Faculty of Education
Palacký University
Olomouc

e-PEDAGOGIUM

II/2016

An independent scientific journal
for interdisciplinary research
in pedagogy

ISSN 1213-7758

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The e-Pedagogium journal is listed
in "The List of Peer-Reviewed Non-impact Periodicals"
approved by the Research and Development Council on January 31, 2014.

On-line journal site: http://www.upol.cz/fakulty/pdf/e-pedagogium/

This publication was not subjected to editorial revision.
Each author is responsible for correctness of content.

All contributions were reviewed. Each contribution was reviewed by two reviewers.
Names of the reviewers will be published in the last issue of given volume of the journal.

ISSN 1213-7758 printed version
ISSN 1213-7499 electronic version

Content

Introduction 5

Articles

What helps in the Scenery in Systemically-Oriented Work with People 7
Stanislava Ševčíková

Quo Vadis Teaching Literary Criticism 17
Suryo Tri Saksono, Imron Wakhid Harits, Štefan Chudý

Foreign Language as Teachers' Skill in the 21st Century 26
Linda Chmelařová

Gaining Specific Competences from the Perspective of Future Teachers of English 36
Zuzana Sassiková, Blanka Babická, Tomáš Studeník

Selected aspects of lifestyle of active boys in the older school age 46
Jana Kvintová, Martin Sigmund, Michal Kudláček, Iva Dostálová

Professional Reflection and Self-reflection in the Educational Work of Secondary School Teachers 62
Michal Novocký

Lower Secondary School Pupils' Perception of e-Textbooks 75
Josef Moravec, Karolína Pešková

Development and Reflection on Early Childhood Education in U. S. Higher Schools 90
Shangwei Li

Developing Professional Skills in Pre-primary Teachers via Reflexion and Self-Reflection 108
Zora Syslová, Nina Ziklová

Preschool Teacher Education in China: History, Achievements, Problems and Prospects 120
Shangwei Li, Changjie Deng

Pre-service Teachers' Sentiments, Attitudes, and Concerns about Inclusive Education in Chongqing, China 133
Xinrui Li, Suqiong Xu, Youyu Xiang, Miloň Potměšil

Reviews

A Practical Guide for Practitioners in Inclusive Early Childhood Classrooms 142
Yuntong Peng

Professionalization of Kindergarten Teachers from the Perspective of Curriculum Reform 145
Alena Jůvová

Art in History, History in Art
Chapters from British History Seen Through Works of Art 148
Ondřej Duda

Introduction

Dear readers,

we would like to introduce the second issue in English of the e-Pedagogium magazine which focuses on several topics currently being discussed in the field of education. In the introductory section, there is an essay by Stanislava Ševčíková who deals with systemic approach in supporting professions, constructs used for the definition of 'problem' and results that can be achieved by using principles such as beauty or benefits of respect to other people's differences. Next sections discuss the issue of early childhood education in an international perspective. In his studies, Shangwei Li concentrates on the history and current concepts of nursery school teachers' education in the US and China. These articles are followed by the text devoted to the development of nursery school teachers' professional skills through reflection and self-reflection written by Czech authors Zora Syslová and Nina Ziklová.

Miloň Potměšil et al. complement to the discussion by a section summarizing the results of an investigation aimed at identifying the attitudes and concerns about inclusive education in China that can be used to improve the training of Chinese teachers for inclusive education.

In the next part, the authors Zuzana Sassiková, Blanka Babická and Tomáš Studeník deal with issues of foreign language teaching and skills development in the training of future teachers of English. Furthermore, Linda Chmelařová analyses the English language skills as one of the skills of teachers in the 21st century and presents the results of research carried out among future teachers. The aim was to determine students' opinions on the importance of English language in their future job responsibilities.

The topic diversity of this issue is further broadened by authors Surya Tri Saksono, Imron Wakhid Harits and Štefan Chudý. In their articles, the authors discuss the current possibilities of teaching literary criticism. The concluding section consists of Michal Novocký's conclusion of questions of reflection and self-reflection of secondary school teachers that can be considered the right way to achieve a progressive change in their work.

