanych artykułach ujawnia pewien paradoks – stosunkowo niewielka liczba badań skupia się na zjawisku polityki WEIO, a te badanie, które podejmują ten temat, koncentrują się na jakości systemu WEIO. Przyszłe badania powinny zwrócić większą uwagę na powyższy paradoks i skoncentrować się na związku przyczynowo-skutkowym pomiędzy polityką a praktyką w zakresie WEIO. Poprzez teoretyczne zrozumienie polityki WEIO oraz procesu planowania jej realizacji przez inne kraje odnoszące sukcesy na tym polu można odkryć pewne implikacje dotyczące uzyskiwania odpowiednich wyników, które mogą przyczynić się do skutecznej realizacji polityki edukacyjnej w ramach systemu WEIO.

Słowa kluczowe: dostępność; wczesna edukacja i opieka nad dziećmi; polityka edukacyjna; systematyczny przegląd literatury; jakość.

Образовна политика предшколског васпитања и образовања – систематски преглед литературе

Образовање је кључни ресурс и важна инвестиција и за појединце и за друштво у целини. Образовне политике система предшколског васпитања и образовања заузимају све значајније место у јавним политикама широм света. Различите земље постављају различите циљеве за своје образовне политике, у зависности од актуелних стратешких докумената, система вредности и/или традиције на коју се ослањају. Циљ овог истраживања био је да се направи преглед истраживања у области образовне политике предшколског васпитања и образовања. Примењена је метода систематског прегледа литературе. Прегледом чланака у бази часописа отвореног приступа (DOAJ) тражени су извори истраживања за период од 2019. до 2023. године. Резултати систематског прегледа литературе дају различите погледе на систем предшколског васпитања и образовања и његов положај у оквиру образовних политика широм света. С једне стране, препознатљива је идеја о флексибилном систему чија педагогија се заснива на игри, активном учешћу детета и прилагођавању рада дететовим интересовањима и потребама. Са друге стране, анализирани чланци указују на тежњу да се рад установа предшколског васпитања и образовања структурише само у циљу стандардизације припреме за школу. Према резултатима везаним за методолошки део овог истраживања, већина испитивања је вршена у земљама Европе и Америке. Високог су квалитета, имајући на уму да је већина радова објављена у часописима Q2 квартила. Очигледно, предшколско васпитање и образовање је интердисциплинарни систем, а будући да његове особености одговарају принципима квалитативне методологије, путем такве парадигме се његова политика и пракса и истражују.

Ова студија доприноси разумевању теоријског оквира политике предшколског васпитања и образовања и контекстуалних различитости међу поменутим земљама. Она је допринос науци у области предшколског васпитања и образовања, имајући у виду да се овој врсти политике у свету поклања релативно мало пажње. Будући да образовне политике на светском, националном и регионалном нивоу одређују функционисање система предшколског васпитања и образовања, важно је да се овој теми поклони више пажње, како би се дати систем учинио што ефикаснијим. Знајући да поједине земље имају дугогодишњу традицију система предшколског васпитања и образовања, док се у другима о томе тек однедавно говори, важно је да националне политике усмере довољно средстава ка том систему. Питања квалитета укључују врло различите области, од квалификација особља, доступности раног и предшколског образовања, до иновација у побољшању квалитета, итд. Међутим, о квалитету предшколског васпитања и образовања скоро је немогуће говорити ако су основна људска права доведена у питање. С тим у вези, ова студија открива својеврсни парадокс у анализираним радовима – свеукупно, мали број њих пажњу посвећује питању

политике предшколског васпитања и образовања, док они који се тиме и баве, пажњу усмеравају ка квалитету тог система. Будућа истраживања морала би да посвете више пажње овом парадоксу и да се усмере ка узрочно-последичним везама између политике и праксе предшколског васпитања и образовања. Импликације могу да се огледају у резултатима који би допринели успешној примени образовне политике у систему предшколског васпитања и образовања, како путем њеног теоријског разумевања, тако и подстицањем планирања њене примене по узору на друге земље.

Кључне речи: доступност; предшколско васпитање и образовање; образовна политика; систематски преглед литературе; квалитет.

Politike u sustavu ranog i predškolskog odgoja i obrazovanja – sustavni pregled literature

Obrazovanje se prihvaća kao temeljni resurs i vrijedna investicija, kako za pojedince tako i za društvo u cjelini. Obrazovne politike u sustavu ranog i predškolskog odgoja i obrazovanja (RPOO) sve su važnije u dijelu javnih politika u svijetu. Različite zemlje postavljaju različite ciljeve svojih obrazovnih politika, ovisno o trenutnim strateškim dokumentima, sustavima vrijednosti zemalja i/ili tradiciji na koju se oslanja. Cilj ovog istraživanja bio je napraviti pregled istraživanja obrazovne politike RPOO-a. Korištena je metoda sustavnog pregleda literature. Izvor istraživanja pretražen je u bazi podataka otvorenog pristupa DOAJ članaka od 2019. do 2023. godine. Rezultati ovog sustavnog pregleda literature daju različite poglede na sustav RPOO-a i njegovo pozicioniranje u obrazovnoj politici diljem svijeta. S jedne strane jasno je vidljiva ideja o fleksibilnom sustavu u kojem se njeguje pedagogija temeljena na igri, aktivnom sudjelovanju djeteta i prilagodbi rada djetetovim interesima i potrebama. No, s druge strane, analizirani članci daju osjećaj težnje da se rad u ustanovama RPOO-a strukturira samo u svrhu standardizacije pripreme za školu. Rezultati koji se odnose na metodološki dio ovog istraživanja pokazuju da je većina istraživanja provedena u europskim i američkim zemljama. Kvalitetni su s obzirom na to da je većina radova objavljena u časopisima koji se nalaze u Q2 kvartilima. RPOO je očito interdisciplinarni sustav čije specifičnosti korespondiraju s načelima kvalitativne metodologije, te se njegova politika i praksa uglavnom istražuje u toj paradigmi.

Ova studija doprinosi razumijevanju teorijskog okvira politike RPOO-a s obzirom na sve kontekstualne razlike gore navedenih zemalja. Doprinosi znanosti u području RPOO sustava, uzimajući u obzir da se na svjetskoj razini relativno malo pažnje posvećuje temi RPOO politike. Imajući u vidu da obrazovne politike na svjetskoj, nacionalnoj, a potom i regionalnoj razini odlučuju o tome kako će RPOO sustav funkcionirati, ključno je ovoj temi posvetiti više pažnje kako bi kvaliteta RPOO sustava bila što učinkovitija. Imajući u vidu činjenicu da neke zemlje imaju dugogodišnju tradiciju RPOO sustava, dok se u drugima o istome govori tek odnedavno, prije svega je ključno da nacionalne politike usmjere dovoljna sredstva u razvoj sustava. Drugo, unutar kvalitete se govori o vrlo različitim područjima, od osposobljenosti osoblja, dostupnosti RPOO-a, inovacijama za poboljšanje kvalitete itd. No, relativno je nemoguće govoriti o kvaliteti RPOO-a u uvjetima kada su upitna temeljna ljudska prava. S tim u vezi, ova studija otkriva svojevrsni paradoks u analiziranim člancima - sveukupno mali broj studija usredotočuje se na fenomen politike RPOO-a, a one studije koje se bave tom temom, fokusiraju se na kvalitetu RPOO sustava. Buduća bi istraživanja trebala posvetiti više pažnje ovom paradoksu i usredotočiti se na uzročno-posljedičnu vezu između politike i prakse RPOO-a. Implikacije se mogu pronaći u dobivanju relevantnih rezultata koji mogu doprinijeti uspješnoj provedbi obrazovne politike u sustavu RPOO-a kroz njezino teorijsko razumijevanje i inspiriranje procesa planiranja njezine provedbe iz drugih uspješnih zemalja.

Ključne riječi: kvaliteta; obrazovna politika; pristupačnost; predškolski odgoj i obrazovanje; sustavni pregled literature

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Cooperation between kindergarten and local community in promoting the quality of educational process

Abstract: *Continuous cooperation between professional kindergarten staff and the local community contributes to the improvement of the educational institution quality. Through interaction between kindergarten and the local community, the children become active participants in society, contributing to the betterment of the community in which they live and grow up. Therefore, the aim of this research was to examine the opinions of kindergarten teachers about the forms of cooperation between kindergarten and institutions in the local community, as well as frequency of cooperation. The research was conducted with kindergarten teachers (N=149) from Zadar (Croatia) during 2023. For the purposes of the research, a Questionnaire was conducted containing the demographic data, a scale of teachers' opinions about the cooperation of the preschool institution with institutions in the local community, and an open-ended question so that the research participants could suggest forms of cooperation between kindergarten and the local community. The Questionnaire was distributed via Google Form. Data was processed in Excel 2010. Results of the conducted research show that teachers in kindergartens recognise the value of cooperation with the local community and propose the application of structured forms of cooperation that will include all stakeholders in the educational process. A review of recent literature found that kindergartens most often collaborate with primary schools in the local community. However, this type of cooperation is poorly represented, which this research also confirms. Despite the potential benefits of strengthening ties with different local institutions, other forms of cooperation are rarely mentioned.*

Keywords: *cooperation, elementary school, kindergarten, local community, kindergarten teachers.*

Introduction

Children grow and develop in a community made up of different family structures, cultures, nationalities, values and beliefs, traditions, languages, religions and customs. Institutions that encourage active inclusion of pre-school and school institutions in the life of the community tend to grow in social and economic terms and thus contribute to the quality of life. The field of cooperation with the community is closely related to other areas that make up the quality of the institution, and it is important for its overall work. All the components make the institution recognisable and ready for affirmation

in the community it lives in and beyond. Well-being, satisfaction and democratic relations in society develop as a result of the positive pedagogy of kindergarten teachers and partner relations.

Among other things, the quality of the kindergarten's work is based on cooperation with the immediate and wider local community. The form and quality of kindergarten's cooperation with institutions from the immediate and wider environment differ in terms of frequency and modalities of cooperation and the contribution to the implementation of educational work (Handbook for Self-evaluation of Early Childhood and Preschool Education Institutions, 2012).

The National Curriculum for Early Childhood and Preschool Education (National Curriculum, 2014) serves as a cornerstone document for educational practices in kindergartens. It outlines the objectives and guiding principles of Croatian educational policy, ensuring alignment with the evolving needs of Croatian society within both, the European and global landscapes. Notably, the National Curriculum (2014) emphasises the importance of collaboration and partnership among all participants involved in its creation and implementation.

Cooperation of family, kindergarten and local community

According to Bronfenbrenner (1986), the wider environment (neighbourhood, kindergarten and school) forms a mesosystem, within which emphasis is placed on the interaction between primary elements and their impact on children. Intertwined systems form a macrosystem, which also includes the economic system, customs and rituals of the wider social community. Namely, the importance of the chronosystem is reflected in the changes that imply the need to shift the boundaries of cooperation between systems, which is especially evident during the children's transition from kindergarten to elementary school.

Sensitising the local community for needs of preschool institutions is a joint task of kindergarten teachers and parents. The openness and cooperation of the early childhood education and care (ECEC) institution with the local community opens space for providing various forms of direct and indirect assistance in achieving and improving its quality. Harmonised and coordinated activities of ECEC institution and various services of the local community ensure multiple forms of support in solving specific problems and achieving specific tasks of the institution. At the same time, the active participation of an ECEC institution in the life of the local community is an opportunity for its presentation, that is, the affirmation of its overall activity (Pribela Hodap et al., 2012). By planning and implementing joint activities of children, kindergarten teachers and members of the local community, children develop a sense of belonging to the society in which they grow up and develop social and civic competences. By involving community members in the work of kindergartens, public awareness of the role of education in community life is raised (Tankersley et al., 2012). The community is defined as a social and cultural milieu made up of children, kindergarten staff, parents, peers and adults from children's wider environment, as

well as local organisations and business establishments. Through mutual interaction of children and family with the community in which they grow up, they develop a sense of attachment and belonging to the environment and thereby deepen their understanding of the world in which they grow up and live.

Parents, kindergarten teachers, and other adults in their immediate environment present role models, fostering a sense of belonging within the community and guiding children towards understanding moral principles and civic responsibilities. Aligned with the National Curriculum (2014) kindergarten teachers actively involve children in community life through engaging activities tailored to their interests. This inclusion fosters a sense of belonging, enhances participation in the learning process, connects classroom experiences to real-world situations, and instils pride in both self and family. Children develop an understanding of the interconnectedness between their home, kindergarten, school, and the broader community, further promoting their emotional and cognitive development (Tankersley et al., 2012).

Also, parents, kindergarten teachers, schoolteachers and other adults from the children's environment have a different image of children. Namely, when starting school, educational work takes place in accordance with the expectations of families, institutions in local community, and society as a whole (Ljubetić, 2014). The modern image of children based on the new paradigm of upbringing and education places the children, their benefits, needs and possibilities in the focus of educational work. The abovementioned implies effective mutual communication, which is based on caring, helping and respecting ethical principles. A quality supportive relationship for the children's well-being is based on the maximum support of all stakeholders of the triad consisting of kindergarten/school - family - community.

Methods

The aim of the conducted research was to examine kindergarten teachers' opinions about the forms of cooperation between kindergartens and institutions in the local community, as well as frequency of such cooperation.

Based on the research objective, the following research questions were defined:

- What are the teachers' opinions about the characteristics of kindergarten's cooperation with institutions in the local community?
- With which institutions in the local community (associations, societies, communities, private and public entities) has cooperation been achieved?
- Is there a need to improve cooperation?
- What are the suggestions of teachers for improving cooperation?

Research Sample

Research sample consisted of early childhood teachers (N=149) working in kindergartens in the city of Zadar. Slightly less than half (40%, N=60) of the total number of research participants (N=149) were aged between 34 – 40 years, while

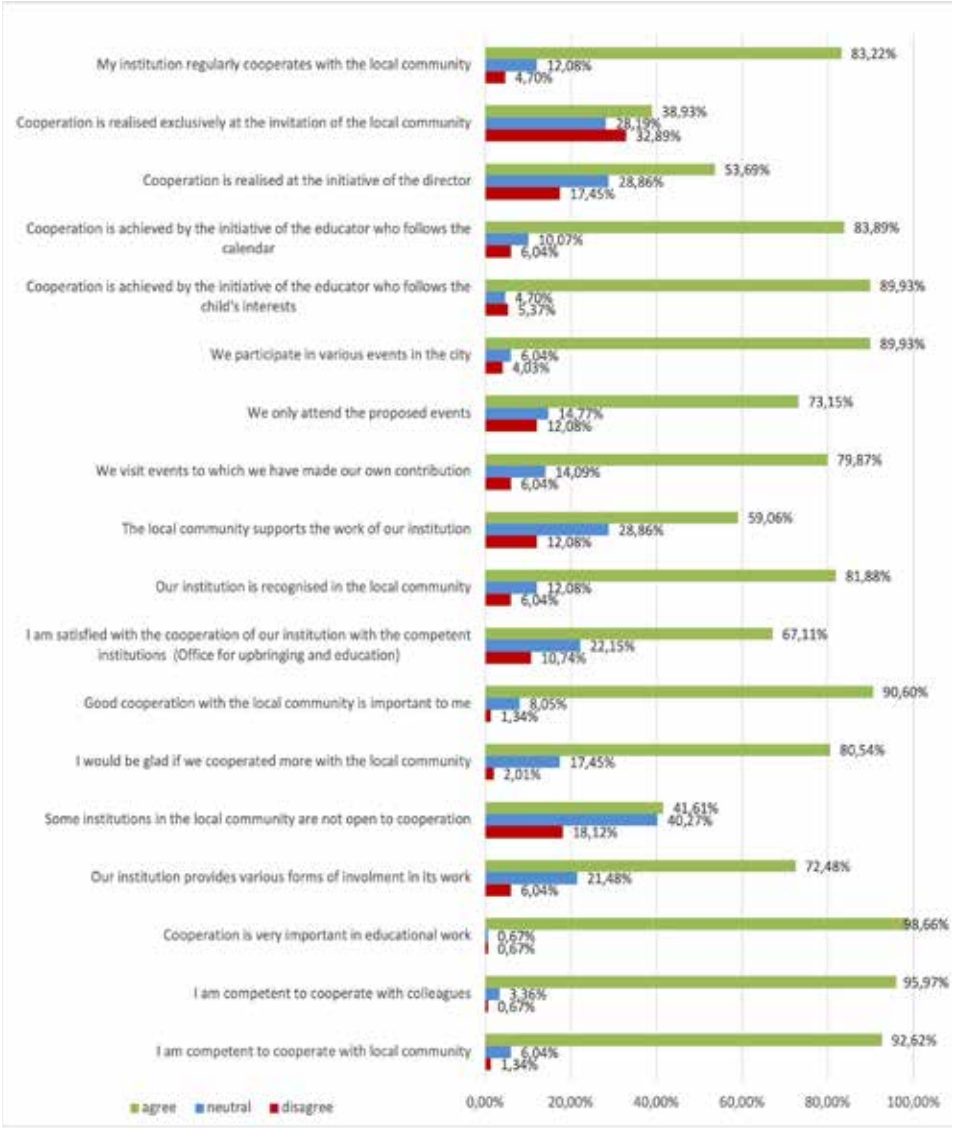
only 1% of kindergarten teachers were over 60 years old. The largest percentage of kindergarten teachers, research participants, 28% (N=41), had 5 years of work experience, while the smallest percentage, 9% (N=14), had between 16 and 20 years of work experience in the profession. An equal percentage of kindergarten teachers had 6 – 10 years (24%) and 11 – 15 years of work experience (22%), while 17% of kindergarten teachers had more than 20 years of work experience. All the participants (100%, N= 149) were females. The majority of participants had a 2-year university degree (47%, N=70), while there were 13% of participants (N = 19) with a university bachelor's degree, and 15% (N=23) that hold a master's degree in early childhood education. Most of the participants work in kindergartens founded by the city (60%, N=89), while 40% (N=60) of the participants are employed in preschool institutions founded by private individuals or a religious community.

Instruments and data processing procedure

In accordance with the research questions, a Questionnaire for teachers was constructed. It was divided into four parts and contained the following categories: sociodemographic data of the participants, teachers' opinion on the offered characteristics of cooperation of kindergartens and institutions in the local community (they regularly participate in the activities of the local community, cooperation is realized exclusively at the invitation of the local community, cooperation is achieved following calendar-significant dates) expressed on a five-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = I do not agree at all to 5 = I completely agree with the statement offered), questions closed-type institutions of the local community (science library, theatre, kindergartens founded by private individuals or a religious community) were listed, where dichotomous answers (YES/NO) were offered, whereby teachers had the opportunity to state their agreement or disagreement, then the question of the frequency of cooperation (1 to 3 times a year, 5 to 7 times a year) with institutions in the local community, where teachers had the opportunity to choose the answer that best describes their cooperation, and the open-ended question. In answers to open-ended questions, teachers had the opportunity to express their opinions on possible ways of elevating cooperation between kindergartens and the local community (teachers' suggestions for elevating cooperation with institutions, associations, communities, private and public entities in the local community).

Results

Using the Excell 2010 programme, data on characteristics and forms of cooperation between kindergartens and the local community was presented in percentages, and the frequency of closed-type questions about the frequency of cooperation between kindergartens and the local community, which institutions they cooperate with, and an open-ended question about suggestions for models of cooperation between kindergartens and local communities. Graph 1 shows the opinions of kindergarten teachers about the characteristics of cooperation with institutions in the local community.



Graph 1 *Teachers' opinions on the characteristics of cooperation*

For easier monitoring, in the processing of the results, the answers are divided into three groups: *I completely agree* and *agree* as the first group, *neither agree nor disagree* option as the second group, and *disagree* and *I completely disagree* as the third group of answers.

Over 83% of kindergarten teachers agree their institution regularly collaborates with the local community, indicating a positive foundation for community engagement. While 83.89% agree cooperation is based on monitoring events, a slightly higher percentage (89.94%) agree it is driven by kindergarten teachers' initiative based on children's needs and interests.

While nearly 70% of kindergarten teachers expressed satisfaction with current community collaboration, less than half (38.93%) solely rely on community invitations to initiate cooperation. This suggests a proactive approach, as a significant majority (89.93%) actively participate in various city events and almost 80% attend events showcasing children's contributions.

Over 90% of kindergarten teachers believe cooperation with the local community is crucial for educational work. Additionally, over 96% feel confident collaborating with colleagues within their kindergarten, and as experts with external community institutions.

Results indicate a generally positive outlook on cooperation between kindergartens and the local community. Over 83% (completely agree/agree) endorse this collaboration, regardless of the initiator (kindergarten teachers themselves, community invitations, or director's initiative). However, agreement is slightly lower for cooperation solely driven by community invitations (less than 84%) or the director's initiative (around 83 %).

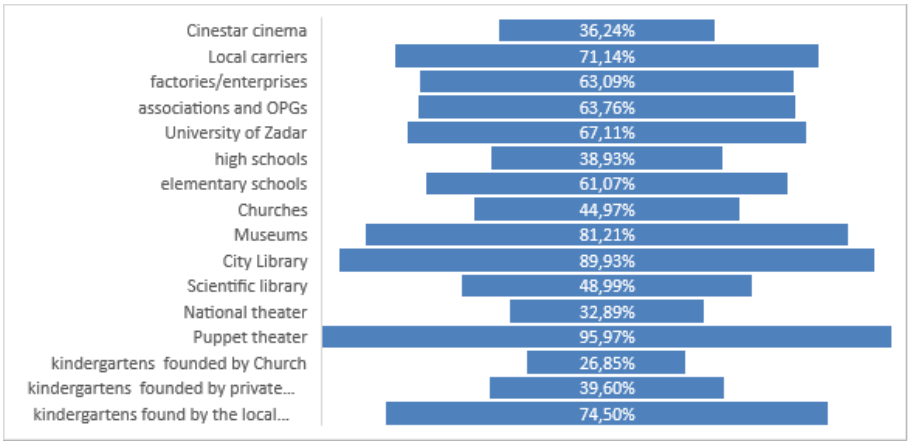
Interestingly, only 0.67 % of kindergarten teachers expressed neutrality regarding the statement that *cooperation is very important in educational work*. This suggests near-unanimous agreement on the value of collaboration. However, a more concerning finding lies in the significant portion (40.27%) of kindergarten teachers who remained neutral on the statement how *some institutions in the local community are open to cooperation*. This indicates a potential lack of confidence or experience regarding community receptiveness towards collaboration.

Additionally, a considerable number of kindergarten teachers (around 29%) remained neutral on statements concerning *cooperation being initiated by the director* or *supported by the local community*. This suggests a possible need for clearer communication or a more proactive approach to fostering collaborative efforts. Only a small portion (around 33%) of kindergarten teachers disagree that cooperation solely depends on local community invitations, highlighting a proactive approach to building partnerships.

Kindergarten teachers from the study actively participate in local events, demonstrating their willingness to engage regardless of the initiator (community, principal, or themselves). While pre-determined events play a role (73.15% participate in proposed activities), their involvement is often driven by children's needs. This highlights a focus on child-centred collaboration. Overall, kindergarten teachers express satisfaction with existing partnerships and acknowledge the crucial role which community collaboration plays in education and development of children. However, they also recognise that some local institutions might be less receptive to such collaboration, suggesting potential areas for improvement. Institutions within the community with which preschool institutions cooperate are most often institutions that themselves encourage cooperation or from which preschool institutions seek cooperation. Graphic 2 shows which institutions in the local community kindergartens cooperate with, and to what extent.

The study found that kindergarten teachers reported the most frequent cooperation with institutions like the local puppet theatre, city library, museums, the national theatre, scientific library, and cinemas. Interestingly, while 111 kindergarten teachers

(74.5%) confirmed cooperation with other city-founded kindergartens, 38 kindergarten teachers (25.5%) indicated no such collaboration.



Graph 2 *Institutions in the community with established cooperation*

Based on the obtained results, we can draw a conclusion about the second research question we posed, which refers to institutions (associations, societies, communities, private and public entities) with which cooperation was established. A satisfactory percentage of cooperation is evident with the puppet theatre and the city library. The largest number of participants answered affirmatively to the question about cooperation with the mentioned institutions. Involvement in cooperation with the local church and activities organised by church orders is unsatisfactory. The same dissatisfaction is reflected in cooperation with primary schools.

While given the chance to offer suggestions for strengthening collaboration with local institutions in an open-ended questionnaire, only around 34% of kindergarten teachers (50 out of 149) provided their input. This indicates a potential lack of widespread engagement in identifying solutions. Interestingly, the suggestions from these kindergarten teachers align with the quantitative data collected earlier. They highlight concerns about insufficient community interest in the kindergarten's activities, and a perceived lack of communication and collaboration within the local community.

This reinforces the need for a collaborative approach that prioritises mutual benefit and productive partnerships between the kindergarten and other local institutions. While the overall response rate for suggestions was low, the provided insights offer valuable perspectives. For the purpose of this article, we outlined the least often and the most often answers and they are as follows:

- Direct Community Engagement (6%): Some kindergarten teachers (3 of them) propose taking the initiative in directly engaging with the local community, highlighting their own communication skills.

- Professional Service Involvement (6%): Other kindergarten teachers (3 of them) suggest using professional services to facilitate activities with the local community.
- Innovation and Education (18%): A more significant portion (9 kindergarten teachers) emphasise the importance of openness to innovation in collaboration with parents and organising workshops and educational programmes to raise awareness about the value of preschool involvement within the community.
- Strengthening Existing Partnerships (20%): The largest group (24 kindergarten teachers) advocate for fostering better cooperation with various entities like elementary schools, police, local associations and firefighters.

Discussion

A prerequisite for cooperation at the institutional level is a reflective practitioner who is ready to learn and use materials and resources effectively, who is focused on dialogue and open two-way communication, on joint learning and reflection on one's own practice with an emphasis on developing attitudes about children as competent participants in their life, learning and development. Kindergarten teachers mostly express satisfaction with existing partnerships and recognise the key role that community cooperation plays in education, which can be seen from the results of this research, where 73% of teachers expressed satisfaction with cooperation. A satisfactory percentage of cooperation with the puppet theatre and the city library is evident, while there is dissatisfaction with the elementary school and the church community. Mann et al. (2021) research found that public library use, and shared book reading were positively associated with kindergarten children's academic skills and may play a role in promoting kindergarten children's academic skills, regardless of their socioeconomic background.

The results of this research confirm the results of earlier research on the role of cooperation between kindergartens and institutions in the local community in the upbringing and education of children, with a special focus on cooperation with elementary schools where cooperation is not at a satisfactory level. Cooperation and partnership are recognisable through mutual visits of children and educational workers of kindergartens and schools, collaborative dialogue between kindergarten and school workers and parents, as well as transition activities and connecting families, kindergartens and schools (Miočić, 2022; Visković & Višnjić Jevtić, 2019). Besides that, the results of this research are in line with the reflections of the authors Antulić Majcen and Pribela Hodap (2017), who also indicate the importance of mutual cooperation between institutions for early and preschool education, stating it as an important segment of the quality of work of preschool institutions and the professional development of teachers. A prerequisite for cooperation at the institutional level is a reflective practitioner who is ready to learn and effectively use materials and resources, focused on dialogue and open two-way communication, on joint learning and reflecting on one's own practice with an emphasis on developing attitudes about

children as competent participants in their lives, learning and development. Also, Epstein (2011) concludes that cooperation has a significant contribution to development and future activity of children in society. It also suggests more research on this topic and educating future kindergarten teachers and teachers to implement cooperation of all stakeholders in educational practice in an appropriate way, especially to intensify the involvement of parents in daily kindergarten activities. In addition to cooperation with primary schools, libraries, museums, a small part of research participants (N=9) emphasised the importance of introducing new forms of cooperation with parents and their greater involvement in the life of the kindergarten community, thereby raising awareness of the value of preschool education involvement in the community. According to Slunjski (2008), the modern kindergarten teacher changes their practice by building a kindergarten-community that learns continuously by getting to know, change, and build new theories, improving the kindergarten curriculum.

A prerequisite for cooperation at the institutional level is a reflective practitioner who is ready to learn and use materials and resources effectively, focused on dialogue and open two-way communication, on joint learning and reflection on one's own practice with an emphasis on developing attitudes about children as competent participants in their life, learning and development.

According to Slunjski (2012), the most important and primary role is played by the reciprocal relations between the stakeholders of the process and stakeholders of structure and environment, in which there is a positive atmosphere full of appreciation based on the socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky stated how learning emerges from the purposeful activities of children in the context of social interactions and relationships, where the quality of the kindergarten environment is put under a special mirror. The principles of this approach clearly state empowerment, where the emphasis is placed on the quality of conditions for development and learning, a holistic approach, the connection and partnership of the kindergarten with the family and the community, and the very relationships in which and through which children learn best. All principles enable children to develop into competent individuals that would become active citizens of the community. It should be noted that this approach is closely related to the project's way of working, and it is the project work in ECEC institutions that connects them more and more with the community.

By visiting museums and participating in museums activities, children gain new experiences, expand their experiences based on the spatial, social and cultural context (Dockett et al. 2011). Research conducted by Bell et al. (2018) shows how children of early and preschool age follow the events related to contemporary art in their environment, contributing to the understanding of contemporary art within the museum context, which is often not even possible for adults.

Educational institutions, family and local community make up three different, mutually dependent systems. Their joint action related to the necessity of functional communication has recently become significant at the international level, building foundations with new principles, ideas, theoretical and practical models of application in everyday educational practice for the benefit of the children. The cooperation of the

aforementioned stakeholders aims to change their attitudes and behaviour from a state of indifference/disinterest to an active and effective participation in joint educational action on children as the future active members of society who will contribute to the betterment of the community and the individual through critical reflection and personal action. By applying this cooperation model, social capital is created, developed and accumulated (Mylonakou & Kekes, 2007).

By establishing a partnership between kindergarten and institutions in the local community, it is possible for the children to gain new experiences and create quality prerequisites for further growth and development. Environment in which the children grow up has the same influence as the family on the shaping their life, building their identity, developing their social ties and belonging to the community, and thus the understanding of the world in which they live (Cohen, 2010). The community has an educational influence on a person throughout their life, in the acquisition of new skills and abilities. According to Buljubašić-Kuzmanović (2009), children do not meet their needs exclusively by meeting themselves, but also their social environment. Based on the above, it can be said that the author is of the opinion that children acquire different knowledge by cooperating with their environment while simultaneously satisfying their needs. Therefore, it can be concluded that with the cooperation of kindergarten and the local community, children are involved in many activities that enable them to acquire knowledge in various fields of science, such as natural, medical, technical or artistic sciences.

Conclusion

Engaging with the local community creates opportunities for various forms of direct and indirect assistance, ultimately improving the quality of early education. Collaborative activities between ECEC institutions and local services can provide diverse support in addressing specific challenges and achieving institutional goals. Joint initiatives between kindergartens and schools can motivate children and foster a positive attitude towards their new school environment. This collaborative approach promotes the well-rounded development and learning of each child, while also helping them build social connections in a new setting.

Research suggests closer collaboration between kindergartens and local institutions, particularly elementary schools. This includes innovative partnerships, open communication, and emphasising the value of preschool involvement within the community. Kindergarten teachers propose fostering a more inclusive approach, engaging all parents through workshops and educational programmes while emphasising continuous communication and collaboration with teachers, directors, and the wider community.

Local involvement benefits kindergartens by raising their profile and fostering collaboration with families and the broader community. This elevates education and improves overall quality. While cooperation is crucial, existing frameworks lack specific guidelines. In Croatia, family-school collaboration is outlined but detailed

guidelines are missing. Current literature emphasises cooperation with elementary schools, with occasional mention of museums and libraries. Research suggests that a traditional parent-kindergarten teacher relationship still dominates in everyday practice.

Based on the conducted research and set hypotheses, it can be concluded that institutions for early and preschool education work on cooperation with the local community. Although, according to the kindergarten teachers, the cooperation takes place according to the calendar and is not based on the needs and interests of the children, the kindergarten teachers are aware of the importance of mutual cooperation. Also, obtained results show the need to introduce changes in the form of cooperation between the kindergarten - parents - local community and a child. The shortcoming of this research is based on the insufficient number of surveys of kindergarten teachers' opinions about forms of cooperation between kindergartens and the local community in the Republic of Croatia in order to make a comparison and support the results obtained from this research.

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Współpraca przedszkoli ze społecznością lokalną w zakresie rozwoju jakości proces edukacyjny

Od chwili narodzin dziecko należy do rodziny, rozwija się i rośnie w jej obrębie, przejmując kulturowe, tradycyjne i moralne wartości oraz zachowania. Rodzina jest tą częścią społeczeństwa, która poprzez swoje działania stwarza optymalne warunki dla integralnego rozwoju dziecka i wraz z placówką oświatową ponosi odpowiedzialność za wychowanie, edukację, naukę i rozwój dziecka. Wspólne działania rodziny, placówek oświatowych i innych instytucji lokalnej społeczności przyczyniają się do poprawy jakości życia dzieci w aspekcie ekonomicznym i społecznym. Dzieci stają się aktywnymi uczestnikami własnego wychowania i edukacji, a także rozwijają kompetencje aktywnego członka społeczności, który poprzez swoje działania przyczynia się do poprawy sytuacji społeczności, w której żyje i dorasta.

Ponadto stała współpraca kadry edukacyjnej przedszkola ze społecznością lokalną przyczynia się do podniesienia jakości pracy edukacyjnej. Znaczenie współpracy pomiędzy instytucją przedszkola a społecznością lokalną jest doceniane w politykach publicznych wielu krajów europejskich, w tym Republiki Chorwacji. O takich formach współpracy wspomina się rzadko pomimo świadomości znaczenia współpracy z innymi instytucjami lokalnej społeczności. Badania te pokazują, że nauczyciele wychowania przedszkolnego dostrzegają wartość we współpracy z instytucjami działającymi w lokalnej społeczności. Podkreślają jednak przy tym, że współpraca odbywa się jedynie spontanicznie, zgodnie z „ważniejszymi" wydarzeniami kalendarzowymi.

Przegląd najnowszej literatury wykazał, że wspomina się o formach współpracy z muzeami i bibliotekami, ale najczęstszą formą kooperacji jest współpraca ze szkołami podstawowymi. Nauczyciele wychowania przedszkolnego uważają, że współpraca pomiędzy przedszkolami a szkołami podstawowymi jest słabo akcentowana w praktyce edukacyjnej. Zgodnie ze swoimi przemyśleniami, bazującymi na refleksji nad praktyką edukacyjną, nauczyciele wychowania przedszkolnego proponują różne formy ciągłej współpracy, które będą obejmować wszystkich uczestników procesu edukacyjnego.

W badaniu przeprowadzonym w 2023 r. wzięli udział nauczyciele wychowania przedszkolnego (N=149) z Zadaru (Chorwacja), którzy wypełnili ankietę udostępnioną za pośrednictwem Formularzy Google. Oprócz danych społeczno-demograficznych ankieta zawierała skale ocen, w których uczestnicy mieli możliwość wyrażenia swojej opinii w odniesieniu do każdego stwierdzenia dotyczącego charakterystyki współpracy przedszkola z instytucjami w środowisku lokalnym, posługując się pięciostopniową skalą Likerta (od 1 = całkowicie się nie zgadzam do 5 = całkowicie się zgadzam). Dzięki odpowiedziom TAK/NIE na pytania zamknięte nauczyciele mieli możliwość wyrażenia, czy zgadzają się lub nie z przedstawionym stwierdzeniem odnoszącym się

do lokalnych instytucji, z którymi przedszkole nawiązało współpracę. Wykorzystując metodę częstotliwościową, nauczyciele mogli wyrazić, jak często przedszkole współpracuje z instytucjami w środowisku lokalnym. Oprócz wymienionych skal, nauczyciele mieli możliwość przedstawienia swoich sugestii dotyczących wzbogacenia i usprawnienia współpracy z instytucjami w lokalnej społeczności poprzez wykorzystanie do tego celu pytań otwartych.

Słowa kluczowe: przedszkole; społeczność lokalna; nauczyciele wychowania przedszkolnego; szkoła podstawowa; współpraca.

Сарадња вртића и локалне заједнице у унапређењу квалитета васпитно-образовног процеса

Од рођења, дете припада породици, у њој се развија и расте, усваја културне, традиционалне и моралне вредности и облике понашања. Породица је део заједнице који својим деловањем поставља темеље оптималних услова за интегрални развој детета и са образовном институцијом дели одговорност за дететово васпитање, образовање, учење и развој. Заједничко деловање породице, образовних и других установа у локалној заједници доприноси квалитету живота деце у економском и социјалном смислу. Деца постају активни учесници у сопственом васпитању и образовању, развијају компетенције активних грађана друштва који својим деловањем доприносе унапређењу заједнице у којој живе и одрастају.

Осим тога, стална сарадња стручног особља вртића и локалне заједнице доприноси унапређењу квалитета васпитно-образовног рада. Важност сарадње вртића и локалне заједнице препозната је у јавним политикама многих европских земаља, укључујући и Републику Хрватску. Упркос свести о значају сарадње са другим установама у локалној заједници, овакви облици сарадње ретко се помињу. Ово истраживање показује да предшколски васпитачи препознају вредност сарадње са установама локалне заједнице. Међутим, они истичу да је сарадња слабо заступљена, да се одвија спонтано, у складу са „значајнијим“ календарским догађајима и манифестацијама

Увид у новију литературу показује облике сарадње са музејима и библиотекама, мада је најчешћи облик сарадње са основним школама. Васпитачи сматрају да је сарадња вртића и основне школе слабо заступљена у васпитно-образовној пракси. У складу са својим размишљањима и рефлексијом о васпитно-образовној пракси, предлажу различите облике континуиране сарадње која ће укључити све учеснике васпитно-образовног процеса.

У истраживању, спроведеном 2023. године, учествовали су васпитачи (N=149) из Задра (Хрватска), попуњавањем електронског упитника типа *Google Forms*. Поред социо-демографских података, упитник је садржао скале оцењивања на којима су учесници, користећи Ликертову скалу од пет тачака, имали прилику да изразе своје мишљење (у распону од 1 = ‘уопште се не слажем’ до 5 = ‘потпуно се слажем’) у односу на сваку тврдњу о карактеристикама сарадње вртића са установама у локалној заједници. Дихотомним одговором (ДА/НЕ) на питање затвореног типа, васпитачи су имали прилику да изразе своје (не)слагање са понуђеном тврдњом у односу на установе локалне заједнице са којима вртић има сарадњу. Методом учесталости васпитачи су имали прилику да изразе колико често вртић сарађује са установама у локалној заједници. Осим наведених скала, имали су прилику да дају предлоге за обогаћивање и унапређење сарадње са установама локалне заједнице одговорајући на питања отвореног типа.

Кључне речи: дечији вртић, локална заједница, предшколски васпитач, основна школа, сарадња.

Suradnja vrtića i lokalne zajednice u promicanju kvalitete odgojno-obrazovnog procesa

Dijete od rođenja pripada obitelji, u njoj se razvija i raste, usvaja kulturne, tradicionalne, moralne vrijednosti i ponašanja. Obitelj je dio zajednice koja svojim djelovanjima postavlja temelje optimalnih uvjeta cjelovita razvoja djeteta te zajedno s odgojno-obrazovnom ustanovom dijeli odgovornost za odgoj, obrazovanje, učenje i razvoj djeteta. Zajedničkim djelovanjem obitelji, odgojno-obrazovnih ustanova i ostalih ustanova u lokalnoj zajednici pridonosi se kvaliteti života djeteta u ekonomskom i socijalnom smislu. Dijete postaje aktivni sudionik svog odgoja i obrazovanja, razvija kompetencije aktivnog građanina društva koji svojim djelovanjem doprinosi boljitku zajednice u kojoj živi i odrasta.

Također, kontinuirana suradnja stručnih djelatnika dječjeg vrtića i lokalne zajednice pridonosi poboljšanju kvalitete odgojno-obrazovnog rada. Važnost suradnje dječjeg vrtića i lokalne zajednice prepoznata je u javnim politikama nekoliko europskih zemalja, pa tako i u Republici Hrvatskoj. Unatoč svjesnosti o značaju suradnje s drugim ustanovama u lokalnoj zajednici, rijetko se takvi oblici suradnje spominju. Ovo istraživanje pokazalo je kako odgojitelji prepoznaju vrijednost suradnje s ustanovama u lokalnoj zajednici. Međutim, ističu kako je suradnja slabo zastupljena, odvija se stihijski, sukladno „značajnijim“ kalendarskim obilježjima i manifestacijama. Pregledom novije literature utvrđeno je kako se navode oblici suradnje s muzejima i knjižnicama, ali kao najčešći oblik suradnje navode se osnovne škole. Odgojitelji suradnju dječjeg vrtića i osnovne škole smatraju slabo zastupljenim u odgojno-obrazovnoj praksi. Sukladno svojim promišljanjima, na temelju refleksije odgojno-obrazovne prakse odgojitelji predlažu različite oblike kontinuirane suradnje koja će uključivati sve dionike odgojno-obrazovnog procesa. U istraživanju, koje je provedeno 2023. godine, sudjelovali su odgojitelji (N=149) iz Zadra (Hrvatska), odgovarajući na pitanja u anketnom upitniku, koji je distribuiran putem Google obrasca. Upitnik je osim socio-demografskih podataka sadržavao skale procjene gdje su odgojitelji primjenom Likertove petostupanjske skale imali mogućnost iskazati mišljenje (u rasponu od 1= uopće se ne slažem do 5= u potpunosti se slažem) u odnosu na pojedinu tvrdnju o karakteristikama suradnje dječjeg vrtića s ustanovama u lokalnoj zajednici. Dihotomnim odgovorom (DA/NE) na pitanje zatvorenog tipa odgojitelji su imali mogućnost iskazati svoje (ne) slaganje s ponuđenom tvrdnjom u odnosu na ustanove u lokalnoj zajednici s kojima je dječji vrtić uspostavio suradnju. Primjenom metode frekvencije odgojitelji su imali mogućnost iskazati koliko često dječji vrtić ostvaruje suradnju s ustanovama u lokalnoj zajednici. Osim navedenih skala, odgojitelji su imali mogućnost primjenom pitanja otvorenog tipa dati svoje prijedloge obogaćivanja i unaprjeđenja suradnje s ustanovama u lokalnoj zajednici.

Ključne riječi: dječji vrtić; lokalna zajednica; odgojitelji; osnovna škola; suradnja.

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Board games in the process of stimulating mental development of pre-school children

Abstract: *In the age of computers and rapidly developing media, it seems that the Internet and computer games dominate the way children spend their free time. But nothing could be further from the truth. Board games, i.e. "analogue" games, have recently experienced a renaissance. The gaming market is vast and constantly expanding. Board games play a crucial role in stimulating the development of preschool children. When playing board games, children sit facing each other, talk and do not focus on smartphone or computer screens. Playing board games contributes significantly to the development of logical, mathematical and vocabulary thinking and the improvement of social skills. Thanks to board games, children have the opportunity to spend time with their parents or other older people and have fun with them, while also learning various behaviours. Stimulation of various developmental areas of a child does not always have to be carried out by a specialist using complicated implements for that purpose. Due to their simplicity, board games can be used by every educator in a virtually unlimited way.*

Keywords*: board games, preschool education, stimulating child's mental development.*

Introduction

Play is an important factor in the development of children of all ages. However, preschool period is the best time to introduce targeted games that help accelerate mental development. It manifests itself in development of cause-and-effect reasoning and development of operational thinking. During focused play, children unconsciously develop many of the skills they will later utilize. It is focused play that stimulates children to spontaneous and very natural cognitive activity. By playing board games, in which, for example, words are created, counted or a new reality is constructed, the child naturally acquires and shapes the skills needed during later, formalised learning. Preschool education must prepare a child for systematic school education. When using board games for this purpose, the act of stimulating children's mental development can take a very effective form of play, enriched with educational elements. A child can derive many benefits from this form of learning, which will also bring joy stemming from the use of time for play in a non-standard way.

The concept of a board game

Defining a game is often equated with play. However, it should be noted that every game is a form of play, but not every form of play is a game. The essence

of the game lies in activity based on rules and established laws, which takes place according to an established order. A game is located on the verge between the sphere of selfless pleasure and the seriousness of life (Waloszek, 2006: 296). The game progresses in a clearly marked space and, unlike play, it is repeatable. However, it is impossible to completely separate games from play, as both of these activities can be freely transformed. Games may be of a motor, mental, didactic, simulation, random, strategic or aesthetic nature. Plays, in turn, can be movement, tracking, construction, thematic, didactic, research, or theatre (Klim-Klimaszewska, 2010: 46).

The concept of "board game" falls under the spectrum of games classified as didactic games. Okoń (2004: 475) understands educational play as an activity that follows a certain pattern created by adults, usually leading to the achievement of a goal, i.e. solving a task. The basic didactic games include tabletop games (e.g. dominoes, Ludo, checkers), jigsaws, crosswords, word puzzles, lotteries (Klim-Klimaszewska, 2010: 48).

Assuming the practical aspect of games used in various classes in pre-school, we can distinguish among them: games that contain specific instructions to be followed (blocks, playing with plasticine, etc.), games such as "magic bag", in which things can be used that are everyday objects (training the senses, visual memory), board games (picture puzzles, various types of puzzles, tabletop games), nursery rhymes (riddles and other word games) (Papuda-Dolińska & Pogoda, 2016: 208).

Using board games to stimulate a child's mental development is the most effective because it gives the opportunity to integrate many skills simultaneously (Berland & Lee, 2011). Any well-designed board game creates an entertaining, safe, but also competitive learning environment while providing rewarding reinforcements. The board game itself is the means of constituting a visual metaphor rich in stimuli, enabling the integration of information (Składanowska & Tułacz, 2014: 15). A game that has properly constructed questions and problems to solve allows players to apply the skills they have already acquired (Treher, 2011: 3). Board games help combine acquired information into conceptual frameworks and owing to the fact that they are rich in analogies and metaphors games transform abstract concepts into specifics. Moreover, the game formula itself supports certain educational values, such as waiting for one's turn, following the rules, following instructions, listening and giving adequate answers, correct communication or enduring failure (Januszewski, 2016). Almost all board games, owing to their specificity, i.e. the presence of a colourful board, various fields on a board, dice, as well as specific rules, help develop and improve various functions and skills, i.e. recognising and grouping numbers and shapes, counting, recognising letters and attempting to read, improving visual perception, attention and visual-motor concentration, and manual dexterity (Pijanowski, 2010: 6).

A board game usually follows carefully defined rules that should be known to all players. It usually requires the use of pawns that are moved on a board specially designed for this purpose. However, there are games that can be played using a piece of graph paper, e.g. the very popular *Battleships*. The strategy of most commercially available board games is based on defeating the opponent, gaining a winning position

or a certain number of points. The game for a solitary player is also available, e.g., *Mozajki* or logical puzzles (e.g. *Smart Games*) (Pasterak, 2019: 18).

Typical board games that have been very popular for many years and that previous generations grew up with include: *Młynek*, *Checkers*, *Chess*, *Ludo*. However, the offer of board games is growing every year. Currently, it is impossible to mention all of them. However, we may try to group games into certain categories, which include: language games (e.g. *Time's Up!, Story Cubes*), dexterity-based games (e.g. *Baobab, Jungle Speed*), cooperative (e.g. *Forbidden Island, Pandemic*), and logical (*Cortex, Abalone*). This division can be presented in another way: educational games, i.e. logical, linguistic, mathematical, speech therapy, fitness games, social games, family games, team games.

Yet another division of board games distinguishes entertainment games (e.g. strategy games, adventure games, etc.), thematic games (historical games, educational games) and mechanical games (e.g. card games, dice games) (Woźniak, 2016: 33).

Characteristics of the stimulation process

The concept of "stimulation" in its literal sense should be understood as "stimulation, encouragement to perform a certain action" (Sobol, 2002: 970). Stimulation is the intensification of the body's life processes by acting on it with a stimulus or impulse that stimulates or encourages some action or increased activity. A process should be understood as "a course of regularly occurring phenomena that remain in a causal relationship with each other" (Ibidem: 751). The simulation process involves exerting an influence on the organism for a specific, usually longer period, during which it is stimulated to act.

Stimulating a small child (newborn) is aimed at accelerating its development. The idea is for the child to quickly acquire the necessary habits and skills (manipulation, signalling physical needs, recognising loved ones, understanding the daily schedule and the home environment). Stimulation in the post-infantile age mainly means taking care of the proper living environment. Stimulation at the pre-school stage means providing the child with the opportunity to act independently and freely, ensuring the joy of creation and experiencing success (Muchacka, 2007: 42).

Sometimes development of a child may be disturbed (Sparrow & Brazelton, 2020). Then the stimulation process is expanded to include rehabilitation or revalidation of the disturbed functions. In principle, stimulation of various processes in a child should take place with the participation of parents, if parents want to actively participate in its development. Contact between a child and an adult has an activating effect on children and promotes the growth of knowledge about the world. This conclusion is close to the theory of L. S. Vygotsky, who in his works always emphasised the role of the adult in stimulating child's development (Muchacka, 2000: 390). Board games seem to be perfect for implementing this process.

Stimulating the mental development of preschool children

It is difficult for an average adult to find their way in the chaos of modern knowledge and the abundance of information. All the more so, the child loses themself in the undifferentiated mass of sensations. So, there is a need to help a child in giving its world an understandable shape. The child should be able to find causal laws, put various phenomena into sequences of facts, and notice the cause-and-effect relationship of phenomena. This will allow a child to find the order of the world, get out of the information chaos and see a transparent structure of the order of reality (Muchacka, 2007: 10).

Many factors influence the activity of a preschool-age child. Said activities regulate the individual pace and rhythm of a young person's development. The key factors contributing to mental development are biological and environmental factors. A child is born with its own genome, which determines its character and appearance. Certain relationships related to intelligence are contained in the genetic code. The genetic code unique to each person creates opportunities for development but does not determine its quality. In this process, the educational environment that influences the child is important and should create the most optimal conditions for development. The family environment, and then peers and local factors, have a huge impact on the intellectual and socio-moral sphere of development (Ostrach, 2014). Majority of researchers agree that there is a huge scope for action on the part of parents or other adults who want to stimulate a child's development by supporting them from an early age (Chauvel, Michel, 1999: 8-9). The environment in which a child grows up should enable them to engage in various forms of activity, thus stimulating their further development.

The child, as an active being, constructs their own behaviour to some extent, but is also a recipient of external influences. Adults can modify a child's behaviour under the influence of stimulating factors which constitutes the basis for developing their skills and knowledge. Development is based on certain characteristic features depending on the child's age. These characteristics change individually. Proper development of a child is influenced by the stimulation of physical and mental abilities. Factors such as health, family, motivation, upbringing, acceptance, meeting basic needs and creating appropriate conditions for learning are extremely important (Ostrach, 2014).

Pre-school teachers face various educational challenges, the most important of which are the challenges intended to prepare children for school education. Experts cooperating with the Education Development Centre believe that school readiness can be defined as the expected and desired skillset possessed by children who finish pre-school and are about to start learning in the first grade of primary school (Skura et al., 2014: 15-16). The scope of school readiness can most often be considered from the point of view of being prepared to learn mathematics, reading and writing.

When it comes to developing school readiness to learn mathematics, it involves, among other actions, introducing children to mathematical concepts. From numerous studies conducted in the field of mathematical failures, it can be concluded that without

proper mental development it is difficult to obtain the appropriate level of mathematical knowledge. Therefore, it is important to develop a child's mental and emotional maturity, based on operational logic, and only then develop strictly mathematical knowledge (Gruszczyk-Kolczyńska & Zielińska, 1997: 5). Mathematical education itself has the ability to stimulate a child's mental development. Pre-school children need math experiences that are appropriate to the stage of life the children are in, not ones that require skills that are not yet fully developed. During pre-school education, a child should develop perceptual abilities (seeing, feeling, manipulating details) which prepare the child for logical thinking. Hence, there is a need to use various aids, including board games, which can easily and pleasantly introduce children to the beginnings of mathematical education (Winninger, 1999).

Language concepts may be shaped in a similar way, preparing for reading and later writing. It may also be related to the introduction of foreign language concepts. In this process, teaching aids such as board games will be perfect.

A child's mental development also depends on the relationship between the child and environment. A child is able to develop properly if they are allowed to explore the world in psychological, social and cultural aspects. It needs role models, relationships with the world and the need to take up its own activity. Board games provide such patterns and provoke child's own activity.