The research sections are further supported by reviews that reflect the current literature dealing with the issue of early childhood education, particularly in the topic of inclusion and training of nursery school teachers.

We believe that this issue focusing on current issues of inclusive education, language skills and the current debate about the importance of early childhood education we manage to contemplate or open the debate on these topics.

Editors

Articles

What helps in the Scenery in Systemically-Oriented Work with People

Stanislava Ševčíková

Motto: A great many people think they are thinking when they are merely rearranging their prejudices.
William James

Abstract

Postmodern time appeals many questions dealing with the manner of the cooperation among the people in different context, f. e. in helping professions such as social pedagogy, social work or school system professionals. In the article, the author deals with the question of what is systemic approach, what constructs it uses for the understanding of "problem" and what is achieved by the systemic approach in dealing with the principles of beauty and usefulness by the respecting of the other in his otherness as an offer to the traditional view of using "specialism" as a tool assigned to a helping professional in a helping relation.

Key words: systemic approach, helping profession, respect, beauty, usefulness, recognising of other in the otherness.

Abstrakt

Postmoderní doba klade mnoho otázek spojených se způsobem spolupráce mezi lidmi v nejrůznějších profesionálních kontextech, např. v pomáhajících profesích jako je sociální pedagogika, sociální práce nebo profesionálové ve školství. V textu se autor-

ka zabývá otázkou, co je systemický přístup, jaké konstrukty užívá pro definici pojmu "problem" a jakých výsledků dosahuje užitím principů jako krása, užitek při respektu druhého v jeho odlišnosti jako nabídka k tradičnímu pojetí odbornosti vyhrazeném pomáhajícímu profesionálovi v pomáhajícím vztahu.

Klíčová slova: systemický přístup, pomáhající profese, respect, krása, užitek, uznání druhého v jeho odlišnosti.

Introduction

Not many views of the helping process are available to helping professions. There could be used the altruistic ideas and those are to be used as a basis for the help to clients (cf. Musil, 2006), which is a very common approach, or the helping professionals are concentrated on cultivating their work with clients and a usefully formulated object of co-operation (cf. Ludewig, 2011). The thus-formulated objective can also be seen as an effective prevention of the burnout syndrome (Brock, Grady, 2002). The research question the author deals with the question of what is systemic approach, what constructs it uses for the understanding of "problem" and what is achieved by the systemic approach in dealing with the principles of beauty and usefulness by the respecting of the other in his otherness as an offer to the traditional view of using "specialism" as a tool assigned to a helping professional in a helping relation. There will be discussed the questions of whether and how helping professionals are able to distinguish between "reality" in the context of perceiving the client's problem and his family and life context; how to distinguish between what is objectively observable and measurable (first-order reality) and how a fact is evaluated and what meaning is attributed to that fact (second-order reality) (cf. Watzlawick 1998, Watzslawick, Bavelas, Jackson, 1999). All these individual building blocks of constructivist thought can help social workers better work with clients in asking usefully formulated questions (cf. Schweitzer, Schlippe, 2001), handling life better, becoming stronger and facing difficult life situations bravely.

Systemic approach

The systemic approach is based on the premise that the human world consists of systems and these human systems produce speech and meanings (Schlippe, Schweitzer, 2001).[1] The system needs to be understood, through communication within the system.

[1] Any therapeutic systems or systems providing help are problem-determined systems and as such they do not belong in everyday life events. The therapist becomes a part of the system and, hence, part of the problem; he is not someone "outside" but rather "within". He is a "conversation artist", one who is able to create room

Thus, the systemic approach derives its understanding of an individual from observation of the family which is characterised as a sociocultural system with all its elements (stability, hierarchy, power and control). The systemic approach sees reality as a social construct. Emphasis is placed especially on interrelation, interaction (cf. also Gergen, 2012). Post-structuralism, from which the systemic approach stems, asserts that people's interaction is the activity which creates meaning (Ludewig, 2011). Consequently, the meaning of communication and mutual interactions is created by interactions rather than naming, which is only secondary. The fact that the social world is understood as one constructed by language makes it impossible to find and formulate generally valid laws. Thus, social structuralists believe that the designation of a phenomenon leads to its substance and is therapeutic – naming leads to recovery (Schweitzer, Schlippe, 2001).

In the systemic approach, a problem defines a problem-determined system which comes to the helping worker. Consequently, not every system is a problem-determined system (Schlippe, Schweitzer, 2001, Ludewig, 2011).

Thus, the systemic approach is one which has developed from the family therapy that showed the need to work not only with the client himself but to include the whole family system in the helping intervention. It is no longer the individual but the whole system which becomes the client in the systemic approach. For example, Schlippe and Schweitzer (2001) refer to a case of the Milan Institute of Family Therapy where a schizophrenic client's mother and his son (brother of the client) had to be included in the therapy because it would be impossible to ascertain without working with the whole family why the client suddenly worsened. It was only the presence of the admired brother and his communication with the mother that suggested a possible way of resolving the problems.

Family therapists have noticed that the system is homeostatic, maintains balance and that, in a problem-determined system, it is the problem which keeps the system together. The systemic approach closely observes how the client constructs the problem and his ideas about himself, others and the world. These trends are currently also called postmodern trends for their proximity to a paradigm which respects the autonomy of multiple original realities within social reality. This means in practice that while maintaining ethical principles, the helping professional respects clients' wishes in decisions pertaining to their lives and believes that they make decisions which are the best possible at the time (cf. Ludewig, 2011, Schlippe, Schweitzer, 2001, Dallos, Vetere, 2009).

The narrative theory developed by Michael White is yet another trend in the development of the building of the systemic approach (cf. White, Epston, 1990, Payne, 2005). Narrative therapy draws inspiration from postmodern thought and social constructivism (cf. Berger, Luckmann, 1966). Narrative therapy is based on the assumption that

for, and facilitate, conversation in order to resolve a problem. Clients are encouraged to assume responsibility for their life; they are experts in their own problems and the therapist helps them look at these problems from various angles.

the reality lived by people ceases to correspond to the ideas and stories they or their close ones have created about themselves and they therefore create a new story, either independently or with the help of a helping worker (as an analogy: they knit or sew a new piece of clothing), which better corresponds to their life settings and enables them to cope with life difficulties better and more virogously. As an example, instead of building his self-understanding as someone deserving compassion because he lacks biological parents, a child in a children's home or foster family learns to see himself as a smart child who willingly helps others, has a feel for their needs or is perhaps good at playing football.

According to Ludewig (2011), systemic work is centred on the notions of ***respect*** (respect for oneself, clients, society, shared work), ***beauty*** (beauty of co-operation, looking for and enabling new and unique decisions of clients, c. f. also Karfíková, 1998) and ***usefulness*** (usefulness of co-operation; the worker follows the principle "be useful, do not help")[2]. Respect for the client has become an important moment of successful co-operation[3]; systemic therapists "respect" the client in his perception of the world and goals and attempt to think about clients by approaching their language and conversing (languaging) in that language (cf. Miller, 2004) or, as Gergen (2012) puts it, the client together with the worker form and interpret their story. The aforementioned principle of respect also means that helping workers do not fulfil their own needs but rather attempt to be helpful through an explicitly expressed form of co-operation with the client, i. e. the client should primarily perceive the usefulness of the worker's help – with the sole exception of assuming control in systemic understanding (Schweitzer, Schlippe, 2001, Ludewig, 2011). According to Gergen (2009, 2012), who is considered to be the founder of social constructionism – the concept that we construct or form the social world in human relationships and interpersonal communication; a human being is no longer perceived as the "Self", hermetically enclosed in the body and defining itself in relation to other entities (see Leibniz' monadology, cf. Mates, 1986), but is rather a relationship with others, involved in social contexts, communicating and responding to projects and identities of others (Gergen, 2012).