In summary of the above, it should be noted that stimulating mental development of the pre-school-age child largely depends on child's experiences gained from the environment surrounding the child (Przetacznik-Gierowska & Tyszkowa, 2005: 90).

Areas stimulated by board games

Games and competitions are always attractive opportunities for children to have fun. These forms of entertainment in a child's mind oppose the need to learn, because it is thanks to games that learning can be made interesting. While playing, children are more willing to learn and therefore have the chance to achieve better results on the grading scale. For example, children like to play with puzzles. Mosaics, picture or geometric puzzles perfectly develop visual-motor-spatial coordination and support the processes of visual analysis and synthesis. A child aged 6 has the ability to notice similarities (Skałbania, 2016: 121-122). Board games stimulate children's cognitive, social and emotional activity. Learning through play influences motivation, stimulates curiosity and cognitive interest, and contributes to the development of creativity in children. Frequent educational games, using board games, may result in the child achieving smaller or greater educational successes, because they lead to the achievement of set goals while complying with specific rules. Games and activities using boards are considered an effective form of development stimulation that creates conditions for enriching vocabulary. Another advantage is the frequent need to think logically, as are learning to compare, globalize and classify. One can also notice huge impact of boardgames on character development in terms of self-discipline, consistency, justice and perseverance. Establishing specific regulations applicable

to similar games results in a gradual transition into the game space, as evidenced by writing down arrangements or making scoreboards, counting, comparing, and demanding fair treatment (Waloszek, 2006: 300). All games make it easier for children to go through subsequent stages of mental development. An important element that favours this process is the development of key competences in pre-school children, especially those children who are preparing to start school. Pre-school children should be provided with activities that encourage them to expand their knowledge, develop their skills and create attitudes appropriate to specific situations. Acquiring this type of competence allows children to build autonomy, which promotes further self-development, commitment and responsibility outside pre-school or school and later in adult life. Key competences are therefore crucial for functioning in the 21st century, which is why one of the tasks of a pre-school teacher is to integrate and promote development of these skills in the pre-school group. Examples of key competences include learning to learn, entrepreneurship, expression and cultural awareness. In the context of using board games in pre-school education, the most important key competence is critical thinking, i.e. the ability to correctly analyse and identify, and select the true and most necessary information. Creative thinking is the second important key competence. It is the ability to search and create your own unique solutions, the willingness to create your own ideas and use them in practice. Another key competence developed in kindergarten should be cooperation, i.e. the ability to cooperate properly with others in order to achieve a set goal or compromise, as well as work in a team with the division of responsibilities. There is another key competence that can be stimulated through board games. It is communication, i.e. the ability to communicate with others, but also the ability to present one's own ideas in an effective way. All four key competencies mentioned here are interrelated and can be developed during classes through using board games (Zalisz & Zielińska-Nowak, 2021: 232-233).

Board games in the process of expanding knowledge and practising skills

By using various games in the process of expanding knowledge and skills, there is also development in the perceptual and motor sphere. Using board games particularly bolsters a child's imagination, perceptiveness, attention and ability to focus. All games of this type have a huge impact on the development of imagination and the development of habits useful in the further learning process. Board games also possess the quality of supporting the desire to solve subsequent problems. They make the content interesting, which prevents children from getting bored and further motivates children to act based on the desire to win. In the moral aspect, a student playing board games trains to follow the rules previously adopted or established together with other players. It is also a training in the practical application of rules and an opportunity to assess cause and effect relationships (Masłowska, 2019: 202).

One of the primary tasks of didactic board games is the development of cognitive processes such as memory, visual-auditory analysis and synthesis, perceptiveness and attention. A game gives a preschool child the opportunity to systematise their knowledge, access new information, manipulate it and understand it. All these aspects are possible to achieve in board games. Playing such games, a child often encounters direct learning, i.e. using the senses, as well as discovering new elements of knowledge and acquiring them by heart (O'Neill, Holmes, 2022: 62). Properly selected games and activities can help with introducing children to mathematical education, e.g. by enforcing the encoding or decoding of information. Games stimulate logical experiments, promote assembling wholes from parts, learning new symbols, analysing sets, and practising conversions. All of this has a huge impact on improving operational intelligence in children (Winninger, 1999). Most board game rules usually include the advantage of the above-mentioned exercises.

Board games also have important educational functions. Games teach taking into account the adopted rules, provide the opportunity to cooperate, socialise, and help control emotions when winning and losing (Zielińska, 2020: 64). It can be said that games shape a child's personality by skilfully influencing it. Every teacher using games in their practice should take into account their phenomenal impact on stimulating various skills in children. Board games are undoubtedly one of the most interesting activating methods. They have a positive impact on the ability to work according to established rules and principles (Each game has detailed rules according to which children play, and established rules of cooperation and behaviour apply during the game). They influence the development of concentration and perceptiveness (the game often requires focusing on several things at the same time: the rules, the order of playing, observing the movements of other players). Games teach perseverance in striving to solve a problem on your own (In most games, there is no single path to winning. During the game, children independently build their game plan, make decisions related to the movements of their pieces and find ways to solve emerging problems). Board games also develop the ability to work in different teams (Division into groups gives children the opportunity to work in changing teams and learn to cooperate with different people). During the game, children adopt an appropriate attitude towards defeat and victory and gain resistance to stress (By playing repeatedly, children become accustomed to the stress of competition and learning new games. They experience both success and failure in a safe environment, thanks to which they become accustomed to the emotions that accompany them.) By playing the game, children discover their own strengths (While playing various games, children discover their potential. They recognise areas and spheres in which they can achieve success.). When playing games children also develop many different mathematical skills, including calculation skills, examining geometric figures and relationships, creating strategies, and logical thinking (Korolczuk & Zambrowska, 2014: 6-7). "Board games" help develop children's emotional balance. They can cause a sudden increase in the tension of positive or negative emotions. However, the desire to win pushes the child to make an effort and try to stay in the game until the end. If a child

wins, it will experience success and increase their resilience. When they lose, they learn to endure defeat with the hope that they will just have to try better, and the outcome might be different next time.

Board games can therefore improve the skill of constructive competition because the child has the opportunity to learn the appropriate reaction in the event of a loss. This helps stimulate proper mental resilience. Children's reactions to failure may vary. The reactions may even manifest themselves as anger and aggression (Aronson et al., 2006: 331-332). Therefore, it is extremely important that adults, when participating in games, honestly follow the rules of the games (even at the cost of losing), allowing the child to enjoy the opportunity of winning. Board games develop cooperation skills and improve children's thinking. A child will be able to become more emotionally involved and absorb the teaching material better if they see that it will involve winning.

In the process of expanding knowledge and practising skills, games that involve finding similarities and differences on similar boards play an important role. These games teach children logical thinking and perceptiveness (Winninger, 1999).

Select board games in educational practice

Games can be played in various ways. Games are typically utilised as a teaching tool. An adult suggests a game to children, and they become familiar with it and try to adapt to its rules. When choosing a game, you should keep in mind the educational goals that should be achieved during the game. It is also possible for a child to create the game or set its rules themself. In such a situation, the rules of the game are established already at the stage of the game's construction or preparation for the game. A similar example of using a game is modifying the rules of an existing game. Such behaviour also contributes to the creation of a new order. Children who take part in modifying a game feel more satisfied with the subsequent gameplay (Pijanowski, 2010: 6).

Creating a board game is not overly difficult. A board game can be played by a predetermined number of players, so that the number of elements on the board does not cause excessive density. An essential element of the game is a dice and a pawn for each player (any small object can be considered a pawn). In addition to the pawns, you can also place additional objects on the board, obtaining which may have pleasant or negative consequences. Players usually sit in a circle with the game in the middle. The supervisor (teacher/parent) designates the participant who starts the game. Most often, players roll the dice clockwise, moving around the board by the number of spaces specified by the dice roll. After completing the task placed on a given field, they pass the dice to the next person. The player who reaches the finish line first wins.

One of the least complicated board games that you can prepare yourself is *Game* of *Battleships*. However, it helps shape various abilities that develop skills useful at school. It contributes to the acquisition of the ability to read and write the location of points in a coordinate system and to learn mathematical and geographical concepts.

The market of ready-made board games offers quite an extensive range of different types of games. Games which are random or random-strategic in nature are one of the

most popular types of board games. The undisputed advantage of this type of games is their simplicity, and manipulative activities performed using dice and pieces which not only improve fine motor skills, but also eye-hand coordination. In this type of games, winning or losing depends little on the player's skills, which is why games of chance with elements of strategy began to emerge. The most popular game of this type is *Monopoly*. During the game, participants move their pieces clockwise to buy more properties. Ending movement on a field purchased by another player results in obligation to pay rent to the owner. Players work towards getting rich and attempt to bankrupt other players. Players strive to realise these goals through simulated commercial transactions, real estate transactions and various financial operations (Papuda-Dolińska & Pogoda, 2016: 210). The gameplay requires participants to plan, build strategies and complex mental strategies. Developing the understanding of cause-and-effect relationships, counting skills, dialogue and negotiation can be considered as an additional advantage of the game. The game also encourages participants to consider saving and excessive spending. Getting to know global companies can also be an excuse for players to learn words in a foreign language.

Games that can develop preschoolers' perceptiveness, as well as control their emotions and the pace of reaction to pictures, include the game titled: *Duuuszki [Ghoooosts]*, created by the "Egmont" company. The game involves grabbing an object identical to the one visible on the card drawn by the player (a book, a ghost, a bottle, a mouse or an armchair). This game stimulates perceptiveness and ability to focus.

The Granna company offers many interesting educational games. This publisher's games help children develop through play. One of such proposals is a game called *Superfarmer*, which was created to honour the memory of the outstanding Polish mathematician, prof. Karol Borsuk, and to commemorate the success of his game *Animal breeding*. The brilliant idea of prof. Borsuka involved rolling two twelve-sided dice and thus breeding the animals depicted on them. By rolling the dice, the participant tries to manage the farm. The player has brave shepherd dogs to help him, because a wolf and a fox are lurking in the nearby forest. *Superfarmer* is the modern successor to Prof. Borsuk's game, where mathematical elements are visible in many details of gameplay. The dice used in this game also have the shape of dodecahedrons, with each side representing an animal (a rabbit, a sheep, a pig and one image of a cow, a horse, a wolf and a fox). A player will receive an animal for his herd if its image appears on both dice. When, after a few rounds, a player has already created a breeding farm, in the next roll he receives as many animals displayed on the dice as he has full pairs of a given species. The Fibonacci sequence[1] may apply here. During the game, you can exchange animals according to the price list. The wolf and the fox are characters that pose a threat to any farm, and to defend yourself against them, you can buy a dog.

[1] Fibonacci sequence – a sequence of natural numbers defined recursively as follows: The first term is equal to 0, the second is equal to 1, each subsequent term is the sum of the previous two.

The board game market is saturated with many recommended items, and companies compete in designing and creating new products in this field. Both the "Alexander" company and their "*Sowa mądra głowa [Wise Owl]*" series, as well as the "Zielona Sowa" publishing house and the well-established "Trefl" company specialise in the production of educational games that subconsciously stimulate various senses and abilities as well as children's skills.

From the *Wise Owl* series, *Memory 3 D* game is worth recommending. It is a spatial game that exercises memory and perceptiveness. The game comes with 25 colourful cubes and 55 pattern cards depicting different cube combinations. During the game, the card with the pattern is revealed only briefly, and then the participant must arrange the pattern previously observed on the card from the cubes as quickly as possible, but the time to recreate the pattern is limited. The game is an excellent training in perceptiveness, memory and spatial imagination.

We can also recommend *Syllables for fun* game from the same series. The game develops phonemic hearing (the ability to analyse and synthesise syllables and sounds of words), as well as visual-auditory-motor coordination, which is very important when learning to read and write. The game is a great aid in the therapeutic process for speech therapists, educators and therapists. Parents can also help their children learn to speak and write correctly by participating in the game.

Another option worth recommending, to stimulate children's mental development, is *Scriba Junior* from the "Alexander" company, whose idea refers to the game *Scrabble*, known and appreciated among older players. It is one of the most attractive word games. With the help of adults, even the youngest children can learn the alphabet and explore the basics of reading. In a more difficult variant of this game, older children can also develop their language skills. The rules of the game are simple, yet there is a large selection of variants of the game. This makes the game very attractive and exciting. By competing with each other, players have the opportunity to learn previously unknown words, learn their correct spelling, and practice focusing.

Another proposition worth using in the process of mental stimulation of preschool children is an educational board game also prepared by the "Alexander" company titled *Washing machine full of words*. It is an example of a creative solution that attracts the attention of both children and parents. Players themselves assemble the casing of the washing machine from which you draw tiles for the game. Thanks to this game, children practice speech, hearing, sight and mathematical skills. The game is intended for children aged 5 and over. It can be played alone or in a group of up to 5 players. This game is perfect for working with children with attention deficit and with children at risk of dyslexia. It can also be a support for students who learn new information at a slower rate. Rules of the game are to come up with sets based on specific criteria, such as the colour of clothes, their cut, style, etc. However, in all this, the most important aspect of the game is creating words by players. This is an example of a speech therapy game that is intended to improve children's articulation, analysis and syllable synthesis of words, while expanding their language skills.

There is a plethora of board games. However, they are relatively expensive. The prices of the most attractive ones usually start at around PLN 45 (EUR 10). However, taking into consideration games' educational values used in the process of stimulating children's mental development, it seems that this is money properly invested in children's development.

Conclusion

We live in times when modern information technology is prevalent. Children today grow up and develop surrounded by technology. In the current reality, it is difficult to imagine the functioning of the world and science without computers, tablets or smartphones. Various available studies show that said devices do not have a completely positive effect on children's mental abilities. These abilities can be greatly developed with the help of board games, which are a traditional and harmless form of entertainment for children of all ages.

By playing board games, a child often experiences new knowledge in various fields and has the opportunity to consolidate previously learned content. While playing games, a child puts into practice the skills acquired during other forms of play. The board game market offers many items that are aimed at developing children's ability to count, read and spell. However, we should not forget about games that seem to offer only fun, such as *Ludo* or *Jackstraws*. It turns out that inconspicuously moving a pawn around the board, according to the number indicated by the dice, trains counting and stimulates regularity and patience. It demonstrates that achieving success is possible by following certain rules and principles of competition. Focus, accuracy and self-control are what matters when playing jackstraws. All this is the advantage of simple board games that perfectly stimulate the mental development of preschool children, especially those who are approaching the threshold of starting education in a primary school.

In summary, it is worth recalling that board games not only develop typical school skills, such as mathematics or language skills, but also have a significant educational and social aspect.

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Gry planszowe w procesie stymulowania rozwoju umysłowego dzieci w wieku przedszkolnym

W dobie komputerów i szybko rozwijających się mediów wydaje się, że Internet oraz gry komputerowe zdominowały sposób spędzania czasu wolnego przez dzieci. Nic jednak bardziej mylnego. Gry planszowe, a więc gry „analogowe", przeżywają w ostatnim czasie swój renesans. Rynek gier jest bardzo bogaty i cały czas się poszerza. Gry planszowe spełniają w obszarze stymulowania rozwoju dzieci w wieku przedszkolnym bardzo ważną rolę. W trakcie grania następuje mobilizacja aktywności poznawczej, społecznej i emocjonalnej. Nauka w formie zabawy wpływa na motywację, ciekawi i wzbudza zainteresowania animacyjne, a także przyczynia się do rozwoju twórczości u dzieci. Częste zabawy dydaktyczne wykorzystujące gry planszowe, mogą skutkować osiąganiem przez dziecko mniejszych lub większych sukcesów edukacyjnych, gdyż prowadzą one do osiągania założonych celów przy jednoczesnym zastosowaniu się do określonych reguł. Dzieci grając w planszówki siedzą twarzami do siebie, rozmawiają i nie skupiają się na ekranach smartfonów lub komputerów. Granie w takie gry przyczynia się wydatnie do rozwoju myślenia logicznego, matematycznego, słownikowego i doskonalenia kompetencji społecznych. Dzięki tym grom, dzieci mają okazję przebywać z rodzicami czy innymi osobami starszymi i wspólnie z nimi bawić się, a przy okazji uczyć się różnych zachowań. Planszówki uczą stosowania przyjętych reguł, dają możliwość współdziałania, uspołecznia a także przyczyniają się do panowania nad emocjami w momencie wygrywania i przegrywania. W trakcie trwania rozgrywki dzieci przyjmują odpowiednią postawę wobec porażki i zwycięstwa oraz nabywają odpornosci na stres. Stymulacja różnych obszarów rozwojowych dziecka nie zawsze musi być prowadzona przez specjalistę, wykorzystującego do tego celu skomplikowane artefakty. Gry planszowe poprzez swoją prostotę mogą być wykorzystywane przez każdego wychowawcę w sposób praktycznie nieograniczony. Do typowych gier planszowych bardzo popularnych od wielu lat, na których wychowały się poprzednie pokolenia zaliczyć można m.in.: Młynek, Warcaby, Szachy, Chińczyk. Jednak oferta gier planszowych z każdym rokiem się powiększa. Na polskim rynku dostępnych jest wiele nowych zabawek edukacyjnych, które stymulują różne zmysły i zachęcają dzieci.

Słowa kluczowe: gry społecznościowe; zachęcanie do rozwoju poznawczego dzieci; edukacja wczesnoszkolna i przedszkolna.

Друштвене игре у процесу подстицања менталног развоја деце предшколског узраста

У ери компјутера и све развијенијих медија, чини се да интернет и компјутерске игрице доминирају дечијим слободним временом. Али ништа не може бити даље од истине. Друштвене игре, односно „аналогне“ игре, недавно су доживеле ренесансу. Тржиште игара је веома богато и стално се шири. Друштвене игре имају веома важну улогу у подстицању развоја деце предшколског узраста. Током њих мобилише се когнитивна, социјална и емоционална активност. Учење у виду игре утиче на мотивацију, буди радозналост и интересовање за анимацију, уједно доприносећи и развоју креативности код деце. Честе едукативне игре које се ослањају на друштвене игре могу да резултирају мањим или већим образовним успехом детета, доводећи до постизања постављених циљева уз поштовање одређених правила. Играјући друштвене игре, деца седе једно наспрам другог, разговарају и не усмеравају пажњу на екране паметних телефона или рачунара. Играње ових игара значајно доприноси развоју логичког и математичког размишљања, богаћењу речника и унапређењу друштвених вештина. Захваљујући овим играма, деца имају прилику да проводе време са својим родитељима или другим старијим особама, забављајући се са њима и учећи различите облике понашања.

Друштвене игре нас уче како да примењујемо правила, дају нам прилику да сарађујемо и дружимо се, а помажу нам и да контролишемо своје емоције када побеђујемо и губимо. Током игре деца усвајају одговарајуће ставове према поразу и победи и резвијају отпорност на стрес. За подстицање различитих развојних подручја детета нису увек неопходни специјалиста и сложени артефакти. Друштвене игре, због њихове једноставности, може да користи сваки васпитач, на практично неограничен начин. Типичне друштвене игре које су биле веома популарне дуги низ година и на којима су одгајане претходне генерације су: млин, даме, шах, ,Човече, не љути се'. Ипак, понуда друштвених игара расте сваке године. На пољском тржишту постоји велики број нових едукативних игара које код деце свесно подстичу различита чула, способности и вештине.

Кључне речи: друштвене игре, предшколско васпитање и образовање, подстицање дечијег менталног развоја.

Društvene igre u procesu stimuliranja mentalnog razvoja djece predškolske dobi

U eri digitalnih medija, izgleda da su internet i računalne igrice dominantan način na koji djeca i mladi provode svoje slobodno vrijeme. Istodobno, pojedina istraživanja ukazuju na svojvrsnu renesansu društvenih ("analognih") igara. Tržište takvih igara ("gaiming" tržište) je u ekspanziji.

Društvene igre mogu doprinijeti razvoju cjelovitom razvoju djece predškolske dobi. Takve igre pokreću kognitivne i socio-emocionalne procese i razvoj kompetencija. Učenje kroz igru potiče znatiželju, interest i motivaciju djece za učenje te razvoj kreativnosti. Kroz poticaje za uvažavanje pravila I težnji za postizanje postavljenih cijljeva, može doprinijeti obrazovnim postignućima djece. Učenje kroz igru potiče i razvoj logičkog mišljenja, matematičkih i jezičnih kompetencija Socijalne interakcije djece u fizičkom okruženju mogu ih fokusirati na odnose, doprinijeti razvoju socijalnih vještina i distancirati od digitalnih medija. Igra u fizičkom okruženju omogućava lakše uključivanje odraslih, primarno roditelja, u zajedničku igru. Zahvaljujući tome djeca lakše usvajaju socijalne vještine, suradnju I društveno prihvaljiva ponašanja, primjerice nošenje s frustracijom zbog neuspjeha u igri. Kroz igru djeca mogu razviti i otpornost na stres.

Poticanje razvoja i učenja djece kroz igru ne treba nužno provoditi stručnjak niti su za to potrebna sofisticirana didaktička sredstva. Zbog svoje jednostavnosti, društvene igre svaki odgajatelj može poticati i organizirati neograničene. Često su to tradicijske I društveno poznate igre, primjerice mlin, dame, šah. No, ponuda društvenih igara svake se godine proširuje. Na poljskom tržištu su prepoznatljiva svojevrsna takmičenja tvrtki u dizajniranju novih proizvoda. Vidljiv je veliki broj novih, kvalitetnih edukativnih društvenih igara koje kod djece ciljano potiču razvoj pojedinih vještina. Na tržištu je ponu*đen* velik broj novih društvenih igara koje ciljano potiču senzomotorni razvoj i različite vještine djece. Na tržištu je u ponudili velik broj novih društvenih igara koje ciljano potiču senzomotorni razvoj i različite vještine djece.

Ključne riječi: društvene igre; rani i predškolski odgoj i obrazovanje; poticanje spoznajnog razvoja djece.

PART 2

PEDAGOGY IN THE SYSTEM OF PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

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Function of the home reading diary from the teachers' perspective

Abstract: *Home and school reading in the teaching of the Serbian language includes literary works prescribed by the official curriculum. While school reading is done at school, and home reading at home, both are analysed during classwork. Preparing for classwork, students rely on the home reading diary, which contains their notes as required and instructed by the teacher. This paper presents primary school teachers' home reading requirements as the basis for keeping a diary. The research covered: the use of diaries to encourage reading, teachers' usual requirements, their quantity and versatility. The aim of the paper was to determine the function and structure of the reading diary through requirements for students' home reading. The research sample included primary schools' teachers in Serbia (N = 136). The research is based on the survey method and technique, and a questionnaire for teachers as an instrument. The results show that teachers instruct pupils to keep a reading diary; they mostly use it to encourage pupils to engage in home reading, and their requirements determine the structure of the reading diary and change according to the book being read. Therefore, it is necessary to prepare detailed methodological instructions for primary school teachers on structuring the reading diary in their teaching, which will further lead to the improvement of pupils' independent reading at home.*

Keywords: *reading, Serbian language teaching, home reading, reading diary, notes on the reading.*

Introduction

Home reading in the teaching of the Serbian language in primary and secondary schools is prescribed by the official documents issued by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia. In the Serbian language syllabus, there are recommended titles of literary works for school and home reading that students should read. School reading done in classes includes a large number of literary works. A special part of the syllabus is home reading, and these are literary works for independent reading at home. Thus, home reading is pupils' independently prepared and organised reading of a book (Jovanović, 2002; Marinković, 2013; Rosandić, 1986). The key difference between home and school reading is the text volume. Accordingly, school reading "is fully included in the school Reading Book", while home reading "is published in specially designed books" (Ilić, 2006: 472). Home reading mainly includes collections of poems or stories, or novels written by important Serbian and foreign writers. For example, in the third grade of primary school, the following literary works are included

in pupils' home reading list: a selection from Dušan Radović's poetry, Branko Ćopić's novel *The Adventures of Tosha the Cat*, and a selection of Grimm Brothers' fairy tales (National Curriculum, 2019: 7). Therefore, in this grade, pupils read poetry and prose independently.

When talking about the class interpretation of school and home reading, both are covered in school lessons. Home reading "must be read at home before interpretation in classes" (Stevanović, 1980: 155). In school lessons, students "use everything they have already prepared independently" (Jovanović, 2002: 21). One of the ways for students to prepare for the lesson based on home reading is to keep a diary while reading the book, which will help them in their work at school.

Reading diary is one of the ways of recording key segments of home reading and it prepares students for the lesson of literary work interpretation. As an element of the complete home reading process, it is the initiator of independent student work. However, if inadequately applied, students may experience it as a burden. That is why it was important to examine teachers' opinions about the function and structure of the home reading diary.

Methodological relevance of the home reading diary

From the very beginning of the home reading work, students should be instructed in the technique of reading with a pencil in hand. One of the ways to achieve this is to keep a reading diary. Technically speaking, it is usually a more voluminous notebook, which will be used for the aforementioned purposes for several years (Marinković, 2013: 173). In addition to using it while devoted to the home reading material, students can keep a diary when reading texts of their own choice, in their free time, outside of class time (Marinković, 1985: 227). Thus, using a reading diary improves the student's independent work.

The first task of the teacher in this process is to inform the students about the kind of notebook they should purchase and reveal to them its purpose. This should be followed by more detailed referrals and guidance of students. In this regard, Rosandić (1986: 494) recommends that this should first be attempted as a trial with a selected segment from a specific literary work, meaning that under the guidance of the teacher students should try to record their thoughts and observations. The next, methodologically very complex, teacher task is determining what the students should note down in the reading diary. At that point, it should first be emphasised that note taking in the diary can be spontaneous or guided. "Spontaneous note taking is done at the student's own discretion", while guided note taking is based on the teacher's "suggestions, recommendations and instructions" (Rosandić, 1986: 342). When we talk about the first option, the teacher will give the students general instructions, for example, "to arrange and decorate the notebook nicely: to mark the pages, to include the content, to illustrate the content, etc." (Marinković, 2013: 173). Students can also be shown examples of good reading diaries. The other way of taking notes requires clearer directions regarding what and how to record. Marinković (2013: 174) suggests that the title page should first be followed with a few nice thoughts about the book as a

general concept, and then with notes about each book read written in a uniform style. Such note taking may include the following elements: the author's name, the title of the literary work – some bibliographic data; number of pages; quotes – particularly pleasing text passages (verses, stanzas, descriptions, aphorisms, diadiaryues, etc.); words and expressions – unfamiliar or interesting; preparatory or research assignments; character description; retold content; observations and reflections on the literary work; feelings – amazement, delight, etc. (Jovanović, 2002: 60; Marinković, 2013: 174; Rosandić, 1986: 494; Smiljković and Stojanović, 2006: 33).

A reading diary is one of the steps towards "developing love and respect for books" (Smiljković and Stojanović, 2006: 33). What is read is relatively quickly forgotten, but when it is written down, it remains under students' permanent ownership (Stevanović, 1980: 182). Written quotes, as well as observations and thoughts "become part of the student's intimacy, they are small jewels, words that shine on the path and give life the feeling of warmth and safety" and help foster "a culture of searching for words, choosing, recording, remembering" (Marinković, 2013: 174), the student returns to them, and uses them in speech and writing. Keeping a diary directs the child to "think more actively about the content and other components of the book" (Ražman, 2023: 5). The functionality of the reading diary in the teaching of home reading is also reflected in its support to the student. Based on the reading diary, the student's work in the school lesson devoted to home reading is facilitated, because it can serve as a preparation for the analysis (Rosandić, 1986: 342) and as a reminder for successful participation in the interpretation. All these structural elements of the diary are created based on the teacher's request and student's notes.

Contrary to the emphasised relevance, students do not often understand the importance of keeping a reading diary and generally consider this activity tiring. As a result of taking notes, they interrupt the reading process to write down important information, which leads to a loss of focus. Some teachers may assign too many tasks that students must focus on, which further increases the mentioned loss. The requirements are often uniform, which means that the reading diary is perceived as a formality in the student's mind (Jurdana et al., 2021: 20). Also, the disadvantage is that teachers often take the reading diary as a measure of the student's understanding of the text and their work activities.

Care must always be taken that the reading diary does not become a place of monotonous retelling of events and enumeration of characters and their characteristics. The requirements should be adapted and differentiated according to students' abilities and changed from grade to grade, in accordance with the literary genre. It is necessary to be realistic and evaluate students' abilities well, so that writing does not represent a particular difficulty for them (Stevanović, 1980: 183). For example, in "the first attempts to work on a collection of poems, it is enough for students to notice the structure, i.e. to determine the motif inclination (what is it that the poet is devoting his lines to), to choose the most beautiful poems (one or two from each cycle) and to comment on their choice" (Rosandić, 1986: 419). The older their grade is, and the better the students become at notetaking, the more complex the requirements are and the more extensive the system of their notetaking.

Preparatory tasks for keeping the reading diary

In the home reading diary, the primarily recorded data are the title of the book being read and its author. In this way, the informative function of the reading diary is achieved, because the student can always be reminded of the book they have read. Students learn the basic concepts of literary theory in the lessons devoted to school reading, so they can recognise them in the books they read independently. Thus, in the home reading diary, they can take notes about the theme of the literary work – a novel, or a certain number of poems or stories they read. Depending on their age, students can depict the motifs, characters, and the setting in the literary work. Thus, the reading diary directs them to the analysis based on literary terms and characteristics of the literary work according to its genre. "The genre specifics of texts determine their theoretical and methodological interpretation" (Cvetanović, 2012: 96), so the diary fulfils the function of initial theoretical analysis of home reading.

More complex reading diary requirements include research assignments. It is a set of tasks that are set mainly based on theoretical analysis and particularities of each book. According to Milatović (2019: 310), research tasks direct students to a certain problem, with the aim of helping them in a more versatile, systematic and reliable understanding of the literary work they are reading. With them, students are "suggestively encouraged to persevere in reading, preparation and interpretation, to experience literary and artistic contents as intensely as possible, and to discover their beauty, value and significance" (Pavlović, 2008: 103). It is important to emphasise, though, that they should not be understood as ready-made instructions for reading or interpreting what is being read, but rather as guidance and encouragement. However, research tasks can only be carried out in the fourth grade of primary school (Jovanović, 2002: 60). In the first and second grades, students are given instructions and guidelines on how to engage in home reading, and what to pay attention to while reading the literary work.

What often happens in classes is that students were delighted with a literary work, that they read it carefully and strongly experienced it. But they often cannot organise their thoughts about a literary work. The reason for this may be the distance taken in reading and interpreting the home reading material, but also the insufficiently directed guidance of the students. In fact, if we do not want the subjectivity of the artistic world to disappear easily from memory, it is necessary to guide students in their organisation of thoughts about a literary work that will ensure a deeper insight and longer retention of its meaning in their memory (Nikolić, 2009: 273). This is exactly achievable with the reading diary and the various requirements and tasks within it.

Home reading diary is also suitable for students to express their experience of what they read, to note what they liked and why. Also, literature as an art arouses feelings that students can name after reading and present the literary work in an artistic way. Students' home reading diaries often include illustrations, which are used to express their experience of the literary text. Teacher's requirements related to the reading diary may include recording unfamiliar words and interesting quotes, which serves

the purpose of enriching the student's vocabulary. Retelling the content functionally affects one's oral and written expression, because in this form of expression there is a "known storyline that can be reproduced in different ways" (Smiljković, Cvetanović, 2016: 89). However, such requirements must be methodologically carefully graded, as they can be experienced as too hard by younger students.

Questions, tasks, and instructions that teachers give students can further encourage them to engage in home reading, especially if they suit their interests and abilities. Routine tasks, for example, usually produce boredom and demotivate students, while challenging tasks activate their need for competencies and have greater motivational potential (Trebješanin, 2009: 76). Their functional value derives partly from their characteristics, which teachers must take into account when formulating and preparing the tasks. Home reading literary works requires a student's independence, so a reading diary with prompts helps them to make the whole process simpler, better supported and more meaningful.

Methodological framework of the research

The subject of the research is functionality of applying the reading diary as one of the methodological steps in home reading activities, and subsequently, drawing conclusions on its structure according to the requirements for note taking.

Goal of the research is to determine the functionality and structure of the reading diary in home reading activities from the perspective of the teacher.

Research tasks were: 1. to examine whether reading diaries, from the perspective of primary school teachers, increase the motivation of students to engage in home reading; 2. to examine how many teachers apply the reading diary as an element of students' home reading; 3. to examine which requirements in the reading diary the teachers refer pupils to when engaged in home reading; 4. to examine whether teachers change the requirements related to the reading diary depending on the book itself and the abilities of students.

Research hypotheses are: 1. reading diaries increase the motivation of students to work on home reading; 2. teachers apply the reading diary in their approach to home reading; 3. teachers instruct students to record responses to specific requirements in their reading diary; 4. teachers adapt the reading diary requirements depending on the home reading book itself.

Research sample consisted of primary school teachers on the territory of the Republic of Serbia – 136 of them in total. Structure of the sample according to gender is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 *Structure of the sample of teachers according to gender*

Gender	f	%
Male	10	7,4
Female	126	92.6
Total	136	100

Table 1 shows that the majority of the sample, 93%, are female teachers.

The structure of the sample according to years of service is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 *Structure of the sample of teachers according to years of service*

Years of service	f	**%**
Up to 5 years	6	4,4
From 5 to 10 years	18	13,2
From 11 to 15 years	28	20,6
From 16 to 20 years	24	17,6
Over 20 years	60	44,2
Total	136	100

The majority of teachers who participated in this research have been working at school for more than a decade (20.6% and 17.6%), or over twenty years (44.2%), which shows that they have had a lot of teaching experience.

Research methods, techniques and instruments

The method applied in the research was the survey method, and in accordance with the set goal and tasks we opted for the survey technique and constructed the research instrument – a survey questionnaire for teachers.

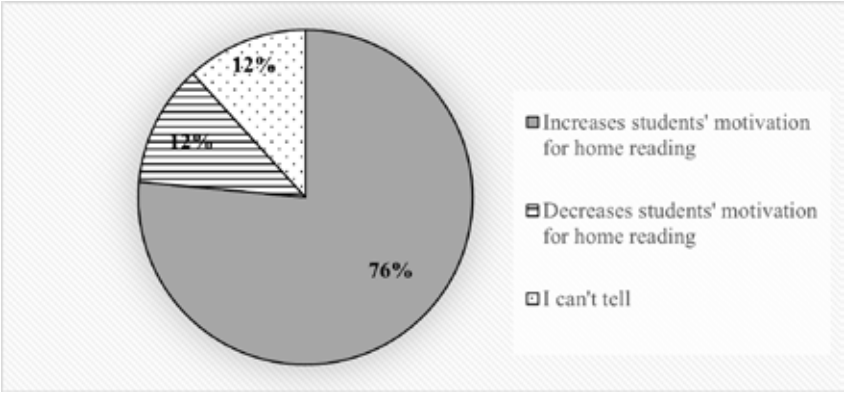
Research results and interpretation

The results of the research show teachers' opinions about the motivational potential of reading diaries and their application in home reading. Teachers also expressed their views on the requirements they give to students for keeping a reading diary, the specific requirements that they have, the quantity of the requirements and their alignment with the book being read. Research results are presented and interpreted in several short chapters.

Teachers' opinions on the motivational potential of reading diaries

One of the tasks of our research was to examine teachers' opinions about the motivational potential of reading diaries, and the results are shown in Graph 1.

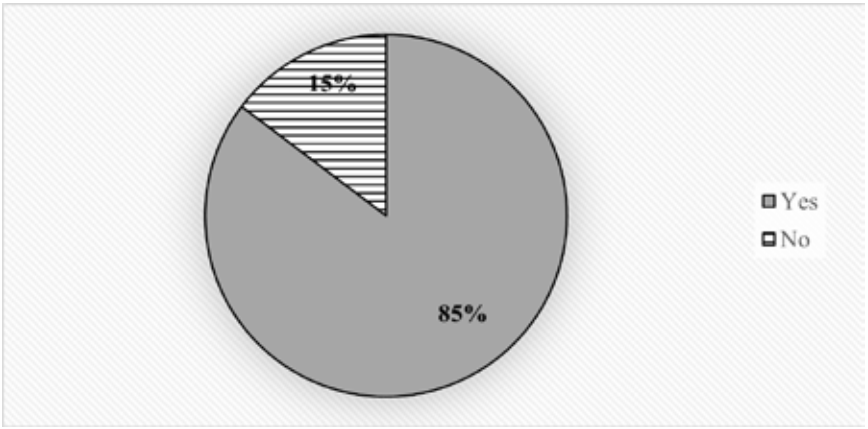
Answers of the teachers shown in Graph 1 show that the majority of the teachers, namely 76%, believe that the reading diary has a positive effect on the motivation of students to engage in home reading. Therefore, most teachers believe that the reading diary has motivational potential in teaching and that it is good to use it. The remaining answers of the surveyed teachers show divided opinions. Namely, 12% of the respondents answered that they could not estimate the motivational potential of the reading diary, and the same percentage of teachers believe that the diary reduces the motivation of students to read. Therefore, the first hypothesis of this research, that *from the perspective of most teachers reading diaries increase motivation of students to engage in home reading*, has been confirmed.



Graph 1 *Teachers' opinions about the reading diary as a motivation for reading*

Application of the home reading diary in classwork

It was important for our research to determine how many surveyed teachers apply the students' reading diary in their teaching work, and the results are shown in Graph 2.

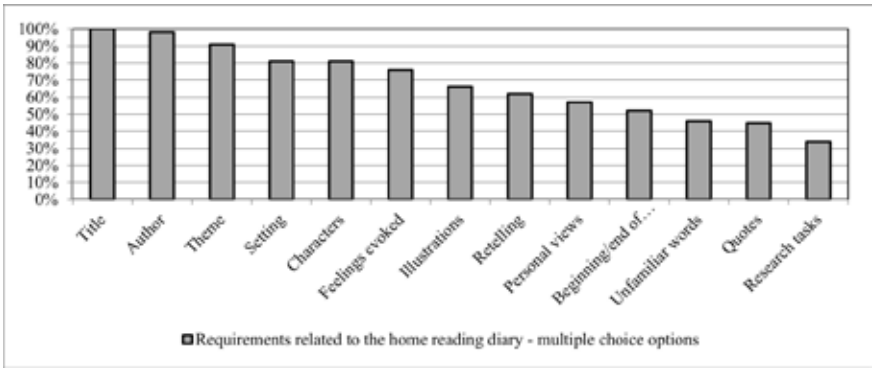


Graph 2 *Application of the reading diary in the teaching of home reading*

Number of teachers who apply the reading diary is significant, i.e. 85%. Therefore, the interviewed teachers are of the opinion that students' notes taken during reading are functional since they apply them. There are also teachers, 15% of them in our research, who do not use the students' reading diary. It is possible that they have come to the conclusion that students find it difficult to take notes while reading, so they refrain from the application of the reading diary. Nevertheless, the vast majority does apply the reading diary, in order to train pupils to read with a pencil in hand from an early age and thus provide for additional benefits. In accordance with the abovesaid, we conclude that the second hypothesis of our research, which is related to the fact that *the majority of teachers use a reading diary in their classwork*, has been confirmed.

Reading diary requirements that teachers refer students to

In order for the reading diary to be useful, it was necessary to take into account the requirements that students follow when taking notes in it. As a result, teachers who do apply the reading diary (85%) in their work on home reading further singled out the requirements to which they refer students when taking notes. Teachers had the option of multiple choices, and Graph 3 shows the results from the highest to the lowest percentage in their selection.



Graph 3 *Teachers' requirements for note taking in the reading diary*

The requirement that all the surveyed teachers (100%) place upon their students when using the reading diary is the title of the literary work assigned as the home reading, while almost all respondents (98%) also require notes on the name and surname of the book's author. Therefore, in the opinion of surveyed teachers, both requirements are an indispensable segment, which completely fulfils the informative function of the reading diary.

The teachers marked literary concepts as good guidelines for the requirements in the reading diary, which fulfils its theoretical function. Thus, almost all surveyed teachers (91%) ask students to recognise the theme of the literary work, that is, a sentence that expresses the essence of what they have read. This is applicable when working on novels, while when working on collections of poems or stories it is preferable to name one theme for each poem, fable, story or to name the most frequent themes. Determining the theme of a literary work is important, but it can also be complex due to students' insufficiently developed abilities to do it. A note on the setting, i.e. the time and place of action, is required by 81% of the surveyed teachers. In certain texts, the time and place of action are important elements for their interpretation, so their recording is justified. For some literary works this record does not make sense, for example, where time and place are unknown. Character descriptions (81.0%) and retelling of events (62%) were also selected as important teacher requirements in the reading diary. Research tasks are mainly applied in interpretation of literary works in the senior grades of primary school, so it is understandable that only 34%

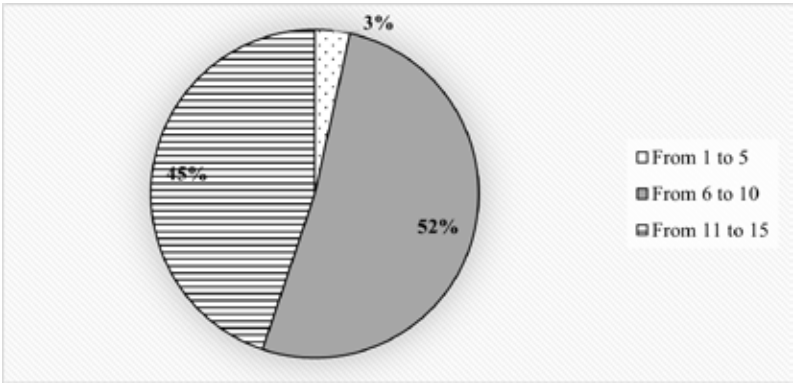
of the teachers in lower primary education grades chose these tasks for their students' reading diary.

Frequent teacher requirements include: feelings evoked by the literary work (76%), illustrations (66%), personal views (57%), and dates of the beginning and end of reading (52%). Notes on feelings and personal views are based on the experience, which is the starting point in the interpretation of the home reading in class. Illustrations help make the reading diary look good and keep students coming back to it. By writing the date, pupils track their reading pace progress and can plan future readings. Certain notes in the diary have a linguistic function, i.e. the role of improving the vocabulary and developing students' oral and written expression. Surveyed teachers also stated that they ask their students to record unfamiliar words (46%) and quotes (45%) from the book they are reading.

The third hypothesis was also confirmed – that *teachers instruct students to record responses to specific requirements in their reading diary.*

Results on the requirements placed upon students related to the notes they are to take in their reading diaries indicate that surveyed teachers have a large number of such requirements. This was our next question, which sheds light on this relevant methodological problem: How many requirements on average should students be asked to meet when taking notes? As we are talking about students at the beginning of their education, it is clear that there should not be many of these. In our research, they were divided into three groups according to the number of requirements, and the results are shown in Graph 4.

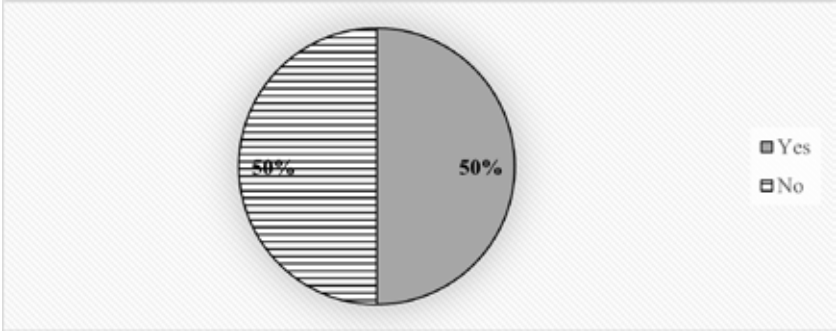
Optimal number of requirements depends on the volume of literary work and the age of students. More than half of the surveyed teachers (52%) have 11 to 15 requirements regarding the notes that they require students to take in their reading diary. The highest percentage of responses in this group was not expected, because the number of requirements is quite large for younger students. Number of these requirements shows that students can often feel overwhelmed by note-taking, which leads to frequent interruptions in reading and consequently to decreased immersion in literary work and enjoyment of reading in general. However, 45% of teachers declare that they give from 6 to 10 tasks. Only 3% of teachers task their students with 1 to 5 requirements, which points to the fact that teachers mainly opt for more requirements related to the reading diary. It must not be forgotten that the *how* aspect is more important in this context than *how much*. Primary schoolteacher does not need to teach the students everything; it is only the beginning of their schooling, and the longer process is yet to come.



Graph 4 *The number of requirements to meet when taking notes in the reading diary*

Adapting the reading diary requirements depending on the home reading book

Note taking in the home reading diary should not always be uniform but adjusted to the grade – the students' abilities and capacities, their personal abilities and the literary form and genre of home reading. Question for the teachers who apply the reading diary was related to the variability of requirements in their work on different books assigned for home reading, and the results are shown in Graph 5.



Graph 5 *Uniformity of requirements on note taking in the reading diary*

Results of the survey (Graph 5) show that 50% of teachers adapt their reading diary requirements. This shows that they adapt to the nature of literary work and formulate the tasks accordingly. The other 50% of teachers always follow the same principle, which indicates an inadequate use of the reading diary. Namely, although we can find a justification for the uniformity of the requirements, i.e. assume that teachers do not change them so that students would develop a habit and therefore get used to reading independently, this is not the methodologically correct way. Students often seek and find something not truly included in the literary work, or even if included, it is not essential. The fourth hypothesis is partially confirmed, because teachers do not always adapt the reading diary requirements depending on the home reading book itself.

Conclusion

Independent reading of literary works in Serbian language classes begins with home reading. Support in their interpretation is a reading diary, the structure of which is mainly determined by the teacher and their requirements and instructions for recording the most important details about what has been read. This depends on the type and number of the reading diary requirements that students are referred to. Namely, the requirements should be harmonised with the students' individual and collective abilities, that is, the abilities of each individual student and the class as a whole, and with the literary form and genre of the home reading assigned. 136 primary school teachers participated in the empirical research about the function and structural elements of the reading diary. Results of the research show that the majority of surveyed teachers believe the reading diary increases students' attention while reading and interpreting home reads. Therefore, most teachers use the students' reading diary in their teaching. Findings of the research show that teachers apply the reading diary in their work on home reading, especially emphasising the following elements of its structure as relevant: title of the book and the author's name, literary-theoretical elements of the book read, and personal experience. Teachers usually have more than ten requirements related to keeping the reading diary. A shortcoming in the application of the reading diary is that only half of the teachers change and adapt their requirements according to the book the children are reading, while the other half always adhere to the same requirements for every book they assign. These findings point to the need for preparing detailed methodological instructions for using home reading diaries in classwork, which should further lead to instructing students towards independent book reading. Therefore, a good introduction of students to independent reading of home reads and books in general opens the path to the formation of reading habits and developing a love of books and reading.

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Funkcja domowego dziennika czytelniczego z perspektywy nauczyciela

Czytanie w szkole i domu w ramach nauki jest określone w państwowym programie nauczania języka serbskiego, który zawiera spis zalecanych utworów literackich, które uczniowie powinni przeczytać w ciągu roku szkolnego. Materiały szkolne są czytane i analizowane w szkole, natomiast materiały domowe są czytane przez uczniów samodzielnie w domu i interpretowane w trakcie lekcji. Lektura domowa obejmuje głównie dłuższe dzieła literackie – zbiory wierszy i opowiadań lub powieści ważnych autorów serbskich oraz zagranicznych. Aby w pełniejszy sposób umożliwić uczniom samodzielne czytanie, jednym ze sposobów przygotowania się do zajęć w domu jest prowadzenie dziennika lektur. W artykule omówiono z perspektywy nauczycieli szkół podstawowych wymagania dotyczące prowadzenia domowych dzienników lektur, liczbę tych wymagań i ich związek z utworami literackimi. W dzienniku lektur uczniowie zapisują najważniejsze fragmenty tego, co przeczytali, najczęściej zgodnie z instrukcjami i poleceniami nauczycieli. Notatki te obejmują przede wszystkim: podstawowe informacje o książce (tytuł, autor), znane pojęcia z zakresu teorii literatury (temat, bohaterowie), nieznane słowa i ciekawe cytaty. Uczniowie mogą również odnotowywać własne doświadczenia związane z tym, co przeczytali, przedstawiać dzieło literackie w obrazowy sposób i parafrazować niektóre fragmenty. Do bardziej złożonych wymagań zaliczają się zadania badawcze, które wymagają od uczniów rozwiązywania postawionych problemów podczas czytania dzieła literackiego.

Celem niniejszego artykułu było określenie funkcji i struktury dziennika lektur poprzez określenie wymagań stawianych uczniom podczas czytania w domu. Badania empiryczne zawarte w tym artykule obejmują następujące aspekty metodologiczne korzystania z domowego dziennika lektur: zastosowanie dziennika w zachęcaniu do czytania, zalecenia nauczycieli i wymagania dotyczące prowadzenia dziennika, liczbę i różnorodność tych wymagań oraz ich zgodność z gatunkiem książki. Próbę badawczą stanowili nauczyciele serbskich szkół podstawowych (N=136). W badaniu zastosowano metodę i technikę ankietyzacji, a narzędziem badawczym był kwestionariusz ankiety przeznaczony dla nauczycieli.

Wyniki badań wskazują, że trzy czwarte ankietowanych nauczycieli wymaga od swoich uczniów prowadzenia dziennika lektur domowych. Nauczyciele stosują metodę dziennika lektur głównie w celu zachęcenia uczniów do czytania, czyli zwiększenia motywacji uczniów do angażowania się w czytanie w domu. Wszyscy ankietowani nauczyciele uważają, że podstawowe informacje o książce stanowią nieodłączny element dziennika lektur, który w pełni spełnia swoją funkcję informacyjną. Dwie trzecie nauczycieli poleca swoim zwracanie uwagi w trakcie czytania na terminy literackie, które uczniowie rozpoznają, co spełnia swoją funkcję teoretyczną. Nauczyciele często zachęcają swoich uczniów do robienia notatek na temat emocji wywołanych przez

czytany utwór literacki oraz do dodawania ilustracji i osobistych odniesień do utworu literackiego. Niektóre notatki w dzienniku pełnią funkcję językową, tzn. mają na celu wzbogacenie słownictwa uczniów oraz rozwijanie ich umiejętności formułowania wypowiedzi ustnej i pisemnej poprzez zapisywanie nieznanych słów, cytatów oraz parafrazowanie treści. Większość ankietowanych nauczycieli stawia wobec uczniów ponad dziesięć wymagań dotyczących robienia notatek w dzienniku lektur, co wskazuje na to, że uczniowie mogą czuć się przytłoczeni tak dużą liczbą wymagań. Połowa ankietowanych nauczycieli dostosowuje wymagania dotyczące dzienników lektur do czytanych książek, lecz druga połowa nie robi tego, co stanowi poważny problem w stosowaniu dzienników. W związku z tym wymagania dotyczące notatek w dzienniku lektur domowych nie zawsze odpowiadają umiejętnościom uczniów i specyfice samego utworu literackiego. Konieczne jest zatem przygotowanie szczegółowych wskazówek metodycznych dla nauczycieli dotyczących prowadzenia dziennika lektur w ramach prowadzonej przez nauczycieli pracy dydaktycznej, co w dalszej perspektywie będzie miało wpływ na poprawę umiejętności samodzielnego czytania uczniów w domu.

Słowa kluczowe: czytanie; nauczanie języka serbskiego; czytanie w domu; dziennik lektur; notatki z lektur.

Функција дневника читања у обради домаће лектире из перспективе учитеља

Школска и домаћа лектира у настави српског језика прописана је наставним програмима у којима се налазе препоручени наслови књижевних дела које ученици треба да прочитају у току једне школске године. У школи се чита и анализира школска лектира, док домаћу лектиру ученици читају самостално код куће, а тумаче је на школским часовима. Домаћа лектира углавном обухвата обимнија дела – збирке песама, прича или романе значајних српских и страних писаца. Да би ученичко самостално читање било потпуније, један од начина припреме за час домаће лектире је вођење дневника читања. У раду су приказани захтеви за вођење дневника домаће лектире, њихова бројност и усклађивање са књижевним делима, из перспективе учитеља. У дневнику ученици бележе кључне сегменте прочитаног, углавном према упутствима и захтевима учитеља. Првенствено се бележе основни подаци о књизи (наслов, аутор), научени књижевнотеоријски појмови које ученици препознају (тема, ликови), ученику непознате речи, занимљиви цитати. Затим, ученици могу да унесу и свој доживљај прочитаног, да дело ликовно представе, као и да препричају одређене целине. Сложенији захтеви јесу истраживачки задаци, који усмеравају ученике на решавање постављених проблема у читању књижевног дела.