Systemic doctrines adhere to the theory of social constructivism. We can describe the latter in a simplified way in line with Paul Watzlawick (1998) in the example of the distinction between two kinds of reality: first-order reality, i. e. that of the objective world and objective facts, most often such that can somehow be quantified and measured (the dimensions of a room, outside or inside temperature, etc.), and this quantification can be replicated. Second-order reality, especially social reality, incorporates the meanings that individual facts have for us. These individual facts are described by

[2] Similarly, the Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training refer to the necessity of "recognition of the dignity, worth and the uniqueness of all human beings" in social work education and training (cf. Global, 2007 and Ševčíková, 2007).

[3] In the same way as one of the American fathers of humanistic psychology Carl Rogers abandoned his expert approach in the middle of the 20th century and established the "person-centred therapy" (cf. Rogers, 1995).

language and, in the most radical meaning of the word, anything that has not been named and voiced is non-existent (Watzslawick, 1998). According to Kenneth Gergen (2009), a human neither a nor a reality but a social construct; the notions of "truth", "objectiveness", "reason" and "knowledge" become relational – a human always has a relationship to something. These notions are also endowed with a historic context and are conditional. Gergen (2004) asserts that this does not mean the necessity to cease using them (including the notions of "creativity", "intuition", "instincts", "personality traits") but to be radically aware of their historic context and loss of any entitlement to objectiveness or full testimony. Steve de Shazer says the same by saying that "boundaries do not exist, boundaries happen".

Basic concepts of systemic approach

Problem as a result of a system

In the constructivist approach, a problem is not defined through "causes" (see the different, objectivist view of the world). In this approach to man and the world, causes are not "removed" because this is often impossible. Looking at complex systems from the perspective of causes and consequences can even lead to their destruction.

According to Ludewig (2011), negative experience with the need for change represents a problem. If a person endeavours for a change in vain, meeting a major refusal and similar reactions instead of a positive response from people around him, he will unwillingly stick to his old behaviour or fall into psychotic behaviour that brings him at least the care of hospital staff.

Úlehla (1999) also mentions the "problem-holder principle"; put simply, if the client has manners acceptable for society but problematic for himself, the client is the problem-holder and control sets in; if his unacceptable manners are a problem for the worker, the latter is the problem-holder and control is again employed[4]

Art of reframing

It does not help much to the helping intervention if we label the client with negative characteristics (cf. Mattila, 2001). Characteristics such as lazy, egoistic, close-mouthed, dependent do not mean much in terms of usefulness of helping co-operation and, most importantly, for coping with and addressing a difficult situation (cf. Bartlett, 1970). Labelled with a characteristic like these, the counterpart in communication will either have to keep the the position which he considers justified or lose face and, for the sake of appearances, admit that what he considers correct and relevant is in fact wrong. On the other hand, looking for positive connotations in the behaviour of a communication partner can enable communication which was seemingly no longer possible. For example, a dependent person can be seen as someone who endeavours for co-operation with others to join them on a common path or as a prudent individual who wants to avoid errors.

Recognising the other in his/her otherness by the example of poor or ethnical origin

Systemic respect, beauty and usefulness are related to the concept of "recognising the other", which involves respect, recognition and non-judging differences – qualities that inspire the philosophical views of S. de Beauvoir in her 1949 book "The Second Sex" (Beauvoir, 1989). A life and thought partner of J. P. Sartre, Beauvoir contemplates the fate of the "other" and the "different" – meaning women in society, calling for recognition of and respect for this otherness, preserving the full dignity of an individual (f. e. poor one, different sex or ethnical origin).

The dominant view of present Euro-American society, which sets values claiming to be valid and recognised by the majority is that every human has the chance to change his or her life through his/her own efforts and work. Middle- and, sometimes, upper class in Latin America who worked in 1960s with and endeavoured to improve literacy of the poor, such as the Brazilian P. Freire (2000a, 2000b), shared the same view. These middle class members were able to transform their negative attitude to the poor and began working with people in slums and rural areas. By doing this, they achieved solidarity and new literacy for most of Latin America. It proved essential to strive for recognition of the human dignity of not only the rich, but also the poor in their distinction and otherness. The "voiceless" poor had their voice in (mostly) educated "delegates" who were able to look at the poor through their own eyes and, simultaneously, use the means available to the rich and powerful (education, media, universities, psychology).