Циљ рада је био да се одреди функција и структура дневника читања кроз захтеве за ученике током читања домаће лектире. Емпиријским истраживањем у овом раду обухваћени су следећи методички сегменти коришћења дневника домаће лектире: примена за подстицање читања, упутства и захтеви за бележење, бројност и разноврсност ових захтева и њихово усклађивање са жанром књиге. Узорак истраживања обухватио је учитеље из основних школа у Србији (N = 136). У истраживању су примењене *survey* метода и техника анкетирања, а инструмент је анкетни упитник за учитеље.

Резултати истраживања показују да три четвртине испитаних учитеља упућује ученике да воде дневник читања домаће лектире. Најчешће га користе да подстакну читање, односно да повећају ученичку мотивацију за рад на домаћој лектири. Сви испитани учитељи сматрају да су основни подаци о књизи неизоставни сегмент дневника читања, чиме се у потпуности остварује његова информативна функција. Две трећине учитеља упућује ученике на записе књижевних појмова које су препознали у лектири, чиме се остварује и његова теоријска функција. Чести захтеви на које упућују испитани учитељи су и осећања изазвана делом, илустрације и лични ставови о књижевном делу. Одређене белешке у дневнику су у језичкој функцији, односно имају улогу богаћења речника и развијања усменог и писменог изражавања ученика, а то су непознате речи, цитати и препричавање. Испитани учитељи најчешће дају преко десет захтева за бележење у дневнику, а овај број указује на то да ученици

могу бити и преоптерећени бележењем. Половина испитаних учитеља усклађује захтеве дневника читања са књигом домаће лектире, док их друга половина не мења, што је недостатак у примени дневника. Дакле, захтеви за бележење у дневнику домаће лектире нису увек усклађени са ученичким способностима и са специфичностима самог књижевног дела домаће лектире. Зато је потребно припремити детаљна методичка упутства учитељима за структурисање дневника читања у настави, који ће даље водити ка унапређивању ученичког самосталног читања код куће.

Кључне речи: белешке о читању; домаћа лектира; дневник читања; лектира; настава српског језика.

Funkcija dnevnika čitanja u obradi domaće zadaće iz perspektive učitelja

Školska i domaća lektira u nastavi srpskog jezika propisana je nastavnim planom i programom koji sadrži preporučene naslove književnih djela koje učenici trebaju pročitati tijekom jedne školske godine. U školi se čita i analizira školska lektira, dok domaću lektiru učenici čitaju samostalno kod kuće, a interpretiraju na nastavi. Domaća lektira uglavnom uključuje veća djela - zbirke pjesama, priča ili romana značajnih srpskih i stranih pisaca. Kako bi samostalno čitanje učenika bilo potpunije, jedan od načina pripreme za sat domaće lektire je vođenje dnevnika čitanja. U radu su prikazani zahtjevi za vođenje dnevnika domaće lektire, njihov broj i usklađenost s književnim djelima, iz perspektive učitelja. U dnevnik učenici bilježe ključne segmente pročitanog, uglavnom prema uputama i zahtjevima nastavnika. Bilježe se prvenstveno osnovni podaci o knjizi (naslov, autor), naučeni književnoteorijski pojmovi koje učenici prepoznaju (tema, likovi), učeniku nepoznate riječi, zanimljivi citati. Učenici mogu dodati osobni doživljaj pročitanog, likovno prikazati djelo, ali i prepričati pojedine dijelove. Složeniji zahtjevi su istraživački zadaci, koji učenika usmjeravaju na rješavanje postavljenih problema u čitanju književnog djela.

Cilj ovog rada je bio utvrditi funkciju i strukturu dnevnika čitanja kroz zahtjeve učenika pri čitanju domaće lektire. Empirijsko istraživanje u ovom radu obuhvaća sljedeće metodičke segmente korištenja dnevnika domaće lektire: primjenu za poticanje čitanja, upute i zahtjeve za bilježenje, brojnost i raznolikost tih zahtjeva te njihovu usklađenost sa žanrom knjige. Uzorak istraživanja obuhvatio je učitelje osnovnih škola u Srbiji (N=136). U istraživanju je primijenjena anketna metoda i tehnika anketiranja, a instrument je bio anketni upitnik za učitelje.

Rezultati istraživanja pokazuju da tri četvrtine učitelja u uzorku upućuje svoje učenike na vođenje dnevnika čitanja domaće lektire. Najčešće ga koriste za poticanje čitanja, odnosno povećanje motiviranosti učenika za rad na domaćim zadaćama. Svi ispitani učitelji smatraju da su osnovne informacije o knjizi neizostavan segment dnevnika čitanja koji u potpunosti ispunjava svoju informativnu funkciju. Dvije trećine nastavnika upućuje učenike na zapise književnih pojmova koje su prepoznali u lektiri, čime se ostvaruje i teorijska funkcija. Česti zahtjevi na koje anketirani učitelji upućuju su osjećaji koje izaziva djelo, ilustracije i osobni stavovi o književnom djelu. Pojedine bilješke u dnevniku imaju jezičnu funkciju, odnosno imaju ulogu obogaćivanja rječnika i razvijanja usmenog i pismenog izražavanja učenika, a to su nepoznate riječi, citati i prepričavanja. Anketirani učitelji najčešće daju više od deset zahtjeva za bilježenjem u dnevnik, a ovaj broj ukazuje da bi učenici mogli biti preopterećeni bilježenjem. Polovica ispitanih učitelja usklađuje zahtjeve dnevnika čitanja s domaćom lektirom, dok ih druga polovica ne mijenja, što je nedostatak u primjeni dnevnika. Stoga zahtjevi za bilježenjem u dnevnik domaće lektire nisu uvijek usklađeni s učenikovim mogućnostima i specifičnostima samog književnog

dijela domaće lektire. To upućuje na potrebu pripreme detaljnih metodičkih uputa za učitelje kako bi kvalitetno strukturirali dnevnike čitanja u razredu, što će dodatno dovesti do unapređivanja samostalnog čitanja učenika kod kuće.

Ključne riječi: bilješke o čitanju; domaća lektira; dnevnik čitanja; lektira; nastava srpskog jezika.

PART 3
HIGHER EDUCATION

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Becoming a pre-school teacher: developing competence for human rights education and education for democratic citizenship in Croatia

Abstract: *This paper explores opinions of prospective pre-school teachers in Croatia on the development of their professional competencies for EDC and EHR developed during their pre-service education. Quantitative research methodology was used to determine the opinions of prospective pre-school teachers on their competencies for EDC and EHR. Participants were 253 (N=253) students of early childhood education with different personal and educational backgrounds. The results show that although human rights and children's rights are relevant in teacher education, human rights, children's rights, and active citizenship competencies are not fully recognised nor developed during pre-service teacher education in Croatia.*

Keywords*: children's rights, competencies, democratic values, education, pre-school teachers*

Introduction

Since teaching profession is considered an area of special national interest in European countries, many Curriculum reforms emphasise the importance of teacher competencies. European commission has issued a document that presents key competences of teachers at the European level. In the document named *Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications* (2005), key competences should enable teachers to:

- work with others: teachers work in a profession which should be based on the values of social inclusion and nurturing the potential of every learner;
- work with knowledge, technology and information**:** teachers need to be able to work with various types of knowledge. Their education and professional development should prepare them to access, analyse, validate, reflect on and transmit knowledge, making effective use of technology where appropriate;
- work with and in society: teachers contribute to preparing learners to be globally responsible in their role as EU citizens. Therefore, teachers should be able to promote mobility and co-operation in Europe and encourage intercultural respect and understanding.

It is known that teacher competence and the quality of teacher education are some of the main factors that impact the level of student achievement in general. Therefore, teacher education and continuous professional development of teachers is seen as

the key issue that seeks to improve the outcomes and efficiency of education system. Ministry of Science and Education (hereafter MoSE) is the main stakeholder in the creation of numerous educational policies throughout legal framework that regulates the required teacher competencies and educational standards such as the *National Framework Curriculum for Preschool*, *Primary and Secondary Education* (2011), *Preschool Act* (2013, 2022), *National Curriculum of Early Childhood Education* (2015), *Croatian Qualifications Framework* (2016*)* and many others. These documents clearly outline the expectations that the state has from teacher education institutions and the competencies needed for teachers in contemporary society that enable them to meet national and international educational goals.

These goals are clearly stated in the document presented by Delors (1996), the Four Pillars of Learning (learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together). Later, UNESCO added the fifth pillar "to address the special challenge of sustainability: learning to transform oneself and society" (UNESCO, 2012: 35). The Five Pillars of Learning are understood as "an integrated vision for education and are considered to be a key reference for the conceptualisation of education and learning worldwide" (Tawil & Cougoureux, 2013: 2).

Teacher competencies needed for teachers to be able to work with others, work with knowledge, technology and information, and work with and in society, resting on the Five Pillars of Learning, are competencies developed during initial teacher education that enable teachers to contribute as active participants in democratic societies. This participation needs to be achieved on a classroom, school, local and global level. Therefore, the competencies for education for democratic societies and human rights emerge at the core of teacher development.

Education for human rights and democratic citizenship

Despite their differences, all educational programmes should be based on five pillars of education, which are fundamental to providing quality education and fostering human development: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, learning to be, and the fifth pillar - learning to transform oneself and society.

Also, as stated in *Declaration on and Training* (UN, 2011), all educational programmes should ensure access to Human Rights Education (hereafter HRE) and training as a fundamental right, at all levels and forms of education, from preschool to university. Declaration highlights three key dimensions of HRE:

- education about human rights, which includes providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that reinforce them and the mechanisms for their protection;
- education through human rights, which includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners;
- education for human rights, which includes empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect the rights of others. (UN, 2011, Article 2)

Human rights education in European context often goes hand in hand with or is seen as part of education for democratic citizenship – EDC. According to CoE (2010) education for democratic citizenship is fundamental to a free, tolerant, just, open and inclusive society, to social cohesion, as well as mutual understanding, intercultural and interreligious dialogue and solidarity and equality between men and women.

”Education for democratic citizenship involves inter alia civic, history, political and human rights education, education on the global context of societies, and on cultural heritage. It encourages multidisciplinary approaches and combines the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes – particularly the capacity for reflection and selfcritical disposition necessary for life in culturally diverse societies.“ (CoE, 2010: 44)

Democratic culture needs to be taught (CoE, 2016) since democracy cannot exist without democratic institutions and laws, and these cannot work in practice unless they are grounded in a culture of democracy, i.e. in democratic values, attitudes and practices. Audigier (2000) states two main classifications of key competences associated with democratic citizenship. The first one includes three broad categories of competences: cognitive competences, affective competences and those connected with the choice of values and connected with action. The second classification distinguishes four dimensions of citizenship: dimensions which are based on the analysis of life in society. These dimensions are political and legal, social, cultural and economic (Audigier, 2000). Prospective teachers need to develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary for participation in democratic societies, as well as generic and specific competencies that enable them to ensure development of the same competencies of their students. Zyngier (2016) highlighted critical pedagogy as the foundation for analysing how democracy is perceived, prioritising education’s ability not only to empower individuals but also to enhance democracy, ultimately striving for a more egalitarian, equitable, and socially just society. Hence HRE and EDC is not merely about democracy, but aimed in nurturing engaged citizens (Osler, 2011) or uniting individuals towards a shared goal of long-term survival (Davis, 2014). In the contemporary context, there is a need to realign education with the fundamental principles outlined in the United Nation Convention on the Right of the Child (UN, 1989): “eliminating discrimination, prioritising decisions that serve the best interests of children, guaranteeing every child’s right to life, survival, and development, and actively promoting children’s rights to express themselves and be heard.” (Višnjić-Jevtić et al., 2021: 261).

Davis (2014) considers early childhood to be the key stage for actualisation of children’s rights, for the formation of ethical values, attitudes, and behaviour and for nurturing cultures that favour sustainability. The assumption is that teachers have competencies that can contribute to this. Initial teacher education tends to be the key point for development of these competencies that will be a prerequisite for the democratic educational process. Therefore, it is important to find out how competent are the prospective teachers in HRE and EDC at all levels of education, even in kindergarten.

Method

The purpose of this research was to find opinions of prospective ECEC teachers on their competences for human rights and democratic citizenship education.

Research was conducted in October 2023. Participants were briefed on the purpose of research and a questionnaire was distributed to research participants via email. Participants was guaranteed anonymity. They were also informed of the option to withdraw from participation. Research was conducted in accordance with the Ethical Code of the University of Zagreb.

*Participants*Top of Form

Participants were 253 (N=253) students of 2nd (N_1=145) and 3rd (N_2=108) year of early childhood education undergraduate studies at the University of Zagreb (Table 1.). In the 2023 / 2024 winter term there were 329 students, so more than three quarters (f=76.9%) of the total number of students participated in the study. Given that the research was conducted at the very beginning of the academic year, the research did not include 1st year students, who lack study experience, are not familiar with the contents of courses, and are unable to assess to what extent they could contribute to their competences in the field of research. Faculty of Teacher Education at University of Zagreb educates prospective ECE teachers at three different departments (Čakovec, Petrinja and Zagreb), with Zagreb being the largest one. The sample involved students from all three departments.

More than half of all participants (54.5%) finished vocational secondary schools before starting their studies at the University of Zagreb. Given there were only a few male students in the study population, there was no need to collect data on gender.

Table 1 *Participants*

Variable	Variable description	Percentage (N=253)
Department	Čakovec	37.2%
	Petrinja	14.6%
	Zagreb	48.2%
Year of study	2nd	42.7%
	3rd	57.3%
Secondary school	Grammar school	45.5%
	Vocational school	54.5%

Research instrument

The questionnaire was developed to explore the perception of participants on their competence in human rights and democratic citizenship education. Questionnaire contained 4 parts. The first part of the questionnaire was related to their sociodemographic data (department and year of study, academic success in the previous year and the secondary school they attended). The second part of the questionnaire consisted of 17

statements related to competence in human rights and democratic citizenship education. These were adopted and adjusted from the list of teacher competencies that support EDC and HRE (Brett et al., 2009). Participants expressed their level of information about the statements on a five-point Likert-type scale. The third part was related to their experiences in education about/through/for human rights and democratic citizenship, children's rights and participation during their study. Participants assessed whether during their university education they had courses whose contents dealt with human rights, children's rights and participation and the child as an active citizen, and they were asked to name the courses. The fourth part was related to participants' educational and personal context related to human rights and democratic citizenship. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient indicated satisfactory reliability (α= ,74) for the questionnaire.

Results and Discussion

Competence in human rights and democratic citizenship education

The descriptive indicators of the assessments show that the participants are well-informed on half of the statements offered, while the other half they assess neutrally, as neither being informed or not being informed (Table 2). They are most familiar with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (M=4.01, SD=0.85) and ways of including children in the decision-making process (M=3.79, SD=0.86). These results were expected considering that the mentioned content is an integral part of the teacher education program. Content on children's rights is clearly highlighted in many courses, while the principles of child-centeredness, which includes child participation, are a part of the modern ECE curriculum. In contrast to these topics, the participants cannot assess to what extent they are informed about the content in the field of democratic citizenship, and they more often take a neutral stance on these claims. Considering that this teaching content may not be clearly highlighted, but can be recognized on the level of values, it is questionable whether the participants cannot recognize EDC as teaching content or planned learning outcome or whether this content is not present in the courses they take.

Table 2 *Competence in human rights and democratic citizenship education*

I am familiar with	Min	Max	M	SD
…opportunities for collaborative work in the community.	1	5	3.68	0.88
… possibilities of organising a stimulating environment for the use of multiple choices.	1	5	3.55	0.86
methods of discrimination prevention.	1	5	3.56	0.87
… different ways of evaluating children's competences.	1	5	3.81	0.84
… shaping democratic citizenship and accepting and valuing human rights.	1	5	3.57	0.92
… external evaluation of the educational process.	1	5	3.36	0.87

Table 2 *(Continued)*

… ways of involving children in the decision-making process.	1	5	3.79	0.86
… strategies for easier involvement of children in the discussion.	1	5	3.55	0.87
… by setting basic rules for positive institutional values.	1	5	3.39	0.91
… the need to introduce Civic Education.	1	5	3.33	0.98
… goals and purpose of Civic Education.	1	5	3.28	0.97
…with the inclusion of basic ideas and habits of Civic Education in the teaching process.	1	5	3.14	0.95
… key international frameworks of Civic Education.	1	5	3.04	0.98
… planning, methods and learning opportunities of Civic education.	1	5	3.09	1.00
… with the inclusion of basic ideas and habits of Civic Education in the educational process.	1	5	3.08	1.02
… with the Convention on the rights of the child.	1	5	4.01	0.85

Experiences related to human rights and democratic citizenship education

Assessment of educational experiences in the areas of human and children's rights, as well as democratic citizenship, is of utmost importance for understanding the effectiveness and impact of educational systems on encouraging informed, engaged, and empowered individuals in society. More than half of participants (58.5%, f=148) state that during their studies they attended a course contents of which deal with human rights. They point out that these topics are a part of pedagogical and psychological courses (for example, Early education pedagogy, Developmental psychology, Profession of teachers and reflective practice, Socio-emotional development and children's rights, Education for human rights and democratic citizenship). Teachers' insufficient knowledge and attitudes towards HRE, as they are often unaware of its existence and responsibility, lack adequate knowledge about human rights, and perceive teaching human rights as complex and sensitive, leading to delays in its introduction in the curriculum (Quennerstedt, 2022).

During their studies, more than three-quarters (76.3%, f=193) of participants attended a course whose contents deal with children's rights and participation. Here, too, they list pedagogical and psychological courses.

It is interesting to find, that most of the participants state they are familiar with the ways of including children in the decision-making process, while almost three quarters of them (73.9%, f=187) state that during their studies they did not attend a course whose contents dealt with the child as an active citizen. The question arises in regard to the understanding of active citizenship (whether participation in decision-making is part of active citizenship) or the understanding of a child as a citizen, as well as the

approach to teaching about these topics: education about/through/for EDC. Australian prospective teachers relate democracy to "freedom of speech (but not necessarily in action)" (Zyngier, 2016: 795).

Although more than 80 percent of participants (83.8%, f=212) agree that professional competencies in HRE and EDC are necessary for the development of human rights and democratic citizenship and are relevant for their future work, almost half of them (48.2%, f=122) are not sure whether they had the opportunity to develop them. These results can be explained in the initial teacher education curriculum since there are not many courses that explore this content, even when dealing with teacher role and teacher competencies. This issue of limited acknowledgment of teachers' HRE responsibilities within the teacher education programmes has previously been detected by Robinson et al. (2020).

Educational and personal context related to human rights and democratic citizenship

Table 3 *Educational and personal context related to human rights and democratic citizenship*

Variable	Variable description	Percentage (N=253)
Membership	Not member	53.3%
	Sport clubs	13.8%
	Cultural and artistic organization	11.9%
	Religious organisation	11.1%
	Voluntary organisation	10.1%
	Student organisation	4%
	Charity	4%
	Professional association	0.4%
	Political party	0.4%
Activism	Volunteering	43%
	Signing petitions	90.5%
	Voting in elections	53.8%

Given the research topic, it was justified to delve into forms of active participation of prospective ECEC teachers in society e.g. membership in different organisations and their activist habits (Table 3). Social participation takes place within a community context, where prospective teachers engage in social activities in many formal and informal social networks. Forms of participation are often determined by issues

arising within a community, a place, and include its culture, norms, values, and institutions (Cicognani et al., 2008). Membership in organizations plays a crucial role in democratic citizenship by providing people with opportunities for participation, transparency, voting rights, equality, accountability, education and empowerment. These characteristics contribute to the construction of a democratic society in which citizens actively engage in decision-making and shaping the common future. More than half of participants (53.3%) aren't members of any organisation. Participants are mostly members of sports clubs (13.8%), cultural and artistic (11.9%), religious (11.1%) or voluntary (10.1%) organisations. Volunteering, signing petitions, and voting in elections are crucial elements of activism that constitute an integral part of democratic citizenship, enabling individuals to express their views, participate in decision-making, promote social change, strengthen democratic institutions, and actively engage in social and political life. Therefore, it was important to collect data on active participation of the participants themselves.

Corelation of educational and personal experiences and competence for human rights and democratic citizenship

To determine whether there is a connection between educational and personal experiences of participants with their assessment of human rights and democratic citizenship education, a t-test and one-way analysis of variance were used - depending on the evaluated variables.

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted and according to factor loadings, two factors were recognised and named as: context of EDC and teacher's competence in EDC. Context of EDC is saturated with statements on aims, purpose, international framework and the need for implementation of EDC. Teacher's competence in EDC explains autonomous work of the teacher, ability to organise educational process, cooperation with the community and evaluation of the process.

When researching the impact of prior educational experiences, the type of high school plays a significant role in shaping the civic identity and active participation of individuals in society. The assumption was that students who attended grammar school would be more familiar with content from the field of human rights and democratic citizenship education. The results of this research show that no statistically significant correlation was found between the assessment of competence ($t=-0.23$, $p= ,82$) and the context ($t=0.13$, $p= .86$) regarding the secondary school that the participants completed. Research by Siegel-Stechler (2021) showed that learning civics topics in school leads to higher levels of civic knowledge and engagement.

No statistically significant difference was found either regarding the year of study or enrolment in courses dealing with human rights, children's rights, and participation (Table 4.). Howe and Covell (2009) state that civic citizenship education has little impact on the improvement of civic competences. Interestingly, Quennerstedt (2022) states that teachers' understanding of human rights concepts appears to be insufficient. While teacher education programmes may touch upon children's rights, they often fall short in addressing broader human rights issues, probably because the focus is

more often placed on children's rights specifically, referencing the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* rather than addressing broader human rights treaties.

Table 4 *Correlation with educational experiences*

	∑ Competence		∑ Context	
	t	p	t	p
Year of study	-1.44	.15	-0.63	.53
Course with content in the field of human rights	0.15	.88	0.33	.74
Course with contents in the field of children's rights and participation	1.12	.27	0.56	.57
Course with contents focused on the child as an active citizen	1.97	.05	2.51	.01

In this research, it was shown that content related to children's rights has no influence on the perception of prospective teachers. The only variable that proved to be significantly different in the assessments of competence (t=1.97, p=.05) and context (t=2.51, p=.01) is enrolment in courses that have teaching content focused on the child as an active citizen. These results are interesting, since the result of the similar research conducted by Grubišić and Rajić (2015) detected the need for a course for prospective teachers that would provide knowledge and information about the wider context of EDC and specific pedagogical and methodological needs of EDC. The results show that this kind of teaching content does make an impact.

Different forms of participation such as volunteering, signing petitions, and voting in elections also did not prove to be crucial for the assessment of competences and context (Table 5.).

Table 5 *Correlation with personal experiences*

	∑ Competence		∑ Context	
	t	p	t	p
Volunteering	0.47	.64	0.56	.58
Signing petitions	-0.95	.34	-0.97	.34
Voting in elections	0.19	.85	-0.26	.80

There was a lack of statistically significant differences in relation to the effects of human rights and democratic citizenship education. So far, research has found that personal experiences can have individual effects on democratic behaviour (Siegel-Stechler, 2021). Despite the fact that the results of this research did not find statistically significant differences in assessment of understanding of teacher competence and context for teaching EDC and HRE, these experiences can contribute to shaping an individual's likelihood to participate in democratic processes. Participation in volunteering or political activities may enhance individual competences. At the same

time, volunteering affects social skills, and political activism enhances knowledge of social, economic, and political issues (Pavlova & Ruhr, 2023). Contrary to these findings, our research did not confirm these claims when exploring prospective teacher understanding of teacher competence and teaching context relevant to EDC and HRE.

Conclusion

Education is often seen as panacea to all societal problems, and teacher education is likewise perceived as a solution to many of the problems in education, if not all. This kind of understanding of teacher education puts great pressure on teacher education institutions when conceptualising great ideas such as human rights, democracy, sustainable development and many others. Even though it is clear that teacher education alone cannot save democracy, it can prepare teachers to bring meaning and complexity to classroom life and teach students that they have choices and that those choices are the building blocks of democratic engagement (Westheimer, 2022). Despite this conclusion and great expectations society puts on teachers, initial teacher education in the field of human rights and democratic citizenship is still very limited (Grubišić & Rajić, 2015), or explicit (Kasa et al., 2021). Regrettably, not enough attention is paid to the implementation of HRE and EDC in education of prospective teachers. This means that prospective teachers, at all levels, have unclear understanding of the importance of HRE and EDC, the context, and their role in it.

Although preschool education is not a part of formal education and is not compulsory, preschool education tends to be a starting point of education for many children. It is within this setting that a child starts to learn about the ways to know, to do, to be, to live together and has the first opportunities to learn of the possibility to transform oneself and the society. According to Erickson and Thompson (2019), preschool is one of the first public meeting spaces for young children, and "it presents a unique and compelling opportunity to expose individuals to the benefits of partaking in reasonable discussions of ideas, issues, and problems that matter to them". These first experiences are very important, so there is a need to further explore the prospective ECEC teachers' competencies that enable their support and nurture of these experiences. Further research of prospective preschool teachers in the area of HRE and EDC is necessary to understand the competencies and potential of preschool teachers for professional engagement in the area of HRE and EDC.

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Zostać nauczycielem wychowania przedszkolnego: rozwijanie kompetencji w zakresie edukacji o prawach człowieka i edukacji na rzecz obywatelstwa demokratycznego w Chorwacji

Kompetencje w zakresie edukacji na rzecz praw człowieka (EPC) i obywatelstwa demokratycznego (EOD) mają kluczowe znaczenie dla wychowania świadomych, zaangażowanych i odpowiedzialnych jednostek, które mogą aktywnie uczestniczyć w procesach demokratycznych i bronić praw człowieka. W niniejszym badaniu, ujawniającym zarówno mocne strony, jak i obszary wymagające poprawy, analizuje się sposób, w jaki przyszli nauczyciele edukacji wczesnoszkolnej (EW) (N=253) na Uniwersytecie w Zagrzebiu są informowani o tych zagadnieniach, a także ich doświadczenia edukacyjne i osobiste zaangażowanie w praktyki demokratyczne.

Wyniki pokazują, że uczestnicy badania są na ogół dobrze poinformowani o pewnych aspektach praw człowieka, zwłaszcza w odniesieniu do praw dziecka. *Konwencja o prawach dziecka* jest jednym z najlepiej poznanych obszarów (M=4,01, SD=0,85), a uczestnicy badania wyrażają również znajomość sposobów angażowania dzieci w proces podejmowania decyzji (M=3,79, SD=0,86).

Co do doświadczeń edukacyjnych, 58,5% uczestników badania stwierdziło, że uczestniczyło w kursach obejmujących tematykę praw człowieka. Zagadnienia te są najczęściej włączane i omawiane w ramach zajęć pedagogicznych oraz psychologicznych, takich jak *pedagogika wczesnoszkolna*, *psychologia rozwojowa* oraz *rozwój społeczno-emocjonalny i prawa dziecka*. Warto odnotować, że ponad trzy czwarte uczestników (76,3%) wzięło udział w kursach dotyczących tematyki praw dziecka, co dodatkowo podkreśla nacisk położony na prawa dziecka w trakcie doskonalenia zawodowego nauczycieli.

Co ciekawe, choć wielu uczestników przyznało, że zna zasady i sposoby angażowania dzieci w proces podejmowania decyzji, niemal trzy czwarte (73,9%) stwierdziło, że nie uczestniczyło w kursie poświęconym konkretnie dzieciom jako aktywnym obywatelom. Nasuwa się zatem pytanie, w jaki sposób uczestnicy badania postrzegają koncepcję aktywnego obywatelstwa i czy uważają udział dzieci w podejmowaniu decyzji za część tej szerszej idei.

Niejasności dotyczące rozumienia zagadnienia aktywnego obywatelstwa mogą wynikać z braku wyraźnego uwzględnienia tych treści w programie nauczania lub z niejasnych strategii nauczania, które nie pozwalają w pełni zdefiniować dziecka jako obywatela.

Pomimo zgody większości uczestników badania (83,8%) co do tego, że kompetencje zawodowe w zakresie praw człowieka i obywatelstwa demokratycznego mają kluczowe znaczenie dla ich przyszłej pracy, niemal połowa uczestników (48,2%) nadal nie jest pewna, czy posiadane przez nich wykształcenie odpowiednio przygotowuje ich do rozwijania tych kompetencji. Niepewność ta odzwierciedla

ograniczony dostęp do kursów poświęconych tej konkretnej tematyce w programach kształcenia nauczycieli. Poprzednie badania, takie jak te przeprowadzone przez Robinson et al. (2020), również zidentyfikowały te braki i podkreśliły potrzebę bardziej kompleksowego podejścia do nauczania EPC oraz EOD w ramach programu nauczania.

W badaniu przeanalizowano również zaangażowanie uczestników w działalność społeczną i polityczną, które stanowią istotne elementy obywatelstwa demokratycznego. Co zaskakujące, ponad połowa uczestników (53,3%) nie jest członkiem żadnej organizacji. Spośród osób zaangażowanych w działalność społeczną większość należy do klubów sportowych (13,8%), grup kulturalno-artystycznych (11,9%), organizacji religijnych (11,1%) lub grup wolontariackich (10,1%). Tego typu aktywności prezentują pewien poziom zaangażowania społecznego, ale zauważalny jest brak uczestnictwa w organizacjach typowo obywatelskich lub politycznych.

Badanie ukazuje, że chociaż przyszli nauczyciele są dobrze poinformowani w temacie praw dziecka, istnieją znaczące luki w szerszym zrozumieniu praw człowieka i obywatelstwa demokratycznego wykazywanym przez nauczycieli. Programy edukacyjne muszą kłaść większy nacisk na obywatelstwo demokratyczne – zarówno jako treść nauczania, jak i kompetencję zawodową. Co więcej, doświadczenia osobiste badanych, takie jak uczestnictwo społeczne, chociaż ważne dla zaangażowania demokratycznego, nie wykazały silnego wpływu na kompetencje zawodowe uczestników w zakresie EOD. Podsumowując, wyniki badań wskazują na potrzebę bardziej wszechstronnego podejścia do kształcenia nauczycieli, uwzględniającego wyraźniej kwestie praw człowieka i obywatelstwa demokratycznego w programie nauczania.

Słowa kluczowe: prawa dzieci; kompetencje; wartości demokratyczne; edukacja; nauczyciele przedszkolni.

Развијање компетенција будућих васпитача за образовање о људским правима и демократском грађанству у Хрватској

У образовању за људска права и демократско грађанство од кључног значаја је оспособљеност за неговање информисаних, ангажованих и одговорних појединаца који подржавају људска права и активно учествују у демократским процесима. Ова студија истражује информисаност будућих предшколских васпитача (N=253) Универзитета у Загребу о овим темама, њихово образовно искуство и лични ангажман у демократским праксама, откривајући предности и области за потенцијална побољшања.

Налази показују да су учесници углавном добро информисани о одређеним аспектима људских права, посебно у вези са правима детета. Конвенција о правима детета једна је од најбоље схваћених области (M=4,01, SD=0,85), док су учесници такође упознати и са начинима укључивања деце у доношење одлука (M=3,79, SD=0,86). У вези са образовним искуствима, 58,5% учесника наводи да је похађало курсеве који су обухватали теме људских права. Ове теме су најчешће интегрисане у педагошке и психолошке курсеве као што су Педагогија раног детињства, Развојна психологија и Социо-емоционални развој и права детета. Значајно је да је више од три четвртине (76,3%) испитаника похађало курсеве о дечијим правима и партиципацији, што додатно показује колико пажње се посвећује правима детета у њиховој обуци.

Док многи учесници наводе да су упознати са укључивањем деце у доношење одлука, занимљиво је да скоро три четвртине (73,9%) наводи да нису похађали курс који детету приступа као активном грађанину. Поставља се питање како испитаници виде појам активног грађанства и да ли учешће деце у доношењу одлука виде као део тог концепта. Двосмисленост у разумевању активног грађанства могла би да проистиче из недостатка експлицитне укључености овог садржаја у наставни план и програм, или из нејасних наставних стратегија које не успевају да у потпуности дефинишу дете као грађанина. Упркос високом степену слагања међу учесницима (83,8%) да су професионалне компетенције у области људских права и демократског грађанства кључне за њихов будући рад, скоро половина (48,2%) остаје несигурна да ли их њихово образовање адекватно припрема за развој ових компетенција. Таква неизвесност одражава ограничену доступност курсева који се посебно баве овим темама у програмима за образовање наставника. Претходна истраживања, на пример Робинсона и др. (2020), такође су препознала овај недостатак, наглашавајући потребу за свеобухватнијим приступом образовању о људским правима и демократском грађанству у оквиру наставног плана и програма.

Студија је такође испитала ангажовање испитаника у друштвеним и политичким активностима, које су суштинске компоненте демократског грађанства. Изненађује да више од половине (53,3%) њих нису чланови ниједне

организације. Они који јесу, већином учествују у спортским клубовима (13,8%), културно-уметничким друштвима (11,9%), верским организацијама (11,1%) или добровољним групама (10,1%). Такве активности нуде одређени ниво друштвеног ангажовања, али приметан је недостатак учешћа у грађанским или политичким организацијама.

Према овом истраживању, док су будући васпитачи добро информисани о дечијим правима, постоји битан јаз у њиховом разумевању ширих људских права и декомкратског грађанства. Образовни програми треба више да истичу демократско грађанство, како у смислу наставног садржаја, тако и у смислу професионалних компетенција. Осим тога, лична искуства попут друштвеног учешћа, иако важна за демократски ангажман, нису показала снажан утицај на професионалне компетенције учесника у образовању за демократско грађанство. Све у свему, резултати указују на потребу за свеобухватнијим приступом образовању васпитача, интегришући експлицитније и људска права и демократско грађанство у наставни план и програм.

Кључне речи: дечија права, компетенције, демократске вредности, образовање, васпитачи.

Postati odgojitelj: razvijanje kompetencija za odgoj i obrazovanje za ljudska prava i odgoj za demokratsko građanstvo u Hrvatskoj

Kompetencije u obrazovanju za ljudska prava i demokratsko građanstvo ključna je za poticanje informiranih, angažiranih i odgovornih pojedinaca koji mogu aktivno sudjelovati u demokratskim procesima i ljudskim pravima. Ovaj rad istražuje informiranost budućih učitelja ranog i predškolskog odgoja i obrazovanja (N=253) na Sveučilištu u Zagrebu o svojim obrazovnim iskustvima i osobnoj uključenosti u demokratske prakse.

Nalazi pokazuju da su sudionici općenito dobro informirani o pravima djece. *Konvencija o pravima djeteta* jedno je od najbolje shvaćenih područja (M=4,01, SD=0,85), kao i poznavanje načina uključivanja djece u donošenje odluka (M=3,79, SD=0,86).

O obrazovnim iskustvima, 58,5% sudionika izjavilo je da su pohađali kolegije o ljudskih prava. Ove teme najčešće su integrirane u pedagoške i psihološke kolegije kao što su *Pedagogija ranog djetinjstva*, *Razvojna* psihologija i *Socio-emocionalni razvoj i Dječja prava*. Više od tri četvrtine (76,3%) sudionika pohađalo je kolegije o pravima djece i njihovom aktivnom sudjelovanju.

Mnogi sudionici izvještavaju da su upoznati s uključivanjem djece u donošenje odluka, no tri četvrtine (73,9%) spominje da nisu pohađali kolegij koji se posebno bavio djecom kao aktivnim građanima. To postavlja pitanja o tome kako sudionici percipiraju koncept aktivnog građanstva i vide djecu u donošenju odluka kao dio toga. Razumijevanja aktivnog građanstva moguće proizlazi iz nedostatka eksplicitne pokrivenosti ovog sadržaja u kurikulumu ili iz nejasnih strategija poučavanja, te definiranja djeteta kao građanina.

Sudionici (83,8%) se slažu da su profesionalne kompetencije u području ljudskih prava i demokratskog građanstva ključne za njihov budući rad. Polovica (48,2%) i dalje nije sigurna da li ih njihovo obrazovanje adekvatno priprema za razvoj tih kompetencija. Uočava se ograničena dostupnost kolegija koji se posebno bave ovim temama u programima obrazovanja učitelja.

Istraživanjem se ispitao angažman sudionika u društvenim i političkim aktivnostima, koje su bitne komponente demokratskog građanstva. Više od polovice (53,3%) sudionika nisu članovi nijedne organizacije. Većina sudjeluje u sportskim klubovima (13,8%), kulturno-umjetničkim skupinama (11,9%), vjerskim organizacijama (11,1%) ili volonterskim skupinama (10,1%). Ove aktivnosti nude određenu razinu društvenog angažmana, ali primjetan je nedostatak sudjelovanja u građanskim ili političkim organizacijama.

Važnost volontiranja, peticije i glasovanja na izborima naglašavaju se kao kritični elementi demokratskog građanstva. Ovi oblici sudjelovanja iako pružaju

pojedincima priliku za donošenje odluka, promicanje društvenih promjena i aktivno uključivanje u politički život, nisu značajno utjecali na procjenu sudionika o njihovim kompetencijama u odgoju i obrazovanju za demokratsko građanstvo i ljudska prava.

Nalazi pokazuju kako iako su budući učitelji dobro informirani o pravima djece, postoji značajan jaz u njihovom razumijevanju širih ljudskih prava i demokratskog građanstva. Obrazovni programi trebaju staviti naglasak na demokratsko građanstvo kao nastavni sadržaj i kao profesionalnu kompetenciju. Osobna iskustva, nisu pokazala utjecaj na profesionalne kompetencije sudionika istraživanja. Robinson i suradnici (2020) naglašavaju potrebu za sveobuhvatnijim pristupom poučavanju o ljudskim pravima i odgoja i obrazovanja za demokratsko građanstvo i obrazovanje u okviru kurikuluma.

Ključne riječi: prava djeteta; kompetencije; demokratske vrijednosti; odgoj; obrazovanje.

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Foreign language communication of dyslexic students

Abstract: *The study concerns communication skills of students with dyslexia in foreign languages. Theoretical basis includes selected aspects of communication in foreign languages and concepts explaining the essence of dyslexia in adults. Presented research results regard the level of self-assessment of foreign-language students' competences and factors that hinder and enable their improvement. Research conclusions are the basis for formulating recommendations for the practice of education at the academic level.*

The study consists of the following parts: (1) Introduction, (2) The issues of communication and communicative competences from a theoretical perspective, (3) Selected aspects of linguistic functioning of adults with dyslexia and organisation of language education at the academic level, (4) Methodological assumptions of own research, (5) Communicating in foreign languages among students with dyslexia – analysis of research results, (6) Conclusions and recommendations for educational practice.

Communication competences, embedded in the sociolinguistic theory of language learning and use, constitute a perspective for the analysis of language blocks, which include developmental dyslexia. According to research, most students with dyslexia are not satisfied with the level of their language skills. The sources of this condition should be sought in the essence of dysfunction, and in cognitive functioning and personal characteristics of learners, organisation of the educational process and learning strategies used, construction of textbooks and auxiliary teaching materials, among others. The recommendations presented include proposals for changes in organisation of classes, students' own work and support system implemented at universities.

Keywords*: communication, competences in communicating in foreign languages, foreign language education at the academic level, students with dyslexia*

Introduction

Participation in social life is affected through the process of interpersonal communication and each culture has a specific manner of communication. This manner of communication includes verbal aspects of speech, but also a system of characters called non-verbal communication. Therefore, interpersonal communication is not only affected by language. It is believed that more than 2/3 of the information obtained during a conversation does not come from consciously spoken words, but from signals unconsciously transmitted by facial expressions, eye contact, body

postures and gestures, results from the tone and tempo of voice and space in which the meeting takes place (Dymek, 1996).

Communicating in one's native language and foreign languages is a necessary condition for being active in social relationships, including professional relationships for which students are being prepared. Furthermore, the ability to communicate is an important aggregate of key competences of a modern person, which in practice translates into ability to learn, use various sources of information, conduct and participate in discussions, work in a group, ability to present and self-present, ease of establishing relationships, among others (Kraśniewska, & Dybaś-Stronkowska, 2019). The public sphere is currently a space of multi-dimensional communication, in which - in addition to traditional forms of communication - there are extensive modern forms. In its global specificity and striving for multilingualism, the labour market positively verifies those people who supplement their professional competences with the ability to communicate effectively, fluently and spontaneously in foreign languages.

A theoretical perspective on the issues of communication and communication competences

Interpersonal communication is defined as the intentional exchange of verbal and non-verbal signs that we use to cooperate and share meaning between partners. The process of communication "is affected through linguistic communication, which is a process of communication between people using a system of linguistic signs" (Nęcki, 1996: 42-43).

Communication model highlights the following components: "(1) participants acting alternately as listeners and speakers, (2) information content, message, (3) linguistic code consisting of various signs and rules for combining them, enabling coding and decoding information" (Habrajska, 2005: 92). Effective message transmission is possible when the recipient knows and understands the code used by the sender. Issue of the linguistic code is analysed in greater detail by Kaczmarek (2005). Kaczmarek distinguishes three basic codes: linguistic, extralinguistic and paralinguistic. Non-linguistic codes are not related to language, but they can modify the meaning of verbal utterances, facilitating or disturbing their understanding. The linguistic code, in turn, consists of several subsystems: (1) phonological, composed of phonemes, (2) morphological, enabling generation of larger wholes from phonemes, (3) lexical, containing a set of words belonging to a given language, (4) syntactic, providing rules for combining words into sentences and longer phrases, (5) stylistic, providing rules for combining sentences and creating longer texts from sentences.

Unit of linguistic communication consists of the act of communication (a speech act), in which the sender, using the linguistic code available to him, builds his statement and directs it to the recipient, who receives and understands it. Understanding is more complete if participants belong to the same communicative community, i.e. they not only know the same language, but also belong to the same cultural circle (Nęcki, 1996). The act of communication is embedded in a broadly understood linguistic and

non-linguistic context, in which three types (levels) can be distinguished: cultural-cognitive, pragmatic-social (situational) and linguistic-textual context. In relation to the issues analysed in this study, the role of the linguistic, textual and situational context, also known as the pragmatic and social context, should be emphasised. Linguistic context is the organisation of a statement in accordance with its function, genre, composition, syntactic, lexical and spelling-punctuation aspects. The pragmatic and social context is related to the place, time, topic of the statement, number of participants in the act of communication, their social roles and relationships between them, their age, gender, social origin, profession, education, and it distinguishes (1) oral and written communication, (2) direct and indirect communication, (3) mass and everyday communication (Retter, 2005).

Regardless of the categories indicated above, the basic form of expression consists of sentences and meanings assigned to them, which, when combined consistently with grammatical rules, create information transmitted orally or in writing, directly or remotely, publicly available or available only to a narrow group. Nęcki (1996) indicates the need to follow the principles of organising speech as a factor determining the success of an act of communication.

These principles are classified into groups of four rules: (1) the principle of grammatical correctness and comprehensibility, which obliges to follow syntactic rules in the construction of statements so that they can be directly interpreted, (2) the principle of matching statements to the linguistic context, which obliges to take into account the interlocutor's previous statements, so as to maintain thematic coherence, (3) the principle of economy in conversation, which allows the statement to be transparent, concise and understandable by avoiding unnecessary repetitions, pauses and interruptions, (4) the principle of expressiveness, which obliges us to make the statement as personal and emotional as possible and use correct tone of speech so that the recipient can understand the sender's attitude towards the text being spoken (Nęcki 1996).

These principles are primarily emotional and social guidelines in character. It is also prudent to highlight aspects specific to discursive linguistics, which enrich the set of cognitive behaviours with the properties of language used in the act of communication - written or spoken text and linguistic exchange between the sender and the recipient (Kaczmarek, 2005: 87,89).

The act of communication is transformed from a theoretical construct into practical action owing to the communicative competences of the people participating in it. These communication competences are the ability to use language appropriately to the recipient and the situation and are individual in nature, i.e. they are shaped in the process of individual development and are the property of each individual (Wilczyńska, 2008). From a sociolinguistic perspective, it is the ability to choose appropriate linguistic structures, based on the speaker's cognitive and emotional properties, social roles and recognised norms. Communicative competence is full knowledge (unconscious or conscious) of the rules governing language use within the available linguistic resources, the ability to create and interpret correct sentences, as

well as knowledge of linguistic behaviour, patterns and the ability to adapt them to the patterns existing in a specific linguistic community (Senderska, 2005).

Selected aspects of linguistic functioning of adults with dyslexia and organisation of language education at the academic level

Many factors cause distortions in the communication process that disrupt communication. External barriers include, among others: noise, lack of time, cultural differences, lack of conversation culture, whereas internal barriers include conscious or unconscious behaviour of participants, e.g. creating judgements and criticising the interlocutor, prejudices and stereotypes, moralising, deciding, persistent questioning, dismissing and departing from the topic of conversation, differences and language blocks (Retter, 2005). Group of factors referred to as language blocks includes dyslexia, which is a disorder that reduces the ability to read and write in one's native language and foreign languages (the term "dyslingua" is also used in this category).

Adults with dyslexia are a heterogeneous group, and their difficulties in communication depend not only on the type and scope of deficit in the development of perceptual and motor functions, but also on their own compensatory mechanisms, methods of action proven in experience and personal resources (Wejner- Jaworska, 2019).

Table 1 shows the most common difficulties emerging in applying basic language skills.

Table 1 *Language difficulties of adults with dyslexia and ways of compensating for them*

Language competences	Types of difficulties	Compensatory mechanisms
reading	difficulties with reading aloud, slow pace, difficulties in analysing and selecting information from the text, losing the thread, errors in recognising and reading single words, fatigue and loss of concentration, slips of the tongue	masking difficulties and avoiding tasks, learning by heart, obtaining information in an alternative way than in written text (from others, from Internet sources, from the media)
writing	spelling, grammatical, punctuation errors, incorrect writing of digits and numbers, lack of self-correction skills, reluctance to participate in written communication (including formulating practical and official letters), confusing letters of similar shape, using printed letters, slow writing speed, illegible handwriting	writing on a computer with text correction enabled, avoiding handwriting, using verbal communication methods

Table 1 *(Continued)*

speaking	slips of the tongue, distortions, difficulties in recalling words, difficulties in mastering and reproducing sequential material, difficulties with spontaneous statements or in situations of social exposure, memory deficits, difficulties in recalling data from semantic and operating memory, reluctance to speak, repetitions (duplicating a word or several words without the intention of emphasising the meaning), automatic repetitions, omissions (omission of the whole word or part of it, paralinguistic acts (a series of sounds that do not constitute either words or grammatical wholes), linguistic mistakes (slips of the tongue), pronouncing a word other than the intended one	avoiding difficult words, replacing them with others – in a descriptive way, excessive preparation of speeches by heart, excessive use of notes
listening	hampered selection, analysis and remembering of key information, inability to focus, difficulty understanding, reporting what has been heard	request to work with written text, to repeat information

Source: own compilation based on Bogdanowicz, K.M. (2011). *Dysleksja a nauczanie języków obcych* (pp. 82-88). Gdańsk: Harmonia; Łockiewicz,M., Bogdanowicz, K.M. (2013). *Dysleksja u osób dorosłych* (pp. 43-46). Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls"; Wejner-Jaworska, T. (2019). *Dysleksja z perspektywy dorosłości,* (pp. 45-50). Warszawa: Difin.

As the above list demonstrates, dyslexic difficulties in adults are, to a large extent, a continuation of those occurring in earlier stages of education. Symptoms of disorders appear in all language skills, and their frequency is so important that it significantly disrupts the educational process. There are many analogies that make dyslexic difficulties similar in the native language and foreign languages, in which they are declared more clearly and are perceived as more severe. The sources of these increased difficulties should be sought not only in the nature of dysfunction, but also in the specific nature of foreign-language education. It begins when the native language had already been mastered, and the process of mastering the native language took place in the following order: speaking, then writing and reading. In learning foreign languages, the order is different: writing, then reading and speaking. For people with dyslexia, tasks involving visual and auditory cognitive mechanisms, which are strengthened to a limited extent by speaking, understanding and assigning meanings, turn out to be problematic, contribute to the escalation of difficulties and reduce the readiness to communicate (Jaworska, 2018; Klapa, 2023).

Foreign languages teaching at universities is carried out by inter-faculty units – Foreign Language Studies, Foreign Language Centres, Practical Foreign Language Studies – the nomenclature varies and depends on the institution. On the grounds of

the requirements specified in the education standards and resolutions introduced by the senates, each university in Poland teaches at least one language at the target level B2 (in bachelor's studies) and B2+ (in second-cycle studies). Educational outcomes for all levels of studies include mastering foreign languages. Consistently with the Regulation of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of November 14, 2018 on the characteristics of second-level learning outcomes for qualifications at levels 6-8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework (PRK) (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 2153), a graduate of first-cycle studies speaks a foreign language at CEFR level B2: P6S_UK (where P6S means: PQF level 6 intended for first-cycle studies, typical characteristics for qualifications obtained in higher education, U stands for skills, and K – competences) .

Levels B2 and B2+ are levels of language independence, characterised by fluency and spontaneous communication. A person who speaks the language at the required B2 level understands the meaning of the main threads of the message contained in complex texts, communicates fluently and spontaneously enough to conduct a conversation with a native speaker without causing tension for either party. Such person can formulate clear and detailed oral or written statements on a wide range of topics and explain his position regarding discussed issues as well as consider the advantages and disadvantages of various solutions.

Classes usually cover a minimum of 120 hours divided into four academic terms. For instance, the Language Centre at the Jagiellonian University, referring to the Resolution of the Jagiellonian University Senate No. 2/I/2012, specifies the minimum number of language course hours as follows:

- first-cycle studies: 120 hours divided into two or four academic terms;
- second-cycle studies: 60 or 120 hours completed in two or four academic terms;
- long-cycle master's studies: 180 or 240 hours over three or four academic terms;
- third-cycle studies: 60 hours divided into two academic terms (http://www.dn.uj.edu.pl/documents/1333504/4915315/25.01.2012_uchwala_senatu_nr_2-I-2012_-wytyczne_programy_ksztalcenia_KRK.pdf , accessed: 06.2019).

Economic universities, where two foreign languages are taught are an exception. A second language (German, French, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Swedish, Chinese) can be taught from the ground up. It is equivalent to the first language, which is most often English, both in terms of the number of hours and the form of assessment (https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/edukacja/edukacja/szkolnictwo-wyzsze-w-roku-academickim-20202021-wyniki-wstepne,8,7.html , accessed: 08.2021).

As a response to the needs of units offering courses, many universities are introducing specialised and industry language courses, adapting teaching

programmes to the specificity of the field (https://cj.uek.krakow.pl/o-nas/jakosc-ksztalcenia/aktualne-programy-nauczania-i-okresowe-plany-pracy/ , accessed: 09.2021).

The work of teachers is conditioned and systematised by the standards of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – CEFR (*Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, CEFR) (https://www.lang.com.pl/lang-ltc/blog/373-zdrowie-jezyka-w-skali-rady-europy-co-to-jest-cefr.html, accessed: 06.2019).

Foreign language education programmes are based on the provisions of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, 2003). CEFR levels have been adopted as one of the most important determinants of language education provided at the academic level. This document was developed by experts from countries belonging to the Council of Europe and is the implementation of main goal of the council specified in the Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers (Council of Europe Language Policy Portal, 2020). It describes the scope of knowledge and skills required at particular levels of language proficiency in detail and is uniform for every foreign language taught in the European Community. In 2001, CEFR was recognised by a resolution of the EU Council (https://www.coe.int/en/web/portfolio/history , accessed: 08.2020) as the official, uniform system for assessing foreign language skills and has become a specific interpretation of linguistic competences' assessment.

Students with dyslexia, like others, participate in foreign language classes, meeting the standard of requirements. They can use adaptation procedures developed in most universities, which enable, for example, receiving additional teaching materials, recording classes, changing the form of the final exam and extending the time. To increase the number of language classes or to provide individual classes to a student is a rarity. Implementation of forms of assistance is most often carried out by offices for disabled people. These solutions are not always accepted by students and cause confusion. In practice, the scope of support depends largely on the individual decisions of academic teachers and results from their knowledge, capabilities and readiness to provide assistance (Klapa, 2023).