The endeavour for recognition of and respect for the other and his/her dignity in his/her otherness is one of the starting points of the liberation movement in philosophy, psychology, history and theology in Latin America (cf. Gutiérrez, 1992, Dussel, 1989).

I am placing under this concept all activities that the people involved considered to belong to "desire for liberation", mostly at universities where new educational concepts emerged, old interpretations of history and man were abandoned and new ways were sought to help "the people" prosper in society or learn to read and write. Among others, the following areas are worth mentioning: pedagogy of liberation, theology of liberation, but also liberation psychology), emerging in the 1960s as a response of intellectuals (people who had the opportunity to obtain education in Europe or America and, after returning home, saw the destitution of their homeland, especially the unscrupulous exploitation of the poor and the illiterate by the rich. Liberation (pedagogy, philosophy, psychology and theology of liberation) was to be achieved not "from above" but directly from within the "poor Other" (cf. the concept of recognition and respect for the other in his/her otherness); they were to become a history written from the angle of the poor and not the rich as had always been the case. For a Czech reader these thoughts appear to resonate with those of real communism which many of them experienced, but a deeper examination reveals that they contain a deep wisdom – provided that the poor also respect and recognise the other (for example, the rich) in his/her otherness.

In this context, the "other" is the poor who no longer wants to be enslaved and no longer wants to be poor. The "other" is undergoing transformation, rebirth – still in the mode of "being the other, the different" (Ševčíková, 2001), but shows a will to transition from this condition to a better one – together with the different "other", the one whom the majority calls the "rich".

A large part of the culture of the liberation movement in humanities at universities, including in Europe, endeavoured to form new hermeneutics, a new culture of "recognition of and respect for the other and in his/her existence" (Metz in Gutiérrez, 1992: 14).

Conclusion

In the presented article, I attempted to reflect the basic elements of the systemic approach, concentrating primarily on the understanding of problem, art of reframing and concepts and notions of beauty, respect and usefulness in professional and reflected social work, social pedagogy and other helping professions. Clients of helping professionals are often socially excluded men and women limited in their resources. The task of helping professionals is to look for respect and recognition of their value outside the mainstream. Primary task of helping professionals is to be intrinsically aware, and specifically in relation to clients, that there are also other values that shape the dignity, beauty and value of a human being. And as part of the dignity and beauty of helping professional' help, they are able to use both verbal and non-verbal communication to pass this message to their clients and help them find the dignity, beauty and respect for their lives and life values in the respect to the other in his otherness.

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Quo Vadis Teaching Literary Criticism

Suryo Tri Saksono, Imron Wakhid Harits, Štefan Chudý

Abstract

Literature comes to its readers/audience with complexity and uniqueness. Behind literature, there are authors that bring morality, religion, and other hidden missions. Literary criticism works to reveal every element in literature. It bridges the authors' agenda and the audience's needs. Aware with these complicated tasks, literary criticism has to face the problematic challenges: define its focus of analysis or let itself goes everywhere to follow the authors' agenda and the audience's needs.

Keywords: literature, literary critic, literary criticism, focus of analysis.

Introduction and general overview

Literary criticism is description and evaluation of its object; the primary concern of criticism is about the problem of unity – a kind of whole which the literary work forms or fails to form, and the relation of various parts to each other in building up this whole. Soon after being published, a work of literature will fight criticisms. The author of the work has to be ready for various consequences; they can be positive, but no one can guarantee that they will be negative. Of course, literary criticism is not completely negative; 'critic' is etymologically related to 'criteria'; a literary critic is a judge, not a denouncer (Posner 2008: 388). A provoking statement appears in Aristophane's Frogs (1008–1010), authors were in charge with the task of making human better (Destrée

and Murray 2015: 57). This duty is very heavy to be carried out. Literary works are different according to religion. Literary works talk about beautiful and not beautiful, while religion discusses the right and the wrong. Consequently, when philosophers bring literature and morality together, it is time to ask, roughly what is the impact of morally charged content on literary value (Hagberg and Jost 2015: 101). This phenomenon complicates the problem.