Methodological premises of own research

The goal of the research is to determine the level of proficiency in communicating in foreign languages achieved by young adults - students who have completed the formal stage of education and are defending their diploma theses. The research included students with dyslexia who, according to the views of many authors (e.g. Bogdanowicz, 2011; Jaworska, 2018; Werner-Jaworska, 2019), may experience difficulties in communicating, both in their native language and foreign languages.

The research focused on the following research problems: (1) *How do students with dyslexia determine the level of their communication competences in foreign languages?* (2) *What factors make it difficult for the respondents to improve their*

communication competences in foreign languages? (3) *What factors make it easier for respondents to improve their foreign language competences?*

The research used a survey method, which involved a questionnaire and document analysis. The anonymous survey questionnaire (own development) included sample questions as well as closed, multiple-choice, semi-open and open questions. The questions regarded the assessment of the general level of foreign language competences in relation to the B2 requirements and included a request to indicate factors that facilitate and hinder their improvement. Documents were analysed using standard requirements developed in the form of descriptors.

Research was conducted at the University of Economics in Krakow and the Pedagogical University in Krakow among students of the last years of first-cycle studies in the following fields: banking and risk management, international logistics, applied computer science, pedagogy, social work. The selection of the research sites resulted from their accessibility, but also from the fact that both universities meet the standards of academic education, including language education, and occupy comparable places in the rankings of Polish academic universities (http://ranking.perspektywy.pl/2020/ranking/ranking-academic-universities , accessed: 07/2020). A purposeful selection of the group of surveyed students was used (121 people, including 58 women and 63 men), in which the decisive criterion was the declaration of dyslexia diagnosed in the earlier stages of education and the completion of foreign language education provided for in the study plans. The research was conducted from February to June 2022.

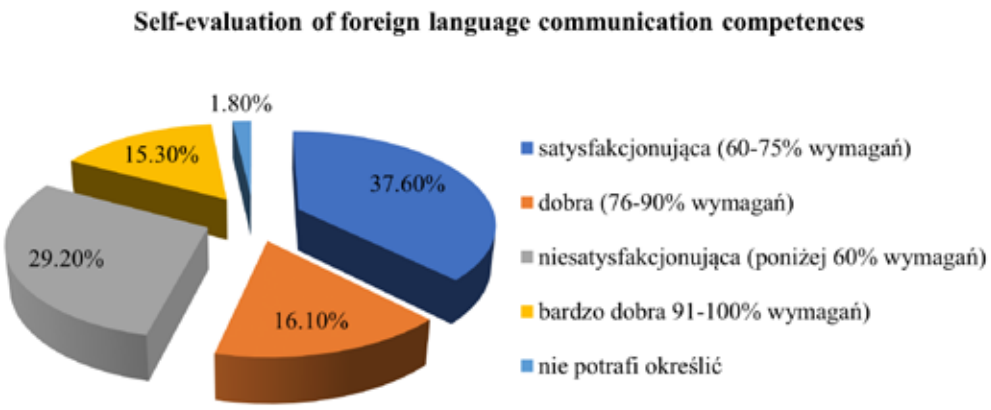
Communicating in foreign languages among students with dyslexia - analysis of research results

The analysis of standard requirements for students completing foreign language education at the B2 level allows for the characterisation of competences specific to individual language skills, assigned to categories of language tasks and arranged according to the following levels of achievement: (1) unsatisfactory (below 60%), (2) satisfactory (60-60%). 75%), (3) good (76-90%), (4) very good (91-100%).

For example: achieving a satisfactory level (meeting 60-75% of the requirements) means: (1) constructing a written statement in which there may be disruptions in the coherence of the text, but it is understandable, the vocabulary is sufficient, grammatical structures are used correctly, it is possible to have spelling and punctuation errors and partial disruption of the text layout; (2) formulating an oral statement that is complex, fluent and grammatically correct, although there are pauses and hesitations, an appropriate vocabulary is used, and lexical limitations are covered up by paraphrasing; (3) understanding the text being listened to and parts of the commands contained in it, which is possible thanks to the knowledge of vocabulary, idioms, phraseological compounds and grammatical structures; (4) understanding of written texts, which may result in failure to understand detailed information contained in long and complex texts due to limited understanding of

grammatical structures and insufficient knowledge of vocabulary, including phrasal verbs. The criteria formulated in this way, developed in the form of collective lists, are presented to students and discussed in detail by academic teachers conducting foreign language courses.

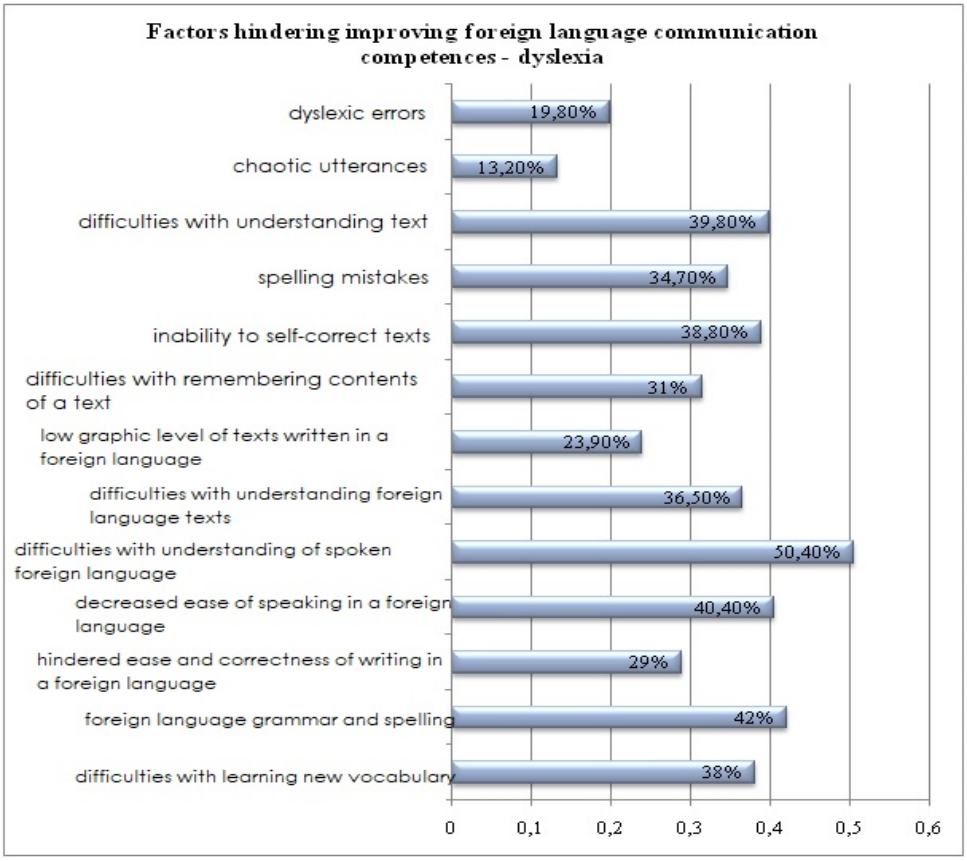
Students with dyslexia, having detailed information about the requirements specified for the B2 level, self-assessed their competences. This information is presented in Graph 1.



Graph 1 *Self-assessment of the level of competence in communicating in foreign languages.*
Source: own research; Question: How do you assess your competences to communicate in foreign languages in relation to the requirements specified for the B2 level?

Approximately 1/3 of the respondents (less than 30%), comparing their competences in foreign language communication with the average level of requirements for students studying foreign languages at the B2 level, recognises that their skills in this area are not satisfactory. This translates into a negative final exam grade, and the student usually retakes the exam. More than 1/3 of respondents (37.6%) declare a satisfactory assessment and it is usually a positive assessment (acceptable or acceptable+). A good grade was indicated by approximately 16% of students, and a very good grade was declared by approximately 15%. Some people are unable to make such an assessment – they have trouble defining requirements or assessing their own achievements.

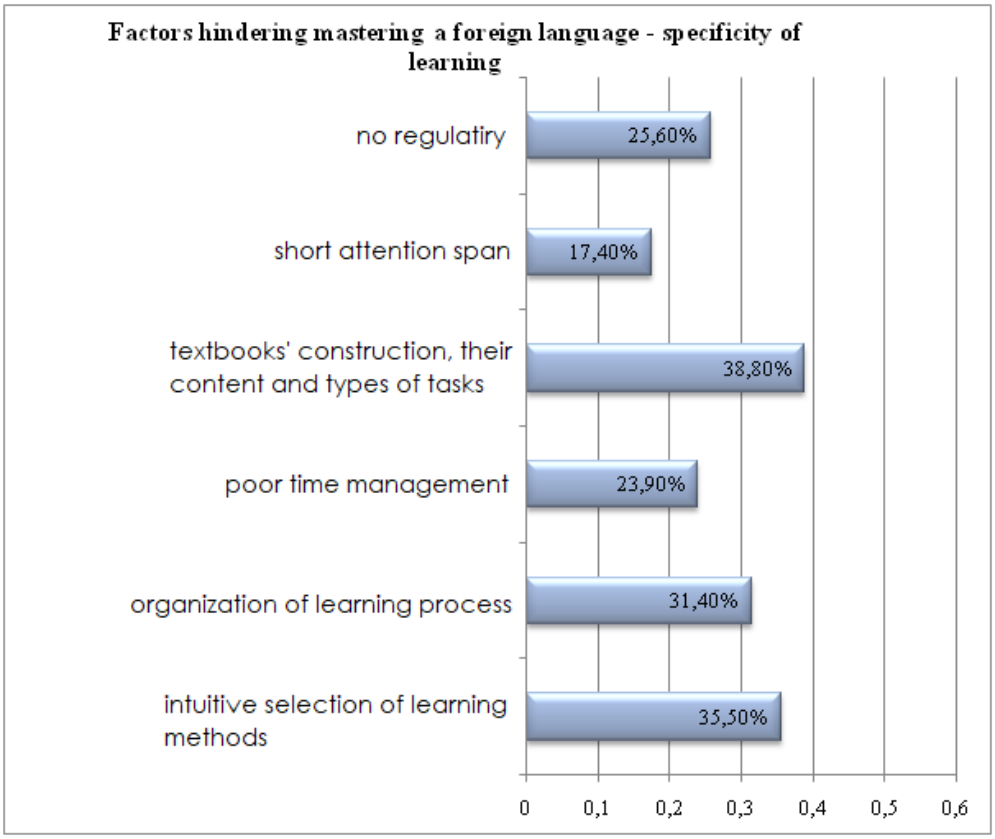
Many factors influence the reduced level of foreign language competences of surveyed students. Those that respondents consider important merit attention. These factors are of diverse nature – they stem not only from the nature of learning dysfunctions and personal characteristics, but also from external conditions, such as organisation of the learning process. Detailed information in this area is presented in the tables below.



Graph 2 *Factors hindering the improvement of foreign language communication skills caused by dyslexia. Source: own research; Question: Which of the following factors do you consider to be an obstacle to improving your communication skills in foreign languages?*

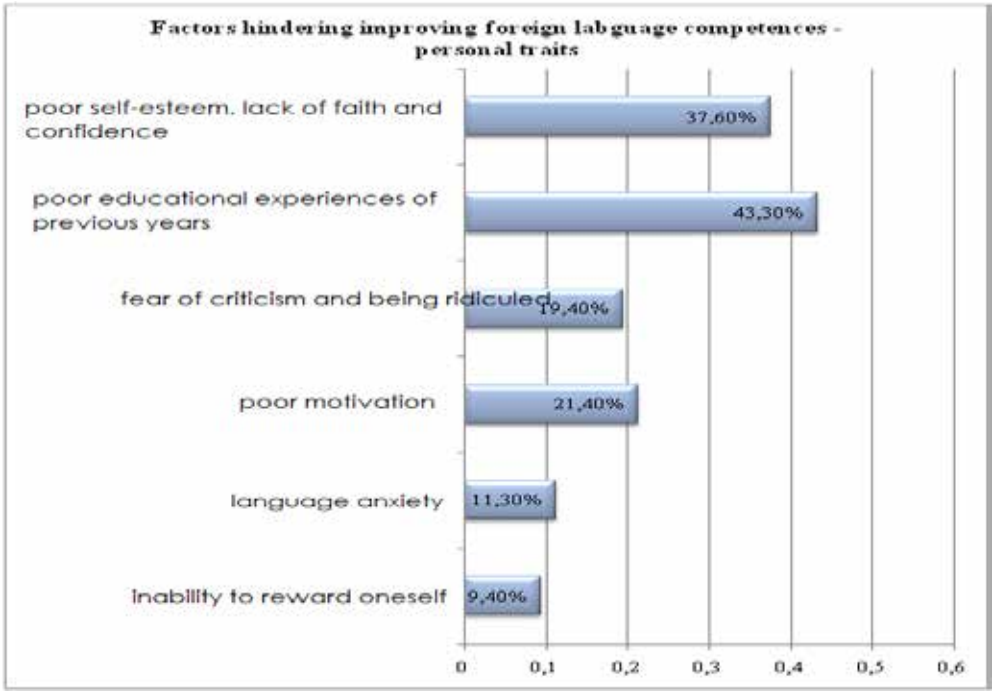
All language skills are difficult for students with dyslexia (although to varying degrees):

- in writing, students emphasise the occurrence of spelling errors and so-called dyslexic errors, reduced graphic level, problems with grammar and spelling that reduce the correctness of expression and its freedom, and lack of ability to improve the texts they write;
- when reading, students point out difficulties in understanding and remembering information and the slow pace of working with text;
- in speaking, students emphasise deficiencies in vocabulary and difficulties in expanding their lexical resources, reduced expressiveness of speaking and problems in speaking spontaneously;
- in listening, students exhibit difficulties in understanding information and problems in following text that they cannot see, and the exposure is short and usually one-time.



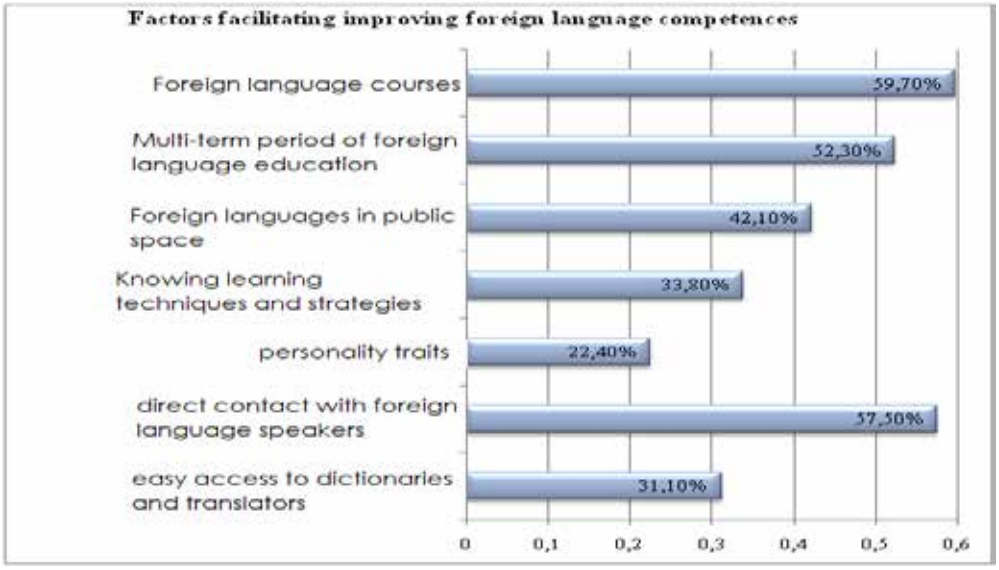
Graph 3 *Factors hindering the improvement of foreign language communication skills, caused by the specific nature of the learning process. Source: own research; Question: Which of the following factors do you consider to be an obstacle to improving your communication skills in foreign languages?*

Among many factors that reduce foreign language competences of students with dyslexia, the respondents indicate organisation of the learning process and the lack of systematicity, as well as intuitive selection of learning techniques and strategies for mastering a foreign language, which is not always adequate to the predispositions and the language task. They also draw attention to the structure of textbooks that makes it difficult to perceive texts and understand content and instructions.



Graph 4 *Factors hindering the improvement of foreign languages communication skills, caused by student's personal characteristics. Source: own research; Question: Which of the following factors do you consider to be an obstacle to improving your communication skills in foreign languages?*

Achieving a satisfactory level of foreign language competences is also made difficult by the personal characteristics of students with dyslexia, among which the respondents emphasise low self-esteem, numerous negative experiences from earlier stages of education, fear of criticism and ridicule, and low motivation. A particularly difficult category is language anxiety (especially in the form of communication and exam anxiety). However, this phenomenon requires analysis and development considering individual criteria, which goes beyond the framework of the presented project and is the subject of a separate research.



Graph 5 *Factors facilitating the improvement of foreign language communication skills. Source: own research; Question: Which of the following factors do you think facilitate the improvement of your foreign language communication skills?*

Improving foreign language competences is a process that takes place at all stages of education, and many years of experience are combined with participation in foreign language classes, which are a compulsory course (or courses) included in the education program. Such a long period of education is conducive to consolidating acquired skills and mastering new ones. Formal and informal contacts with foreign-speaking people and the presence of foreign-language phrases in public space are also important. Some of the respondents associate the strengthening of their competences with their personal characteristics. These include a sense of humour, the ability to take risks, courage, openness in relationships and downplaying failures. For some respondents, the ability to select learning techniques and strategies consistent with their individual profile and preferences is also important.

Conclusions and recommendations for educational practice

Research conducted in a group of young adults shows the issue of improving foreign language competences at the final stage of formal education. After its completion, this process can only be continued in the form of informal and extra-formal education. It is therefore worth analysing the respondents' statements and using the resulting conclusions to optimise the process of foreign language education implemented at universities.

Table 2 *Conclusions from research and recommendations for educational practice*

Conclusion	Recommendation
Difficulties in improving foreign language competences concern a large group of students with dyslexia. The level of their achievements is lower than the required minimum or within the limits considered satisfactory. The majority of problems concern writing and speaking, and to a lesser extent reading and listening.	Improving foreign language communication skills requires recognising what difficulties individual students are experiencing, and especially people with dyslexia. The diagnosis can be made by an academic teacher delivering foreign language courses based on a conversation with the student, analysis of the psychological and pedagogical documentation provided by a student, diagnosis of language skills and by thorough analysis of emerging errors and difficulties.
According to the majority of respondents, factors hindering the improvement of foreign language competences are difficulties resulting from dyslexia, personal conditions unfavourable for learning and the teaching and learning process, which lacked effective training in learning techniques adequate for the needs and cognitive potential.	It is advisable to include elements of personalisation of the educational process, which will enable students and academic teachers to learn about their cognitive preferences and learning profile to a greater extent than before. Based on this, the teacher can select methods of glottodidactic work which develops skills that the student does not use at the appropriate level, and which are difficult for them to master. Reducing factors that interfere with the acquisition of foreign-language competences is associated with glottodidactic work. It is advisable to limit the grammar-translation and audiolingual methods and expand the conversational and cognitive methods, as well as natural, eclectic, language games and realism methods. An interesting proposition for people with dyslexia is also the strategic training demonstrating foreign language learning by using direct (memory, cognitive and compensatory) and indirect (metacognitive, affective and social) strategies.
Factors that help students with dyslexia improve their foreign language competences are mainly the opportunity to participate in foreign language classes, contact with native speakers, presence of foreign-language phrases in the social space and favourable individual personal circumstances.	Enabling participation in international exchanges in the form of direct contacts and using modern technologies (e.g. ETT DEVISE – Net(t)work for the Development and Exchange of Virtual and Inclusive Sustainability Education) is beneficial for improving the competences of foreign-language students with dyslexia.
The declarations of students with dyslexia demonstrate how important personal characteristics and emotional reactions are in improving students' foreign language competences. Low self-esteem, fear of criticism, shame and embarrassment are detrimental. The following prove helpful: self-confidence, courage, openness, and downplaying mistakes.	For some students with dyslexia, psychoeducational workshops, facilitating positive reframing of failures, reducing anxiety, introducing techniques for overcoming and reducing stress, self-regulation and self-rewarding techniques may be helpful.

Recommendations listed above do not require significant changes in the organisation of the study process. They can be implemented by modifying students' work in foreign language classes, emphasising conversational and cognitive methods and introducing elements of instruction on foreign language learning techniques and strategies. Simultaneously, it is worth informing the students with dyslexia about the procedures existing at universities that enable changes in the mode and form of mid-term evaluation and final exams.

The ability to communicate in foreign languages is an important competence of a modern young person who enters the stage of professional activity and expands the circles of interpersonal contacts. Not only do professional choices of such person, but also their level of satisfaction often depend on their foreign-language skills. The last stage of formal education, which is studying at a university, should be used to maximise the skills of speaking, reading, writing and listening in foreign languages.

The issues of teaching/learning foreign languages by people with dyslexia merits further research. Interdisciplinary research, showing the educational problems of this group from a linguistic perspective (e.g. language errors and language features such as transparency and flexibility) and a psychological and pedagogical perspective (e.g. the type of deficit that generates problems in reading and writing, learner's own resources, organisation of the teaching and learning process) is recommended. This scope of research has an important individual dimension but is also important in the context of broader social expectations.

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Komunikacja w języku obcym studentów z dysleksją

Opracowanie dotyczy kompetencji komunikowania się w językach obcych studentów z dysleksją. Podstawą teoretyczną są wybrane aspekty komunikowania się w językach obcych i koncepcje wyjaśniające istotę dysleksji u osób dorosłych. Przedstawione wyniki badań dotyczą poziomu samooceny kompetencji obcojęzycznych studentów oraz czynników utrudniających i ułatwiających ich doskonalenie. Wnioski z badań są przesłanką do sformułowania rekomendacji dla praktyki kształcenia na poziomie akademickim.

Opracowanie składa się z części: (1) Wprowadzenie, (2) Problematyka komunikowania się i kompetencji komunikacyjnych w perspektywie teoretycznej, (3) Wybrane aspekty funkcjonowania językowego dorosłych osób z dysleksją a organizacja kształcenia językowego na szczeblu akademickim, (4) Założenia metodologiczne badań własnych, (5) Komunikowanie się w językach obcych studentów z dysleksją – analiza wyników badań, (6) Wnioski i rekomendacje dla praktyki edukacyjnej.

Kompetencje komunikowania się, osadzone w socjolingwistycznej teorii uczenia się i używania języka, stanowią perspektywę dla analiz blokad językowych, do których należy dysleksja rozwojowa. Jak wynika z przeprowadzonych badań, studenci z dysleksją w większości nie są usatysfakcjonowani poziomem swoich umiejętności językowych. Źródeł takiego stanu należy poszukiwać w istocie dysfunkcji, a także m.in. w funkcjonowaniu poznawczym i cechach osobowych uczących się, organizacji procesu edukacji i stosowanych strategiach uczenia się, konstrukcji podręczników i pomocniczych materiałów dydaktycznych. Przedstawione rekomendacje zawierają propozycje zmian w organizacji zajęć, pracy własnej studentów oraz systemie wsparcia realizowanego w uczelniach.

Słowa kluczowe: komunikowanie się, kompetencje komunikowania się w językach obcych, edukacja obcojęzyczna na poziomie akademickim, studenci z dysleksją.

Комуникација дислексичних студената на страном језику

Рад се бави комуникативним компетенцијама студената са дислексијом у области страних језика. Теоријску основу чине одабрани аспекти комуникације на страним језицима и концепти који објашњавају суштину дислексије код одраслих. Приказани резултати истраживања тичу се нивоа самопроцене компетенција студената страних језика и фактора који ометају и олакшавају њихово унапређење. Закључци истраживања су основа за формулисање препорука за образовну праксу на академском нивоу.

Студија се састоји из следећих делова: (1) Увод, (2) Питања комуникације и комуникативних компетенција из теоријске перспективе, (3) Одабрани аспекти лингвистичког функционисања одраслих особа са дислексијом и организација језичког образовања на академском нивоу, (4) Методолошке претпоставке сопственог истраживања, (5) Комуникација на страним језицима код ученика са дислексијом – анализа резултата истраживања, (6) Закључци и препоруке за образовну праксу.

Као део социолингвистичке теорије учења и примене језика, комуникативне компетенције пружају перспективу за анализу језичких сметњи, међу којима је и развојна дислексија. Према истраживању, већина студената са дислексијом није задовољна својим нивоом језичких вештина. Изворе овог стања треба тражити у суштини дисфункције, као и, између осталог, у когнитивном функционисању и личним карактеристикама студената, организацији образовног процеса и примењеним стратегијама учења, изради уџбеника и помоћних наставних материјала. Дате препоруке укључују предлоге за промене у организацији наставе, сопственом раду студената и систему подршке који се примењује на универзитетима.

Кључне речи: комуникација, комуникативна компетенција у области страних језика, настава страних језика на академском нивоу, студенти са дислексијом.

Komunikacija na stranom jeziku studenata s disleksijom

Ovaj rad daje prikaz istraživanja komunikacijskih vještina na stranom (nematerinjem jeziku) studenata s disleksijom. Teorijski se analiziraju komunikacijski aspekti jezika i disleksija kod odraslih. Empirijski je istražena samoprocjene studenata o komunikacijskim kompetencijama na stranom jeziku te olakšavajući i otežavajući čimbenicici usavršavanja. Nalazi istraživanja polazišta su za preporuke obrazovne prakse na akademskoj razini.

Rad ima 6 poglavlja: (1) Uvod, (2) Problematika komunikacije i komunikacijskih kompetencija iz teorijske perspective. (3) Odabrani aspekti govorno-jezičnog funkcioniranja odraslih osoba s disleksijom i organizacija jezičnog obrazovanja na akademskoj razini, (4) Metodološke postavke istraživanja, (5) Komunikacija na stranom jeziku između studenata s disleksijom – analiza nalaza istraživanja, (6) Zaključci i preporuke za odgojno-obrazovnu praksu.

Komunikacijske kompetencije, tumačene kroz sociolingvističku teoriju učenja i uporabe jezika, polazište su za analizu dimenzija jezika uključujući i disleksiju. Nalazi istraživanja ukazuju da većina studenata s disleksijom nisu zadovoljni razinom osobnih jezičnih vještina. Razlozi za to su, između ostalog, u kognitivnom funkcioniranju i osobinama pojedinca, organizaciji obrazovnog procesa, strategijama učenja i poučavanja te udžbenicima i nastavnim materijalima. Predlažu se zato promjene u organizaciji nastave i sustavna podrška studentima.

Ključne riječi: komunikacija; komunikacijske kompetencije na stranom jeziku; nastava stranog jezika na akademskoj razini; studenti s disleksijom.

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Preferred learning style of preschool education students

Abstract: *Learning is a complex and dynamic process that takes place throughout life and includes the acquisition of new knowledge, information and skills. The learning process takes place through learning modalities. Learning modalities are different ways of learning, with the help of which individuals absorb, process and understand information better. Understanding the learning modality can be helpful for an individual to adjust their learning approach and thus achieve a better result. This paper investigates the learning modalities of students of preschool education, of the second- and third-year undergraduate studies at the Faculty of Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Educational Sciences. The research included 80 preschool students from Mostar and Orašje in Bosnia and Hercegovina. Average age of participants was 23. The Learning Modalities Questionnaire (Visković, 2014) and the Learning Styles (Self) Assessment Questionnaire, which is a modified Learning Styles Index (Felder and Soloman, 1997), were used for the purposes of the research. Results show that students mostly use an active learning style (34.1 %). They also use a visual style (25.6 %) and an observing style (29.3 %) more often than expected, while they use a sequential learning style less often (11 %). A statistically significant difference was found in the preference of the way students like to learn, where independent learning proved to be dominant.*

Keywords*: learning; learning modalities; preschool education students.*

Introduction

Psychologists define learning in different ways, but they agree on one thing, which is how learning contributes to overall personality building and socialisation. Therefore, learning is a complex process that includes different learning styles and techniques. Learning is related to motivation, cognition and emotions. In this paper, we start from defining the concept of learning itself, presenting relevant definitions and emphasising the complexity of the concept of learning. In addition to learning characteristics, we are talking about learning modalities, without which the learning process itself would not be possible.

Learning modalities can appear in different combinations depending on the individual and their abilities, conditions and motivation, which is evident from the research presented in the paper.

Defining the concept of learning

The term *learning* is not easy to define. Recent literature (Barron et al., 2015; Pritchard, 2013) is full of different definitions of learning, depending on the scientific interest and field of the authors from whose pens the definitions come. Therefore, Barron et al. (2015) perceive learning as a process of processing information obtained through experience due to modifying the properties of a system. Educational psychology interprets learning as a relatively permanent change in behaviour caused by experience or practice (Pritchard, 2013). A similar definition of learning is highlighted by Smith and Kimball (2010), who see learning as a permanent change in behaviour caused by experience. For Bingham and Conner (2010), learning is a process by which information is obtained and connected to the information we have from before (past experiences). In educational contexts, learning is generally considered an outcome or an objective suggesting some change in a student and as such embodies the types of definition presented above (Nagel & Scoles, 2016).

Although, from the definitions given it can be concluded that learning is a simple process, it is not so. Learning is a complex process that contains a number of other processes such as memorisation, thinking and forgetting. Learning causes a permanent change in the individual, providing the opportunity to create a personal learning style.

Learning styles theories

Learning style has been debated by many scholars in educational psychology. Learning style makes cognitive, affective, physical, or kinetic behavioural changes according to individual differences and human learning experiences. It is important to note that no common learning style exist for every learner because people differ in their persons and approach in executing a common academic task (Mahamaa et al., 2021). Woolfolk (2004) described learning style as the individual's favourite way of learning and studying, such as using pictures instead of books, interacting with others rather than working alone, learning in formal versus unstructured circumstances and so on. According to Chick (2010), learning style is an individual's preferred way to engage, process, understand and hold information.

The experiment results (Hoa-Huy et al., 2024) also indicate that students with a visual learning style had better learning outcomes in theory-oriented courses. In contrast, students with a kinaesthetic learning style had better learning outcomes in practice-oriented courses. The classification according to the type of information that individuals prefer to perceive is recognisable in the Felder-Silverman model of learning styles, FSLSM (Felder & Silverman, 1988, according to Visković, 2014). Individual preferences are assessed on 4 dimensions of learning styles, namely: *perceptive style* (oriented to facts and procedures), *visual* (visually presented material), *active* (learning from concrete experience) and *sequential style* (logical connection of content).

In recent times, we have seen the so-called VARK model that deals with learning styles with the aim of assessing individual learning styles. McKenna et al., (2018)

emphasise how this model has been tested by conducting research and analysis in different research disciplines. The VARK questionnaire is based on three principles:

- everyone has their own style for acquiring knowledge,
- learner's motivation is increased when different learning styles of learners are considered by the teacher and
- educational concepts are learned through deployment of four sensory modalities and perceptions.

Literature review

A number of studies in education (McKenna et al., 2018; Romanelli et al., 2009; Willingham et al., 2015) correlate learning styles and academic achievement of students. Identification of learning styles is one way of contributing to a more efficient teaching process (Alemdag, 2020). Student success depends on learning style (Dalaman et al., 2019). According to the research results, kinaesthetic style is the dominant learning preference for pre-service teachers in the visual arts and sports sciences, and both kinaesthetic and aural styles are the dominant learning preferences for pre-service teachers in music education (Türker & Bostanci, 2023).

A number of educators do not believe that the congruence between teaching methods and learning preferences necessarily enhances student learning and believe that learning styles, at least as studied, are an illusion (Kirschner, 2017; Reiner & Willingham, 2010). It is interesting that some authors like Hawk and Shah (2007) believe that within higher education system professors use and combine different learning styles with an emphasis on the quality of acquired content that will one day be applicable in practice. Knowing learning styles, we have the opportunity to experiment with them in order to find a style that suits us, a style with which we can improve our knowledge.

Methods

Starting with different learning modalities of students, the goal of this research was to examine the preferred learning modalities of students of preschool education, the second and third year of study, at the Faculty of Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Educational Sciences, University of Mostar (further Faculty). The sample is opportunistic and intentional (N=80). In accordance with the set goal of the research, the following hypotheses were defined:

H_o: There is no statistically significant difference in learning modalities of students of the second and third year of preschool education at the Faculty, University of Mostar.

H_1: Preschool education students' achievements deviate from the normal distribution of grades.

H_2: We assume that self-financed students have better academic achievements.

H_3: Among students from the sample, all learning styles are equally represented.

H_4: Students from the sample prefer independent work.

H_5: The achievements of third-year preschool education students are better than the achievements of second-year students.

H_6: Students from Mostar prefer independent work, unlike students from Orašje.

The research sample is not representative because it included only female students who regularly attend classes and are undergraduate students of preschool education. The average age of the participants in the sample is 23. For the most part, the participating students are financed by their parents (81%), and only a small number (19%) finance their studies independently.

For the purposes of this research, a Questionnaire on Students' Learning Modalities was constructed. At the beginning of the Questionnaire (general data), independent variables were investigated: age, gender, place of study, study year and method of financing. The Learning (Self)assessment Questionnaire is a modified Learning Styles Index (Felder & Soloman, 1997). Research was conducted anonymously and voluntarily. The student survey procedure was conducted in February 2024.

Data processing was carried out using the Statistical Program for Social Scientists 20 (SPSS20).

Results and Discussion

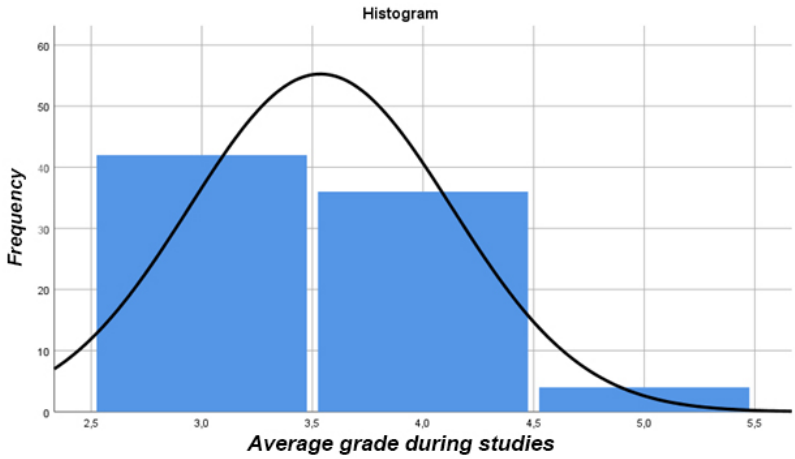
There was no statistically significant difference in learning modalities between the second- and third-year students ($p>0.05$). Descriptively, the *active* style is most represented (33.3%), followed by *observing* (29.6%) and *visual* (25.9%). *Sequential* style is the least represented (11.1%) among students, which is shown in Table 1. From the obtained results, it is clear that we can accept the hypothesis (H0), which states: *There is no statistically significant difference in learning modalities of students in the second and third year of preschool education at the Faculty, University of Mostar.*

Table 1 *Learning style and Year of study*

			Year of study		Total
			2	3	
Learning style:	Visual	Count	11	10	21
		%	13.6	12.3	25.9
	Perceptive	Count	12	12	24
		%	14.8	14.8	29.6
	Active	Count	17	10	27
		%	21.0	12.3	33.3
	Sequential	Count	7	2	9
		%	8.6	2.5	11.1
Total		Count	47	34	81
		%	58.0	42.0	100

$X^2 = 2.621$; df= 3; $p>0.05$

The distribution of achieved average grades deviates significantly from those that would be expected under the normal distribution ($p<0.05$). Students of preschool education, second- and third-year undergraduate studies, most often (51%) achieve an average grade of good (3), which can be seen from Graph 1. Then, the grade of very good follows, as does the average grade of studies (41%), while the smallest number of female students, research participants (5%) states excellent (5%) as their average grade during their studies. Based on the obtained research results, we can conclude that we reject the set hypothesis which reads H_1*: The achievements of preschool education students deviate from the normal distribution of grades.*



Graph 1 Average student achievement and normal distribution of grades

By comparing the representation of average grades with regard to the method of study financing, no statistically significant differences were found between the mentioned variables ($p>0.05$). In general, independent financing is relatively less common (20.7%) than co-financing by parents (79.3%), so conclusions about the differences should be taken with caution (Table 2). We did not prove that students who finance their studies themselves have better grades, and we can conclude that we reject *H2: We assume that students who finance themselves have better academic achievements.*

Table 2 *Study financing method and average grade*

			Average grade:			Total
			3	4	5	
Financing method:	1	Count	8	8	1	17
		%	9.8%	9.8%	1.2%	20.7%
	2	Count	34	28	3	65
		%	41.5%	34.1%	3.7%	79.3%
Total		Count	42	36	4	82
		%	51.2%	43.9%	4.9%	100.0%

$X^2=0.165$; df= 1; $p>0.05$

By comparing the observed representation of learning styles with the hypothesis of equal representation, statistically significant differences in the use of styles were determined ($p<0.05$). Students use the visual (25.6%), observing (29.3%) and active style (34.1%) more often than expected, while they use the sequential learning style less often than expected (11%), which is shown in Table 3. Based on the obtained results, we conclude that all learning styles are not equally distributed among students from the sample, which rejects *H3: All learning styles are equally represented among students from the sample.*

Table 3 *Representation of individual learning styles*

Learning styles	Perceived frequencies	Theoretical frequencies[2]
Visual	21 (25.6%)	20.5
Observing	24 (29.3%)	20.5
Active	28 (34.1%)	20.5
Sequential	9 (11%)	20.5

$X^2=9.805$; df= 3; $p<0.05$

By testing the hypothesis of the preference for learning in a group or independently, a statistically significant difference in the representation of the two learning contexts was established ($p<0.05$). It is clear (Table 4) that students prefer to learn independently (72%), while less often than expected they prefer to study in a group (28%).

Table 4 *Preferred way of learning*

I love to learn	Perceived frequencies	Theoretical frequencies[3]
In the group	23 (28%)	41
Alone	59 (72%)	41

$X^2=15.805$; df= 1; $p<0.05$

By testing the differences in representation of students' achievements with the chi-square test, statistically significant differences between the mentioned variables were determined ($p<0.05$). Between undergraduate students of the second and third year there are no big differences in achieving a good grade (3, i.e." C") – second-year students achieve this grade somewhat more often (27.2%) compared to third-year students (23.5%). On the other hand, second-year students more often achieve a very good grade (4, i.e. "B") (30.9%) compared to their colleagues from the third year (13.6%). At the level of achieving excellent grade (5, i.e. "A"), not a single second-year

[2] Distribution of theoretical frequencies according to the principle of equal distribution (25%:25%:25%:25%)

[3] Distribution of theoretical frequencies according to the principle of equal distribution (50%:50%)

student achieves this kind of success, while almost 5% of third-year students achieve excellent grade (Table 5). Based on the obtained results, we conclude that we can partially accept the hypothesis H5: *The achievements of third-year preschool education students are better than the achievements of second-year students.*

Table 5 *Average grade during the studies and years of study*

			Years of study		Total
			2	3	
Average grade during the studies:	3	Count	22	19	41
		% of Total	27.2%	23.5%	50.6%
	4	Count	25	11	36
		% of Total	30.9%	13.6%	44.4%
	5	Count	0	4	4
		% of Total	0.0%	4.9%	4.9%
Total		Count	47	34	81
		% of Total	58.0%	42.0%	100.0%

X^2=7.778; df= 2; p<0.05

By comparing the preferences of independent or group work among students in Mostar and Orašje, no statistically significant differences were found between the mentioned characteristics (p>0.05). Students of both groups prefer to study independently (72%) equally often, in comparison to the smaller representation of those who prefer to study in a group (28%), which is evident from Table 6. Based on the obtained results, we rejected the hypothesis that states: *H6- Students from Mostar prefer independent work, unlike the students from Orašje.*

Table 6 *Learning style preferences with regard to the place of study*

			Place		Total
			Mostar	Orašje	
I love to learn:	In the group	Count	16	7	23
		% within Place	28.1%	28.0%	28.0%
	Alone	Count	41	18	59
		% within Place	71.9%	72.0%	72.0%
Total		Count	57	25	82
		% within Place	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

[4] X^2=0; df= 1; p>0.05

[4] Fisher´s exact test

Conclusion

Learning is a complex and inevitable process that lasts from birth to death. Individuals can develop different learning styles and change them according to experience, acquired skills and knowledge. The results of the conducted research indicate that there is no statistically significant difference in the learning modalities of the students of the second and third year of the undergraduate study of preschool education at Faculty of Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Educational Sciences, University of Mostar. Active learning style is the most prevalent, followed by perceptive, visual and sequential learning styles. Obtained results can serve as the beginning for educating teachers about learning styles. The teaching staff would therefore acquire the information and knowledge needed to improve their teaching skills. In this way, it would be easier for students and professors to achieve their common goal, which is the well-being of students and the acquisition of knowledge.

The conducted research has certain limitations that could affect the research results. The research included only the second- and third-year undergraduate students of preschool education, and only those students who regularly attend classes. Therefore, we cannot generalise the obtained results. The paper omits a longer analysis of the causes and reasons why students choose a particular learning style. This data could help in better understanding the academic performance of students.

The research can serve as a starting point for other research that would talk about learning motivation, students' learning habits and learning styles.

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Preferowane metody uczenia się uczniów w wieku przedszkolnym

Uczenie się to złożony i dynamiczny proces, który trwa przez całe życie i obejmuje zdobywanie nowej wiedzy, informacji i umiejętności. Proces uczenia się odbywa się poprzez metody uczenia się. Metody uczenia się to różne sposoby zdobywania wiedzy, dzięki którym jednostki przyswajają, przetwarzają i lepiej rozumieją informacje. Zrozumienie metod uczenia się może pomóc osobie dostosować swoje podejście do nauki i tym samym osiągnąć lepsze wyniki. W przeglądzie literatury podkreśla się, że nie ma jednej uniwersalnej metody uczenia się, wspólnej dla wszystkich uczniów. Każdego człowieka charakteryzuje indywidualne podejście do procesu uczenia się. Jednocześnie podejście to obejmuje preferowane metody uczenia się, rozumienia i wykorzystywania zdobytych informacji. Nie istnieją identyczne ustalenia dotyczące metod uczenia się i osiąganych przez uczniów sukcesów, chociaż różne rezultaty badań próbują wykazać istnienie korelacji. Ustalono istnienie pewnych zależności pomiędzy określonymi metodami uczenia się a dziedzinami nauki, np. w edukacji muzycznej preferowane są metody kinestetyczne.

W niniejszym tekście autor przedstawia wyniki badań w obszarze netod uczenia się studentów nauczania przedszkolnego na drugim i trzecim roku studiów licencjackich na Wydziale Nauk Przyrodniczych, Matematyki i Nauk o Edukacji. Badaniami objęto 80 studentów nauczania przedszkolnego z Mostaru i Orašje w Bośni i Hercegowinie. Średni wiek uczestników wyniósł 23 lata. Do celów badawczych wykorzystano Kwestionariusz nt. metod uczenia się (Visković, 2014) oraz Kwestionariusz do (samo)oceny metod uczenia się, który jest zmodyfikowanym Indeksem metod uczenia się (Felder i Soloman, 1997). Wyniki pokazują, że uczniowie najczęściej stosują aktywne metody uczenia się (34,1%), również częściej niż przewidywano stosują metody wizualne (25,6%) i obserwacyjne (29,3%), a rzadziej stosują metodę sekwencyjnego uczenia się (11%). Stwierdzono statystycznie istotną różnicę w preferencjach studentów dotyczących metod uczenia się, przy czym dominującą metodą okazała się samodzielna nauka. Poznanie metod uczenia się stwarza okazję do znalezienia odpowiedniego stylu nauki, który może przyczynić się do poprawy wiedzy w placówkach edukacyjnych i poza nimi oraz do eksperymentowania z metodami nauczania zarówno przez wykładowców szkół wyższych, którzy w różny sposób przekazują treści oraz wiedzę, jak też przez studentów.

Słowa kluczowe: uczenie się; sposoby uczenia się; uczniowie w wieku przedszkolnym.

Преферирани стилови учења будућих предшколских васпитача

Учење је сложен и динамичан процес који се одвија током читавог живота и укључује стицање нових знања, информација и вештина. Процес учења се одвија кроз модалитете учења. Модалитети учења су различити начини учења путем којих појединци стичу, обрађују и боље разумеју информације. Разумевање модалитета учења може да помогне појединцу да прилагоди свој приступ учењу и тако постигне бољи резултат. Преглед литературе указује да не постоји заједнички стил учења за све ученике, већ је индивидуални приступ оно што је карактеристично за сваког појединца. Истовремено, тај приступ укључује и преферирани стил у погледу процеса, разумевања и располагања стеченим информацијама. Не постоје идентични налази модалитета учења и постигнутог успеха ученика, иако различити налази настоје да успоставе корелацију. Успостављена је својеврсна динамика одређених стилова према областима изучавања – на пример, кинестетички стилови су највише преферирани у музичком образовању.

У овом раду истражују се модалитети учења међу студентима предшколског васпитања и образовања на другој и трећој години основних студија Факултета природних наука, математике и образовних наука. Истраживањем је обухваћено 80 студената предшколског смера из Мостара и Орашја у Босни и Херцеговини. Просечна старост учесника била је 23 године. За потребе истраживања коришћени су Упитник о модалитетима учења (Visković, 2014) и Упитник за (само)процену стилова учења, који је модификовани Индекс стилова учења (Felder and Soloman, 1997). Резултати показују да студенти најчешће примењују активни стил учења (34,1%), затим визуелни стил (25,6%), као и стил посматрања (29,3%) више него што се очекивало, док ређе користе стил секвенцијалног учења (11%). Утврђена је статистички значајна разлика у преференцији начина на који студенти воле да уче, при чему се показало да је доминантно самостално учење. Познавање стилова учења пружа прилику за експериментисање, како професорима, који нуде садржаје на различите начине, тако и студентима, да би се пронашао одговарајући стил који може да унапреди знање у образовним институцијама и шире.

Кључне речи: учење; модалитети учења; будући предшколски васпитачи.

Preferirani stil učenja studenata predškolskog odgoja i obrazovanja

Učenje je složen i dinamičan proces koji se odvija tijekom cijelog života, a uključuje stjecanje novih znanja, informacija i vještina. Proces učenja odvija se kroz modalitete učenja. Modaliteti učenja su različiti načini učenja uz pomoć kojih pojedinci usvajaju, obrađuju i bolje razumiju informacije. Razumijevanje modaliteta učenja može pomoći pojedincu da prilagodi svoj pristup učenju i tako postigne bolji rezultat. U pregledu literature naglašava se kako ne postoji zajednički stil učenja za sve studente već je individualan pristup ono što je karakteristično za svakog pojedinca. Pristup pritom uključuje preferirani stil procesa, razumijevanja i raspolaganja stečenim informacijama. Ne postoje istovjetni nalazi modaliteta učenja i postignutog uspjeha studenata, iako različiti nalazi pokušavaju utvrditi korelaciju. Utvrđena je svojevrsna dinamika određenih stilova s područjima studiranja, primjerice kinestetički stilovi se preferiraju u glazbenom obrazovanju.

U ovom radu istražuju se modaliteti učenja studenata predškolskog odgoja na drugoj i trećoj godini preddiplomskih studija Fakulteta prirodoslovno-matematičkih i odgojnih znanosti. Istraživanje je obuhvatilo 80 učenika predškolskog odgoja iz Mostara i Orašja u Bosni i Hercegovini. Prosječna dob sudionika bila je 23 godine. Za potrebe istraživanja korišteni su Upitnik o modalitetima učenja (Visković, 2014) i Upitnik za (samo)procjenu stilova učenja, koji je modificirani Indeks stilova učenja (Felder i Soloman, 1997). Rezultati pokazuju da učenici najčešće koriste aktivan stil učenja (34.1 %), također češće od očekivanog koriste vizualni stil (25.6 %) i promatrački stil (29.3 %), dok rjeđe koriste sekvencijalno učenje kao stil (11 %). Utvrđena je statistički značajna razlika u preferiranju načina na koji učenici vole učiti, pri čemu se dominantnim pokazalo samostalno učenje. Poznavajući stilove učenja, stvara se prilika za eksperimentiranje s njima, kako profesora koji nude sadržaje na različite načine, tako i studenata, kako bismo pronašli odgovarajući stil kojim se može poboljšati znanja u odgojno-obrazovnim institucijama i šire.

Ključne riječi: učenje; modaliteti učenja; studenti ranog i predškolskog odgoja i obrazovanja.

PART 4

NEW PEDAGOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

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Conditions and anthropological inspirations in contemporary pedagogics

Abstract: *Dynamic changes in the modern world bring about various tensions - these changes are also associated with conceptual chaos and existential crisis - they somehow postulate the emergence of a human being who could competently formulate and solve new difficult tasks and judge cultural content according to universal principles and values. The reality of education, which is perceived as a set of processes and activities conducive to the optimal and adequate development of an individual, is an opportunity to develop and formulate a human model that meets the challenges presented by modern times. Therefore, the great significance of the anthropological approach across the entire field of pedagogy is revealed, because only considering and examining the anthropological perspective makes it possible to formulate significant answers to ontological, axiological and epistemological questions in the field of general pedagogy. Anthropology appears as a science about men, holistic in character, taking into account the connection between the biological and cultural and social sides of humanity, also at the scientific level. The subject of interest in general pedagogy should include not only the processes and mechanisms that constitute the overall process of anthropodevelopment in its individual and generational dimensions, including the processes of biopsychological, sociocultural and personal development, but also the achievements of anthropological thought expressing opinions on the essence of man and their existence and development in universal and holistic terms.*

Keywords*: philosophical anthropology, scientific anthropology, philosophy of education, pedagogy.*

Introduction

Education appears to be the great hope of contemporaneity, although it struggles with various threats itself, because it is permeated with internal contradictions and in fact seems to be underestimated. In fact, modern times appear burdened with developmental delays, embedded in difficult realities of tensions of changes in the present and external circumstances i.e. being in a constant state of crisis; in a way it forces and postulates the emergence of a human being who could cope with the emerging difficulties and challenges. This competent person would be able to formulate and solve new, difficult tasks, as well as critically select and judge cultural content according to universal values and universal principles.

The reality of education is usually perceived as a set of conditions, processes and activities conducive to the optimal and adequate development of an individual. Hence, it is the responsibility of education - which is universal, mass and available

to all social classes – to develop and formulate a human model to meet the complex challenges of the modern world. However, since general education remains in a state of stagnation, as can be observed, the task for educators becomes much more difficult. Every person - regardless of whether they seek change or adopt a sceptical attitude towards it - should certainly recognise that its consequences go far beyond the scope of the individual; their scope affects smaller or larger social groups, sometimes also larger ethnic, religious or national communities. Any change that bears such features can be characterised as a social change.

It encompasses globalisation processes, all democratisation and emancipation tendencies, as well as expansion of mass media and virtual communication. This social change, affecting wide circles of society, has a significant impact on the conditions of development, opportunities and fate of individual people. Due to growing dynamics of said changes in the modern world, their presence in the developed and implemented pedagogical concepts is significant (Szymański, 2021: 11).

Education for the future should therefore include the postulate of ensuring the coherence of a changing society. In the context of the phenomenon of globalisation, rapidly occurring mass migration processes of world's population, and also in the situation of widespread penetration of popular culture to the farthest ends of the world, it seems indispensable to shape an appropriate relationship to the "Other", so that they are not perceived - as is also the case nowadays – as someone unfriendly, a "Stranger" (Robinson, Aronica, 2015).

Anthropological perspective in pedagogy

In the approach to formulating and defining a specific philosophy, which later becomes the basis and foundation of a specific pedagogical vision, it is of great importance to construct an identity in a changing society and to make efforts to understand the importance of existential questions about the meaning of humanity itself and the voice of concern for the right choice of the self-present therein (Hertz, 1991: 197). Contemporary thinking about man is characterised by conceptual chaos. Competing anthropological views and theories drown out our self-knowledge to such an extent that we cannot answer who we are. We are unable to define our nature and understand the meaning of being human.

The conceptual and existential chaos that prevails today has its historical source in the changes that have been taking place in European culture for several centuries and are still taking place in an intensified way. This process started at the beginning of modern times, when new ideas inspiring scientific knowledge were formulated - it was clearly revealed in the 19th century through the disintegration of the classical concept of man (E. Cassirer) and through the revaluation of traditional images and concepts regarding nature of man, his origins and destiny. However, this process revealed its decidedly negative character only in the second half of the 20th century *with the proclamation of the death of a man* (Siemianowski, 2005: 11). Therefore, in view of the above conclusion, it seems completely justified to return to philosophical

reflection on man and to make an effort to develop satisfactory philosophical and axiological foundations that can be applied to the construction of education systems.

Pedagogy should not solely play the role of a passive consumer of the achievements of anthropology, because in turn - being covered under the human sciences - it can also make a valuable contribution that enriches the resources of anthropological knowledge. However, in this role the inspiring postulate of immersing pedagogical research thinking in the awareness of the "uninterrupted continuity" of human culture emerges (Jaworska-Witkowska, 2009: 176). It should be noted that when we think about the relationship between culture and pedagogy, we inevitably, although quite unconsciously, present a question regarding culture from an anthropological, i.e. holistic, perspective (Mencwel, 2006: 33). In fact, anthropology is the keystone and bonding agent of every pedagogical system, because it appears as a constant transformation and renewal of the concept of man, constituting a construct – present in every era and noticeable for every thinker – of the designed whole of pedagogical concepts, educational goals, and the means leading to their implementation (Ablewicz, 2003: 35).

Schulz (2007: 9) emphasises the significance of anthropological approach in and for all pedagogy, because only considering and examining the anthropological perspective allows us to formulate significant answers to ontological, axiological and epistemological questions in the field of general pedagogy. This *anthropological imagination* is what helps capture and understand differences and, at the same time, establish unity within culture, which is in essence a condition for the possibility of grasping and understanding this concept (Gołaszewska, 2002: 22).

For the perspective of culturally perceived pedagogy, this brings hope and a chance for source integrity. Anthropology is the field of human thought that speaks about humans in holistic terms and thus tries to provide universal answers about their essence, existence and development (Schulz, 2007: 9). Hence, anthropology understood in the broadest terms serves pedagogy as knowledge about humans, combining various methods, perspectives and disciplines, and showing the connection between language and culture as an integral plane of activity that stimulates and awakens the human mind (Kuligowski, 1996).

According to Schulz (2007), the overall interpreted process of homogenesis can be described in terms of three orders:

- deterministic, i.e. development determined by the causes;
- telic (purposeful), i.e. development determined by consciously chosen goals and values;
- autotelic.

Education therefore appears as a "telic form of homogenesis" – going beyond biological and cultural determinism - constituting a manifestation of creating, enriching and developing relationships between culture and personality. It is a zone of indeterminism, or rather, it constitutes a new type of determinism: educational, pedagogical, subordinated to developmental, educational, shaping and hominising

goals. Therefore, in this aspect we experience not a passive, but an active adaptation to the existing cultural order (Schulz, 2007: 149). In the light of the above, this *anthropological imagination*, the element and goal of which is a comprehensive and continuous vision of humans, culture and pedagogy, may constitute a justification for the selection of research topics. Defining oneself in the field of such humanistic interests also constitutes the adoption of the subject of pedagogical research, which reconciles various cognitive needs and conditions of the pedagogy program (from the inside) of culture (Jaworska-Witkowska, 2009).

Practising pedagogical anthropology in a phenomenological version (or more precisely: anthropological pedagogy) pushes theory and *praxis* to once again become a unity that enriches human experience and serves this experience (Ablewicz, 2003: 13). The perspective of human life and development in all dimensions (biological, socio-cultural, personalistic) is in fact related to culture in a symbolic sense, while the way of learning about this extraordinary relationship requires developing the research perspective of pedagogical anthropology and taking into account the ontology adopted therein (Schulz, 2007).

Following philosophy, anthropology constitutes the second area of searching for general knowledge about humans – an area where social experience and achievements of specific sciences are synthesised. For this reason, in anthropology (along with philosophy), we should look for premises for the construction of a generalising – from the point of view of science - idea of human development and upbringing, which could be described as an anthropological concept (theory) of upbringing. Development of humanistic thought results in great variety and a wide *spectrum* of detailed ideas defining the nature of humans, the specificity of their existence, the peculiarities of their development, including their upbringing. The formation and development of philosophical anthropology was the answer to the need to create a more general and universalistic perspective (Schulz, 2003).

Anthropology is an extremely broad field, and what distinguishes it from numerous detailed branches of human sciences is a comprehensive (holistic) approach to human phenomena, noticing the connections between biological and cultural and social side of humanity and taking into account these connections in research and interpretations (Malinowski & Strzałko, 1985: 7). Holism, i.e. a holistic approach to humans is considered to be the so-called constitutive feature of anthropology. It is primarily expressed in the fact that humans in all their aspects: physical (biological), social, cultural and psychological, are considered to be the subject of this discipline. Subsequently - as part of the interest in humans as cultural beings – anthropology focuses on all types of cultures and all areas of culture, such as: technology, economy, social structure, language and communication, aesthetic expression, belief systems, etc. The third dimension of holism manifests itself in the interest in the entire geographical area occupied by human societies and all stages of its evolution (Nowicka, 1991: 32).

While maintaining a sense of unity, anthropology, as a discipline of knowledge, reveals its internal diversity. The internal structure of anthropology is most often described in terms of its “divisions” or “anthropological subdisciplines”. Without

entering into a deeper discussion regarding this problem, it can be said that anthropology as a comprehensive science of humans currently takes on two forms: scientific anthropology and philosophical anthropology. Unlike philosophical anthropology, cultural anthropology is characterised by the fact that it is practised consistently with the rules of cognitive conduct adopted in science (Schulz, 2003). In anthropology understood in this manner, there are two basic sections: natural anthropology, also known as physical or biological anthropology, and cultural anthropology.

The second great branch of integrally understood anthropology is philosophical anthropology understood as "reflection on a human". Its roots date back to the beginnings of philosophy, which is why it is sometimes imprecisely called "the philosophy of a human". However, in the strict sense the term "philosophical anthropology" (as opposed to scientific) was used by M. Scheler. Scheler was convinced that the multitude of existing concepts of humans – however very diverse and therefore difficult to reconcile - were a necessary requirement for the creation of this new discipline. Namely, these are the following concepts: (1) Judeo-Christian, emphasising original sin and expulsion from paradise, (2) Greek and Enlightenment, recognizing human as a being qualitatively different from animals due to the divine spark of reason contained in humans, (3) modern scientific, considering humans only as highly developed animals. In addition to the three indicated concepts, M. Scheler adds two more: (4) human is a dead end of biological development, the resilience and forces of life are blocked in a human by the "spirit", science and technology (Klages and Nietzsche), (5) freed from the suffocating care of God, humans can take their fate into their own hands and rise to the heights of the Ubermensh (N. Hartmann and once again Nietzsche). In his main anthropological work, M. Scheler discusses the biological, intellectual and religious aspects of humans ("life" and "spirit"), trying to combine all the valuable elements of the existing concepts. In his approach to philosophical anthropology, Scheler pointed out, in summary, "how all his [man's] achievements and works result from the basic structure of man's existence." According to M. Scheler, philosophical anthropology is the foundation of all social, historical and psychological sciences (Honderich, 1998: 142).

It is assumed that the main goal of philosophical anthropology is to develop a general concept of humans that would enable answering the question regarding the essence of humans as a species or the way of perceiving human nature.

The priority issue is to isolate such a set of features that determines the humanity and specificity of humans among other living beings. This issue also concerns establishing the basic structural elements of human existence and determining the mutual relationship between the body and the psyche. Philosophical anthropology also makes efforts to determine the sources of activities specific to humans, the place and role of humans in the natural and social order, as well as person's relationship to themselves and other people (*Mała encyclopedia filozofii...*, 1996). Taking into account this type of issues is of key importance to the identification, description and explanation of the set of phenomena related to individual and generational hominisation, especially the educational phenomena. From the point of view of

general pedagogy, we are primarily interested in those aspects of the human condition (human status) that are important for understanding the worldview of hominisation phenomena, especially phenomena in the sphere of education (Schulz, 2003: 198).

Let us now attempt to look at anthropology as a number of constructed proposals for answers to questions regarding the status of humans, the structure of human being, the specificity of human existence, the specific nature of human development and the essence of this particular modality of development, which is referred to in pedagogy as human education (Krasnodębski, 1988). There are in actuality two – fundamentally different – categories of these answers: the answers found in historical (classical) human philosophy and the answers found in contemporary philosophical anthropology. In fact, let us focus on the answers formulated within contemporary philosophical anthropology, although each of the answers has, to a greater or lesser extent, a clear counterpart in scientific anthropology. Classical philosophy of humans certainly brings along axiological richness and a ready-made concept of the human individual (models of the ideal man), whereas modern philosophical anthropology is rich in information and is strongly rooted in scientific knowledge regarding the human world.

Assuming that in presentation of the achievements of philosophical anthropology we will abandon historical approaches and only take into account contemporary positions (characteristic of the 19th and 20th centuries) and reduce them to a few categories that are most significant for the educator, then the following three directions which can provide comprehensive answers to questions about the nature, structure, existence, development and upbringing of humans will be possible to distinguish (Krąpiec, 1996).

Trends in contemporary anthropology and their pedagogical implications

The naturalistic trend focuses its attention on the organic (biological) aspect of human existence. It is interested in humans as creations of nature, as elements of the biosphere, as one of the entities (species) that create the world of living beings and are subject to the process of evolution. J. J. Rousseau is considered the ideological (Enlightenment) precursor of this trend who coined the famous saying: "everything is good that comes from the hands of nature, everything spoils in the hands of man" (Gutek, 2007: 74-75). The core of the naturalistic worldview is its anti-metaphysical and anti-mechanistic orientation in explaining the world of nature and the world of man. Naturalism was formed in the opposition against metaphysics, against theistic concepts of humans and their development. It was this pedigree that determined its content. Hence, naturalism opposes all metaphysical concepts of humans that attempt to explain their status, origin, structure, forms of life and development with the presence and intervention of supernatural factors (Sośnicki, 1967). The second component of the naturalistic orientation is the organicist perspective, which assumes a specific status of living creatures. Living organisms are *sui generis* entities that

cannot be explained by reducing them to their component parts. In the biosphere, the whole is superior in regard to its parts and more important than them (Sztobryn, 1994).

The psyche (soul) – just like the mind – does not have a supernatural status: it is a natural creation that is a property of the nervous system. Thus, the psyche and mind are ultimately subject to natural laws. Moreover, culture – a way of life specific to humans – is no mystery according to naturalism. Cultural behaviours are a special type of adaptive behaviour. Both material culture, as well as social and symbolic culture, have natural and biological provenance and perform instrumental functions in relation to life (Wilson, 1991).

In naturalistic philosophy, a man appears as a component of the natural world and, within his existence, is subject to the same laws that govern nature (Holbach). Human social life is not guided by transcendent values, but only by egoism and the struggle for existence (Hobbes, social Darwinism). Culture is not an autonomous sphere, it often becomes a source of suffering and inhibits drives (Wilson, 1988).

In turn, there are two varieties of naturalism in the philosophy of education: the first one, narrower in scope and more developed, is limited only to care, upbringing and education, especially school education. The second type, broader in scope, refers to the overall process of anthropodevelopment in its individual and generational aspects. Apart from organised education, it also includes other components, such as: biopsychic development, acquiring individual experiences through learning, processes of inculturation and socialisation, subjective self-development, processes of developmental regression and desocialisation, etc. In summary, it can be stated that the first version of naturalism refers solely to the philosophy of education, while the second one is revealed as the philosophy of hominisation, and within it in organised education (Siemianowski, 2005).

The application of naturalistic ideas to educational phenomena can be found in concepts called pedagogical naturalism or naturalistic pedagogy. This one of the main trends in pedagogical reasoning comes down to education in nature rather than in culture. Modern naturalistic pedagogy developed first as a methodological concept recommending teaching young people in accordance with the natural laws of human cognition (e.g. J.A. Komensky). Naturalistic pedagogy gained was expressed to its fullest in the views of J. J. Rousseau, who derived the concept of educating a new man capable of resisting a depraved society from the concept of human nature. At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, naturalism was revived under the influence of the development of biology (Darwinism) and psychology (paedology), becoming the basis for new pedagogical movements. Carrying out a kind of Copernican revolution in pedagogy, these sciences postulated adapting the upbringing process to the natural, spontaneous development of a child, and limited the role of the educator to taking care of this process (paedocentrism) (Wołoszyn, 2019: 126-127). It is undoubtedly worth noting that the ideology of paedocentrism and free upbringing, dominant in the 20th century, as the leading worldview orientations of pedagogy, are experiencing a painful crisis. Many individuals – including publicists - argue that this ideology has not proven effective in social experience (Bandura, 2007).

The second basic worldview orientation in anthropology is a trend that has not yet been clearly perceived as a separate and comprehensive orientation. Hence, in the conceptual sphere we most often come across the name anti-naturalism or the closely related term "philosophy of culture". The anti-naturalism trend, which opposes naturalism in the field of philosophy, assumes in terms of ontology the specificity, autonomy and irreducibility of the world of history and culture to natural reality; in terms of the theory of knowledge and methodology, it postulates a different type of knowledge typical of the humanities as idiographic, individualising and understanding (meaning, meaning and values), as opposed to the natural sciences as appearing as nomothetic (formulating laws) and explaining (seeking causes); the main representatives of the trend are: W. Dilthey, H. Rickert, E. Spranger, E. Cassirer, and in Poland S. Brzozowski, F. Znaniecki (Schulz, 2003: 216). It seems that naturalism utilizes a somewhat narrow concept of culture, essentially limited to two areas, namely social culture (social institutions, morality, law) and spiritual culture (art, religion, science) (Tulibacki, 1998: 65).

Instead of the ambiguous and semantically loaded and pejoratively sounding concept of "anti-naturalism", R. Schulz proposes the term "culturalism" as a more adequate name for a separate, comprehensive – although internally diverse – trend in anthropology, which includes a strictly defined and at the same time unique in its content, concept of humans, their status and development. This trend also includes concepts developed within scientific (cultural) anthropology, taking the form of such directions as: materialism, ethnopsychologism, structuralism, cognitivism and others (Gajda, 2008: 63).

Culturalism was formed and developed in opposition to naturalism, which viewed the human as *homo animal* and perceived the idea of anthropodevelopment as animalisation, i.e. representatives of the *homo* species updating their biological potential in the process of adapting to the environment. Although naturalism emphasised primarily the similarities and relationships of humans with all living beings and built the concept of humanisation on these grounds, culturalism rather emphasised the qualitative differences between the *homo* species and other biological species. These differences concern all aspects of the human condition, including hominisation and upbringing. The circumstances of the birth of the culturalist orientation and the substantive reasons determining its provenance are presented by Suchodolski (1987).

The uniqueness of culturalism is expressed by considering four aspects of the human condition (existence): the physical side (bodily, organic), the mental side, the behavioural side and the ecological side (conditions, living environment). Culturalism has always emphasized humans' progressive departure from what can be called their natural endowment: the weakness of biological features, the incompleteness of humans' biological constitution, the fragility and general misery of the human being. These weaknesses are accompanied by the presence and development of new artificial supplements to the human physicality, replacing, strengthening or extending natural systems: e.g. clothing, glasses, artificial heart, work tools, etc. Hence, humans appear to be weak due to their nature, but strong due to their culture, i.e. artificial equipment,

which they developed owing to the ability to learn. Moreover, this second category of features, revealing going beyond and reaching outside the material world, is considered by the culturalism trend to be constitutive of humans (Grzegorczyk, 1989).

When it comes to the psychological side of humans, culturalism emphasised that what it emphasises in relation to the somatic sphere: the dual character of humans. On one hand, the disappearance of natural, innate competences and information skills, and on the other –, somewhat complementarity – the development of new, artificial, extensive information capabilities of humans in terms of getting to know their environment and themselves, as well as managing themselves and their relations with the environment. These new competences are expressed in the development of qualitatively new forms of information control of reality, based on a mechanism other than mutation. All these aspects of information metabolism prove the uniqueness and superiority of humans as an information processors and decision-makers. In the light of the culturalist doctrine, these properties are fundamental for the distinctiveness of the *homo* species from other entities in the domain of acquiring, processing and using information for the needs and demands of life. As biological knowledge indicates, each species is specialised in regard to its structures and life functions. In relation to humans, a specific lack of specialisation is assumed, or rather, humans demonstrate the ability to live in any environment due to being specialised in the field of information (Martens & Schnedelbach, 1995).

The third aspect of the human condition, which appears to be unique to representatives of the culturalist trend, demonstrates itself in his behaviour. It is here where the dual character of human nature becomes evident: on one hand, we can observe a regression within the *homo* species in terms of instinctive behaviours, inherited genetically – which are somehow responsible for the lack of adaptation of the species to its environment, and on the other hand – in the place of natural behaviour – there is the formation of a "supernatural" type of learned behaviour, largely independent of innate qualities, known as culture (Schulz, 2003: 223).

The last set of differences in this trend concerns human living conditions. The consequence of the unique properties of humans as the subject of existence, discussed above, is a new type of living environment created by humans, in which they live, a new world: artificial, extra- and supernatural, cultural. This unique, specific world, incomparable to the worlds of other species, is the "world of man", the "sphere of the humanum" (Suchodolski, 1993). Humans live in a qualitatively new world, different from the world other species live in. The uniqueness of this world – according to culturalism – comes down to three dimensions: material (physical), social (interpersonal) and symbolic (ideational). Hence, the following qualities constitute humans as the creators of culture: a human acts as the creator of the artificial environment of (a) the physical world, (b) the social environment and (c) the symbolic universe.

Four currents can be distinguished within the holistically interpreted culturalist orientation. 1. The materialistic or techno-economic current (K. Marx), emphasising the importance of technical culture and economy, and generally – civilisation as

the primary and basic factor determining the specificity of status, the specificity of existence and the uniqueness of human development. This trend has a counterpart in cultural anthropology referred to as the "economic anthropology". 2. The sociological current that emphasises the importance of social structures, relations and behaviours (interpersonal) as factors determining the uniqueness of human existence and explaining the peculiarities of human life and the process of becoming a human being (E. Durkheim). This current has an approximate equivalent in cultural anthropology under the name of "social anthropology". 3. A linguistic trend that emphasises the human ability to create signs and symbols and use them for the purposes of acquiring, communicating and processing learned information (W.G. Herder). This current has an approximate scientific equivalent in cultural anthropology called "linguistic anthropology". 4. The cognitive current, emphasising the human ability to create, possess, exchange and use the so-called social consciousness forms, i.e. symbolically encoded images of the world, ideas about the world (e.g. myths, art, social ideologies), which together constitute the sphere of spiritual and mental culture (E. Cassirer). This current has an approximate scientific equivalent in cultural anthropology under the name of "cognitive anthropology" (Wołoszyn, 2003).

Bearing in mind the knowledge about culturalism's understanding of the hominisation process, we are faced with the question of how culturalism interprets educational phenomena (more precisely: value-driven ways of forming personality) as an important component of anthropodevelopment. In the current philosophy of education, this question was considered within the framework of the ideological trend called "pedagogy of culture". A characteristic feature of this trend was the reference to the "philosophy of spirit", i.e. to a narrower version of "anti-naturalism", in which "spiritual culture" was presented as synonymous to the culture in general and in which the uniqueness of humans was perceived in the fact that they are the creators and carriers of the "world of spirit". "(contemporarily: "all forms of social awareness"). Therefore, cultural pedagogy referred to the so-called philosophy of the "new humanities", which argued for the existence and need for a specific (different from natural science) way of discovering this autonomous "human world", identified with the culture of the spirit (Milerski, 2011).

As a result of accepting these assumptions, a specific idea of anthropodevelopment and education emerges. The essence of the first process comes down to the individual's entry into the world of spiritual culture through assimilation of the "goods-values" that form it. However, as a consequence, education was perceived as the directed development of personality (spiritual forces) through organised internalisation of the values of spiritual culture (Suchodolski, 1993: 549-551).

Fundamental category and thesis of cultural pedagogy is the concept of educating human personality (spiritual sphere) through goods (cultural values). The "basic axiom of education" formulated in 1917 by G. Kerschensteiner – one of the outstanding representatives of this trend - assumes that the student, when exposed to cultural products that carry the values of the world of the spirit, experiences and understands the meanings contained in the products of culture. Then, spiritual acts corresponding

to cultural values, which shape a person's character and autonomous personality, are revealed, conditioned by the resources of innate dispositions and the individual's developmental period. A special role in the development of cultural pedagogy was played by the philosophy of culture developed by W. Dilthey, as well as the psychology of "understanding" and the typology of forms of "experiencing values" developed by E. Spranger. The most outstanding representatives of cultural pedagogy in Poland included: B. Nawroczyński, B. Suchodolski, Z. Mysłakowski (Suchodolski, 1993). The subject of cultural pedagogy distinguishes it not only from naturalism, but also from individualism and sociology in pedagogy. The response to individualistic pedagogy consisted in emphasising the dependence of the spiritual being on its assimilation of the cultural heritage and values of the contemporary cultural era. In turn, the opposition to pedagogical sociology was revealed by emphasising the inseparable unity of personality with supra-individual values, which, experienced and created by a person, determine his development and determine the meaning of human life (Gajda, 2006: 18).

In its modern, 20th-century form, personalism developed as a form of opposition to naturalism and pedagogical culturalism, i.e. to the concepts of human person and humanisation proclaimed by these trends. Putting this philosophical current in general terms, it can be stated that it formulated: (a) the idea of a human person as a supernatural and supercultural (personal) being - i.e. going beyond the status of the representative of a species and a member of culture, and (b) the idea of humanisation as personalisation – i.e. going beyond the limits of biological and cultural development in human individual development. In the creation and dissemination of this type of concept, personalism was supported by the trend of humanistic psychology, which in its own way emphasised the importance of taking into account the human condition in the vision of the human person, in the research and therapeutic practice of psychologists. Two related trends in contemporary anthropology, personalism and existentialism, have contributed to the development of a concept of human person competitive in regard to naturalism and culturalism. Personalism focuses its research activity on determining the unique features of human person's position in the world, and existentialism focuses on determining the specific features of human existence. The term "existentialism" covers a trend in contemporary philosophy that attributes central importance to reflection on the existence specific to humans, i.e. their existence. The existentialists' emphasis on the specificity of human existence means that all determination concerning human beings comes from a human being itself (i.e. it is an act of self-determination), and also that all reflection on existence begins with the analysis of existence, i.e. it is a function of human self-knowledge. The most outstanding precursors of this trend were Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. Husserl's contribution regarding the nature of consciousness, stating its intentionality and being self-conscious turned out to be valuable (Schulz, 2003: 242).

For personalistic pedagogy, the concept of human person, which cannot be one-sided or reductionist, is particularly important. A human being is an existentially differentiated being in which the body initiates the internal "I" as a subject, while

the soul is an element integrating all material elements of human existence, actively organising the entirety of human life (Kowalczyk, 2012). From the perspective of personalism the contemporary approaches to humans are accused of excessive individualism and the absolutisation of freedom. These approaches focus on a human person as an individual, ignoring their personal dimension, which has significant consequences in social life; this, in turn, leads to an artificial opposition of the individual to society, whereas approaching a human as a person, society reveals itself as a necessary environment and condition for the full development of a person (Kowalczyk, 1997: 9-12).

In personalism, we draw attention to the specific personal dimensions of its existence. These dimensions include primarily: (a) rationality and freedom, (b) the interiority of the person, (c) the dialogic nature of personal existence. J. Maritain distinguishes two dimensions of human nature: material individuality, which makes humans a part of nature, whereas immaterial personality indicates mental and spiritual life and the transcendence of nature. This last spiritual dimension of humans consists of two essential properties: rationality and freedom. The personal dimension of humans is manifested in their specific activities: intellectual cognition and the ability to self-direct (self-determination), in which freedom is a consequence of rationality, expressed in self-decision (Nowak, 2019: 502).

The issue of freedom leads us to notice this specific sphere of a person's personal existence, which is connected with the inner dimension. Guardini outlines three dimensions of person's personal existence, namely: * a person is, above all, a "form", i.e. they are recognisable as a shape among others; * the second level of the "person" phenomenon is represented by individuality established by interiority; * the third level is in what is called "personality"; such a concept indicates the form of a living individuality, provided that it is determined by the spirit (Guardini, 1939: 122-149).

The singularity and uniqueness of the person, thanks to the aspects of "materiality" and "formality", prevent the substantialisation of the "I". Personalism moves decisively at the level of realism, in which spiritual facts not only do not exclude, but assume personal reality at all levels. Such realism does not allow us to speak about a person as a monad absolutely closed in on itself and self-sufficient. The unity-uniqueness of the person is manifested especially in dialogue, in question and answer. "The "Other" becomes "You" only when the pure subject-object relationship ceases" (Guardini, 1964: 88). This is where a key element for understanding personalism emerges.

The pedagogical use of personalism is synonymous with "personalistic education", i.e. the personal shaping of the dimension of the human condition during and through deliberately organised educational interactions. Among various concepts, D. H. Heath's specific and substantive proposal as developed and presented by Kozielecki (1995) stands out. The author attempts to create a system of humanistic education that would use the achievements of humanistic psychology. The aim of such a system would be to develop a fully mature person who would be able to actualise their potential opportunities. D. H. Heath identified five main goals/tasks of humanistic education:

- striving for personality integration; raising people whose thoughts and actions are consistent;
- development of individual autonomy; making it independent from accidental external stimuli and pressures, and from the burdens of the past;
- shaping allocentric attitudes; focusing attention on others, not on ourselves;
- expanding awareness; educating people capable of reflecting on life;
- formulating an identity that allows you to answer the question "who am I", which is a relatively stable system in a changing world (Kozielecki, 2010).

Personalism, being keenly interested in the problems of education, has therefore become a kind of peculiar personalistic pedagogy (Nanni, 1984: 120-122). The opposite also happened, i.e. personalism sparked interest of teachers and educators, becoming an impulse for many studies on the concept of school, upbringing and didactics. Therefore, personalism bears certain pedagogical implications, and due to the understanding of the concept of "person", which is understood in a way characteristic of the Christian tradition, it is sometimes identified with Christian tradition in terms of emphasising the value and dignity of the human person (Rusecki, 1994: 6-7). Contemporarily personalism is defined as:

- a doctrine emphasising the autonomous value of a human as a person and postulating its full affirmation;
- programmes of activities supporting the development of the human person, subordinating economic and technical values to personal and spiritual values;
- a pedagogical concept of education and upbringing as well as the functioning of school and educational institutions, the special feature of which is the pursuit of integral upbringing and supporting the integral development of the student (Herbut, ed., 1997: 422-423).

Conclusion

Pedagogical personalism receives special attention in pedagogical thought, and just as it exists in many varieties in philosophy and other areas of life (medicine, aesthetics, economy, ethics, psychology, Christian theology), it is also marked in many varieties in pedagogy (Garnet, 1985). The most common pedagogical varieties of the concept of personalism include ontological (metaphysical) and historical personalism. On the grounds of these philosophical foundations, pedagogical personalism – coming from the person – emerges as a direction in pedagogy that responds vividly to emerging educational needs and conditions of human development. Above all, this fact requires redefining the category of "person" and its development (Nowak, 2000: 211-226).

In summary, it must be said that the basic feature characterising personalism is the phenomenon of a person. This statement is also a contestation of those positions that attempt to divide personalism into theocentric and anthropocentric. Personalism, in fact, always begins with the "person" fact – experienced intuitively in one's own experience – and is situated between the metaphysical concept of "Person" in relation

to the Creator and the anthropological approach to a person as a historical and concrete entity (Nowak, 2019: 495).

Knowledge about upbringing consists of both pedagogical views, expressed in philosophical reflection on the phenomena of upbringing common in human life, and the results of empirical research on educational reality (Wołoszyn, 1998: 9). For the philosophy of education, the source of formulated views consists in educational practice, but to an even greater extent the philosophy of education draws inspiration from more general accepted views on a human, their essence and the meaning of life. On such a foundation, educational directive expressing views on the ethos, goals, content and methods of education is established. Empirical scientific pedagogy develops and applies scientific methods to study educational practice and control the achieved results. By predicting the results of continued practice on a scientific level empirical scientific pedagogy attempts to formulate principles of effective and desirable pedagogical behaviour. These empirical studies are, in fact, always supported by more general, theoretical anthropological assumptions.

It can be stated that the world of ideas, ideologies, doctrines, positions, schools, currents, and worldview orientations in education appears to be extremely rich and diverse. However, organising it is not the subject of our interest in this paper. Certainly, all these approaches are extremely important and inspiring, but they are fragmentary and partial because they focus on selected dimensions of man, his development and self-education. Meanwhile, the scope of analysed problem in regard to general pedagogy should include the most general and universal aspects in relation to the human condition and human development. Therefore, the subject of interest should not only be upbringing and its conditions, but also the processes and mechanisms that together form the overall process of anthropodevelopment in its individual and generational dimensions, as well as the processes of biopsychological, sociocultural and personal development. Unfortunately, it turns out that if we delineate and give character to the answers we are seeking, we will reduce the universalistic aspirations of the philosophy of education (pedagogical thought).

Only the so-called "first" answers, formulated on the basis of anthropology – both philosophical and scientific, are revealed as absolutely necessary. It is so because anthropology is the field of human thought that speaks about the essence of humans, their existence and development in universal and holistic categories. In fact, only the anthropological perspective makes it possible to formulate qualitatively adequate answers to basic, ontological questions posed in the field of philosophy of human development and upbringing. Current, constantly and dynamically emerging changes in the contemporary post-modern world somehow encourage us to go beyond ideology and philosophy in the sphere of building the worldview framework of education and to make a turn towards anthropology (scientific and philosophical), which can become an ideological foundation for anthropodevelopment and an educational order tailored to our needs and educational order meeting the challenges of the globalist world. Pedagogical teleology requires the adoption of anthropological assumptions as the starting point, i.e. adopting a specific model of human that perceives human

life in two dimensions: *hic et nunc* and *in potentia*. To be able to function fully in outer life a person must be supported by their inner life that provides them with the necessary distance, courage, and willingness to give up, because it is impossible to fully contribute to outer life by projecting own inner emptiness into it. If a person has no permanent point of reference within oneself, a person becomes just one of specs of dust in the wind.

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Uwarunkowania i inspiracje antropologiczne we współczesnej pedagogice

Dynamicznie zachodzące zmiany we współczesnym świecie niosą rozmaite napięcia – łączą się również z chaosem pojęciowym i kryzysem egzystencjalnym – niejako postulują pojawienie się człowieka, który mógłby w sposób kompetentny formułować i rozwiązywać nowe trudne zadania oraz osądzać treści kulturowe według uniwersalnych zasad i wartości. Rzeczywistość edukacji, którą postrzega się jako ogół procesów i czynności sprzyjających optymalnemu oraz adekwatnemu rozwojowi jednostki stanowi szansę na wypracowanie i sformułowanie wzoru człowieka na miarę wyzwań współczesności. Ujawnia się zatem doniosłe znaczenie podejścia antropologicznego w całej pedagogice, ponieważ dopiero rozpatrywanie i badanie perspektywy antropologicznej umożliwia sformułowanie znaczących odpowiedzi na ontologiczne, aksjologiczne i epistemologiczne pytania z zakresu pedagogiki ogólnej. Antropologia jawi się jako nauka o człowieku, posiadająca charakter holistyczny, uwzględniająca sprzężenie między biologiczną a kulturowo-społeczną stroną człowieczeństwa, także na płaszczyźnie naukowej. W pierwszym rzędzie to całościowe podejście do człowieka wyraża się w tym, że za przedmiot tej dyscypliny uznawany jest człowiek we wszystkich swoich aspektach: fizycznym (biologicznym), społecznym, kulturowym i psychologicznym. Następnie zaś w ramach zainteresowania człowiekiem jako istotą kulturową, antropologia przejawia swój uniwersalny zakres obejmujący wszystkie typy kultur oraz wszystkie dziedziny kultury, takie jak: technika, gospodarka, struktura społeczna, język i komunikacja, ekspresja estetyczna, czy systemy wierzeń. Trzeci niejako wymiar holizmu ujawnia się w zainteresowaniu całym obszarem geograficznym zajmowanym przez społeczeństwa ludzkie oraz wszystkimi stadiami jego ewolucji. Z punktu widzenia pedagogiki można wyróżnić trzy następujące kierunki antropologii filozoficznej, mogące dostarczyć kompleksowe odpowiedzi na pytanie o naturę, strukturę, istnienie, rozwój i wychowanie człowieka, a mianowicie: orientacja naturalistyczna, antynaturalistyczna i personalistyczna. Ujmując ten ostatni kierunek w terminach ogólnych – można skonstatować – iż sformułował on ideę człowieka jako bytu nadnaturalnego i nadkulturowego (wykraczającego poza status reprezentanta gatunku) oraz uczłowieczenia jako personalizacji. Przedmiotem zatem zainteresowań pedagogiki ogólnej powinny stać się nie tylko procesy i mechanizmy składające się na całościowo pojęty proces antroporozwoju w jego wymiarze osobniczym i generacyjnym wraz z uwzględnieniem procesów rozwoju biopsychicznego, socjokulturowego i osobowego, ale również dorobek myśli antropologicznej wypowiadającej się na temat istoty człowieka, jego istnienia oraz rozwoju w kategoriach uniwersalnych i holistycznych.

Słowa kluczowe: antropologia filozoficzna; antropologia naukowa; filozofia edukacji; pedagogia.

Услови и антрополошке инспирације у савременој педагогији

Динамичне промене у савременом свету доносе различите тензије – повезане су и са концептуалним хаосом и егзистенцијалном кризом – на известан начин изискују и појаву човека који би могао компетентно да формулише и решава нове тешке задатке и процењује културне садржаје према универзалним принципима и вредностима. Реалност образовања, сагледавана као скуп процеса и активности погодних за оптималан и адекватан развој појединца, прилика је да се развије и формулише људски модел који одговара изазовима савременог доба. Стога се открива велики значај антрополошког приступа у целокупној педагогији, јер само сагледавање и испитивање антрополошке перспективе омогућава да се формулишу значајни одговори на онтолошка, аксиолошка и епистемолошка питања из области опште педагогије. Антропологија се јавља као наука о човеку, холистичког карактера, водећи рачуна о повезаности биолошке, културне и социјалне стране човечанства, и на научном нивоу. Пре свега, тај холистички приступ човеку очитава се у чињеници да је предмет ове дисциплине човек у свим његовим аспектима: физичком (биолошком), социјалном, културном и психолошком. Затим, као део интересовања за човека као културно биће, антропологија испољава свој универзални домет који обухвата све врсте култура и све области културе, као што су: технологија, економија, друштвена структура, језик и комуникација, естетски израз и систем веровања. Трећа димензија холизма открива се у интересовању за целокупно географско подручје које заузимају људска друштва и све фазе његове еволуције.

Са становишта педагогије могу да се издвоје следећа три правца филозофске антропологије која могу да дају свеобухватне одговоре на питање о природи, структури, постојању, развоју и васпитању човека, и то: натуралистичка, антинатуралистичка и персоналистичка оријентација. Уопштено говорећи о овом последњем тренду, може се закључити да је он формулисао идеју о човеку као натприродном и надкултурном бићу (које превазилази статус представника врсте) и о хуманизацији као персонализацији. Дакле, предмет интересовања опште педагогије треба да буду не само процеси и механизми који чине целокупни процес антропоразвоја у његовим индивидуалним и генерацијским димензијама, укључујући и процесе биопсихолошког, социокултурног и личног развоја, већ и достигнућа антрополошке мисли која изражава мишљења. о суштини човека, његовом постојању и развоју у универзалном и холистичком погледу.

Кључне речи: филозофска антропологија, научна антропологија, филозофија образовања, падагогија.

Antropološka perspektiva suvremene pedagogije (Stanja i antropološke inspiracije u suvremenoj pedagogiji)

Dinamične promjene suvremenog svijeta povezuju se s konceptom kaosa i egzistencijalnom krizom. Generiraju nove zahtjeve prema pojedincima i društvu. Zahtijevaju razvoj kompetencija za rješavanje novih problemskih situacija i prosudbu promjena kulture društva prema univerzalnim (temeljnim) vrijednostima i načelima. Obrazovanje se tumači kao proces koji potiče optimalni razvoj pojedinca i njegovih potencijala za život u suvremenom društvu i primjerene odgovore na zahtjeve tog društva. Antropološki pristup pedagogiji omogućava razmatranje i razumijevanje konteksta okruženja što je preduvjet kvalitetnih odgovora na ontološka, akseološka i epistemiološka pedagoška pitanja.

Antropologija, kao holistička znanost o čovjeku, povezuje biološku i kulturno -socijalnu dimenziju društva u odnosu na pojedinca. Čovjek se razmatra u interaktivnom odnosu fizičkih (bioloških), socijalnih, psiholoških i kulturoloških čimbenika. Tumačeći čovjek kao kulturno biće sagledavaju se sve dimenzije kulture kao načina života: tehnologija, ekonomija, društvena struktura, jezik i komunikacija, estetski izraz i sustavi vjerovanja. Društvo se tumači uvažavajući geografski prostor u kojem egzistira te sve razvojne faze koje prolazi.

S pedagoškog motrišta moguće je razlikovati tri pravca filozofske antropologije koji mogu ponuditi odgovore (teze) o prirodi, strukturi, postojanju, razvoju i odgoju čovjeka. Moguće ih je tumačiti kao naturalističku, antinaturalističku i personalističku orijentaciju. Ova potonja može pružiti cjelovite odgovore na pitanje o naravi, strukturi, postojanju, razvoju i odgoju čovjeka. Konstruira se slika o čovjeku kao nadkulturalnog bića (koji nadilazi status predstavnika vrste) i humanizacije kao personalizacije. Slijedom toga, predmet interesa opće pedagogije ne bi trebali samo procesi i mehanizmi koji konstruiraju antropološki razvoj u individualnoj i generacijskoj dimenziji, uključujući proces biopsihološkog, sociokulturnog i osobnog razvoja. Potrebno je obuhvatiti i dostignuća antropološke misli koja izražava mišljenje o biti čovjeka, njegovom postojanju i razvoju u univerzalnom i cjelovitom smislu.

Ključne riječi: filozofska antropologija; znanstvena antropologija; filozofija odgoja; pedagogija.

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Pedagogical insights into the autonomy-supportive interpersonal style of physical education teachers

Abstract: *The continual traditional understanding of "education in the classic sense" as a process based on ethical values, and a value in itself, is determined in this paper as of authentic significance of the pedagogical perspective in modern market societies. The necessity for strengthening the emancipatory component of education in schools, including physical education classes, is placed in the foreground, with autonomy, as the power of self-determination, seen as the pedagogical goal. The aim of this paper is to analyse the conceptualisations of basic psychological needs, types of motivation and teachers' interpersonal motivating style, theoretically developed within the framework of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), from pedagogical perspective. Systematisation of representative data taken from relevant sources preceded the adoption of principled positions on sustainability of the said theoretical framework for understanding the experiences and engagement of students in physical education classes in terms of provision of autonomy support. The self-determination theory contribution is seen in the actualisation of progressive pedagogy through conceptualisation of autonomous extrinsic motivation, and in the potential for this theoretical framework and recommendations produced over decades to serve as a useful and practical instrument for physical education teachers in their daily activities.*

Keywords**:** *autonomy, self-determination, physical education, teachers' interpersonal style, autonomous motivation.*

Education – pedagogical perspective

In pedagogy, education means influencing the development of personality with the aim of developing an individual's potential as fully, intensively and as optimally as possible, and preparing them for a quality and meaningful life (Antonijević, 2013). Educational process cannot be reduced only to the acquisition of knowledge and training for successful performance in a certain profession. The indicators of education as a basic pedagogical concept are the answers to the questions: what kind of a person one is, what their personality is like and what human characteristics they have developed. The pedagogical perspective, accordingly, implies the tradition of the humanistic conceptualisation of the school system which relies on the concepts of humanity. In this text, we will use the term *education* starting from this tradition, which is in literature more precisely determined as "education in the classic sense" (Tadić, 2023).

The pedagogical perspective implies the continuity in determining the goals of education as harmonious growth and development of all human potentials. In that context, engaging in physical activities can be beneficial for one's physical development, but also expand opportunities for advancement in the areas of intellectual, emotional, social, moral and aesthetic development. Physical education and school sports have a significant role under cognitive, physical, affective, healthy, social, moral, and cultural domains: it creates a framework of life skills that shapes the whole person; it cultivates a healthy lifestyle; it makes significant contributions to respect for the body, psycho-social development (self-esteem and self-confidence), cognitive development and academic achievement, socialisation and social skills (tolerance and respect for others, co-operation and cohesion, leadership, team spirit, antidote to antisocial behaviour) and aesthetic, spiritual, emotional and moral (fair play, character building) development, enhancement of quality of life etc. (Amado, Sánchez-Oliva, González-Ponce, Pulido-González, & Sánchez-Miguel, 2015; Habyarimana, Tugirumukiza, & Zhou, 2022).

In addition to acquiring skills, engaging in physical activities at school and in sports clubs should also contribute to important aspects of socialisation and moral education. These aspects refer, among other things, to respect for the rules of the game. In children, it is necessary to develop awareness about the importance of rules and of applying and respecting rules. Developing awareness about the importance of the rules of a game indirectly means the development of moral awareness, which refers to the appreciation of rules in general, the rules that determine the nature of behaviour and relationships established between people. Education through sports also contributes to the development of certain personality traits of students and athletes, such as consistency, self-sacrifice, solidarity, willingness to help others and other traits that make up important elements of socialisation and moral education.

In today's world, in market societies, the authentic relevance of the pedagogical perspective is recognised in the fact that education is still understood as a process based on ethical values, but also as a value in itself (Tadić, 2019). Physical activity within the framework of physical education and children's sports is seen as a public good and value in itself, despite the very much present tendency in today's societies to measure all values as market values. Achievements and success in the field of physical education and children's sports are not understood as goods brought to the market, and their purpose is not determined in the field of developing "human resources" or "human capital" that will provide them with better positions and opportunities for success in life. In addition to pedagogues, and some scientists and practitioners, this perspective is still represented by relevant international organisations devoted to education. UNESCO affirms ideas and supports programmes of *values-based education* using sports in schools. As emphasised on the website and in the available publications, sport can teach values such as fairness, discipline, teambuilding, equality, inclusion, perseverance and respect; sport has the power to provide a universal framework for learning values, thus contributing to the development of soft skills needed for responsible citizenship.

The pedagogical perspective is clearly recognised today in the view that education always consists of adapting individuals to a given environment (preparing them to perform social roles), but that teachers, above all, are obliged to enable and help students grow up and become autonomous individuals (Merije, 2014; Tadic, 2019). With this determination, we emphasise the need to maintain continuity with the pedagogical tradition, which primarily emphasises the necessity of strengthening the emancipatory component of education in schools. Further in this paper, the physical activities of students in physical education lessons are viewed from such a pedagogical perspective, as well as the interpersonal motivational styles applied by their physical education teachers.

Physical Education – pedagogical perspective

Physical Education is planned, organised and implemented in the education system and refers to everything that society designs and undertakes with the aim of ensuring physical development and growth of one's being, maintaining and improving health, developing awareness of the importance of physical activities for one's development and health, and developing habits of engaging in various physical activities. Physical education supports healthy and versatile growth and development of young people, their physical strength, body resistance, awareness of one's physical abilities, harmony and beauty of movement, as well as significant personality traits such as persistence, endurance, agility, initiative, and boldness (Bačanac & Radovanović, 2005). In pedagogical literature (Antonijević, 2013; Bačanac & Radovanović, 2005; Trnavac & Đorđević, 2013), the development of psychophysical abilities also makes part of physical education tasks, in terms of: nurturing health, resistance, and endurance of the body; facilitating the development of physical skills, motor skills and movement coordination; acquiring necessary knowledge in physical culture and sports; developing moral qualities, attitudes, building habits of engaging in sports and recreational activities and training for proper use of free time.

At school level, the aforementioned tasks are usually implemented within the Physical Education *school subject*, through the system of *school sports* (planned and systematic participation of students in different areas of sports activities, competitions in various sports disciplines, at the school, municipality, district and state level), as well as through free student engagement in various *afterschool sports activities* (in football, basketball, volleyball, handball and other sports disciplines). Outside of school, organised and systematic work that influences physical development of children and young people is most often achieved in sports clubs. Children's and youth sports are increasingly understood as a professional activity that requires the investment of great physical effort, through preparation and practice, as well as financial investment (costs of membership fees, equipment, preparation in specialised camps, trips to match venues, etc.). In professional sports, physical activities have a competitive character and are aimed at achieving the best results. Whether regarded

as a professional activity or as a school activity, from the pedagogical point of view, sport is seen as an important factor in personality development.

International Charter of Physical Education and Sports adopted by General Conference of United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization starts from the assumption that physical education and sport are not confined to physical well-being and health but also contribute to the full and well-balanced development of the human being (UNESCO, 1978). Pedagogical perspective can be seen in this charter in the following paragraphs:

- Physical education and sport programmes must be designed to suit the requirements and personal characteristics of those practising them.
- In the process of education in general, physical education and sport programmes must help create habits and behaviour patterns conducive to full development of the human person.
- Even competitive sport must always be in accordance with the Olympic ideal to serve the purpose of educational sport, it must in no way be influenced by profit-seeking commercial interests.

As a process of harmonious development of overall human potential, education shares all the features relevant to one's personality and the human qualities that one has developed with physical and sports activities (Tadić, 2023).

The success of pedagogical activity in children's and youth sports depends to a considerable extent on how well the balance is achieved between the preparation for what they will do in sports activities and for what they will be as human beings […] That is why the main goal of pedagogical activity in the field of children's and youth sports is not achieving uniformity, but developing diversity, it is not limiting and subduing, but developing authenticity, freedom and creativity (Bačanac & Radovanović, 2005: 81-82).

The pedagogical role of physical education (PE) teachers refers to activities such as: monitoring students' development in certain developmental areas, influencing the formation of certain attitudes, value systems and moral principles pertaining to that system, and activities aimed at giving personal examples to students and others. For the fulfilment of educational goals through physical and sports activities, it is very important for the teachers to become familiar with the characteristics of students' physical and psycho-motor development through the process of professional education and training. In addition, they need to master various didactic and motivational techniques that lead to the fulfilment of long-term goals of physical education and education in general, with an understanding of pedagogical and psychological mechanisms underlying their continuous application.

Self-determination theory applied to physical education – pedagogical insights

As emphasised in the introduction, the aim of "education in the classic sense" is autonomy, as the power of self-determination (Adorno, 1966; Kami, 1984). This

point of view directs practical pedagogical action to ways of learning and motivation that support student autonomy through daily activities and enable self-determination as a long-term pedagogical goal (Đerić, 2018; Tadić, 2015). Humanistic and emancipatory education represents a whole system of principles used in the entire educational process in a humane, holistic, emancipatory and democratic way. Every single theory of education of *progressive orientation* seeks to clarify the social circumstances in which relationships preventing human self-determination are established, thus striving towards a reasonable organisation of society (Tadić, 2019). Emancipation and self-determination are understood as part of the general process of democratisation and are linked to educational practices focused on care and warmth in human relationships (instead of strictness and firmness) and on individual autonomy (contrary to manipulative influences aimed at submission and obedience). In the study of pedagogical activity, the interaction-communication aspect is also emphasised, and central position in the school context, in addition to teaching, is given to the quality of mutual teacher-student relations.

An important contribution to the popularisation and development of the mentioned (progressive) standpoint during the last decades has been given by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan, who developed the Self-Determination Theory (SDT). The theory of self-determination is based on empirically confirmed assumptions in the field of human development and behaviour, especially in the field of motivation. It is based on an optimistic view of man and his behaviour (Deci, et al., 1991; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryan et al., 2009). People are seen as active, desirous of autonomous action, and oriented towards development and actualisation of personal potentials. At the same time, they are potentially vulnerable due to continuous, frequent controlling influences of external coercion. "Self-determination theory is potentially a viable framework from which to understand student experiences in physical education and develop interventions that could enhance student learning and motivation toward physical activity" (Vasconcellos, et al., 2020: 1445).

Self-Determination Theory postulates that "there are basic psychological needs that must be satisfied universally for people to experience ongoing growth, integrity, and wellness, namely needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness" (Ryan & Deci, 2022: 1). Engaging in physical activities (in physical education classes and school sports) and investing effort by students will have a pronounced pedagogical potential in conditions of continuous support from PE teachers in that they:

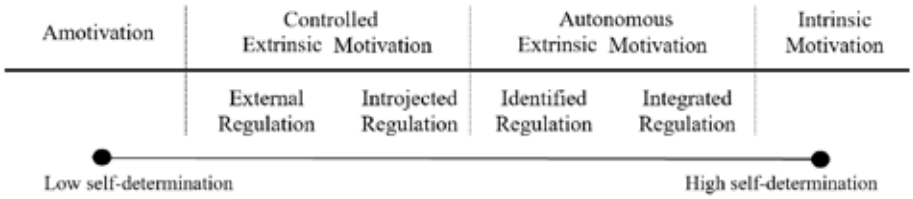
- recognise, understand and respect the strong internal need of students to be effective, successful, capable of performing tasks of various levels of complexity, which contributes to strengthening their self-confidence (need for competence);
- try to ensure that students perceive external requirements, rules and expectations as personally significant, meaningful and relevant, and therefore accept them as their own, and carry them out voluntarily without experiencing control and coercion (need for autonomy);
- create an atmosphere in which students feel cared for, accepted and appreciated by others; through physical activities they achieve connection with other

students, with the PE teacher, a connection based on the natural tendency of people to interact (need for relatedness).

In line with the aforementioned conceptualisation of basic human needs in the teaching context, the fulfilment of pedagogical goals from a methodological perspective can be analysed through three basic strategies that (individually or combined) can strengthen the pedagogical function of teaching: didactic, procedural and interpersonal pedagogical strategies (Tadić, 2019). *Didactic strategies* are based on the understanding that the education process in the teaching context is directly dependent on the organisation of teaching and the characteristics of the content and activities (interesting activities, optimal challenges). *Procedural strategies* refer to the development and implementation of reward and punishment systems, and social demands (clear expectations and guidelines, norms, and prescriptions). *Interpersonal strategies* are aimed at building quality interpersonal relationships between teachers and students, which positively affects the pedagogical dimension of the teaching work (provision of autonomy support).

Interpersonal pedagogical strategies include creating a specific atmosphere and relationship between teachers and students, the teacher's personal pedagogical style, the involvement of students in making important decisions, and the use of communication skills. Among the indicators of teachers' support of student autonomy within interpersonal pedagogical strategies are the techniques based on responsibility sharing, conversation, cooperation, understanding other people's perspective, and empathic response. The teacher's established, prevailing behaviour is determined as a pedagogical work style, educational style, leadership style, interpersonal style, motivational style, and the like.

Differences in the characteristics of teachers' behaviour in relations with students are usually presented in the literature through bipolar representations of pedagogical styles: from authoritarian to democratic; from directive to non-directive behaviour. Within the theory of self-determination, based on the long-term goals it leads to (Graph 1), teacher's motivating style can be understood along a bipolar continuum that ranges from highly controlling to highly autonomy supportive (Reeve, 2006; 2016). In such an understanding of motivational style, what autonomy-supportive teachers say and do during instruction is qualitatively different from what controlling teachers say and do during instruction. "Autonomy support is the instructional sentiment and behaviour the teacher provides during instruction first to identify, then to vitalize and nurture, and eventually to develop, strengthen, and grow students' inner motivational resources. Teacher control, on the other hand, is the instructional sentiment and behaviour the teacher provides during instruction to pressure students to think, feel, or behave in teacher-prescriber way" (Reeve, 2016: 130). A different approach can be seen in the relevant literature (Amoura et al., 2015; Huéscar Hernández et al., 2020), where autonomy-supportive teaching and controlling teaching are investigated and described as two different motivational styles (not as two opposite ends of a single bipolar continuum).



Graph 1 *The self-determination continuum* (Vasconcellos et al., 2020: 1445)

Controlling motivational style (Abós et al., 2018; Amoura et al., 2015; Đerić, 2018; Đorđić & Tubić, 2010; Flink et al., 1990; Jiang et al., 2009; Reeve & Cheon, 2014; Standage et al., 2005) is characterised by techniques in which students' behaviour is conditioned through external regulation (e.g., acting for external reasons such as rewards or coercive pressures, desire to avoid criticism) and/or experience of obligation – the so-called introjected regulation (e.g., acting to avoid feelings of guilt, shame, anxiety, or lesser value due to failure to fulfil duties and meet expectations of important adults).

When a PE teacher tries to encourage a certain type of behaviour in individuals or in the whole class, they can do so in a controlling way, using the mechanism of behavioural conditioning, i.e. the so-called *carrot-and-stick* technique: "You'll get this if you do that." The reward promised, or the punishment threatened with completely triggers and regulates the student's behaviour in such situations. Their behaviour depends on and is controlled by external reinforcements. Students behave in a certain way in order to get the desired reward or avoid punishment. Desired behaviour ceases or is absent if there is no reinforcement (i.e., if the student does not expect it). A common example of this type of behaviour regulation is *group rewards* (or group punishments) applied to the entire class.

The teacher can also exercise control through the experience of obligation, that is, students' effort to avoid feelings of guilt and shame (behaving in a certain way due to a sense of duty, in order to meet the PE teacher's or parents' expectations). In such situations, the student acts in line with external regulation, and partly accepts it, but still perceives the activities as imposed and controlled. An example of such behaviour of a PE teacher is the "*I like*" – messages: "Well done Jovan, I like that you did what we agreed on during the break. I want everyone else to do as we agreed. How many times do I have to explain the same thing!"

When teachers continuously behave in this way in their educational work with students, it indicates an authoritarian approach that undermines the students' feeling of having an influence on the activities in which they get involved at the request and reduces interest in such activities. Controlled motivation (that is external and introjected regulation) and amotivation have been associated with students' boredom and unhappiness (Ntoumanis & Standage, 2009). Teachers more often opt for a controlling style of behaviour during teaching, than for autonomously supportive interpersonal relationships (Reeve, 2009). They often use orders, threats, and even

physical punishment in their work. The problem for students is that the teacher does not give them feedback on the quality of their work, interrupts them while they are speaking, ignores insufficiently active and successful students, and often criticises them (Bodroža et al., 2015; Pšunder, 2005). Frequent application of such techniques in educational work is associated with the old dilemma: "is it possible, and in what way, to develop positive personality traits with repressive measures" (Trnavac & Đorđević, 2010: 173), and to build a positive pedagogical and psychosocial climate. Pedagogical perspective in the field of physical education (PE), as well as children's and youth sports, implies refraining from the application of controlling techniques.

Pedagogical component is stronger when higher levels of behavioural regulation are applied, i.e. the so-called *identified regulation* and *integrated regulation* (Amoura et al., 2015; Behzadnia et al., 2018; Vasconcellos et al., 2020; Đerić, 2018; Reeve, 2009; Reeve & Cheon, 2014; Standage et al, 2005). This implies that the student transfers external requests, which usually come from the teacher to the internal plan (*autonomous extrinsic motivation*). Students who understand that certain requirements, efforts, and expected behaviours are useful for them (and contribute to the achievement of goals they have chosen, which are important), that they enable the satisfaction of basic psychological needs (autonomy, relatedness and competence), and that these activities are consistent with their personal value system, do not feel the required behaviours as an obligation, but accept them as if these were personally chosen. Students seek out opportunities for personal growth, development and choice, and organise their actions based on personal goals and interests when they are autonomously motivated (Abós et al., 2018). If a student in physical education classes perceives that a certain activity can be important for their life aspirations (e.g., for a sports career which is their life goal), they will not perceive it as an imposed obligation. They will have the same experience during sports activities while developing and showing closeness and friendly relations with other students, or when receiving information from them or from the teacher about the progress in sports skills, or contribution to the team, or the results of the whole class. In such circumstances, they are ready to make an effort and engage in the implementation of planned activities.

The teacher's pedagogical style is based on their understanding and application of the types of motivation (*amotivation*, *extrinsic motivation*, *intrinsic motivation*) and types of behavioural regulation that vary in terms of degree of internalisation of the behaviour. As already stated, from the less to the more internalised form, there is *external regulation*, *introjected regulation*, *identified regulation* and *integrated regulation*. "Although identified and integrated regulation belong to extrinsic motivation, they are considered self-determined forms of motivation, even if they are emitted out of choice, because behaviours are internalized" (Amoura et al., 2015: 143). In general, autonomy-supportive teachers facilitate the congruence between students' self-determined inner guides and their day-to-day classroom activity "by identifying and nurturing students' needs, interests, and preferences and by creating classroom opportunities for students to have these internal states guide their behaviour" (Reeve, 2006: 228).

Support of student autonomy by teachers implies reliance on types of regulation of student behaviour characterised by a high degree of self-regulation, i.e. it implies procedures that help students perceive they have influence on their own behaviour, and their activities are freely chosen (Assor et al., 2005; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Fin et al., 2019; Flink et al., 1990; Lalić -Vučetić et al., 2005; Tadic, 2015; Taylor et al., 2008). Such procedures support the self-regulated behaviour of students motivated by their interests and integrated values. They direct students to an active, constructive process of giving personal meaning and value to the teaching activities that are carried out in class. Autonomy-supportive interpersonal motivating style "represents the prototype of the sort of interpersonal relationship that facilitates students' autonomous motivation and classroom engagement" (Reeve, 2006: 234), and it is characterised by "taking into account the student as an essential element of the educational process for making decisions, reaching consensus and ceding responsibility, providing explanations about instruction and adapting tasks, making performance levels more flexible and generating a positive/comfortable learning context/environment based on mutual trust" (Moreno-Murcia et al., 2021: 3).

Teachers' behaviour supportive of student autonomy includes engaging students in relevant activities (students are interested or understand the importance of certain behaviours for fulfilling personal goals and interests), allowing criticism (encouraging the expression of one's own opinion), enabling choices and prompting student participation in decision-making through discussions and other techniques that support student autonomy (Assor et al., 2002; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). "A teacher who supports autonomy gives the possibility of choice, participation in decision-making and management, positive feedback, respects students' perspectives and creates an atmosphere free from pressure, imposed goals and demands" (Lalić-Vučetić et al., 2009: 355). Such teachers create opportunities for students to initiate activities independently or in groups and to perform certain tasks, try to respect and understand students' feelings and points of view and give praise for quality work done, provide clear, timely and appropriate explanations regarding requests for a change in behaviour, do not take over problem-solving that children can achieve themselves, and avoid using controlling techniques such as excessive and unconstructive criticism, orders and reprimands (Đerić et al., 2012).

What Johnmarshall Reeve sees as autonomy-supportive teaching activities (with full pedagogical potential) are interpersonal emotions and behaviours that teachers display during classes in order to identify, nurture and develop students' inner motivational resources (interests, inclinations, psychological needs). Reeve states that it is necessary for the teacher to: (a) adopt the students' perspective; (b) welcome students' thoughts, feelings, and behaviours; and (c) support students' motivational development and capacity for autonomous self-regulation (Reeve, 2009: 162). The students' position is also reflected in their ability to show initiative in class, to express their own judgment about teaching activities, to participate in decisions on important issues in school life, on ways of organising space and time, and on different forms of learning. "In practice, an autonomy-supportive motivating style involves the enactment

of the following six positively intercorrelated and mutually supportive instructional behaviours: (1) take the students' perspective; (2) vitalize inner motivational resources; (3) provide explanatory rationales for requests; (4) acknowledge and accept students' expressions of negative affect; (5) rely on informational, non-pressuring language; and (6) display patience" (Reeve, 2016: 135).

(1) It is necessary to provide help and adequate support to teachers to take the students' perspective in various teaching activities. "When people in positions of authority such as teachers, coaches, and parents, take the perspective of the student into consideration, this perspective taking additionally satisfies the need for relatedness and strengthens a sense of belongingness which is vital according to SDT" (Long, 2014 : 48). This type requires of teachers to imagine themselves in students' position, to understand what students think and feel, to show the willingness to help them feel better during teaching activities; it does not only refer to their teaching activities. It is of particular importance that teachers deal with these issues while planning teaching activities, review various possibilities that would make the activities more interesting, more attractive, more relevant or more personally important to students' concerns (Reeve & Cheon, 2014; Reeve, 2016).

(2) Autonomy-supportive teaching includes teachers' behaviour which encourages students' autonomous motivation. Such teaching is oriented to students' interests, their basic needs, adopted values, personal challenges, tendencies, goals, and choices. Students proactively engage in classroom challenges as an expression of their inner motivational resources. "Some student inner motivational resources are inherent, including the psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness. Other resources, however, are internalized, including certain interests, preferences, and values" (Reeve, 2006: 226). When teachers nurture students' inner motivational resources, they generally avoid external regulators such as incentives, rewards, directives and compliance requests. Teachers should find ways to coordinate instruction in such a way that supports children's interests, sense of enjoyment, and preference for volition. "This may be achieved by supporting children's initiative taking in competitive situations, or by making sure that tasks in PE, where possible, are fun and exciting. For example, PE teachers could give children the opportunity to decide the team formation before a game or choose which activities they would like to participate in" (Curran & Standage, 2017: 268). Reference literature makes distinction between cognitive, organisational and procedural choices, emphasising that cognitive choices foster more enduring and deep-level student engagement than organisational or procedural choices (Jiang et al., 2019; Leisterer & Paschold, 2022; Stefanou et al., 2004). Cognitive choices focus on the processing of opinions about the learning content (e.g., encouraging students to evaluate their own or others' solutions or ideas). Organisational choices concern decisions about the layout of classroom activities, whereas procedural choices refer to the selection of classroom materials and equipment.

(3) Explanatory rationales, which explain the relevance and usefulness of teaching activities in situations when uninteresting tasks are required, when behaviour-related

instructions and requirements in class are not connected with personal needs, allow for a greater degree of internalisation of extrinsic motivation (being accepted as one's own). Students should be given an acceptable explanation why the expected effort is worth making, and how it can be useful for them. When teachers provide students with a rationale of usefulness that is convincing and satisfying (from the students' point of view), then students understand why they are being asked to invest their effort in the requested activity. This understanding allows a process of internalisation to occur, as students essentially say to themselves "Yeah, okay, that makes sense; I'll do it" (Reeve, 2006: 230). Teachers should seek to make sure students are aware of the use, value, and importance or personal relevance of engaging.

(4) The interpersonal teacher style largely determines their sensitivity to students' questions, comments, recommendations, and suggestions, and their acceptance of expressed negative feelings and complaints as students' justified reactions to requests and specific procedures against their will. Accepting students' expression of negative reactions (from negative feelings to criticism) means discussing situations in which there is a motivational problem, and this happens every time a disagreement occurs "between what students want to do and what teachers need students to do" (Reeve, 2006: 230). When students complain that the teaching activities are boring, useless, overwhelming, or unnecessarily difficult, by accepting and supporting the expression of such negative feelings and taking them as constructive information, teachers show sensitivity for and understanding of their perspective, experience and feelings. Acknowledging and accepting negative affect, or even welcoming, student criticisms or expressions of negative affect about a learning activity (e.g., "this is boring"), has a dual benefit of helping students internalise otherwise uninteresting activities (autonomy) and of cultivating secure bonds between the PE teacher and students (relatedness). In this way, students' feelings are treated as potentially valid reactions or a useful source of improvement in specific lesson structures and activity designs (Jiang et al., 2019).

(5) Autonomy-supportive interpersonal style of teachers includes relying on nonpressuring informative language, aimed at guiding students to reconsider and solve their own problems with motivation. "Noncontrolling language revolves around using communications not to push, pressure, or coerce students into compliance with the teacher's agenda but, instead, using communications to help students find ways to coordinate their inner resources with their moment-to-moment activity" (Reeve, 2006: 229). Higher perceived autonomy and greater engagement of students can be expected if the PE teacher "avoids rigid and pressuring phrases such as 'should', 'must', 'got to', and 'have to', and uses volitional phrases such as 'can', 'could', and 'may' to convey classroom rules, requirements, and expectations" (Jiang et al., 2019: 3). Instead of verbally pressuring students to act according to the preset correct procedures and solutions, teachers can encourage voluntary participation in activities through flexible messages that imply competence and capability. "Communicating feedback in this manner allows problems to be met with constructive solutions through language that is encouraging and nondemeaning" (Curran & Standage, 2017: 269).

(6) Besides the already stated, positive pedagogical effects are also achieved when the teacher shows patience and give students time to work independently, as suits their own pace and ability. "Displaying patience means to wait calmly for students' input, initiative and willingness" (Reeve, 2016: 147). Autonomy-supportive teachers allow students the time they need for self-paced learning. "They do so by, for instance, taking the time to listen, providing encouragement for initiative and effort, providing time for students to work in their own way, offering helpful hints when students seem stuck, praising signs of progress, postponing advice until they first understand the students' goals" (Reeve, 2009: 170).

Autonomy-supportive behaviour exhibited by PE teachers is beneficial to their students and to the teachers themselves (Tilga et al., 2021). We shall mention an example of a PE teacher's response in research which tested the effectiveness and educational benefits of an *autonomy-supportive intervention program* (ASIP). The teachers were asked to explain why their motivating style included more, less, or about the same level of autonomy support as it was during the ASIP year: "The quality of physical education was enhanced when I supported students' autonomy. I felt happy and supported their autonomy when I found that students actually recognized what they truly valued and enjoyed. I was more confident in how to manage my students. Now, I always think before my class how to support students' autonomy" (Reeve & Cheon, 2014: 323).

Reference literature documents numerous positive cognitive, behavioural, and affective consequences of acting due to autonomous (as opposed to controlled) forms of motivation (Ntoumanis & Standage, 2009). Teacher-provided autonomy support, as aspect of teacher's interpersonal tone and face-to-face behaviour teachers routinely use to engage their students in learning activities they provide (Reeve, Jang, & Jang, 2018), is associated with students' high-quality motivation (need satisfaction, autonomous motivation), effective classroom functioning (engagement, conceptual learning), and positive educational outcomes (high achievement, well-being). In the context of physical education, an autonomy-supportive teaching style is expected to positively influence both students' affective and emotional perception (e.g. enjoyment after their PE lesson), which in turn is related to an increase in physical activity. "Autonomy-supportive teaching is an effective implicit instructional approach for PE teachers to assist students in developing a physically active lifestyle" (Leisterer & Paschold, 2022: 11). A higher level of autonomous motivation towards physical activity experience has a series of positive health consequences and a greater intention of being physically active outside school hours. "Students who perceive autonomy support from their teacher would feel that their BPN (autonomy, competence and relatedness) are satisfied, which will increase the autonomous motivation and, therefore, consequently, positively result in an increased intention to be physically active" (Leyton-Román et al., 2020).

Instead of a conclusion – On professional PE teacher education from the presented pedagogical perspective

The ethical perspective of pedagogy aims to open opportunities for the emancipation of children and young people, by having their autonomy supported by important adults who influence their growth and development. The concept of emancipation gathers pedagogues around the idea of "not abandoning the project of gaining freedom and focusing on the application of effective conditioning" (Merije, 2014: 43). I see a significant contribution of the self-determination theory in the fact that (by conceptualising the types of regulation of individuals' behaviour and empirically supporting the assumptions regarding the quality of students' and teachers' motivation) in an authentic way, it actualised the vision of progressive pedagogy, affirmed since the beginning of the XX century (Tadić, 2015; 2019).

Presented distinction of types of external (extrinsic) regulation of behaviour emphasises the importance of well-internalised (thus autonomous) forms of extrinsic motivation, which can result in a student's feeling of voluntary engagement in activities (Ryan & Deci, 2022). In addition, within the aforementioned theoretical framework, its instrumental value comes to the foreground, i.e. the possibility of serving teachers as a useful and practical instrument for dealing with everyday activities. John Dewey (1916) built pragmatist pedagogy precisely on the notion of instrumentalism as a form of philosophical pragmatism. Instrumentalism is related to his understanding that scientific theories should primarily be considered as instruments (tools) for solving practical problems.

The presented self-determination theory framework meets the criteria to be seriously considered as a variant of progressive, ethical pedagogical orientation. In the very complex task of creating an educational process aimed at freeing the individual from excessive social pressure, it offers a useful and usable theoretical conceptualisation of the autonomously supportive behaviour style of teachers (and other important adults, or authorities in education). The practice of building interpersonal relationships between teachers and students is characterised by the focus on emancipatory component of the educational process, attitude and competencies that enable autonomy-supportive practice in work with children and young people. Autonomy-supportive teachers are realistic enough and understand that "in everyday work it is impossible to avoid the use of controlling procedures", but they refrain from their application whenever possible, keeping a distance from manipulation (Tadić, 2019). Self-determination theory supports the thesis that moving towards a pedagogical humanistic orientation, and the goals of education defined in it, is significantly determined by the characteristics of the pedagogical atmosphere and the teachers' style of behaviour. It is important to emphasise that the scope of pedagogical work in the field of physical education will not be significantly determined by individual acts in any of the many situations.

By gaining knowledge of established pedagogical laws, principles and theories during professional education, teachers are trained to think pedagogically, which is the assumption of liberation from pedagogical exclusivity, narrow practicalism,

and strengthening competence and enthusiasm for quality pedagogical work and introducing innovations in organising, deeper study and improvement of educational work. Today's tendency to reduce professional education to the mastery of practical knowledge and skills (through short courses), or to a narrow specialisation, has no confirmation and support in modern pedagogy. Pedagogical education does not represent specialisation for the mechanical performance of activities in controlled conditions according to given templates or recipes. Understanding the aforementioned laws, principles and theories is an indicator of the competence of those who educate, and who will probably find it much easier to find their way in any pedagogical situation and a solution that suits that situation.

Pedagogical education and professional development of teachers should be focused primarily on developing competencies for: preparation and implementation of activities that maintain students' attention and provide them with realistic prospects for success, which students find interesting, challenging, and useful; creation of a class atmosphere in which the perception of each individual that they can satisfy their basic needs and meet their expectations through collaborative relationships is considered important. Another aspect of great importance for work quality and mutual relations, and for students' achievement and harmonious development, is the style of motivation (behaviour regulation) that teachers establish in their interactions with them. In order to improve student engagement in physical education classes, it is important for teachers to understand the value and effects of continuous efforts to apply autonomy-supportive interpersonal motivational styles and to develop the competencies necessary for building an atmosphere of mutual respect, enabling students' participation in deciding on issues they consider important, encouraging their initiatives and expression of their own judgment about the activities in which they are involved.

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Spostrzeżenia pedagogiczne na temat wspierającego autonomię stylu interpersonalnego nauczycieli wychowania fizycznego

Tradycyjne rozumienie „edukacji w sensie klasycznym" jako procesu opartego na wartościach etycznych i wartości samej w sobie zostało w niniejszym artykule określone jako autentyczne znaczenie perspektywy pedagogicznej we współczesnych społeczeństwach. Na pierwszy plan wysuwa się konieczność wzmacniania emancypacyjnego komponentu edukacji w szkołach, w tym zajęć wychowania fizycznego, z autonomią jako władzą samostanowienia, widzianą jako cel pedagogiczny. Celem pracy jest analiza konceptualizacji podstawowych potrzeb psychologicznych, typów motywacji i interpersonalnego stylu motywowania nauczycieli, teoretycznie wypracowanych w ramach teorii samostanowienia (SDT) z perspektywy pedagogicznej. Usystematyzowanie reprezentatywnych danych, zaczerpniętych z odpowiednich źródeł, poprzedziło przyjęcie zasadniczych stanowisk w sprawie trwałości wspomnianych ram teoretycznych dla zrozumienia doświadczeń i zaangażowania uczniów w zajęcia wychowania fizycznego w kwestii zapewniania wsparcia w zakresie autonomii. Wkład teorii samostanowienia widać w aktualizacji pedagogiki postępowej poprzez konceptualizację autonomicznej motywacji zewnętrznej, a także w potencjale tych ram teoretycznych i zaleceń opracowanych przez dziesięciolecia, aby mogły służyć jako użyteczny i praktyczny instrument dla nauczycieli wychowania fizycznego w ich codziennych działaniach.

Słowa kluczowe: autonomia; samostanowienie; wychowanie fizyczne; motywacja autonomiczna; styl interpersonalny nauczycieli.

Аутономно подржавајући интерперсонални стил наставника физичког васпитања – педагошка перспектива

У раду се као аутентичан значај педагошке перспективе у савременим тржишним друштвима одређује континуитет традиције схватања васпитања као процеса заснованог на етичким вредностима, али и као вредности по себи. Оваквим одређењем у први план се истиче нужност јачања еманципаторске компоненте васпитног рада у школама, па и на настави физичког васпитања, чиме се за циљ васпитања одређује аутономија, као снага за самоодређење. Васпитање, као процес хармоничног развоја свих човекових потенцијала, са физичким и спортским активностима има онолико додирних тачака колико су ове активности релевантне за питања развоја његове личности.

Циљ рада је да се концептуализације базичних психолошких потреба, типова мотивације и интерперсоналног мотивационог стила наставника, теоријски развијане у оквиру теорије самоодређења, анализирају из наведене педагошке перспективе. Издвајање репрезентативних и илустративних података из релевантних извора, њихова систематизација, претходили су заузимању начелних ставова у односу на питање одрживости наведеног теоријског оквира за разумевање искустава и ангажовања ученика у физичким активностима на часовима физичког васпитања у контексту изградње квалитетних интерперсоналних односа (пружање подршке аутономији ученика).

Разматрају се теоријске претпоставке значајне за разумевање интерперсоналног мотивационог стила наставника физичког васпитања, представљеног као биполарног континуума који се креће од веома контролишућег до веома аутономно подржавајућег са становишта доживљаја ученика. Васпитна компонента јача када наставници у раду користе више нивое регулације понашања, засноване на перцепцији ученика да су им оне корисне или да им омогућавају задовољавање базичних психолошких потреба. Обухваћен је и практични аспект концептуализације аутономно подржавајућег интерперсоналног мотивационог стила наставника који укључује: узимање у обзир перспективе ученика; оживљавање унутрашњих извора мотивације; давање образложења за захтеве; уважавање ученикових испољавања негативних реакција; ослањање на информативне изјаве и комуникацију без притиска; и показивање стрпљења.

Значајан допринос теорије самоодређења види се у начину актуелизовања прогресивне педагогије кроз одређење типова аутономне екстринзичке мотивације, као и у потенцијалу да овај теоријски оквир и деценијама продуковане на резултатима истраживања засноване препоруке, за наставнике физичког васпитања и за оне који раде на њиховом професионалном развоју и педагошком усавршавању, послуже као користан и практичан инструмент за поступање у свакодневним наставним активностима.

Кључне речи: аутономија; самоопредељење; физичко васпитање; аутономна мотивација; интерперсонални стил наставника.

Pedagoški uvid u interpersonalni stil koji podržava autonomiju profesora tjelesnog odgoja

Tradicionalno shvaćanje odgoja u „klasičnom smislu “, kao procesa utemeljenog na etičkim vrijednostima i vrijednosti po sebi, u ovom se radu razmatra kroz pedagošku perspektivu suvremenog, tržišnog društva. Ističe se potreba jačanja emancipacijske komponente odgoja i obrazovanja u školi, uključujući i nastavu tjelesnog odgoja. Autonomija se pri tom tumači kao cilj odgoja i prediktor samoodređenja. Tumači li se odgoj kao proces razvoja cjelovitih potencijala pojedinca, onda tjelesne i sportske aktivnosti zastupaju sve bitne odgojne značajke važne za kvalitetan razvoj osobnosti.

Ovaj rad iz pedagoške perspektive analizira konceptualizacije temeljnih psiholoških potreba, tipova motivacije i interpersonalnog motivacijskog stila nastavnika, teorijski razvijene u okviru teorije samoodređenja. Temeljem podataka preuzetih iz relevantnih izvora, determiniran je teorijski okvir razumijevanja iskustva i angažmana učenika u nastavi tjelesne i zdravstvene kulture. Naglasak je na izgrađivanju kvalitetnih međuljudskih odnosa i pružanju potpore razvoju autonomije. Analizirane su teorijske postavke važne za razumijevanje interpersonalnog motivacijskog stila nastavnika tjelesnog odgoja. Stil je prikaz kao bipolarni kontinuum u rasponu od vrlo kontrolirajućeg do vrlo poražavajućeg iz paradigme učenika. Pedagoška komponenta postaje vidljivija kada učitelji koriste više razine regulacije ponašanja što učenici procjenjuju korisnim i/ili prikladnim za zadovoljavanje osobnih osnovnih psiholoških potreba. Razmatra se i praktični aspekt konceptualizacije autonomno podržavajućeg motivacijskog stila nastavnika. Taj stil uključuje uvažavanje perspektive učenika uključujući i izražavanje negativnih reakcija, poticanje unutrašnje motivacije, obrazloženje postavljenih zahtjeva, korištenje informativnih izjava i komunikaciju bez prisile te iskazivanje strpljenja.

Doprinos teorije samoodređenja vidljiv je u aktualizaciji progresivne pedagogije kod određivanja tipova autonomne ekstrinzične motivacije. Potencijal ovog teorijskog okvira prepoznatljiv je i u istraživački utemeljenih preporukama za nastavnike tjelesne i zdravstvene kulture kao i za njihove edukatore. Navedene preporuke mogu biti praktičan instrument i doprinijeti kvaliteti nastavnih aktivnosti.

Ključne riječi: autonomija; samoodređenje; tjelesni odgoj; autonomna motivacija; interpersonalni stil nastavnika.

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Age-related and sports experience-related differences in young football players' mental toughness: pedagogical implications

***Abstract**: Mental toughness is a very important psychological factor for success in sports. It is a multifaceted construct that helps athletes do their best and progress in facing various challenges and obstacles in sports. This research aimed to examine the aspects of young football players' mental toughness and determine possible differences in mental toughness regarding players' age and sports experience. Research was conducted in one big football club in the Republic of Croatia, on a sample of young football players. The Cricket Mental Toughness Inventory (Gucciardi & Gordon, 2009) was applied in the football context. The results showed players' high self-assessments of mental toughness and differences in mental toughness with regard to players' age and years of training only on the subscale resilience. Older football players who train longer showed a lower level of resilience. The obtained results were further discussed in the context of competitiveness, pressure, and focus on sports results, and coaches, parents and pedagogues having a crucial part in the growth of mental toughness. Special emphasis was placed on the pedagogical implications of obtained results and the need for parents, coaches and pedagogues networking in order to provide holistic support to young athletes and, therefore, to help young athletes face difficulties more easily, overcome them, and achieve success.*

***Keywords:** competitiveness, football academy; networking; resilience; stress.*

Introduction

Success in sports is a combination of many factors, one of which is psychological. While looking for an answer to what drives elite athletes to do their best and to thrive even though the odds are far from being in their favour, the thing that almost always comes up is mental toughness. Twenty years after a famous remark by Jones et al. (2002: 205) that mental toughness is "probably one of the most used but least understood terms in applied sport psychology", we can say that there has been some significant quantitative and qualitative research in recent years that started to create a base of empirical research on mental toughness bringing us closer to the comprehension of this term (Connaughton, Hanton, et al., 2008; Gucciardi et al., 2009b). The reason for not having a full understanding of mental toughness can be found in the fact that, since the 1950s, many authors have come up with different definitions of mental toughness, regarding its different aspects.

Depending on their approaches, the authors can be broadly categorised in four areas: the ones that define mental toughness as a personality trait, those that investigate it as a decisive factor for successful performance, those who look at it as a defence mechanism against adversity and those who do the research on mental skill programmes which serve to enhance performance by increasing mental toughness (Connaughton, Hanton, et al., 2008). According to Connaughton, Hanton, et al. (2008), the authors gave no clear definition of mental toughness with their research approaches and failed to provide empirical and scientific bases for their proposed definitions, models and training programmes. Instead, they considered mental toughness to be an important factor for athletic success on the basis of personal belief and coaching experiences.

Middleton et al. (2004) also criticise research on mental toughness regarding the lack of establishment of quality theoretical background. In addition to that, Eubank et al. (2017) still warn of the neglect of environmental, cultural and contextual aspects of mental toughness in research practice. Therefore, it is very difficult to provide a holistic definition of mental toughness. Among distinguished definitions is the one proposed by Jones et al. (2002: 209), based on individual interviews and focus groups with elite athletes who represent different sports:

"Mental toughness is having the natural or developed psychological edge that enables you to, generally, cope better than your opponents with the many demands (competition, training, lifestyle) that sport places on a performer, and, specifically, to be more consistent and better than your opponents in remaining determined, focused, confident, and in control under pressure".

Similar to that definition, based on interviews with football players, Thelwell et al. (2005) concluded that mental toughness does not enable an athlete to *generally*, as Jones et al. (2002) stated, but to always cope better than the opponents. The definition offered by Jones et al. (2002) portrays psychological superiority over the opponent as one of the key elements for success in sports, but it has been criticized on the ground that, instead of defining the concept of mental toughness in terms of what that concept is, it points to the aspects that mental toughness gives us the capacity to do (Gucciardi et al., 2009a; Middleton et al., 2004).

In order to determine the characteristics of a mentally strong person, several studies have been conducted, and some common attributes for mentally tough football players (Thelwell et al., 2005), cricketers (Bull et al., 2005) and elite performers in several other sports (Jones et al., 2002) were pointed out: self-belief, coping positively with setbacks, intrinsic motivation and desire to succeed, ability to have focus when needed, thriving on the pressure of competition, coping with that pressure and accepting it. Using a grounded theory approach and semi-structured interviews with current and former elite athletes and expert coaches in different sports, Middleton et al. (2004) proposed similar characteristics of mentally tough performers including also positive: attitudes, self-perception and comparisons; valuing and focusing on the task and adding one more: task experience. Bull et al. (2005) conclude that the interaction of performer's tough character, attitudes, thinking and environment impacts the development of mental toughness.

As mentioned above, different aspects of mental toughness can be noticed in different authors. Self-belief, task focus or attentional control, motivation, mental self-concept, and coping skills are the most prominent aspects that are considered in relation to overcoming adversity (Middleton et al., 2004). Consequently, it can be concluded that mental toughness should be understood as a multifaceted construct that can be defined as:

"The presence of some or the entire collection of experientially developed and inherent values, attitudes, emotions, cognitions, and behaviours that influence the way in which an individual approaches, responds to, and appraises both negatively and positively construed pressures, challenges, and adversities to consistently achieve his or her goals", as suggested by Coulter et al. (2010: 715).

It is important to point out that both parents and coaches have a crucial part in the growth of mental toughness. Gould et al. (1987, as cited in Weinberg et al., 2011) determined that most coaches perceive mental toughness as the psychological attribute of the most importance in designating success in wrestling. Only few coaches considered themselves successful in the process of their players' mental toughness development. Weinberg et al. (2011) conducted a study that included head coaches from various sports. Key findings are that all coaches looked for mental toughness while recruiting athletes in their teams because they perceived it as very important factor. They stated that practice environments should be simulated like real competition situations, in order to teach players how to cope. Also, they stated that an athlete needs to be fully prepared (emotionally and physically) in order to express characteristics of mental toughness when facing pressure. They thought mental toughness can be built by organising favourable conditions for positive expectations development.

Sports clubs usually have psychologists who help young athletes with emotional preparation. Not all sports clubs have pedagogues, even though they should have them in their counselling team since pedagogues also have an important role in the growth of young athletes' mental toughness and other issues important for sports success. According to the modern understanding of pedagogical science in Croatia (Milat, 2005), pedagogy is defined as a science that studies upbringing, education and training people (competence development process) in a lifelong context whereby upbringing represents the process of forming attitudes and habits, and developing reasonable interests, socio-emotional abilities and skills, education represents the process of acquiring knowledge and developing intellectual skills and abilities, and training represents the process of developing psychomotor abilities and skills. The competence development process, therefore, synthesises processes of upbringing, education and training and enables an individual's holistic development (Milat, 2005).

According to the abovementioned understanding, it is justified to define pedagogy of sport as a science that studies upbringing, education and training people (i.e. competence development process) in a lifelong sports context, and to define pedagogue's work in sports clubs as the one that deals with the issues of upbringing, education and training of young athletes in the field of sports. Having said that, pedagogues can contribute to young athletes' mental toughness through different

pedagogical workshops and counselling to help them cope with challenges and diversities.

Some authors suggest that there may be some developmental differences in mental toughness (Gucciardi, 2009) and that environment can have vital role in its development, especially in developmental and early career stages when athletes can have different positive and/or negative experiences and learn some strategies for coping with those situations that are going to be useful for their future career (Gucciardi et al., 2009b; Thelwell et al., 2005; Weinberg et al., 2011). Since there are diverse results on differences in mental toughness regarding athletes' age and sports experience (Cowden & Meyer-Weitz, 2015; Crust, 2010; Nicholls et al., 2009; Özdemir, 2019; Sheard et al., 2009; Tutte & Reche, 2016), this paper presents research aimed to examine the aspects of young football players' mental toughness and determine possible differences in players' mental toughness regarding their age and sports experience. It was assumed that there are no age-related and sports experience-related differences in young football players' mental toughness.

Methods

Participants

The sample consisted of 87 young football players from one big football club in the Republic of Croatia aged between 12 and 18 (M = 14.47; SD = 2.15) who have been training football for 3 to 12 years (M = 7.99; SD = 2.01). Data on age and sports experience were categorised. For the age variable, the first category referred to younger players aged 12 to 14 (N = 51; 58.6 %) and the second one referred to older players aged 16 to 18 (N = 36; 41.4 %). Also, for the sports experience variable, the first category referred to players with less sports experience who have been training football for 3 to 7 years (n = 37; 43.5 %), and the second one referred to players who have been training football for 8 to 12 years (n = 48; 56.5 %).

Instruments and procedures

Two questionnaires were used in the research: a general data Questionnaire consisting of questions on players' age and years of training and the 15-item *Cricket Mental Toughness Inventory* (CMTI, Gucciardi & Gordon, 2009[5]) translated to Croatian and applied in the football context. Young football players assessed their mental toughness on a scale from 1 (false, 100 % of the time) to 7 (true, 100 % of the time). Higher numerical values represented higher levels of mental toughness, and lower numerical values represented its lower levels.

The overall inventory's subscale results were formed in accordance with the five 3-item subscales, as suggested by the authors that originally designed the CMTI (Gucciardi & Gordon, 2009; Gordon & Gucciardi, 2011: 147): affective intelligence

[5] The Inventory is publicly available for research purposes (http://www.danielgucciardi.com.au/questionnaires.html).

related to "the ability to regulate one's emotions and moods in any circumstance to facilitate performance", desire to achieve related to "an internalized, insatiable desire and commitment to consistently improve one's performance levels and achieve success", resilience related to "the ability to withstand and bounce back from situations in which negative outcomes are experienced (i.e., pressure, adversity, challenge)", attentional control related to "the ability to manage one's attention and focus over extended periods of play involving various distractions", and self-belief related to "an unshakeable self-belief in your physical ability to perform in any circumstance".

Cronbach's alpha values were: affective intelligence (0.64), desire to achieve (0.82), resilience (0.75), attentional control (0.48) and self-belief (0.72). Even though subscales with only three items are expected to have lower alpha values and some authors consider alpha values 0.45 – 0.96 to be sufficient (Taber, 2018), the subscale attentional control was excluded from further analysis due to low Cronbach α (0.48).

Research was conducted online, using Google Forms. Bearing in mind the fact that players were mostly minors, the research was conducted with the permission of parents and football club's Academy management.

Data analysis

IBM SPSS Statistics 25 was used to analyse the data. A descriptive analysis was used for determining metric characteristics and overall scores on the inventory's subscales. The independent samples Mann-Whitney U test was used for testing age-related and sports experience-related differences in young football players' mental toughness.

Results and Discussion

This research aimed to examine aspects of the mental toughness of young football players and determine whether players differ in mental toughness regarding their age and sports experience. The results showed players' high self-assessments of mental toughness on the scale from 1 to 7 (Table 1).

Table 1 *Inventory's subscales: medians and interquartile range (N=87)*

Subscales	C	IQR
Desire to achieve	7.00	6.67 – 7.00
Resilience	6.00	5.33 – 6.67
Self-belief	5.66	4.67 – 6.67
Affective intelligence	5.33	4.33 – 6.00

It was assumed that there were no statistically significant differences in mental toughness of young football players regarding players' age and years of training. The independent samples Mann-Whitney U Test showed that young athletes differ in mental toughness both regarding age and sports experience on one of the inventory's

subscales, particularly in *resilience* (Table 2 and Table 3), so the starting hypotheses were partly rejected.

As presented in Table 2 and Table 3, younger players expressed greater resilience than the older ones, and players with shorter football experience showed greater resilience than those who train football longer. There were no statistically significant age-related and sports experience-related differences in young football players' mental toughness on other subscales: *affective intelligence, desire to achieve,* and *self-belief*.

Table 2 *Independent samples Mann-Whitney U Test for testing possible differences in young football players' mental toughness regarding their age: results*

Subscales	12 – 14 years C (IQR)	16 – 18 years C (IQR)	U	p
affective intelligence	5.33 (4.33 – 6.67)	5.33 (4.33 – 6.00)	875.000	0.709
desire to achieve	7.00 (6.67 – 7.00)	7.00 (6.67 – 7.00)	877.500	0.700
resilience	*6.33 (5.67 – 6.67)*	*5.67 (4.67 -6.33)*	*686.000*	*0.043**
self-belief	5.67 (4.67 – 6.33)	6.33 (4.83 – 6.83)	687.500	0.056

* $p<0.05$

Table 3 *Independent samples Mann-Whitney U Test for testing possible differences in young football players' mental toughness regarding their sports experience: results*

Subscales	3 – 7 years C (IQR)	8 – 12 years C (IQR)	U	P
affective intelligence	5.33 (4.33 – 6.33)	4.33 (5.33 – 6.00)	852.000	0.748
desire to achieve	7.00 (6.67 – 7.00)	7.00 (6.67 – 7.00)	858.000	0.768
resilience	*6.33 (5.67 – 6.67)*	*5.67 (4.67-6.33)*	*666.500*	*0.047**
self-belief	5.67 (4.67 – 6.00)	6.33 (4.83 – 6.67)	699.000	0.092

* $p<0.05$

Özdemir (2019: 48) emphasises that success in sports "necessitates effective performance, which requires the athlete to be prepared technically, tactically, conditionally and psychologically". According to different stakeholders in sports, mental toughness seems to be one of the crucial characteristics needed for an individual to succeed in elite sports (Liew et al., 2019), and some research shows that mentally tougher athletes show superior levels of sports success (Cowden, 2017).

Aim of the research was to examine the aspects of young football players' mental toughness and determine possible differences in mental toughness regarding players' age and sports experience. According to the results, most young football players showed high self-ratings of mental toughness subscales (> 5 on a rating scale of 1 to 7, Table 1), as it was determined in some other research (Crust et al., 2010; Gucciardi, 2009). Such a result was assumed due to the fact that the club's Academy has a team of

psychologists and pedagogues who regularly work with young athletes, which is very important and recommended for every sports club, since physical and psychological preparations for different competitions are considered necessary for demonstrating mental toughness (Weinberg et al., 2011) and achieving success in sports (Özdemir, 2019).

The research started with null hypotheses that there were no age-related and sports experience-related differences in young football players' mental toughness. Both hypotheses were partly rejected due to the results showing that age (Table 2) and years of young football players' training experience (Table 3) are determining factors for mental toughness in one of its dimensions, particularly in *resilience*. Here it should be noticed that in the inventory used in this research, resilience is seen as an aspect of mental toughness, while some authors understand mental toughness and resilience to be the same (Goldberg, 1998, as cited in Connaughton, Hanton, et al., 2008) and some authors consider them to be separate constructs (Cowden et al., 2016). The main difference between mental toughness and resilience can be seen in the fact that, unlike resilience which always refers to dealing with negative aspects such as adversity or stress, mental toughness can refer to dealing with both positive and negative circumstances (Gucciardi et al., 2009a). Also, it should be noted that although young players differed in their self-assessments of resilience regarding their age and training experience, all groups had medians higher that 5 on the scale from 1 to 7, which can be considered high results.

Different studies show diverse relations between mental toughness, resilience, athlete's age and training experience. There are either no differences in athletes' mental toughness regarding their age (Crust, 2010; Özdemir, 2019) or mental toughness grew with higher age and/or sports experience (Cowden & Meyer-Weitz, 2015; Nicholls et al., 2009; Sheard et al., 2009). Resilience grew with higher age (Blanco-Garcia et al., 2021) but it was both positively (González-Hernández et al., 2020) and negatively related to sports experience (Tutte & Reche, 2016). Our results can be explained from the point of practice which shows that older athletes are exposed to more competitiveness, pressure, and focus on sports results than younger ones, which can lead to higher levels of stress. Also, Mimica (2022: 40) determined "significant negative correlation between the pressure and all aspects of mental toughness (affective intelligence, desire to achieve, resilience, attentional control and self-belief)".

Different levels of resilience between younger and older elite athletes depend on different sources of stress and different levels of exposure to stress (Hanton et al., 2005). It is often important for older players with longer sports experience to continuously achieve success in order to get the opportunity to engage in professional sports. Therefore, it is not a surprise that "significant correlation was found between players' age and winning as a source of motivation whereby older players were more motivated to win" (Reić Ercegovac et al., 2020: 5). Moreover:

"Competitions and requirements are higher in older players and may affect motivation itself, whereas in younger players the competitiveness is not as pronounced as in older categories" (Reić Ercegovac et al., 2020: 7).

Bearing that in mind and considering that our sample included players aged 16 to 18 and those who have been training football for 8 to 12 years (assuming they are aiming for professional careers), their somewhat lower resilience can be understood because they are aware that each football match counts and that they must always show their best and win to be noticed as successful players, as Mimica (2022: 40) concludes:

"Pressure in sports can start even before engaging in sports, coming from parents or the environment that puts too much achievement pressure on the child. Moreover, in the context of football, the world popularity of this sport creates the pressure, as this sport ensures very high incomes and is one of the most watched sports in the world."

Thus, if the older players have experienced more setbacks and difficulties on that path than the younger and less experienced players, it is more difficult for them to think optimistically about their future careers and to see setbacks as opportunities for learning instead of failures. Previous studies show that players with shorter training experience show higher level of optimism, which contributes to their resilience (Tutte & Reche, 2016).

Considering the aforementioned, it can be assumed that having a lot of setbacks and adversities on the path to a professional career can cause stress to older football players who train longer because they feel they are lagging behind in overall sports results. According to Fraser-Thomas & Côté (2009), exposure to stress could represent a negative circumstance in youth sports, and stress is negatively correlated with mental toughness and resilience (Cowden et al., 2016). Our point might be best expressed in one participant's statement in the research done by Fraser-Thomas & Côté (2009: 16): "I'm not very good at dealing with failure. When I was younger, I was one of the ones on top. When I got older, everyone started to catch up and it got harder to beat them. I just became a mental wreck".

Resilience is a relevant factor in coping with stress. It has a negative impact on stress and a positive impact on the recovery process (Codonhato et al., 2018). Describing the psychological resilience process for elite athletes, Özdemir (2019: 49) pointed out high expectations of success, fear of failure and competition atmosphere as some of the factors that can cause stress in sports. When facing stress, if an athlete's psychological resilience is low, it can lead to self-confidence problems, high anxiety, low motivation, and eventually low performance (Özdemir, 2019). These elements can thus be included in future research.

Pedagogical implications: suggestions for practice

Since resilience is, as cited in Bryan et al. (2019: 90), seen as: "A dynamic process encompassing the capacity to maintain regular functioning through diverse challenges or to rebound through the use of facilitative resources", we should discuss the importance of those resources. Lee et al. (2013) conclude that we should not reduce risk factors, like anxiety, instead we should focus on protective factors, including internal resources, such as self-esteem, and external factors, such as family and peer support, that enhance one's resilience. It is suggested that athletes should be "gradually

exposed to, rather than shielded from, demanding situations in training and competition in order to learn how to cope" (Crust & Clough, 2011: 21). Internal and external protective factors "support the athlete's feeling of being in a safe social atmosphere" and lead to high motivation, and eventually to high performance (Özdemir, 2019: 49). The results are further seen in the context of the importance of coaches', parents', and pedagogues' role in the growth of mental toughness to help young athletes face difficulties more easily, overcome them, and achieve success. They should encourage enjoyment in the process and apply the strength-based approach to enhancing mental toughness (Gordon & Gucciardi, 2011; Gucciardi et al., 2009b; Gucciardi et al., 2009). Moreover, they should network and act together, consistently, with the aim of providing holistic support to young athletes.

Once shaped, mental toughness should be nurtured and maintained through intrinsic motivation, enjoyment and desire to succeed, social support in sporting and non-sporting environment (parents, coaches, other athletes, etc.) and usage of certain psychological skills (Connaughton et al., 2008). For that purpose, family and educational settings are very important for young athlete's sports success, as well as their sports experience and relationship with the coach and sports club's pedagogue. Gucciardi et al. (2009) emphasise that experiences one has in early childhood have a crucial part in forming a *generalised feature* of mental toughness. Parents can guide and encourage children to understand how they act and think in order to learn from them, exposing children to different experiences and pressures, encouraging them to explore new and different ways of solving problems, and therefore influence the development of children's mental toughness.

Gucciardi et al. (2009) expanded aforementioned findings into football experience in research conducted with coaches. Coaches agreed that early childhood experiences are an important factor changing players' mental toughness from a generalised form to a more sports-specific form. The following is the coach-athlete relationship, with the emphasis on trust and respect towards the coach. Coaches also included their philosophy, referring to the fact that a good coach will see their player as a person and sportsman, and not just as someone who plays in the team. Also, the coaching philosophy can be the most important factor, since it teaches players that being prepared is very important for someone's success and for the achievement of outcomes. One of the key factors is also the training environment, in which coaches simulate real competition situations that are demanding and stressful so that players can develop skills necessary for coping with the pressure and anxiety that occur in the process of competition. Specific strategies that include asking players why they do certain drills and having one-on-one conversations with them are also of high importance. Overall, coaches and parents should encourage young players to believe in themselves, to be focused on their strengths, to always do their best and to make effort and thrive even though the odds may be far from being in their favour. In that context, the football club's pedagogue is as important as parents and coaches in the growth of young athletes' mental toughness. Their pedagogical efforts can help young athletes gain knowledge on mental toughness and develop positive attitudes and habits, socio-emotional, intellectual and psychomotor abilities and skills needed to effectively cope with adversities and setbacks.

Limitations and future research

There are several limitations of the current study. In this research, we investigated self-assessments of mental toughness by using a quantitative cross-sectional design with a small sample from a very specific group, just one football club. Our research included just a few variables: mental toughness, age and training experience. In the future, longitudinal mixed-method research could be conducted, using other instrument(s) designed for the football context. Also, it would be interesting to investigate mental toughness in other individual and group sports. As Cowden and Meyer-Weitz (2015) and Eubank et al. (2017) point to the lack of diverse cultural and ethnic studies on mental toughness, this concept could be investigated by comparing Croatian participants with participants from some other countries to determine cultural differences and similarities. Certain other variables could also be included, like optimism (Tutte & Reche, 2016), motivation, self-esteem and other protective variables important for mental toughness (Lee et al., 2013; Özdemir, 2019), as well as use of strategies for coping with different experiences (Gucciardi et al., 2009b; Thelwell et al., 2005; Weinberg et al., 2011). Specific to our findings, it would be interesting to further question the developmental differences in mental toughness (Gucciardi, 2009) and resilience as an important construct for mentally tough athletes, as well as differences in pedagogical approach in encouraging mental toughness.

Conclusions

Mental toughness is a multifaceted construct which is considered to be essential for one's athletic success. Although it is a very important factor in sports, it is still not completely understood. Many authors came up with different definitions of mental toughness, regarding different aspects of that construct. In this paper, the definition of mental toughness offered by Coulter et al. (2010: 715) is accepted. The aim of our research was to examine the mental toughness of young football players and determine whether players differ in mental toughness with regard to their age and sports experience.

Overall, football players showed high results on inventory subscales: *affective intelligence, desire to achieve, resilience, and self-belief*. The subscale *attentional control* was excluded from further analysis due to low Cronbach α. We started expecting no statistically significant differences in the mental toughness of young football players with regard to players' age and years of training. However, the results of the research showed otherwise. Older players who train longer expressed lower self-assessments on the subscale *resilience*. Results were discussed in the context of competitiveness, pressure, and focus on sports results that older players are exposed to in regard to younger players, and the importance of coaches', parents' and pedagogues' role in the growth of mental toughness. Also, the need for parents, coaches and pedagogues networking to provide holistic support to young athletes is highlighted. This paper contributes to a better comprehension of mental toughness in sports, and the coaches', parents' and pedagogues' crucial roles in the growth of mental toughness, but also suggests the need for future research of this important psychological factor in pedagogical context.

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Różnice w odporności psychicznej młodych piłkarzy związane z wiekiem i doświadczeniem sportowym: implikacje pedagogiczne

Odporność psychiczna jest ważnym czynnikiem psychologicznym, wpływającym na sukces w sporcie. Nie ma jednak zgody co do definicji tego pojęcia, przez co jego propagowanie jest utrudnione. Osoba silna psychicznie określana jest jako jednostka, która jest wewnętrznie zmotywowana, pewna siebie, potrafi stawiać czoła porażkom i presji konkurencji oraz czyni w takich okolicznościach postępy. Celem badań było określenie aspektów odporności psychicznej młodych zawodników i możliwych różnic w ich odporności psychicznej, związanych z wiekiem oraz doświadczeniem sportowym. Wcześniejsze badania wskazują na różne zależności pomiędzy wytrzymałością psychiczną, wiekiem i doświadczeniem sportowym. W związku z tym w niniejszych badaniach przyjęto hipotezę zerową, zgodnie z którą nie spodziewano się odkrycia żadnych różnic związanych z wiekiem i doświadczeniem sportowym, mających wpływ na odporność psychiczną młodych piłkarzy.

Badanie przeprowadzono w jednym dużym klubie piłkarskim w Republice Chorwacji na próbie młodych piłkarzy (N=87). Młodsi gracze mieli od 12 do 14 lat (58,6%), a starsi od 16 do 18 lat (41,4%). Łącznie 43,5% zawodników trenowało krócej (od 3 do 7 lat), a 56,5% dłużej (od 8 do 12 lat). Zastosowano dwa kwestionariusze: jeden mający na celu zbadanie danych na temat wieku i doświadczenia sportowego, a drugi analizujący odporność psychiczną (CMTI, Gucciardi i Gordon, 2009). Badania przeprowadzono za pośrednictwem sieci, za zgodą rodziców i kierownictwa akademii klubu. Ze względu na niski współczynnik α Cronbacha podskala *kontroli uwagi* została wyłączona z dalszej analizy. Do zbadania możliwych różnic w odporności psychicznej zawodników związanych z wiekiem i doświadczeniem sportowym zastosowano test U Manna-Whitneya.

Wyniki wykazały, że następujące podskale odporności psychicznej: *inteligencja afektywna*, *chęć osiągnięcia sukcesu*, *odporność psychiczna* i *wiara w siebie* osiągały mediany wyższe niż 5 (w skali od 1 do 7, przy wyższych wartościach oznaczających większą odporność psychiczną). Różnice związane z wiekiem i doświadczeniem sportowym zidentyfikowano jedynie w podskali *odporności*, w związku z czym hipotezy zerowe zostały częściowo odrzucone. W podskali *odporności* młodsi gracze (w wieku 12-14 lat) uzyskali wyższe wyniki ($C_{12\text{-}14\ lat}$ = 6,33; IQR = 5,67-6,67; $C_{16\text{-}18\ lat}$ = 5,67; IQR = 4,67-6,33; U = 686,000; p = 0,043); to samo dotyczyło respondentów z mniejszym doświadczeniem sportowym (od 3 do 7 lat) ($C_{3\text{-}7\ lat}$ = 6,33; IQR = 5,67-6,67; $C_{8\text{-}12\ lat}$ = 5,67; IQR = 4,67-6,33; U = 666,500; p = 0,047). Wyniki omówiono w kontekście współzawodnictwa, presji i koncentracji na wynikach sportowych przejawianych przez starszych zawodników z większym doświadczeniem sportowym, a także w kontekście znaczącej roli rodziców, trenerów i pedagogów w rozwijaniu odporności psychicznej.

Odporność psychiczna to cecha wieloaspektowa, uważana za kluczową do osiągnięcia sukcesu w sporcie. Ponieważ młodsi gracze z mniejszym doświadczeniem sportowym wykazują większą odporność psychiczną niż starsi gracze z większym doświadczeniem sportowym, w artykule podkreślono ważną rolę rodziców, trenerów i pedagogów w rozwijaniu odporności psychicznej młodych graczy. Przyjęto, że rozwijanie współpracy wpłynie na stworzenie korzystnych warunków dla integralnego rozwoju młodych zawodników oraz pomoc w łatwiejszym stawianiu czoła trudnościom i skutecznym ich pokonywaniu.

Słowa kluczowe: duch współzawodnictwa; akademia piłkarska; tworzenie sieci kontaktów; odporność; stres.

Узрасне и спортско-искуствене разлике у менталној издржљивости младих фудбалера: педагошке импликације

Ментална жилавост је важан психолошки фактор за спортски успех. Ипак, не постоји сагласност око дефиниције овог појма, што отежава давање такве врсте подстицаја. Ментално жилава особа сматра се суштински мотивисаном, самоувереном особом која се позитивно суочава са неуспесима и притиском конкуренције и напредује у таквим околностима. Ово истраживање имало је за циљ да утврди аспекте менталне жилавости младих играча и могуће разлике у њиховој менталној жилавости у односу на узраст и спортско искуство. Претходна истраживања указују на различите односе између менталне жилавости, година старости и спортског искуства. Ово истраживање је стога пошло од нулте хипотезе према којој се код младих фудбалера нису очекивале разлике у менталној жилавости у односу на узраст и спортско искуство.

Истраживање је спроведено у једном великом фудбалском клубу у Републици Хрватској на узорку младих фудбалера (N = 87). Млађи играчи су били узраста од 12 до 14 година (58,6%), а старији од 16 до 18 година (41,4%). Укупно 43,5% играча тренирало је краће (од 3 до 7 година), а 56,5% дуже (од 8 до 12 година). Примењена су два упитника, један за утврђивање података о узрасту и спортском искуству, а други за испитивање менталне жилавости (CMTI, Gucciardi & Gordon, 2009). Истраживање је спроведено електронским путем, уз сагласност родитеља и руководства клупске Академије. Услед ниског Кронбаховог алфа коефицијента, из даље анализе је искључена подскала контроле пажње. Мен-Витнијев *U-test* примењен је да се испитају потенцијалне узрасне и спортско-искуствене разлике у менталној жилавости играча.

Према резултатима, подскале менталне жилавости афективна интелигенција, жеља за успехом, отпорност и вера у себе показују медијане веће од 5 (на скали од 1 до 7, при чему виша вредност значи и већу менталну жилавост). Разлике везане за узраст и спортско искуство установљене су само на подскали отпорност, тако да су нулте хипотезе делимично одбачене. На подскали отпорност, млађи играчи (од 12 до 14 година) показали су боље резултате ($C_{12–14\ years}$ = 6.33; IQR = 5.67 – 6.67; $C_{16–18\ years}$ = 5.67; IQR = 4.67 – 6.33; U = 686.000; p = 0.043), као и они са мање спортског искуства (од 3 до 7 година) ($C_{3–7\ years}$ = 6.33; IQR = 5.67 – 6.67; $C_{8–12\ years}$ = 5.67; IQR = 4.67 – 6.33; U = 666.500; p = 0.047). Такви резултати тумаче се у контексту конкурентности, притисака и усредсређености на спортске резултате код старијих фудбалера са више спортског искуства, као и важне улоге родитеља, тренера и педагога у подстицању менталне жилавости.

Ментална жилавост је вишезначна особина која се сматра кључном за постизање спортског успеха. Будући да млађи играчи са краћим спортским искуством показују већу отпорност од старијих играча са дужим спортским искуством, рад наглашава важну улогу родитеља, тренера и педагога у подстицању менталне

жилавости младих спортиста. Предложено је њихово међусобно умрежавање у циљу стварања повољних услова за интегрални развој младих играча, као и ради њиховог лакшег суочавања са потешкоћама и ефикаснијег превазилажења истих.

Кључне речи: конкурентност, фудбалска академија, умрежавање, отпорност, стрес.

Razlike u mentalnoj čvrstoći mladih igrača s obzirom na dob i duljinu treniranja: pedagoške implikacije

Mentalna čvrstoća jedan je od psiholoških čimbenika koji su važni za uspjeh u sportu. Unatoč tome, nema suglasja oko određenja tog konstrukta što otežava i proces njegova poticanja. Vjeruje se da je mentalno čvrsta osoba intrinzično motivirana osoba koja vjeruje u sebe te umije pozitivno se suočavati s neuspjesima i pritiskom konkurencije i napredovati u takvim okolnostima. Cilj ovog istraživanja bio utvrditi aspekte mentalne čvrstoće mladih igrača i moguće razlike u mentalnoj čvrstoći s obzirom na njihovu dob i duljinu treniranja. Dosadašnja istraživanja upućuju na različite odnose mentalne čvrstoće, dobi i duljine treniranja, stoga se krenulo od nultih hipoteza prema kojima nisu očekivane razlike u mentalnoj čvrstoći s obzirom na dob i duljinu treniranja mladih nogometaša.

Sudionici istraživanja su bili mladi igrači (N = 87) iz jednog većeg nogometnog kluba u Republici Hrvatskoj. Mlađi igrači su bili u dobi od 12 do 14 (58.6 %), a stariji od 16 do 18 godina (41.4 %). Igrača koji kraće treniraju (od 3 do 7 godina) bilo je 43.5 %, a onih koji treniraju dulje (od 8 do 12 godina) 56.5 %. Primijenjena su dva upitnika, jedan za ispitivanje podataka o dobi i duljini treniranja i drugi za ispitivanje mentalne čvrstoće (CMTI, Gucciardi & Gordon, 2009). Istraživanje je provedeno *online*, uz dozvolu roditelja i uprave Akademije kluba. Zbog niske vrijednosti Cronbachova alfa koeficijenta (0,48), iz daljnje analize isključena je subskala *kontrola pažnje*. Mann-Whitney U test je primijenjen za ispitivanje mogućih razlika u mentalnoj čvrstoći mladih igrača s obzirom na njihovu dob i duljinu treniranja.

Rezultati su pokazali da su na subskalama mentalne čvrstoće *emocionalna inteligencija, želja za uspjehom, otpornost i samopouzdanje* središnje vrijednosti iznad 5 (na skali od 1 do 7 pri čemu viša vrijednost znači veću mentalnu čvrstoću). Razlike u mentalnoj čvrstoći s obzirom na dob i duljinu treniranja su utvrđene samo na subskali *otpornosti*, stoga su nulte hipoteze dijelom odbačene. Na subskali *otpornosti* više rezultate iskazali su mlađi igrači (od 12 do 14 godina) ($C_{12\text{-}14\ godina}$ = 6.33; IQR = 5,67 – 6.67; $C_{16\text{-}18\ godina}$ = 5.67; IQR = 4,67 – 6.33; U = 686.000; p = 0,043) i oni koji kraće treniraju (od 3 do 7 godina) ($C_{3\text{-}7\ godina}$ = 6.33; IQR = 5.67 – 6.67; $C_{8\text{-}12\ godina}$ = 5.67; IQR = 4.67 – 6.33; U = 666.500; p = 0.047). Rezultati su objašnjeni u kontekstu kompetitivnosti, pritiska i usmjerenosti na sportske rezultate starijih igrača koji dulje treniraju, kao i važnih uloga koje u poticanju mentalne čvrstoće imaju roditelji, treneri i pedagozi.

Mentalna čvrstoća konstrukt je koji sadrži više aspekata i smatra se ključnim za postizanje sportskog uspjeha. S obzirom na to da mlađi igrači koji kraće treniraju pokazuju veću otpornost od starijih igrača koji dulje treniraju, istaknuta je važna uloga roditelja, trenera i pedagoga u poticanju mentalne čvrstoće mladih igrača. Predloženo je njihovo umrežavanje s ciljem stvaranja uvjeta povoljnih za poticanje cjelovitog razvoja mladih sportaša i pomaganja igračima u lakšem suočavanju s teškoćama i njihovom učinkovitom prevladavanju.

Ključne riječi: konkurentnost; nogometna akademija; umrežavanje; otpornost; stres.

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A proposal of a multidimensional model for the assessment of OER quality standards

Abstract: *The increase in digital Open Educational Resources (OER) repositories as support to formal, informal and lifelong learning emphasises the relevance and topicality of the OER quality issue. The aim of the paper is to propose a multidimensional model for evaluating OER quality standards in Serbia as support to the development of quality digital content for online and distance learning. The analysis of national and international policies and practices supporting the implementation of quality OER was followed by the analyses of relevant literature on OER evaluation and of the relationship between quality standards of printed textbooks, e-supplements, digital textbooks and OER. Using the method of modelling and case studies, we came up with a proposal for a multidimensional model for evaluating quality standards. These standards should be formulated in a way that clearly represents the quality threshold that every OER must "cross", without compromising on educational materials that can be harmful to students' learning and development. Such quality standards, as the proposed multidimensional model and evaluation instrument, should provide a framework, but also leave enough freedom for authors to design creative didactic-methodological-technological solutions that will facilitate and improve the teaching and learning process.*

Keywords: *Open Educational Resources (OER), quality standards, multidimensional model, education, learning.*

Introduction

Information and communication technologies (ICT) represent a great potential for effective, equitable and inclusive access to *Open Educational Resources* (OER) and their use, adaptation and sharing. They can make OER available for everyone, anytime and anywhere, including people with disabilities and individuals from marginalised or disadvantaged groups. They can also help meet the needs of individual students and effectively promote gender equality, encourage innovative pedagogical, didactic and methodological approaches, and support lifelong learning.

Open Educational Resources are available to everyone – teachers, preschool teachers, students, government bodies, parents, education service providers and institutions, education support staff, teacher trainers, education policy makers, cultural institutions (such as libraries, archives and museums) and their users, ICT infrastructure providers, researchers, institutes, civil society organisations (including professional and student associations), publishers, public and private sectors, intergovernmental organisations, copyright holders and authors, media and broadcasting groups and funding bodies.

Additionally, OER can be integrated into the teaching and learning process within all the three models of educational work organisation which integrate digital technologies into the teaching and learning process: direct work at school with occasional use of digital technology in class; online teaching that is completely conducted via the Internet (most commonly by applying a learning the management system); and hybrid teaching that combines face-to-face and online teaching. Therefore, OER should be viewed as collections of alternative sources of educational materials integrated as needed into a planned, continuous and integrated set of educational activities within the framework of all the three models.

The main feature of the OER ecosystem is promoting society's determination to consider knowledge as a public good and encouraging organisations and individuals to publish it. Although the OER concept is not new, there is a clear need for innovative forms of support for OER creation and for the development of an empirical database on the effectiveness of OER. In all of this, the key question is how to ensure the quality of OER, i.e. what are the areas of standards and indicators that can ensure the quality of *Open Educational Resources*.

National OER policy and practice in the Republic of Serbia

Bearing in mind the UNESCO Recommendations on open educational resources from November 2019 adopted at the 40th session of the General Assembly, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia strives to support the development of the model of open educational resources for effective, inclusive and fair access to quality educational materials. In the education system of the Republic of Serbia, there is a noticeable trend of increase in the number of OER, as well as increase in the number of employees in education engaged in this topic through various projects. However, there is also a noticeable lack of solutions or capacity that would ensure quality and monitor effects in the context of the analysis of students' achievement in education. In the development of open educational resources current focus is still in its first, i.e., early stage, where the emphasis is on creation of digital educational materials. The next stage will be aimed at increasing their availability, application and measurement of effects, as well as establishing an ecosystem of open educational practices.

Building an ecosystem of open educational resources means defining measures and implementing activities that will, among other things, influence the increase in the number of quality open educational resources, influence the increase in the degree of application of existing open educational resources (better searchability, greater visibility, new functionalities, higher quality resources), and better integration of resources in the process of teaching and learning, especially in the process of online and hybrid teaching. Ecosystem also means designing new measures through a consultative process with stakeholders to improve the quality of digital education and education in general. The principle on which all these activities and measures are based is the principle of openness in education.

A number of important repositories of open educational resources have been developed in this area so far. They contain learning objects intended for pre-university education, such as: "Creative school", "Digital classroom", "Learned at the seminar – applied in practice", "Examples of successful extracurricular activities". , "NOP - National Education Portal", video lessons, "My School" Moodle portal, "Digital Class", "CASA-NARA", "Magic in the hands of the teacher", "Net-classroom – Loop"[6].

Recommendations and guidelines have been published: *Open educational resources*, Institute for the evaluation of quality of education and upbringing, 2022 (Gajin et al., 2022). Development of the Digital Open Educational Resources[7] repository has begun using the DSpace software, which will contain collections of repositories intended for pre-university education.

Initiatives related to the improvement of the OER quality assurance process are deemed a priority. Quality assurance is considered a key component of the development of open educational resources, to ensure that the resources meet certain standards and are reliable, efficient and accessible to students.

International education policies and practices that encourage implementation of quality open educational resources – evaluation models

Open Educational Practices which encourage the creation, use and reuse of high-quality open educational materials and innovative pedagogical models have been part of educational policies for over a decade. The idea of OER is spread through a series of declarations, statements and initiatives such as: Guidelines for Open Educational Resources in Higher Education (UNESCO, 2011); The Paris Declaration on Open Educational Resources (UNESCO, 2012); Opening up education: Innovative teaching and learning for all through new technologies and open educational resources (European Commission, 2013), The Hague Declaration on Knowledge Discovery in the Digital Age (Hague Declaration, 2014).

It is necessary to point out that UNESCO adopted *Guidelines for Open Educational Resources*[8] at the annual assembly in Paris, 2019, which further promote the concept of education for all and support development and sharing of open educational resources for teaching and learning, which are of invaluable benefit to students, teachers and researchers alike. At the international level, the Guidelines promote creation, use and adaptation of quality open educational resources. In addition to the

[6] Original titles: „Креативна школа ", „Дигитална учионица ", „Сазнали на семинару - применили у пракси", „Примери успешних ваннаставних активности ", „НОП - Национални образовни портал ", видео лекције, „Моја школа "Moodle портал, „Дигитални час ", „CASA-NARA ", „Магија у рукама наставника ", „Нет-кабинет – Петља "(translator's note).

[7] Original acronym: ДООР (t/n).

[8] https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/recommendation-open-educational-resources-oer

above, they emphasise the importance of adopting policies that not only support open educational resources, but also encourage the development of sustainable models of open educational resources.

The goal of creating repositories containing OER is to provide long-term access to the management of digital resources, for the benefit of current and future users, design of which is in accordance with the adopted conventions and standards in order to ensure continuous management and quality of resources, easy access to materials, security, as well as establishing a methodology for evaluating systems that meet expectations regarding relevance and reliability.

Observed in international frameworks, the ways of evaluating open educational resources for the purpose of quality assurance are usually implemented through three models (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2022): the top-down model, the model at the institutional level and the bottom-up model,

The top-down model implies the evaluation of OER by institutions towards users. This model is present in countries such as China, South Korea, Turkey, India and Canada (several provinces have made joint regulations), whose mechanisms for ensuring the quality of OER are derived from national regulations.

The model at the institutional level (Miao et al., 2019: 35-37) implies independent institutional guidelines for ensuring the quality of OER and is more closely related to the overall institutional strategy. This model is implemented at the University of South Africa (UNISA), University of Edinburgh (Scotland), University of Louvain (Belgium), Delft University of Technology (Netherlands), and Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) in Calgary (Canada). Some state colleges in America are developing a study programme, called a Z degree (zero-textbook-cost degree), which students acquire by learning from OER. This initiative seeks to reduce attrition and increase the number of graduates by engaging faculties to redesign study and degree programmes by replacing original teaching materials with OER. The short-term goal is to reduce costs for students and accelerate their progress through university, but an important secondary goal is to change the culture of institutions so that systems and structures are created to better connect the curriculum and open pedagogy with updated learning outcomes. Another example is the Community College Consortium for Open Educational Resources, with members in twenty-seven US states and two Canadian provinces. Their mission is to promote the adoption of open education to improve teaching and learning at universities of social and technical studies. Students should have equal access to high-quality educational materials to achieve their academic goals.

The bottom-up model starts with individuals working on OER. These initiatives are project-based, and their development begins on a smaller scale with pilot projects. The analysis of what has been achieved after completion opens up the space for recognising and solving the emerging and discovered challenges, which should be overcome in the following projects in order to enable further progress of OER development. The German system has experimented with the value of OER by promoting projects and pilots (Orr et al., 2017). It is assumed that the success of these

projects could lead to adaptation of a political framework to ensure greater integration of OER into the education system.

A good example of development of open educational practice through quality partnership is the Open Education Practices Scotland – OEPS[9] project, led by the Open University in Scotland and financially supported by the Scottish Funding Council. While planning the development strategy of the OEPS project, it was necessary to take into account several key factors: engaging in open educational practice from the perspective of social justice; the possibility of building a quality network for the application of digital technologies in learning by experts from Scottish universities and teachers who are organised around the concept of Open Scotland; the absence of points of contact between educational technologist practitioners and the wider educational community; the existence of a small number of licensed open courses; ignorance of examples of good open educational practice and very few users of open online courses and open educational materials; the need to focus on pedagogy rather than technology; the necessity of working in the formal and informal sector, in order to establish good practice (Cannell, 2017).

It should be noted that the OEPS project rests on a partner with rich experience – the Open University in Great Britain, which is known for creating high-quality educational resources. It has maintained a reputation as the leader for development of platforms with open educational materials such as: OpenLearn and FutureLearn.

Another fruitful partnership, within the OEPS project, was a partnership to design resources that support individuals with Parkinson's disease and their families. This partnership encouraged the development of accessible educational resources ranging from printed materials, online communication, to reflective learning materials and open educational badges that were later used within the project as a verified indicator of interest, progress, knowledge, skills and abilities within academic or work context. The results of this three-year project (2014-2017) include: work with 68 organisations across Scotland (universities, colleges, schools, businesses, unions, organisations) through 79 workshops, 44 presentations, 4 one-day forums, a seminar, a two-day symposium; fifteen new open education licensed courses created by a number of different partners and open education badges for almost all courses.

The findings of the OEPS project (Cannell, 2017) indicate that open educational resources represent a new opportunity for raising the quality of student-centred education (constructivist approach), both in formal and informal education. Furthermore, the necessity is emphasised for a clearer inclusion of open education and open licensing in professional education of teachers, along with need for a critical look at the challenges in this area.

One of the most famous leaders in the publication of open educational resources, since 2001, is MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology). Their educational resources confirm the quality and relevance of this institution, but also its contribution to spreading knowledge and increasing the availability of education. OER not only

[9] Available at: https://www.open.edu/openlearncreate/course/index.php?categoryid=24

allow individual educational modules to be completed and improved with additional materials, but they very often allow reviewing and improving or even establishing new quality educational programmes, and even entire study programmes and study systems.

Open access in Croatia dates back to 1997, when the CROSBI repository of scientific papers was founded. The Croatian Declaration on Open Access was adopted in 2012. Today, there are more than 130 institutional, 4 university and 2 national open access repositories in Croatia. They are available in three systems: Directory of Open Access Repositories (OpenDOAR): 120 repositories; Aggregator of Croatian repositories and archives (Ara): 142 repositories; and Digital academic archives and repositories (Dabar): 137 repositories (SRCE, 2023).

Under the auspices of the Croatian Ministry of Education and Science, CARNET was the host of the project for the construction of digital educational resources Edutorij. This repository of digital educational resources was created as part of the *e-School project: Establishing a system for the development of digitally mature schools* (2015-2022), which enables the publication, access, storage and exchange of digital educational resources (manuals, textbooks, books, home readers, practice books, workbooks, atlases, online courses, educational games, learning scenarios and lesson plans, lectures and scripts, final and seminar papers, educational modules, books of proceedings, journals, as well as all other materials related to education and syllabuses), created primarily by teachers and students of Croatian primary and secondary schools, but also by experts from other educational institutions. In addition to those materials, Edutory also contains educational resources created on other CARNET systems and platforms, as well as those created within the activities of publishing houses. The users of Edutorij are primarily teachers and students of Croatian primary and secondary schools, but also employees of faculties, institutes, as well as all those who have an electronic identity in the AAI@EduHr system. It is necessary for authors, if they want their educational resources to be adequately presented, recognisable and easily accessible to other users, to enter as much metadata as possible, which enables the fastest and easiest way to reach the resources the user is looking for during the search.

For this reason, a unique system of awarding digital award badges was designed and established, which visually convey how well and into detail an individual author has described their materials. The badges that the author can win are bronze (50% metadata entered), silver (70%) and gold (90%). The system of awarding badges is visible when entering new material and is displayed in the form of a scale marked with percentages won. Given that some metadata is entered automatically, all authors start with the already won 37%, and for each new entered data (mandatory, recommended or optional), additional points are won according to the following criteria: attaching the material and entering mandatory metadata (50%); entering all recommended metadata (30%) and entering optional metadata (20%).

Evaluation of the quality of the resources in the Edutorij repository is conducted by peer review. The repository allows the author to send their material for evaluation

upon publication to other experts in the same field, i.e. to teachers who indicated in their profiles that they teach those subjects. Participation in the professional evaluation process is only possible for school employees, as well as teachers who are registered outside the AAI@EduHr system, such as retired teachers. After reviewing the material, evaluators (peer reviewers) can write their comments to the author (who may or may not act upon them) and give the educational material their rating in stars for three areas: 1) expertise; 2) pedagogical aspect; 3) use of technology. Publishers, students and other users of the repository cannot give a professional rating[10].

The relationship between quality standards of textbooks, electronic supplementary materials, digital textbooks and open educational resources

The education policy in the Republic of Serbia clearly defines and regulates the market of textbooks and textbook sets, manuals and teaching materials, supplementary materials and teaching aids for primary and secondary schools. The Rulebook on textbook quality standards and instructions on their use (Official Gazette of RS, No. 42/2016 and 45/2018) determine the quality standards that must be met by textbooks, electronic supplements, manuals and teaching materials, additional teaching aids, didactic and didactic game-based materials, which are approved for use in pre-school, primary and secondary education, based on the legally prescribed procedure.

The Rulebook defines five quality standards:

1. The content of the textbook is relevant for the curriculum implementation;
2. The textbook encourages student development and enables independent learning;
3. The textbook is designed in accordance with didactic-methodological requirements;
4. The language of the textbook is appropriate and functional; and
5. The visual, graphic and technical design of the textbook make it easy to use.

Each of the mentioned standards is accompanied by quality indicators. The number of indicators per standard ranges from five to nine. The quality of textbooks is assessed based on the fulfilment of quality standards. If one of the indicators is not satisfied, the textbook will not be approved by the evaluator.

The electronic supplement, as stated by the Textbooks Act, accompanies the textbook, which means that it is not an independent teaching resource and should not be equated with a textbook that is provided in an electronic medium. Its content, volume and functions can be very different. The author has freedom in creating the supplement (not all contents from the textbook need to be represented), but the way it is prepared must ensure interactivity and maximum usability of all the advantages of the medium in terms of encouraging independence in learning, checking and expanding knowledge and skills, as well as creative work.

[10] https://edutorij.e-skole.hr/share/page/static?pageId=faq

Textbooks Act stipulates that the approved textbook must be adapted for students with developmental and physical disabilities in terms of content, font or format. The method of adjustment is prescribed by the minister. The adapted textbook is evaluated based on the fulfilment of textbook quality standards and the fulfilment of the additional indicators. For children and students with developmental and physical disabilities, the textbook is prepared in accordance with their needs and capabilities. To carry out educational work with visually impaired children and students, the textbook is issued in Braille, in electronic form or in adapted formats (page content printed enlarged, photos processed for the needs of visually impaired students, photographic enlargements, relief drawings, diagrams, maps, sound records or other forms or mediums).

Unlike printed textbook, digital textbook is a didactically designed teaching tool in digital form, which is used on a digital device in educational work, and which enables students' independent knowledge construction, taking into account their characteristics. Pešikan and Lalović (2023:23) propose six categories of standards for digital textbooks and supporting digital educational materials:

1. Textbook and curriculum (the textbook contributes to the achievement of the general goals of academic and pedagogical education; textbook is aligned with the goals and outcomes of the syllabus; content of the textbook is up-to-date and adequately presented; volume of the textbook is adequate, there is a balance between depth and breadth in content construction);
2. Structure and didactic organisation of the textbook content (textbook contains instructions for use; textbook content is clearly organised; textbook content is coherent; keywords, key concepts and unfamiliar words are marked in the text);
3. Learning and the textbook (textbook represents a model of successful learning, and it guides and directs the student in the learning process; textbook offers a variety of learning activities, which are in alignment with goals and outcomes of the subject and students' developmental possibilities, competencies and prior knowledge; student monitoring of their own progress and achievement check are ensured);
4. Language of the textbook (textbook is written in accordance with grammar and spelling norms of the standard literary language; textbook is adapted to age and language abilities of the students);
5. Pedagogical use of digital functions (interactive activities and multimedia content encourage and facilitate learning; there is an appropriate balance between text and multimedia content and/or interactive tasks); and
6. Technical and functional requirements (digital textbook must be compatible with computer devices and modern operating systems; all hyperlinks are valid and all copyright respected; digital textbook is easy and simple for students to use; other technical and technological requirements of the digital textbook work well).

Pešikan and Lalović (2023: 64) state that the purpose of standards and quality assessment procedures for both *digital textbooks* and *supplementary educational digital materials* is to answer the question whether, and to what extent, they contribute to learning and achieving the learning goals of the subject for which they are intended, i.e. whether and to what extent they support and encourage students' (independent) knowledge construction. That is why the purpose of quality standards in this area is not to look for mistakes, but rather to eliminate those mistakes that impede the learning process in a way that can call into question the basic purpose of these or any teaching resources – quality teaching and learning.

Although open educational resources are not the same as a digital textbook, they share certain pedagogical implications – they can be used in the teaching and learning process if they are adequately aligned with the goals and outcomes of the subject for which they are intended, i.e. if their content is such that they encourage and support the construction of students' knowledge. Bearing the same basic goal in mind, we believe that some other postulates of digital textbooks quality can also be applied to the practice of quality assurance related to open educational resources.

Namely, OER quality standards should not be a measure of ideal OER. These standards should be formulated in a way to clearly represent the quality *threshold* that every OER must "cross", without compromising on educational materials that can be harmful to students' learning and development. Such quality standards provide a framework, but also leave enough freedom for the authors to design creative didactic-methodological-technological solutions that will facilitate and improve the teaching and learning process. In reference literature (Gajin et al. 2022) which focuses on the OER quality assurance in repositories, the meta-analysis by Atens and Haveman (2013) is often reinterpreted. Google Scholar[11] provides 92 citations of this meta-analysis in which the cited authors provide an overview of quality assurance indicators from 80 analysed OER repositories.

In Table 1, which we reworked for the purposes of this report, we can see a set of ten quality assurance indicators with descriptions derived from examples of good practice (which promote openness and key principles (themes) such as: search, sharing, reuse and collaboration).

In order for the existing OER to be found and used, they need to be easy to search and download. Since the materials are stored in repositories, the search and retrieval functionality (within the interface, via an OER aggregation service, or via a search engine such as Google) is crucial. Sharing is the activity of education personnel who convert learning resources into OER and share it by uploading it to a repository. The role of repositories is not only to enable sharing of resources, but also to facilitate and encourage sharing. Reuse of resources must be allowed and simple. Given that, it is necessary to work on the improvement of educational practice, i.e. on reduction of obstacles and resistance. We can say that a quality OER repository is not only a base of online resources, but a place for collaboration: knowledge exchange, evaluation

[11] More details: https://scholar.google.com/scholar?cites=6947164504061196 33&as_sdt=2005&sciodt=0,5&hl=sr, [Retrieved: 28/11/2023].

and co-creation. Through the possibility of social interaction, OER can be viewed, commented on and rated.

In Table 1, the social characteristics (DC) are those related to the tools that enable social interaction within the repository, while technical characteristics (TC) refer to the design and functionality of the repository interface (Atenas, Havemann, 2013).

Table 1 *OER repositories quality assurance indicators (Adapted according to: Atenas, Havemann 2013)*

Indicators of Quality Assurance	Description	Principles	DC, TC
Featured resources	Ability of featuring resources that are potentially of high interest to teachers because of their design or content.	Search, Share, Collaborate	DC
User evaluation tools	Tools for the resources to be evaluated by users aiming to rate a resource.	Collaborate	DC
Peer Review	Peer review as policy to revise and analyse each resource to ensure its quality.	Collaborate	DC
Authorship	Analyse if the repositories include the name of the author(s) of the resources.	Search, Reuse	DC
Keywords	Methodically describe the resources to facilitate the retrieval of the materials within certain specific subject areas.	Search	TC
Metadata	Introduce standardised formats of metadata (Dublin Core - IEEE LOM - OAIPMH) for interoperability	Search, Share, Reuse	TC
Multilingual support	Design the interface in a multilingual way to widen the scope of users by allowing them to perform search of content in different languages.	Search, Share, Reuse, Collaborate	TC
Social Media support	Introduce social media tools to enable users to share the resources within social media platforms.	Search, Share, Reuse, Collaborate	DC, TC
Creative Commons Licences	Specify the type of Creative Commons Licence per resource or give information about the specific type of licence for all the resources.	Search, Reuse, Collaborate	TK
Source Code or Original Files	Allow downloading the original files or source code of resources so they can be adapted.	Reuse, Collaborate	TK

We find the quality indicators from Table 1 unique compared to the quality indicators of printed and digital textbooks, as well as e-supplements.

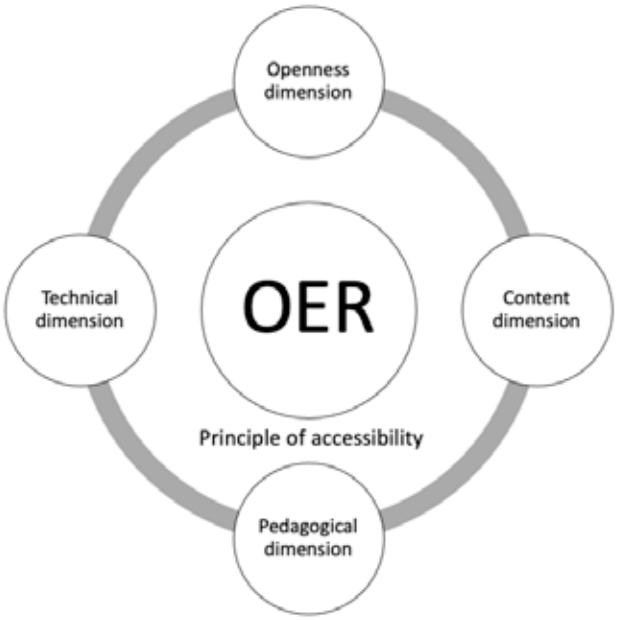
The OER quality verification, with the elements that we can see above, is also mentioned by other authors related to printed and digital textbooks. Thus, Elias and

colleagues (Elias et al, 2020) distinguish: the structure of educational material (clear taxonomy, simple navigation, adaptability of the structure, the possibility of finding material); learning content (text quality, content compatibility with different devices, accessibility of presented content, multilingual content) and self-evaluation (there is content for self-evaluation; availability of answers, average number of questions related to content, e.g. number of questions for each learning objective).

We can say that we share the opinion with some authors who consider that concept related to the construction of software quality standards (Almendro & Silveira, 2018), mobile applications (Ristić & Blagadanić, 2017), printed and digital textbooks and textbook supplements can be one of the signposts in the process of construction of OER quality assurance.

Proposal of a multidimensional model of OER quality standards

Based on the analysis of the existing policy and practice of OER quality assurance, the relevant scientific and professional literature on the evaluation of OER (Velázquez, according to: Almendro & Silveira, 2018), the analysis of the relationship between the quality standards for printed textbooks, e-supplements, digital textbooks and OER, a multidimensional model of OER quality standards was created, as shown in Graph 1 It consists of the: 1) openness dimension; 2) content dimension; 3) pedagogical dimension and 4) technical dimension. It is important to underline that each of these dimensions rely on the accessibility dimension. This multidimensional model is inspired by a graphical representation of technical, pedagogical and content dimensions of OER (Velázquez, according to: Almendro & Silveira, 2018).



Graph 1 *Multidimensional representation of OER quality standards*

Openness dimension

Key issues regarding the dimension of openness include free access to educational materials that are available to all (Inamorato dos Santos et. al., 2016), openness of the material, licensing system and authorship, metadata description of material, user feedback, keyword search enabled (Atenas & Havemann, 2013).

Educational materials can be: 1) individual educational digital materials in digital format (mp3; mp4; doc/docx; pdf; ppt/pptx/pps; jpg; png; xsl/slsx, etc.) which include recordings of lectures, lecture notes, learning materials, textbooks, individual modules, workbooks, online tutorials, interactive tasks, lesson plans, charts, tests, or any other materials prepared for learning and teaching purposes, and 2) entire educational online programmes (massive open online courses) available through university consortia such as: Coursera, Udacity and others.

Openness represents the freedom to manage educational resources. There are five levels of openness, known in literature (Bliss, & Tuiloma, 2022) as the 5Rs:

- Retain – make, own, and control a copy of the resource (e.g., download and keep your own copy);
- Revise – edit, adapt, and modify a copy of the resource (e.g., translate into another language);
- Remix – combine an original or revised copy of the resource with other existing material to create something new (e.g., make a mashup);
- Reuse – use an original, revised, or remixed copy of the resource publicly (e.g., on a website, in a presentation, in a class);
- Redistribute – share copies of an original, revised, or remixed copy of the resource with others (e.g., post a copy online or give one to a friend).

The licensing system being increasingly used worldwide for the publication of open educational resources is the Creative Commons (CC) licences. They provide rights of use and enable distribution, modification and redesign of the author's work under several conditions: naming the original author (BY); sharing with no commercial profit (NC); sharing as no derivative copies (ND); sharing alike, i.e. under the same conditions as the original work (SA); dedicating a work to the public domain (CC0). Compliance with the mentioned attributes is mandatory if they are included in the licence. CC BY is *the most liberal* licence for the user as the only condition for using the work is to credit the original author. Licences with the ND (no derivatives) attribution do not permit any adaptations of the material itself, so a material with this attribute is not considered OER. The openness of the material and the fact that it can be openly and freely accessed via OER does not make the material less valuable and does not mean that its creation was not planned or based on relevant sources. An example of important material publication under the CC0 – public domain licence is the publication of the Europeana multimedia library (https://www.europeana.eu/en), which published 20 million records as public domain in 2012 (Kučina-Softić & Rako, 2018: 135).

Gathering feedback from students and teachers who use OER can help identify areas for improvement and ensure that resources meet their needs. This feedback can be used to revise OER and improve its quality over time. An indicator of quality assurance (Atenas & Havemann, 2013) is derived from OER integrated evaluation tools (evaluation by users) and an applied assessment policy (Peer Reviews) by professional members of the public.

Content dimension

Through its clear and logical structure, digital OER should contribute to the achievement of learning outcomes of a subject. Texts, images, graphics, 3D graphics, audio recordings, video recordings or animations must serve the purpose of presenting the content in the best possible way and understanding it alike. Links and QR codes leading to the internet content must be active and functional, and aligned with the course syllabus. The software in which OER content is created must support functions of the operating system (e.g. zoom, text-to-speech, etc.) and comply with assistive technology in order for the OER to be accessible. If a textual description (narration) is added to non-textual OER elements, such as images, OER will be even more approachable.

Pedagogical dimension

OER should be designed bearing specific pedagogical principles in mind, such as active learning, learner-centeredness, and engagement. These principles help ensure that students are able to interact with the resources in a desired way and achieve their learning goals.

The pedagogical dimension of OER includes instructional design (based on learning theories: behaviourism, cognitivism, constructivism, connectivism) that can be decisive for the quality of OER. When designing OER, it is desirable to apply some of the instructional design elements (e.g. the ADDI model or the IDL model). When designing OER, one should keep in mind the target group of OER users (pupils, students, employees) and how to best support them.

Technical dimension

OER should be developed to meet specific technical standards, such as interoperability and metadata standards (Dublin Core, IEEE LOM, OAI-PMH), which help ensure that resources can be easily shared and found by students and teachers. Technical dimension includes the high quality of multimedia devices implemented in OER, as well as simple and transparent navigation in interactive programmed OER.

There are many software solutions available for creating open educational resources. These can be:

1. Learning management systems, which allow teachers to create online courses. The examples are: Moodle, Office 365 Platform, Canvas, and Blackboard. These platforms, now increasingly based on AI tools, can also be used to create and share OER with students.

2. Educational material management systems allow teachers to manage digital material, such as text, images, audio and video records. Examples are WordPress and Drupal. These platforms can be used to create and share OER.
3. Authoring tools such as Articulate Storyline, Adobe Captivate, and Lectora also enable the creation of OER.
4. Social media platforms can also be used to share OER and interact with students. However, the application of these software solutions raises issues of privacy, security and data management, so they are not recommended for the educational community.

The choice of software solution will depend on specific needs and goals. For professional applications, specialised repository platforms are most commonly used, such as e.g. DSpace. It is an open-source software solution that has a number of functionalities that repositories imply, including the possibility of automatic metadata exchange in the Dublin Core specification via the OAI-PMH protocol.

Moodle is a popular open-source learning management system that also includes DSpace integration. Teachers can use Moodle to create and share OER, and students can access materials directly from the Moodle platform. Apart from that possibility, MoodleNet is also in use as a shared open code platform that can be used in two ways – as a central MoodleNet service or by setting up your own instance of MoodleNet. The central MoodleNet service contains OERs that are directly added to it by individuals or institutions that develop them, as well as OERs from other instances of the MoodleNet platform that are connected with it, therefore creating the potential to use these resources in millions of courses with one click. MoodleNet is an integral part of the Moodle ecosystem and is closely related to the Moodle learning management system, and its version for business users (Moodle Workplace). On the other hand, it can also be used completely independently in combination with any other system for developing/displaying educational materials because resources are easily retrieved and referenced from it.

Another software solution compatible with DSpace software is Islandora. It allows teachers to manage and share OER, and includes functions such as metadata management, version control and access control.

Principle of accessibility

It is necessary to ensure that open educational resources are available to all students, including those with additional educational needs. If the goal of OER is to be widely available, then accessibility considerations must be at the forefront during the development stages. Based on a literature source (Chambers, 2022: 6), ten key elements were selected that should be taken into account when developing accessible OER.

1. **Software used to create the OER** – Compatible with assistive technology; Does not disable features (i.e., zoom, text-to-speech) of the computer's operating system.

2. **Non-Text items/ Images** – Include text descriptions for all images/non-text items.
3. **Use of colour** – Use alternative means (i.e., pattern) rather than colour to differentiate content where needed.
4. **Text –** Ensure accurate optical character recognition (OCR) for all text, so that it can be accessed by screen readers, PDF.
5. **Format** – Ensure content can be read by a range of assistive technology, such as DAISY or refreshable Braille.
6. **Multimedia/Video/Audio** – Use closed captions and/or transcripts to relay content.
7. **Links** – Links are distinguished by means other than colour (i.e., box, text label).
8. **Contrast –** Must have sufficient contrast between text and background.
9. **Form Fields** – Form fields have appropriate text labels.
10. **Font –** Font size and colour should be adjustable.

Over ten years ago, it was considered that when developing platforms, tools and devices, it is useful to initially consider principles of accessibility for web access (WebAIM, 2013). These principles are: Perceivable (has to be able to be accessed by the brain – sight, hearing, touch); Operable (content can be navigated through multiple methods – mouse, keyboard, assistive technology); Understandable (using simple language and explaining background information – use of alternative/supplemental content such as graphics and illustrations); Robust (as much as possible, the content is compatible with a wide variety of browsers and screen).

Based on our experience and earlier research (Ristić, 2017), we can say that in order to create the dimension of accessibility, it is necessary for educational institutions to be fully digitally mature.

About the instrument for OER quality evaluation

An instrument for evaluating four areas emerged from the multidimensional model based on the education system in Serbia: openness dimension, content dimension, pedagogical dimension and technical dimension.

1. The OER quality indicators for the dimension of openness are: 1. it is published in an open format (most often with a Creative Commons Licence) and 2. it is a free educational material in digital form. The evaluator can choose an option (by entering the + sign in the appropriate YES or NO column of the form), as the indicator of satisfaction.
2. OER quality indicators for the content dimension are: 1. it has a prominent purpose and ways of use (in the resource and/or through the metadata description); 2. it is based on scientifically confirmed facts, interpretations, conclusions; current data and modern achievements; 3. it contains correctly cited literature sources;

4. it has functional hyperlinks and/or QR codes. 5. it has a clear and logical structure, and 6. it respects the linguistic and spelling norms of the language in which it is written. The evaluator has three options, in addition to choosing YES and NO, they can choose the N/A option (the indicator is not applicable and does not affect the assessment of the standard fulfilment). For indicators 5 and 6, the YES indicator has two subcategories: *completely* or *to a large extent*.

3. OER quality indicators for the pedagogical dimension are: 1. it is aligned with the goals and learning outcomes (which are visible in the resource and/or through the metadata description); 2. it is appropriate to the development characteristics of the user in the context of volume and complexity; 3. it is designed to suit active construction of knowledge, and 4. it is designed to suit the development of learners' reflective practice. For all indicators, the evaluator can choose the option YES with the subcategories *completely* or *to a large extent*; NO, and N/A.
4. OER quality indicators for the technical dimension are: 1. it has a simple user interface and intuitive navigation; 2. it enables easy download, use and sharing; 3. it can be used without additional installation of commercial programmes or programme plugins; 4. it enables adaptable screen displays on different digital devices (computer, tablet, mobile phone), and 5. it enables clear readability, high-quality noise-free sound and a satisfactory quality of images and videos.

The evaluator of OER quality standards indicators can rate them as: YES (if the indicator is fulfilled), with subvariants *completely* and *to a large extent* (for indicators 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 4.1); NO (if the indicator is not fulfilled) or N/A (the indicator is not applicable and does not affect the assessment of the standard fulfilment). It is necessary for the evaluators to write an explanation for each area (dimension), in which they will state the reasons why they assigned YES, NO, or N/A for the indicators within that area.

If the *principle of accessibility* is applied to OER (as Serbia is in the early stages of creating OER), it is necessary for the evaluator to write an explanation in which they will explain which segments of this principle are represented and in what way. The segments are: 1. It contains graphic and multimedia elements accompanied by a name or explanation; 2. It has hyperlinks that differ from the rest of the text, not only by their colour and by being underlined, but also by some other features (e.g. a frame); 3. It supports the operating system functions (e.g. zoom, text-to-speech, etc.) and compliance with assistive technology, and 4. Non-textual OER elements such as images include textual descriptions (accessibility dimension).

It is essential that the OER being evaluated respect the laws of the Republic of Serbia, support equality, promote social cohesion, and inclusiveness, and not discriminate on any basis. The rubrics in the *Form for evaluating the quality of open educational resources* refer to individual educational materials in the format of a digital record (lecture recordings, lecture notes, learning materials, textbooks, modules, workbooks, online tutorials, interactive tasks, lesson plans, charts, tests or any other materials prepared for learning and teaching purposes), as well as entire educational online programmes.

Conclusion

Based on everything analysed, we can conclude that OER can be used in the teaching and learning process if they are adequately aligned with the goals and outcomes of the subject for which they are intended, i.e. if their content is such that they encourage and support students' knowledge construction. OER represent a new possibility for raising the quality of education that is student-centred (constructivist approach), both in formal and informal education.

The proposed multidimensional model for evaluating OER quality standards in Serbia consists of the: openness dimension, content dimension, pedagogical dimension and technical dimension. It can support the development of quality digital content for online and distance learning because it simultaneously provides quality framework and an instrument for evaluation, but also leaves enough freedom for authors to design creative didactic-methodological-technological solutions that will facilitate and improve the teaching and learning process. If OER are to be widely available, accessibility considerations must be brought to the forefront during the development stages.

We can conclude that OER quality standards and evaluation instruments should be formulated in a way to clearly represent the quality threshold that each OER must "cross", without compromising on educational materials that may be harmful to students' learning and development. Digital maturity of educational institutions is an imperative that includes leadership/management and vision, contexts, ICT infrastructure, resources, curriculum and technology learning support. It points to the necessity of a clearer and constant inclusion of open education and open licensing in the professional education of teachers, along with the necessity for a critical view of the challenges that exist in this area.

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Propozycja wielowymiarowego modelu do oceny standardów jakości otwartych zasobów edukacyjnych OZE

Wzrost liczby cyfrowych repozytoriów otwartych zasobów edukacyjnych (OZE), wspierających formalne, nieformalne i ustawiczne uczenie się, sprawia, że kwestia jakości OZE staje się coraz ważniejsza i bardziej aktualna. Celem artykułu jest zaproponowanie wielowymiarowego modelu oceny standardów jakości OZE w Serbii, w celu wsparcia rozwoju wysokiej jakości treści cyfrowych do celów kształcenia online i zdalnego. Po przeanalizowaniu krajowych i międzynarodowych polityk oraz praktyk, które zachęcają do wdrażania wysokiej jakości OZE, przeprowadzono analizę odpowiedniej literatury przedmiotu na temat oceny OZE, a także analizę związku pomiędzy standardami jakości stosowanymi wobec podręczników drukowanych, suplementów elektronicznych, podręczników cyfrowych i standardami stosowanymi wobec OZE. Stosując metodę modelowania i studium przypadku, przedstawiliśmy wielowymiarowy model oceny standardów jakości, na który składają się: wymiar otwartości, wymiar treści, wymiar pedagogiczny i wymiar techniczny. Należy podkreślić, że jeśli chcemy, aby OZE były dostępne dla wszystkich, którzy chcą się uczyć, w tym dla osób ze szczególnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi, każdy z tych wymiarów powinien opierać się na wymiarze dostępności.

Na podstawie przeprowadzonych analiz możemy stwierdzić, że OZE można wykorzystywać w procesie nauczania i uczenia się, jeśli są one odpowiednio dostosowane do celów i zamierzonych rezultatów przedmiotu nauczania, dla którego są przeznaczone, tzn. jeśli ich treść jest taka, że zachęcają i wspierają budowanie wiedzy. OZE stanowią nową szansę na podniesienie jakości kształcenia skoncentrowanego na uczniu (podejście konstruktywistyczne) zarówno w edukacji formalnej, jak i nieformalnej. OZE same w sobie nie powinny być wzorcem dla idealnych/modelowych OZE. Standardy jakości OZE i narzędzia oceny powinny być sformułowane w taki sposób, aby wyraźnie przedstawiały próg jakości, który każde OZE musi „przekroczyć", nie generując lub nie zawierając przy tym materiałów edukacyjnych, które mogą mieć negatywny wpływ na uczenie się i rozwój uczniów. Takie standardy jakości, podobnie jak proponowany wielowymiarowy model, powinny stanowić ramy, ale także pozostawiać autorom wystarczającą swobodę, umożliwiającą zaprojektowanie kreatywnych rozwiązań dydaktyczno-metodyczno-technologicznych, które ułatwią i usprawnią proces nauczania oraz uczenia się. Jednocześnie niezwykle istotne jest, aby otwarta edukacja i otwarte licencjonowanie były stale uwzględniane w kształceniu zawodowym nauczycieli, przy czym należy krytycznie podchodzić do wyzwań, jakie istnieją w tym obszarze.

Słowa kluczowe: Otwarte Zasoby Edukacyjne (OZE); standardy jakości; model wielowymiarowy; edukacja, uczenie się.

Предлог вишедимензионалног модела за вредновање стандарда квалитета ООР-а

Повећање дигиталних репозиторијума Отворених образовних ресурса (ООР) (енг. *Open Educational Resources* (OER)) за подршку формалном, неформалном и целоживотном учењу даје на значају и актуелности питању квалитета ООР. Циљ рада је предлог вишедимензионалног модела за вредновање стандарда квалитета ООР у Србији у функцији подршке развоју квалитетних дигиталних садржаја за онлајн учење и учење на даљину. Након анализе националне и међународне политике и праксе које подстичу имплементацију квалитетних ООР, вршена је анализа релевантне литературе о вредновању ООР као и анализа односа стандарда квалитета штампаних уџбеника, е-додатака, дигиталних уџбеника и ООР. Методом моделовања и студије случаја дошли смо до предлога вишедимензионалног модела за вредновање стандарда квалитета који се састоји из: димензије отворености, димензије садржаја, педагошке димензије и техничке димензије. Важно је подвући да свака од ових димензија треба да се ослања на димензију приступачности уколико желимо да ООР буду доступни свима који желе да уче, укључујући и оне са додатним образовним потребама.

На основу свега анализираног можемо закључити да се ООР могу користити у процесу наставе и учења уколико су адекватно усклађени са циљевима и исходима наставног предмета за који су намењени, односно уколико им је садржај такав да подстичу и подржавају изградњу знања. ООР представљају нову могућност за подизање квалитета образовања које је усмерено ка ученику (конструктивистички приступ), како у формалном, тако и у неформалном образовању. ООР не треба да буду мера за идеалан ООР. Стандарди квалитета ООР и инструменти за вредновање треба да буду формулисани тако да јасно представе праг квалитета који мора да "прескочи" сваки ООР, без компромиса у погледу образовних материјала који могу да буду штетни по учење и развој ученика. Такви стандарди квалитета, као предложени вишедимензионални модел, треба да дају оквир, али и остављају довољно слободе ауторима да осмисле креативна дидактичко-методичко-технолошка решења која ће олакшати и побољшати процес наставе и учења. Истовремено суштински је важно константно укључивање отвореног образовања и отвореног лиценцирања у професионално образовање наставника, уз неопходност критичког сагледавања изазова који постоје у овај области.

Кључне речи: отворени образовни ресурси (ООР); стандарди квалитета; вишедимензионални модел; образовање; учење.

Prijedlog višedimenzionalnog modela vrednovanja standarda kvalitete otvorenih obrazovnih resursa

Povećanje broja otvorenih digitalnih repozitorija obrazovnih resursa (OOR) kontinuirano raste. Njihova ulogu u procesu formalnog i neformalnog obrazovanja te osobito kao podrška cjeloživotnom učenju dodatno naglašava važnost njihove kvalitet.

U ovom radu predlaže se višedimenzionalan evaluacijski model standarda kvalitete OOR u Srbiji u funkciji podrške razvoju kvalitetnih digitalnih sadržaja za online učenje i učenje na daljinu. Nakon analize nacionalnih i međunarodnih javnih obrazovnih politika i praksi koje zagovaraju primjenu kvalitetnih OOR-a, analizirana je relevantna literatura o vrednovanju OORa te analiza standarda kvalitete tiskanih udžbenika, e-dopune, digitalnih udžbenika i OOR. Primjenom metode modeliranja i studije slučaja, predložen je višedimenzionalni model vrednovanja standarda kvalitete. Model obuhvaća dimenzije otvorenosti i sadržaja te tehničke i pedagoške dimenzije. Pristupačnost OOR svima koji žele učiti, uključujući i pojedince sa specifičnim obrazovnim potrebama, je prediktor ostvarivosti svake od navedenih dimenzija.

Provedena analiza opravdava zaključak da se OOR mogu koristiti u procesu učenja i poučavanja ako su primjereno usklađeni s obrazovnim ciljevima i ishodima te sadržajem potiču i podržavaju konstrukciju znanja. OOR omogućavaju konstruktivistički pristup obrazovanja usmjerenog na pojedinca u okviru formalnog i neformalnog obrazovanja.

Standardi kvalitete OOR i instrumenti evaluacije trebali bi jasno formulirati okvir kvalitete koji svaki OOR mora ispunjavati bez sadržaja koji bi mogli biti (potencijalno) ugrožavajući za pojedinca, njegov razvoj i učenje. Standardi kvalitete, predloženi ovim modelom, daju okvir ali i ostavljaju dovoljno slobode za osmišljavanje kreativnih didaktičko-metodičkih i tehnoloških rješenja koja mogu olakšati i unaprijediti proces učenja i poučavanja. Kako bi kvalitetno koristili takve resurse iznimno je važno uključivanje OOR i licenciranja u stručno obrazovanje učitelja uz kritičko sagledavanje izazova koji se javljaju u tom području.

Ključne riječi: otvoreni obrazovni resursi (OOR); standardi kvalitete; obrazovanje; višedimenzionalni model; učenje.

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Fear of freedom in the context of social re-adaptation of repeat offenders

Abstract: *Experiencing anxiety is an inherent aspect of human functioning. It accompanies facing adversities and solving everyday problems. This emotion is also present in the lives of people deprived of their liberty. Convicts may experience it in an extremely intense way, because it is based on significant life changes. Deprivation of freedom, just like regaining it, is a huge change in a person's life. At the moment of incarceration, the phenomenon of prison adaptation may facilitate the reduction of anxiety. Prisonisation is a side effect of this adaptation and results from the natural dynamics of cognitive processes. It is also favoured by the complex social conditions prevailing in the total environment. Adapting to the conditions of a total institution, although it helps reduce anxiety, counteracts later life resourcefulness. Being released - usually desired - can also become a stress factor. Finally, another change in personal situation is at stake. Regaining freedom allows you to take advantage of a number of freedoms, but it also means that you have to face problems from which the prisoner was previously free. The intensity of fear of freedom may depend on many variables, whereby procedure of preparing for release takes special place. It seems that better preparation for freedom should support prisoners, reducing their sense of fear of freedom. However, this does not always happen. The author's goal is to find out to what extent specific readaptation factors, such as the place or form of preparation for release, influence the subjective experience of fear of freedom. Finally, it also tries to answer the question whether this variable should be taken into account when planning the release procedure. To a large extent, it makes prisoners aware of the enormous amount of work and problems that await them in freedom. This often overwhelms them. Therefore, fears of release become fully justified. The vicious circle of recidivism that convicts fall into increases the stress they experience, thus promoting cognitive escape from freedom.*

Keywords*: fear of freedom; preparation for release; social readaptation; prisonisation.*

Convicts' fears of freedom in the subject literature

Although the problem discussed herein is often explored in psychological literature, this paper is firmly set in the area of pedagogy. It primarily concerns the social aspect of the functioning of incarcerated and released repeat offenders. The adopted research paradigm is dominated by the quantitative approach, which is

commonly utilised in social rehabilitation pedagogy. The specific problems refer, in turn, to penitentiary and freedom space. According to the author, release from prison is associated with a temporary, subjective experience of a certain crisis. The inmate experiences a temporary loss of coping skills and naturally feels the associated fear.

As Ozga (2017) writes, deprivation of liberty has far-reaching consequences, having a destructive impact on the prisoner's personal profile and his social perception. It may also affect the development of specific psychological problems, such as deprivation of needs, overload, internal and social conflicts or even depersonalisation. There is also a risk of adapting to prison conditions to well. Among sensitive or less independent people, such a situation may accelerate the emergence of mental disorders (Ozga, 2017).

A person living in isolation for an extended period of time may adapt to these conditions through various coping strategies and become accustomed to said conditions in order to reduce the level of anxiety associated with isolation. In prison, everything runs according to its own 24-hour rhythm and a clearly defined hierarchy. Interpersonal relationships are frequently defined by the rules of the subculture or the regulations governing the unit. On their own the inmates do not resolve even simple, everyday dilemmas. They do not decide about the time of getting up or the rhythm of the day, they do not choose among the dishes they could eat if they were free, or about their clothes. Finally, they do not decide who they spend their time with or when they can satisfy most of their needs, including physiological ones. By adapting to the immediate surroundings, a cell, a pavilion, or a penitentiary facility, an inmate becomes an integral part of it. Adaptation to a prison is a process spread over time, but there almost always comes a moment when an inmate leaves the prison. The release happens suddenly, and everything changes the moment an inmate crosses the gate. An inmate does not have time to slowly immerse themselves in the world of a free person.

As Kwiatkowski (2022) writes, staying in prison promotes learned helplessness and diminishes the ability to make independent decisions. This happens due to the growing dependence on other people at the time of incarceration. Despite the multitude of regulations effective in a prison (of formal and informal character), it is an incredibly dynamic environment. This dynamism involves and consists of constantly changing conditions (e.g. change of the immediate environment, change of company, staff turnover, moving an inmate to other prisons, deprivation of needs) and may result in reluctance to accept help offered to inmates. Therefore, prisoners may experience anxiety in its extreme and traumatic intensity prior to being released. In the initial period of freedom, the psychological stress stemming from a number of new challenges may further intensify the fear of freedom. Simultaneously, it becomes physically impossible to seek help from people who prepare prisoners for freedom (e.g. prison counsellors). Only the development of balanced and complete relationships with the social environment after being released can constitute the basis for processing the experienced trauma and acquiring the ability to cope with maladaptive beliefs and emotions. Kwiatkowski (2022) observes that penitentiary recidivists are a group of inmates who are particularly reluctant to cooperate with prison psychologists and thus

concerns may arise that the issue of fear accompanying release remains an unsolved problem among this group.

Haney (2002) presents that as a result of internal tensions and interpersonal conflicts that occur in the prison environment, an inmate may experience overload that makes it impossible to independently cope with the challenges awaiting their freedom. Internalised mechanisms of self-control, motivation and balance may be irreversibly destroyed under such circumstances. The transition from prison to freedom requires support from the social environment. This approach also constitutes a protective factor guarding against the occurrence of serious mental disorders. In this author's opinion, the release process does not work properly even in the United States. This may affect not only the more frequent occurrence of traumas or disorders, but also the recidivism of former prisoners. The author also draws particular attention to the risks this problem poses among groups of people who are parents. Their mental condition has an impact on their children for example (Haney, 2002).

The phenomenon of prisonisation can be limited by making the conditions in prison as similar as possible to the conditions that await prisoners after their release. This can be achieved by, among other means: creating opportunities to independently resolve basic dilemmas or make everyday decisions. As the inmate progresses with their stay in prison, a setting of semi-freedom climate should be created - especially in the final period of incarceration. However, within the framework of the Polish penitentiary system, there are no units where the prison regime is reduced, and the totality of the institution is limited to the necessary minimum. However, conceptual works are underway to implement the so-called "halfway houses", which will constitute a kind of bridge between isolation and freedom. Such units have been operating in the Slovak penitentiary system for several years, as part of the "Chance to Return" National Program (Valentovičová & Jasiński, 2020). The primary goal of this program is reducing the risk of social exclusion among groups of Slovak prisoners and improving their competences on the labour market. The project is being implemented in selected Slovak prisons: Hrnčiarovce nad Parnou, Leopoldov, Ilava, Nitra-Chrenová, Sučany, Želiezovce, Banská Bystrica-Kráľová, Košice, Košice-Šaca and Prešov-Sabinov. The key partner in this project is the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (Ústredie práce, sociálnej vecí a rodiny). Slovaks perfectly understand the need for interdisciplinary cooperation within the framework of such activities. The exit wards in Slovakia belong to the special unit's category. Their primary goal is to prepare inmates for conditions of living as free people. To achieve this, inmates are enabled to acquire the necessary information and practical skills to facilitate their return to life after their release. Inmates are placed in the exit ward if they have been in penitentiary isolation for more than 3 years. Convicts who may actually experience anxiety related to release are sent there. Slovak regulations also provide for the placement in exit units of those convicts who require special assistance in returning to independent life in freedom. Depending on the circumstances, the stay in the exit ward may last from 3 to 12 months before the end of the sentence. In order to reduce the restrictions resulting from deprivation of liberty and to implement the goals of an exit ward, a convict may

be allowed additional perks/benefits, such as free telephone contact, more frequent visits from relatives or short – 24-hour – visits outside the prison. The furnishings and interior architecture of such exit units resemble the conditions in a boarding school or an apartment (Valentovičová & Jasiński, 2020).

The exit ward is supposed to teach freedom gradually, and therefore reduce the related anxiety. The aforementioned exit wards were also the place where (for the purpose of comparison with Polish penitentiary wards) the author carried out the research described herein below. According to the author, the gradual release of an inmate from prison habits, beliefs or conditions allows for a controlled release of tension and anxiety. Therefore, under appropriate conditions, release from prison will generate a lower risk of emergence of a psychological crisis.

The transition from a state of strict "enslavement" to unrestricted freedom is a violent process in Poland, which may favour the emergence of maladaptive behaviours among inmates who are strongly adapted to prison conditions – repeat offenders. Therefore, it seems that repeat offenders may experience a stronger fear of being released from incarceration. Repeated stays in prison have a destructive impact on their social standing. The time spent in prison suddenly gives way to the difficulties of living as a free man. Accommodation, work, relationships with the environment, the stigma of being a habitual offender or debts or addictions – are undoubtedly factors that can cause strong anxiety or fear.

Goffman (1975) notes that a prison is a total institution because it dominates all aspects of inmates' lives, almost completely depriving inmates of freedom. The prison has many emblematic features of a total institution. Architectural solutions and the multitude of regulations governing internal order and daily routine limit autonomy, social contacts and forgo many important human needs. This happens, among others means, through isolating inmates from the outside world, full subordination of all aspects of their functioning to the superior authority, clear separation of residents from prison personnel and, ultimately, the lack of agency of inmates.

Writing about prisonisation, Bochniewicz (2011) draws attention to the fact that specialised interventions, such as readaptation programmes, are aimed at compensating for losses incurred as a result of long-term isolation, marginalisation and, finally, at supporting the return to performing social roles. It seems that anxiety will increase in intensity the longer the period of stay in penitentiary isolation and the more frequent such stays. It is also not surprising that adaptation to current conditions (conditions of incarceration) naturally counteracts adaptation to conditions that will take place in a more or less distant social reality (Bochniewicz, 2011).

Iwanowska (2013) also draws attention to the fact that efforts to prepare convicts for release in the last period of freedom are necessary and serve to solve problems that inmates are unable to cope with on their own. In her opinion, lack of proper preparation may result in the return to life of crime. In addition to the problems awaiting the inmate upon release, anxiety related to the release may also depend on the number of inmates stays in prison. Quoting her own research, Iwanowska demonstrates that the majority of prisoners declared fear of the difficulties of living independently in

freedom, but a higher level of anxiety in this regard is being experienced by first-time prisoners. In her opinion, such attitude may result from the fact that frequent stays of habitual offenders in prison lead to such a permanent break in bonds and relationships with others that habitual offenders stop caring about it over time. On the other hand, the first imprisonment in a penitentiary facility makes the prisoner more aware of how much they have lost than the subsequent imprisonments. In essence, the author concludes that the respondents are more afraid of the lack of institutional support from the state after being released than of freedom itself (which she explains by learned helplessness and a demanding attitude) (Iwanowska, 2013).

Analysing the anxiety of prisoners related to the life awaiting them in freedom, Szczygieł (2002) notes that although many of them express a positive attitude towards the future, the range of fears and anxieties is wide. However, the results of her research do not fully confirm Iwanowska's conclusions that first-time prisoners express more fears than recidivists. In the sample group she examined, fears were slightly more common among first-time inmates than among habitual offenders. Fundamentally, however, the spectrum of fears and anxieties is similar and focuses on problems of a social and living nature, i.e. lack of employment, lack of place to live, reluctance of relatives and society. Referring to results of similar research on long-term prisoners, dating back to the end of the last century, Szczygieł (2002) notes that only 1/3 of prisoners did not experience this type of fear. It is also important who the respondents most often expect help from. In most cases (first-time offenders or juveniles) inmates direct their expectations towards their closest relatives - family. Habitual offenders, who expect help from their relatives five times less frequently than the first-time prisoners, are an exception (Szczygieł, 2002). In this respect, both studies lead to consistent conclusions. Both authors interpret this result identically - as a breakage of relationships and family ties of habitual offenders.

Taking into account the heterogeneous views presented in the literature, the author decided to analyse the issue of habitual offenders' fear of release by implementing own research project. This curiosity was additionally intensified by own professional experience of the author, who has been working with released habitual offenders for over 16 years; the author gained experience as a probation officer, a specialist in post-penitentiary assistance in a readaptation centre, and currently also as a trainer of aggression replacement training. Hundreds of hours of observations and conversations with inmates give the impression that the number and types of social problems faced by recidivist inmates do not bode well for the future of habitual offenders. Our research was conducted to explore this part of the penitentiary reality.

Methodology of own studies

The results of research on recidivists' anxieties regarding release presented herein are part of a broader, previously unpublished, research project concerning social reintegration realised by the author. Within the framework of the project, a number of different problem areas were analysed, one of which was the fear of freedom.

Taking into account several areas of research (prisons and readaptation centres) allowed us to look at the issue from a broader perspective. It is possible that the fear of release is experienced differently by people who are still waiting for their release and differently by people who can comment on their experiences in retrospect. Furthermore, comparing the examined issue in the same groups, but in two different countries (Poland and Slovakia), has applicable value. It allows us to answer the question regarding the impact of gradual transition to freedom on prisoners staying in Slovak exit wards.

Subject of the research presented herein are penitentiary habitual offenders - people who are or have been in prison at least twice, as well as their anxiety related to release. This anxiety was assessed analogously in all research groups using an identical ordinal scale in both Poland and the Slovak Republic. Due to the social nature of research, a simple tool was chosen to measure it: an ordinal scale.

The established goal is related to the broader assumptions of the research project on social reintegration of habitual offenders. In the context of the problem presented herein, the goal of research comes down to learning about the circumstances that will help reduce the level of fear of freedom.

The main research problem set by the author herein concerns the phenomenon of fear of freedom, and therefore it could be formulated as follows: Is fear of freedom a criterion that should be taken into account in the process of planning social readaptation of habitual offenders. An auxiliary (specific) problem concerns time and place, i.e. whether the respondents are more afraid of freedom before being released or after being released, i.e. living as free persons. For the purpose of comparison, solving this problem will be possible through examining statements of those habitual offenders who talk about their fears and anxieties in retrospect, i.e. those who have been free for some time. Another specific problem concerns systemic issues, i.e. whether serving a sentence in a Polish or Slovak prison affects the level of fear of freedom. The author will also look at whether staying in Slovak exit wards is an important differentiating variable.

The hypotheses that were adopted for the purpose of research seem to be simple. As assumed in the previous part of the paper, adaptation to prison conditions has a vector opposite to adaptation to living as a free person. Therefore, the more time a person spends in prison, the better adapted they should be to living in it. However, this happens at the expense of functioning as a free person. Long-term or frequent (or both) stays in prisons should therefore cause respondents to experience strong sense of anxiety related to their release. Habitual offenders are therefore very afraid of freedom and feel relatively comfortable in a prison. After all, they have to adapt to extremely different conditions all over again. Consistency, stability and predictability are desirable qualities for humans.

Another hypothesis proclaims that people serving the last part of their sentence in conditions somewhat similar to freedom (e.g. exit wards in Slovak prisons) will experience fear of freedom and release to a lesser degree. Their situation will change

less when they are released than the situation of other inmates. Therefore, the author will consider the group of prisoners in Slovak exit wards as a control group.

The last hypothesis adopted is the assumption that preparing habitual offender prisoners for freedom in the manner referred to in the Polish Executive Penal Code (Article 164, paragraph 1) helps reduce their level of fear of release.

Variables are, as Łobocki (2003) writes, the qualities of the researched phenomenon or the factors responsible for emergence of such qualities, which can assume different values.

This researcher focuses on said factors in order to learn the nature of the analysed phenomenon or the relationships between various objects. Some of these variables (independent variables) are circumstances that supposedly (at least in the researcher's assumptions) influence certain values, which we call dependent variables (Łobocki, 2003). Therefore, the following factors are recognised as independent variables in this study: the place of research (prison, readaptation centre or emergency support point, Poland or Slovakia) and the ward where subjects stay (regular or exit ward). Dependent variables adopted in the research are closely related to the topic of the study, i.e. the level of fear of release. We must also specify indicators for each variable. In this case, indicators for the research sites are previously indicated locations, and for the dependent variable it will be a numerical value on a ten-point scale. Of course, the indicator of the independent variable will also consist of the answer to the question whether appropriate procedure for preparing for freedom was applied in Poland, pursuant to Article 164, paragraph 1 of the Penal Code, and in Slovakia whether the respondent is or was in the exit ward.

Author believes that the quantitative concept is an appropriate approach for tackling the research problem presented in this manner. According to Pilch (1998) a diagnostic survey allows for the exploration of important social phenomena that appear in a precisely defined population and for gathering knowledge about their dynamics. Therefore, if we adopt a diagnostic survey as the leading method, and if we are also interested in the comparative value of the research, it is difficult to find a more suitable research technique than the questionnaire technique. Taking into consideration the conditions of the entire research project in which the fragment discussed herein was placed, these techniques will work great due to the amount of data collected.

The tools used in the research project consisted of a number of questionnaires (both for habitual offenders and specialists working with them in penitentiary facilities and in the outside world). These were tools used in both countries in an unchanged form after translation. Due to editorial restrictions, it is not possible to present the entirety of the applied tools, but the data presented in the analytical part of this paper were drawn directly from the questions referring to a given research problem.

The research sites in Poland are the following prisons: ZK Tarnów, ZK Tarnów Mościce, ZK Nowy Wiśnicz, ZK Wadowice, ZK Nowy Sącz, AŚ Kraków. In the Slovak Republic, the place of research were prisons in: Hrnciarowce nad Parnou, Bratislava, Nitra Chrenova, Košice, Prešov, Ružomberok, Banská Bystrica, Sučany. As far as "freedom" research sites are concerned, in Poland these were the readaptation centres

of the Pomost Foundation in Zabrze, the ProDomo Integration Center in Kraków, the Social Home of the Association for Aid to People in Wrocław, the "Barki" centres in Strzelce Opolskie and the Post-penitentiary Assistance Centre in Nowy Sącz, with the last one providing emergency assistance only. The respondents do not live in the centre in Nowy Sącz, but only seek help when needed. In Slovakia, "freedom" research was carried out in a centre run by the "Good Shepherd" Civic Association in the Monastery near Zniev.

Analysis of the collected material

As already mentioned, the Scales were used to measure the respondents' anxiety, or more precisely – the fear of what will happen immediately after release from a prison facility. The presented question serves several important functions. As presented by Fidelus (2020), among people who leave prison, a sudden change in the environment may induce negative emotions and even the belief that they are unable to cope with it. This may have a negative impact on the adaptation process and, according to this author, may be expressed in fear of release. He states that the situation of release is accompanied by stress and emphasises that it does not appear when the released person returns to people with whom he feels good. However, it also happens that in the face of dysfunctional adaptation mechanisms developed by the inmate before his incarceration, returning to the criminal environment will not strengthen this discomfort, but will even have a soothing effect. This may have two meanings in the present research. On the one hand, it sheds new light on the hypothesis regarding habitual offenders' fear of release. It may also happen that the convict will feel fear when he returns to a free environment, but with strong resolution to improve and make qualitative changes to their life, and therefore to break with previous habits. A convict may also experience this anxiety when they return to a criminal environment, knowing that doing so could land them in prison again. Correlations between this anxiety and treatment of a habitual offender inmate consistent with Art. 164 of the Penal Code (procedure for preparation for freedom) and the time spent in freedom or in isolation are very important. Such information should make it easier to answer the question whether a correlation between post-penitentiary assistance and fear of release exists. In other words, whether readaptation support received by an inmate has an impact on fear of release, or whether it depends on the number of anticipated problems while free. It is also important whether type of these difficulties influences the fear felt by the habitual offender.

To the author's amazement, collected data shows that the vast majority of incarcerated recidivists are not too afraid of their first moments on the outside - high values on the scale (7-10) were indicated by only 22.1% of respondents (Table 1). What may be surprising, however, is that as many as 46% of respondents answered they "are not at all afraid of their first moments on the outside". They indicated the lowest possible value on the scale - 1. Slightly higher and average values, i.e. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, were indicated by 6, 7, 6, 9, and 3% of people, respectively, so this is definitely

a small number of all 300 people surveyed in Poland (Table 1). Since the author is interested in the issue of fear of release, both from the perspective of the inmate and the convict who is already free, the obtained results will be explored further. Therefore, it is worth considering whether the low level of declared anxiety results from, for example, the activation of defence mechanisms or from settling into the penitentiary system. We don't yet know why some prisoners don't feel anxious about the inevitable change of environment as often as expected. This lack of anxiety may be influenced by their living conditions and surroundings, but also by other variables. Undoubtedly, staying in a penitentiary facility is associated with discomfort and limited freedom.

Table 1 *Polish prisoners' fear of release*

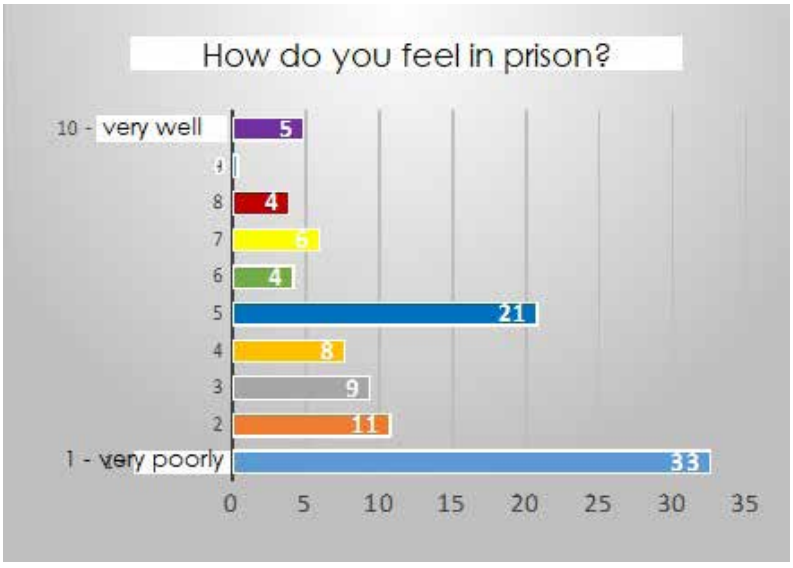
Are you afraid of your first moments as a free man?	Number of answers	% of answers
1 – I am not afraid at all	136	46
2	19	6
3	21	7
4	18	6
5	28	9
6	8	3
7	10	3
8	15	5
9	9	3,1
10 – I am very concerned	31	11
TOTAL	**295**	**100**
Blank:	5	
Number of surveys	300	

Similarly to Polish prisoners-respondents, the vast majority of Slovak habitual offenders are not too afraid of their first moments on the outside, as only 15.5% of respondents indicated high values (7-10) on the scale (Table 2). As many as 42% of respondents answered that they were "not at all afraid of their first moments as a free man", indicating the lowest possible value on the scale of 1. This result is very similar to that obtained in Poland (46%). Average values, i.e. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, were indicated by 18, 6, 5, 13 and 1% of respondents, respectively, which is similar to the results obtained in Poland (Table 2). A high level of fear of being released is therefore not a quality that would well describe recidivists in any of the countries included in the study.

Table 2 *Slovak prisoners' fear of release*

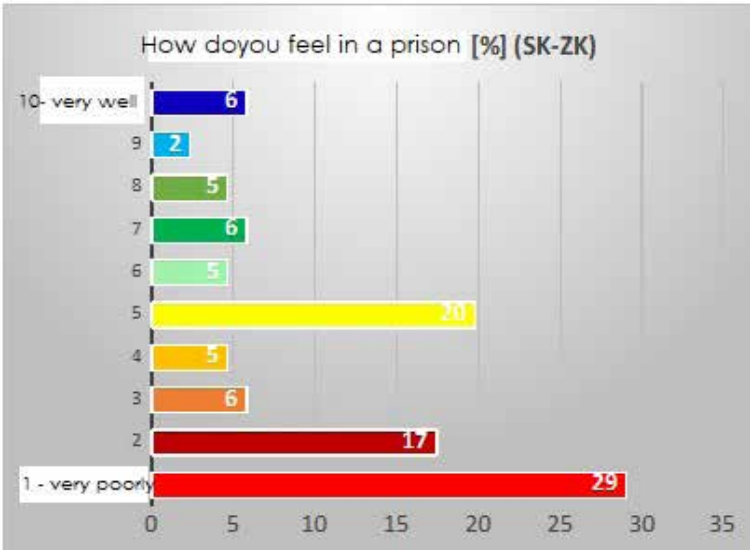
Are you afraid of your first moments as a free man?	Number of answers	% of answers (SK penitentiary facilities)
1 – I am not afraid at all	36	42
2	15	18
3	5	6
4	4	5
5	11	13
6	1	1
7	2	2
8	5	6
9	3	3,5
10 – I am very concerned	3	4
TOTAL	**85**	**100**
Blank:		2
Number of surveys		87

It is worth noting that, on the one hand, the respondents declare, in contradiction to the adopted hypothesis, a generally low level of fear of freedom, and on the other (despite the assumed high level of prison adaptation) they report significant discomfort related to staying in prison. We are speaking about penitentiary habitual offenders, i.e. people who are often said to treat prison as their second home.



Graph 1 *The well-being of Polish habitual offenders in isolation*

Collected data clearly shows that respondents in penitentiary isolation feel bad, which may be the reason for the optimistic results obtained in the area of freedom anxiety. Thus, the next working hypothesis seems to be disproved. The results obtained in the group of Slovak respondents appear to be very consistent with the Polish results presented above. Slovaks also feel unwell in a prison.



Graph 2 *The well-being of Slovak habitual offenders in isolation*

The author decided to determine the level of fear of release in all groups included in the study. Habitual offenders living in readaptation centres were also asked about it. Data collected among the Polish population demonstrates that, from their current perspective, such fears did occur, but their intensity was moderate - 39% of respondents indicated they were quite afraid of being released from prison (scale value >5) (Table 3). For comparison, among the group of habitual offenders still in isolation, these fears seem to be lower, as 25% of respondents indicated the same value on the scale. There are many indications that, in hindsight, confrontation with freedom turned out to be more stressful than the inmates expected. They report less concern when they are still in prison.

Table 3 *Fear of release experienced by residents of Polish centres – all answers provided*

Before your release, were you afraid of your first moments on the outside? **(MORA-PL)**	**Number of answers (MORA-PL)**	**% of answers (MORA-PL)**
1 – I am not afraid at all	14	23
2	4	7
3	2	3
4	8	13

Table 3 *(Continued)*

5	9	15
6	5	8
7	7	11
8	3	5
9	4	7
10 – I am very concerned	5	8
TOTAL	**61**	**100**
Blank:	1	
Number of surveys	62	

Although the distribution in the average ranges is slightly different, in the group of Slovak inmates residing in the readaptation centre (and among Polish inmates) the prevailing belief seems to be that the fact the end of the sentence was approaching was not a strong stressor (Table 4). In both surveyed populations, the largest group were those convicts who reported they were not afraid of release at all. This again seems to disprove the hypothesis that recidivists are generally very afraid of being released from incarceration.

Table 4 *Fear of release experienced by residents of Slovak centres – all answers provided*

Before your release, were you afraid of your first moments on the outside**? (MORA-SK)**	**Number of answers (MORA-SK)**	**% of answers (MORA-SK)**
1 – I am not afraid at all	8	36
2	2	9
3	0	0
4	0	0
5	2	9
6	2	9
7	0	0
8	2	9
9	4	18
10 – I am very concerned	2	9
TOTAL	**22**	**100**
Blank:	1	
Number of surveys	23	

The research included an independent variable - preparation for release pursuant to Article 164, paragraph 1 of the Penal Code (a procedure under which a release plan is developed in cooperation with the inmate and implemented with the participation of a

probation officer, among others). It was previously assumed that this form of preparation should better prepare the habitual offender to face reality. Perhaps this would also have a beneficial effect on the anxiety experienced before release, reducing it in line with the behaviourist concept of exposure. In many behavioural therapies, fears are tamed by experiencing the stressor at a low intensity. Similarly to the case of prisoners who were habitual offenders, the degree of fear of release was calculated separately for residents of centres who were being prepared for release pursuant to Art. 164 of the Penal Code and those who were not covered by this provision. However, it turned out that in the group of people who were being prepared for release level of declared anxiety was higher than in the group of people who were not being prepared for release. The level of emotional arousal above 5 was indicated by as many as 45% of the surveyed inmates who were being prepared for release and 33% of those who were not being prepared for release (Table 5). Differences may not be colossal, but said differences surprise the author because they contradict the hypothesis regarding reducing anxiety through preparation for release from incarceration. This is perhaps because under such activities the inmate is presented with a real, not an idealised, vision of freedom that awaits them. If this was the case, such people would be more aware of the scale of future problems. This time, very few people indicated extremely low values, indicating a complete lack of concern. Unfortunately, due to the fact that repeat offenders are rarely included in the procedure of preparation for release in this way, the modest amount of research data collected is not representative. More than three times as many questionnaires were collected from people who were not being prepared for release.

Table 5 *Fear of release experienced by residents of Polish penitentiary facilities - answers provided only by inmates who were not being prepared for release pursuant to Article 164 paragraph 1 of the Penal Code*

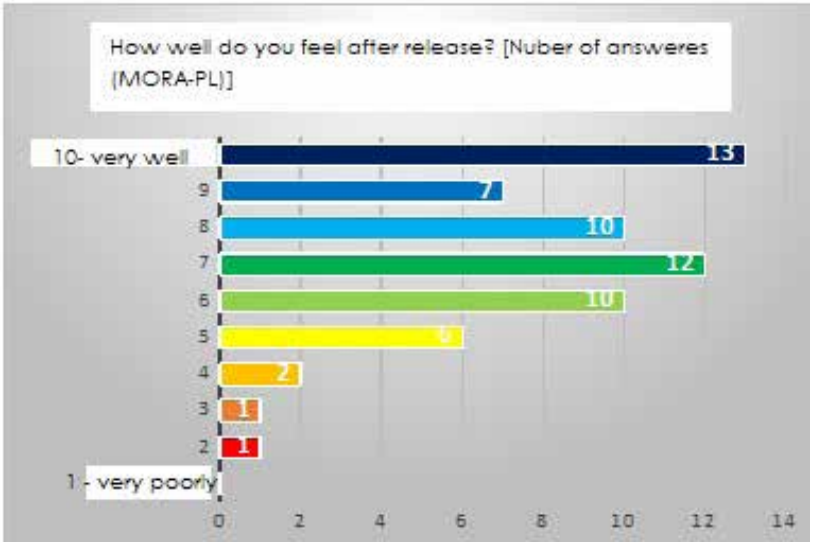
Before your release, were you afraid of your first moments on the outside? – applies to people who were NOT prepared for release (MORA-PL)	**Number of answers (MORA-PL)**	**% of answers (MORA-PL)**
1 – I am not afraid at all	9	24
2	2	5
3	0	0
4	7	19
5	5	14
6	2	5
7	5	14
8	1	3
9	2	5
10 – I am very concerned	4	11
TOTAL	**37**	**100**
Blank:	1	
Number of surveys	38	

An analogous procedure was carried out on the Slovak sample group, from among which a group of habitual offenders prepared for release in the local exit wards was selected. As it turned out, out of 23 respondents, only 4 persons met the required criterion, i.e. they stayed in such a ward before being released. The statistical value of these results is therefore low. However, the author attempted to isolate the results obtained by these people from all the results and it turned out that 3 of them were very worried about being released, and one was not at all worried about being released. It is therefore possible that people being prepared for release in Slovakian exit wards are more aware of the challenges and hardships awaiting them in freedom. However, the mere act of preparing inmates for being released does not solve problems such as debts, lack of housing or work. Its only purpose is to support, activate and raise awareness of the convict.

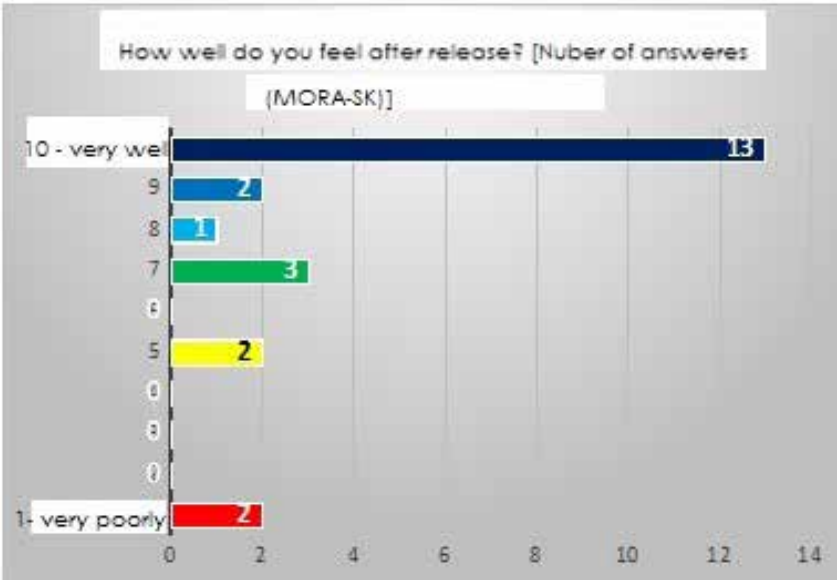
Among the Slovak respondents who were not being prepared for release in the exit wards in Slovakia (13 people), the results were similar to those obtained in the Polish sample. Again, the distribution of results turned out to be relatively even, although in this case the small amount of collected material also does not allow for drawing statistical conclusions.

The hypothesis that preparing habitual offender inmates for release reduces their fear of freedom turned out to be incorrect in the light of obtained results. According to the author, the results can be interpreted as meaning that when preparing for release, convicts are confronted with the difficulties awaiting them on the outside. Therefore, they become aware of the seriousness of the problems that await them. However, preparation for release alone does not solve these problems, but rather eliminates defence mechanisms such as denial.

Despite anxiety related to being released, surveyed residents of penitentiary facilities in both countries unanimously assessed their well-being in freedom conditions as good and very good.



Graph 3 *Well-being of habitual offenders living in Polish re-adaptation centres*



Graph 4 *Well-being of habitual offenders living in Slovak re-adaptation centres*

The research problem was also analysed among the group of habitual offenders who do not live in a readaptation centre after their release and only use interim help. These respondents generally presented a higher level of freedom anxiety than the residents of readaptation centres (Table 6). In this group, a value on the scale >5 (indicating great concern) was indicated by as many as 63% of respondents, while in the group of residents of readaptation centres, only 39% of respondents declared this level of concern. The difference is clear, especially since habitual offenders incarcerated in prison were even less afraid of freedom – 25% of respondents. According to the author, there are several potential factors behind this situation. Firstly, people who have already been released have experienced this fear empirically, and secondly, residents of readaptation centres generally decide to go to such a centre earlier. Therefore, they know even before they are released that they have a guaranteed place in a readaptation centre. Therefore, such convicts do not have to worry about finding accommodation on the day of release. Convicts receiving only the interim assistance return to their previous environments, i.e. towns, homes, families more often. They may therefore have justified concerns about how (if at all) they will be received by those around them. However, such a conclusion remains solely within the area of author's speculations; it seems, however, to be an interesting topic to be discussed in the course of further research. The fact that prisoners who are habitual offenders declare a lesser fear of release than the first-time convicts is once again confirmed.

Table 6 *Anxiety related to release experienced by habitual offender inmates receiving post-penitentiary assistance – general population*

Before your release, were you afraid of your first moments on the outside? (DORA-PL)	**Number of answers (DORA-PL)**	**% of answers (DORA-PL)**
1 – I am not afraid at all	7	19
2	2	5
3	2	5
4	1	3
5	2	5
6	8	21
7	5	13
8	3	8
9	2	5
10 – I am very concerned	6	16
TOTAL	**38**	**100**
Blank:	5	
Number of surveys	43	

In the group of the part-time centre clients, similarly to the previous case, the answers provided by people who were prepared for release pursuant to Art. 164 paragraph 1 of the Penal Code were isolated and marked for further research. However, there were only 7 such people in a group of 43 respondents. In this group, most people (43% of respondents) indicated intermediate values of 5 and 6. As for the respondents who have chosen extreme values (1 – I wasn't concerned about it at all and 10 – It concerned me very much), in both cases only 2 respondents gave such an answer. Due to the small number of people who were prepared for living as a free person after their release from a penitentiary facility, the values presented herein remain without statistical value.

A larger sample consisted of those respondents who declared they were not being prepared for release – 23 people; in their case, values indicating a high level of anxiety were noticeably more common. Values >5 on the scale were indicated by 61% of respondents, i.e. 14 persons (Table 7). However, it should be remembered that the previous sample was non-representative, which does not allow for comparison in regard to this variable.

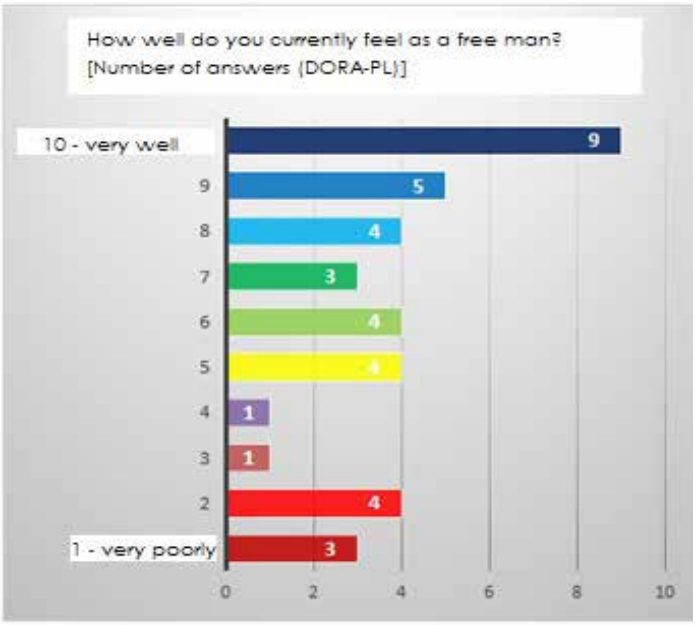
A significant part of the research sample consists of people who were unable to determine whether they were being prepared for freedom or not – 14 out of a total of 43 people. In author's opinion, such an answer is closer to a negative answer (the author himself has been implementing the procedure of Article 164, paragraph 1 of the Penal Code for many years, working as a probation officer). Real work with an inmate for his future readaptation is difficult to overlook. A convict who is being duly

prepared for release is certainly aware of this. The results obtained in this subgroup do not provide a clear solution to the problem, but they suggest that these people quite often experience severe anxiety. However, as mentioned previously, this group is small and the observations resulting from the analysis of this material do not allow for drawing far-reaching conclusions.

Table 7 *Release-related anxiety of inmates receiving post-penitentiary assistance – among the group of inmates not covered by preparation for release under Article 164 paragraph 1 of the Penal Code*

Were you afraid of your first moments on the outside prior to your release? – applies to inmates who were NOT prepared for release (DORA-PL)	**Number of answers (DORA-PL)**	**% of answers (DORA-PL)**
1 - I am not afraid at all	4	17
2	1	4
3	2	9
4	1	4
5	1	4
6	3	13
7	5	22
8	2	9
9	1	4
10 - I am very concerned	3	13
TOTAL	**23**	**100**
Blank:	3	
Number of surveys	26	

Interestingly, while in the group of residents of readaptation centres the level of satisfaction with remaining free was very high, in the case of habitual offenders using only interim assistance these results were more varied. Former convicts were largely satisfied but their feeling of well-being was not as pronounced. Therefore, it seems that habitual offenders receiving interim assistance, in addition to a higher level of freedom anxiety, experienced less satisfaction with it. According to the author, this anxiety may not be illogical if we take into account their more complicated social and family situation. On the other hand, it should be considered that people who ended in a re-adaptation centre probably do not have any support base (family, apartment). Therefore, the social situation of respondents cannot be perceived solely in the context of experienced fears and anxiety regarding freedom or discomfort with their current place of residence. This is a much more complicated situation which cannot be analysed comprehensively in this paper. However, such an attempt was made as part of another, broader research project.



Graph 5 *Well-being of released habitual offenders receiving interim post-penitentiary assistance*

The research also took into account time spent in prison isolation. On average, clients of part-time readaptation centres spend less time in prison than residents of stationary centres. Therefore, it could be assumed that the level of their declared fear of release could be lower as shorter isolation = weaker adaptation. However, as it turned out, even though they spent more time in prison on average, the respondents generally had a higher level of fear of freedom than the group of permanent residents of readaptation centres. According to the author, this can be explained by the fact that residents of readaptation centres decide to be sent to said centres earlier and are already provided with a place to stay there before being released. Clients of part-time centres more often return to their previous, often dysfunctional, environments. Therefore, they experience a number of fears and uncertainties. However, such an explanation remains a matter of speculation based on the author's professional intuition.

Summary and recommendations

Due to quantitative nature of this study, the author did not direct his research curiosity towards the psychoanalytic meanders of anxiety. There were no strictly psychological theories or therapeutic concepts discussed in this paper. Defence mechanisms as a form of defence against anxiety were left aside. However, the fear of being released from prison is a very interesting part of reality to explore. Psychology and related sciences could certainly make a valuable contribution here. In these studies, the degree of declared fear of release was related to external and social variables, unrelated to the personality of the respondents. These variables refer

primarily to the process of social readaptation and preparation for release from prison. Unfortunately, the number of people who were included in the research, although significant, was not always sufficient. This was primarily due to the fact that in both studied countries, few habitual offenders are professionally prepared for release and freedom. However, certain trends can be observed. People prepared for freedom generally experience higher levels of anxiety than those who are not being prepared for release. The leading hypothesis was therefore disproved in the light of the results obtained. Furthermore, it can also be assumed that people preparing for release are better informed and prepared for what they have to face after release, but the scale and multitude of problems may still be overwhelming for them. It should also be noted that Polish and Slovak penitentiary recidivists differ from each other in terms of the fear of freedom they are experiencing or their situation on the outside. It is worth noting, however, that these variables are undoubtedly influenced by the way inmates are preparing for release, as well as social space in which they currently find themselves. To the author's surprise, people who have already experienced freedom declare greater fear than those for whom this moment has not yet come. However, the prisoners themselves seem to look towards the future more optimistically and experience happiness at the thought of being released.

It seems rational to take actions that will make the process of preparing an inmate for release more effective. If various forms of preparation for release make convicted habitual offenders aware of how much work they still have to do, then we must take into account the risk that such preparation may also foster passive or even regressive attitudes. People with reduced personal or social competences may easily succumb to the natural temptation to avoid the problems they have to face. In such a case, the process of preparing for freedom may turn out to be ineffective. Instead of motivating, it can be demotivating.

In the author's opinion, it is worth taking into account the mechanisms of anxiety and its reduction as important variables when planning the readaptation process. It is not so much about a form of psychotherapy, but about the prevention of anxiety so that its level does not exceed a critical level among those who are being released from prisons. The idea is to keep anxiety at a level where it still has a motivating, but not non adaptive, effect. It is easy to imagine that the chain of such treatments could include psychological support, coaching or various self-help activities. Perhaps these actions could consist in meetings in penitentiary units or support groups with the participation of former prisoners whose readaptation process was successful. It is also a good idea for prisoners to participate in regular meetings with representatives of aid institutions, especially non-governmental organisations running readaptation centres or post-penitentiary assistance facilities. It is also impossible to not notice the potential of the pilot project *Chance to Return*, conducted in the Slovak Republic. Organising exit wards within prisons would help reduce the shock a person experiences upon release, which seems to be particularly important in the case of long-term prisoners. Additionally, this process would take place in completely controlled, and therefore safe, conditions. The author also sees the importance of granting special leaves at the

end of the sentence, during which the convict would have the opportunity or even the obligation to take care of their own affairs. They would, for example, have to go to an office or an aid organisation and make first contact with them a few weeks before the actual release. A number of different treatments, which do not require time-consuming and expensive specialist interventions, would make it possible to influence an extremely important variable in the process of social readaptation, i.e. the fear of freedom, and thus would counteract the social exclusion of this group of people.

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Lęk przed wolnością w perspektywie readaptacji społecznej recydywistów

Przeżywanie lęku jest nieodłącznym aspektem funkcjonowania człowieka. Towarzyszy on mierzeniu się z przeciwnościami losu i rozwiązywaniu codziennych problemów. Emocja ta jest obecna również w życiu osób pozbawionych wolności. Skazani mogą przeżywać ją w sposób niezwykle intensywny, bowiem u jej podłoża leżą istotne zmiany życiowe. Pozbawienie wolności, podobnie jak jej odzyskanie to olbrzymia zmiana w życiu człowieka. W chwili osadzenia, redukcji lęku sprzyjać może zjawisko adaptacji więziennej. Prizonizacja jest efektem ubocznym tej adaptacji i wynika z naturalnej dynamiki procesów poznawczych. Sprzyjają jej również panujące w środowisku totalnym skomplikowane uwarunkowania społeczne. Dostosowanie się do warunków instytucji totalnej, choć pomaga ograniczać lęk, to przeciwdziała późniejszej zaradności życiowej. Wyjście na wolność – zwykle upragnione – również może stać się czynnikiem stresogennym. W grę wchodzi w końcu kolejna zmiana sytuacji osobistej. Odzyskanie wolności pozwala co prawda skorzystać z szeregu swobód, jednak sprawia że trzeba stawić czoła problemom, od których osadzony był dotychczas wolny. Natężenie przeżywanych obaw przed wolnością, zależeć może od wielu zmiennych, spośród których szczególne miejsce zajmuje procedura przygotowania do zwolnienia. Zdaje się, że lepsze przygotowanie do wolności powinno działać wspierająco na osadzonych, redukując u nich poczucie lęku przed wolnością. Nie zawsze jednak tak się dzieje. Autor stawia sobie za cel poznanie na ile określone czynniki readaptacyjne takie jak miejsce czy forma przygotowania do zwolnienia, wpływają na subiektywne przeżywanie obaw przed wolnością. Wreszcie próbuje też odpowiedzieć na pytanie, czy należy tę zmienną uwzględniać podczas planowania procedury zwolnieniowej. W znacznym bowiem stopniu, uświadamia ona osadzonym ogrom pracy i problemów, jakie czekają ich na wolności. To nierzadko ich przerasta. Obawy przed zwolnieniem stają się zatem w pełni uzasadnione. Błędne koło recydywy w które skazani wpadają, zwiększa natomiast przeżywany stres, sprzyjając tym samym poznawczej ucieczce od wolności.

Słowa kluczowe: strach przed wolnością; przygotowanie do wypisu; readaptacja społeczna; więzienie.

Страх од слободе у контексту социјалне реадаптације вишеструких преступника

Доживљавање анксиозности је стање својствено људском битисању. Присутно је код суочавања са невољама и решавања свакодневних проблема. Ова емоција присутна је и у животима људи лишених слободе. Осуђеници могу да је доживљавају на изузетно интензиван начин, јер се заснива на значајним животним променама. Лишавање слободе, баш као и њено враћање, огромна је промена у животу човека. У тренутку лишавања слободе, искуство затворске адаптације може да допринесе ублажавању анксиозности. Споредни ефекат ове адаптације је призонизација и она се јавља као резултат природне динамике когнитивних процеса. Њој додатно погодују сложени друштвени услови који владају у свеукупном окружењу. Мада прилагођавање условима институције као целине помаже у смањењу анксиозности, оно се супротставља каснијој животној сналажљивости. Ослобађање – ма колико жељено – такође може да постане фактор стреса.

Коначно, још једна промена личне ситуације је у питању. Повраћај слободе омогућава уживање различитих врста слободе, али такође и суочавање са проблемима којих је затвореник раније био ослобођен. Интензитет страха од слободе може да зависи од многих варијабли, од којих посебно место заузима поступак припреме за ослобађање. Чини се да је као подршка затвореницима потребна боља припрема за слободу, која би умањила њихов осећај страха од слободе. Међутим, то се не догађа увек. Циљ аутора је да открије у којој мери специфични фактори реадаптације, попут места или облика припреме за ослобађање, утичу на субјективни доживљај страха од слободе. Коначно, аутор настоји да одговори и на питање да ли ову варијаблу треба узети у обзир приликом планирања поступка отпуштања. Он у великој мери затворенике чини свесним огромног посла и проблема који их чекају на слободи, што их често оптерећује. Стога страхови од отпуштања постају потпуно оправдани. Зачарани круг рецидивизма у који осуђеници упадају појачава стрес који доживљавају, чиме се подстиче њихово когнитивно бекство од слободе.

Кључне речи: страх од слободе, припрема за отпуштање, социјална реадаптација, призонизација.

Strah od slobode u kontekstu socijalne re-adaptacije recidivista

Doživljaj tjeskobe je specifična osobina / dimenzija ljudskog funkcioniranja. Prati suočavanje s nedaćama i rješavanje svakodnevnih problemskih situacija. Prisutna je u životu većine ljudi. Pojedinci koji su zakonskim odlukama lišeni slobode mogu doživjeti posebno intenzivan osjećaj tjeskobe zbog velikih /specifičnih promjena života.

Iako je oduzimanje slobode generira tjeskobu i anksioznost, takve osjećaje može potaknuti i ponovno stjecanje slobode. Postupna prilagodba može smanjiti anksioznost i zatvaranje pojedinca kao nuspojave koje proizlaze iz prirodne dinamike kognitivnih procesa. Tome mogu pridonijeti i socijalne interakcije s okruženjem.

Prilagodba na uvjete života u zatvorenoj (zatvorskoj) ustanovi, iako pomaže u smanjenju tjeskobe, može negativno korelirati s kasnijim odnosima. Povratak na slobodu, iako željen, istodobno može biti i stresor. Ponovno stjecanje slobode pretpostavlja i suočavanje s životnim problemima čega je pojedinac, boraveći u zatvorenoj ustanovi, bio oslobođen. Intenzitet straha od slobode povezan je s brojnim čimbenicima. Postupak prilagodbe može smanjiti anksioznost, mo to se ne događa uvijek.

Ovaj rad analizira čimbenike re-adaptacije te povezanost procesa pripreme za otpust sa subjektivnim doživljajem straha od slobode. U tom procesu zatvorenici se postupno suočavaju s problemima života na slobodi s čim se svi ne mogu jednako nositi. Strahovi od slobode postaju opravdani i pojedinci se ne mogu s tim nositi. Začarani krug recidiva u koji pojedinici upadaju povećava stres koji proživljavaju što potiče i kognitivni bijeg od slobode.

Ključne riječi: strah od slobode; priprema za otpust; socijalna readaptacija; zatvor.

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From the review

The issue of dynamic changes taking place in modern society, resulting from globalization, directly affects education. Education at all levels of education faces new expectations and challenges. Therefore, even fragmentary knowledge of reality through pedagogical diagnostic research and analysis of certain areas of functioning of various social groups provides insight into the explanation of the phenomena occurring in them in terms of cause-and-effect relationships.

The presented texts are a multi-aspect description including theoretical considerations and practical references to practice. They are valuable because they undoubtedly fit into the contemporary discourse on education tailored to children, young people and the current situation, therefore they can constitute the basis for reflection and pedagogical inspiration on the improvement and effectiveness of education.

prof. Bożena Muchacka, PhD

The articles in this volume analyse the pedagogical, psychological and social aspects of education in and out of the classroom, observing the teachers' and learners' roles from the reflective and critical standpoints. From the anthropological perspective of the philosophy of education, to independent learning, autonomy-supportive interpersonal teacher styles, and deep insights into penology, this monograph covers a range of important educational issues.

It explores questions such as stimulating mental development of preschoolers through game-like didactic activities, supporting students' home reading habits, communicative skills in dyslexic students, to quality standards of open educational resources, or adults' social reintegration. The authors' theoretical reflections and empirical findings provide basis for a broader axiological approach to teacher education and student learning.

prof. Gordana Miščević, PhD

These Papers represent significant international cooperation which gathers 10 higher education institutions from four European countries. They show a praise-worthy effort in solving contemporary educational challenges through multi-institutional and multicultural perspective. It uses logical organizational structure and presents the papers according to the order of practical pedagogical application. Such systematic approach enables a coherent progression from analysis at a political level to specific implementation strategies.

Papers represent a worthy contribution to pedagogical research by successfully connecting theoretical framework with practical application. Their international cooperation character and comprehensive approach to contemporary educational challenges make them a meaningful resource for researchers, practitioners and creators of educational policies.

prof. Marija Sablić, PhD

Focus on scientific and public benefits transcends geographical borders and diversities of public educational policies. These Papers were made by synergy of scientists from Poland, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. They show the importance of academic community networking. In-depth research of specific topics represents the starting point of socially recognized contribution of pedagogical science in practice. Application areas of pedagogical knowledge in practice structurally correspond to the educational system.

Prof. Igor Radeka, PhD

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