Moreover when we look at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries in the environment of globalization and integration of social conditions, the humanitarian thought has undergone tremendous changes, which is particularly evident in the development of national literatures. The shift of spiritual-moral as well as social-esthetical values and cultural reference points became a huge trial for the oral lore (Gilazov et al. 2015: 72). This trend leads to a complexity in conducting criticism towards literature.

A shift in focus in criticism could also point to a shift in the way we consume literature. Television shows and films which come to our homes often make us consumptive. We, then, are reluctant to enjoy literature. When we come to this condition, we have to realize that this worldview has been provoked by corporate interests, and we have to realize that this is not a single truth. Almost every phenomenon has clear origins and possible alternatives when no longer treated as a given fact of life (Huber 2015: 95)

Literary criticism: the phenomena

Literary analyses try to reveal the complexity. They examine individual texts or genres to describe what authors do, looking, for example, at narrative patterns, character development, symbolism, intertextuality, or the function of the setting (Stephens 2015: 105). Through this 'duty', literary critics are expected to convey the true 'spirit' of the author (Schultz 2015: 61).

The subject-matter of literary criticism is an art, and criticism is evidently some kind of art too. This sounds as though criticism is a parasitic form of literary expression, art based on pre-existing art, a second-hand imitation of creative power (Frye 2015: 87). Even though it is supposed to be second-hand, however, if we look at the nature, it belongs to literature, because of literariness which makes of a given work a work of literature or work of art. By literariness is meant implementation of literary devices in a given piece of literature (M. A. H. Khan 2015: 69).

A literary work has belonged to an organized whole considered as a historical occurrence and thus been brought into one of the 'orders' that societies strive to build. Insofar as it did so belong, the individual work of art did not merely become an additional unit in a sum of separate units. It entered a structural whole, a system, among whose parts significant and reciprocal relations existed. The inability to perceive these relations is what Guillen calls the 'atomistic fallacy' in literary studies (Guillen 2015: 201).

It is also unwise to neglect the relation between literature and its readers. Take a look at the relationship of the so-called 'advice' literature to its readers. Regaignon emphasizes that advice literature makes a particularly attractive puzzle because of the way it thematizes readerly compliance, the way its rhetorical confidence seems to elide the gap between representation and action (Regaignon 2015: 25).

Works of literature exist in the world to respond to social, psychological, and political forces operant at the time of their writing, that they take part in forming the systems of beliefs upon which people act, individually and collectively, and that those belief systems continue to have an effect long after the time of their initial construction (Cheney and Silberman 2015: 83). Take a look at Pound. Several decades after his death, his influence over the proverbial landscape of American poetry is undeniable, and proponents of the poetic avant-garde in the late 1970s to 1990s posited that Pound's influence over American poetic form is dominant because of its subversive, political nature (Foltz 2015: 77).

Some authors also try to enrich their works by mirroring other authors. One of them is Ralph Waldo Ellison. Other writers who influence him include Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Herman Menville, Mark Twin, T. S. Eliot, Henry James, William Faulkner, and Andre Malraux (Nelson 2015: 110). A different way is taken by Andrew Marvell. His lyric poems go around a very narrow area. It is a mosaic floor, delicately worked in intricate patterns of great variety, with a great deal of forethought; within the narrow limits that he chose, Andrew Marvell wrote fantastic variations upon his few themes (Colie 2015: 39). This is the reason why artists in general, and the poets principally, have been confined in so narrow circle; they have been rather imitators of one another than of nature (Howells 2015: 123).

A similar phenomenon also happens to Nussbaum. Some of her best works were beautifully created after her readings of Henry James, probably her most persuasive case for a turn to ethics in literary studies. They have helped to encourage a literary ethics that considers literariness and ethico-moral insight as two sides of the same coin, implying, for instance, that somehow Henry James's superior narrative skills contribute to the moral depth of his vision, which makes him all the more literary (Leypoldt 2008: 146).

Many people admire literature because of its genius to bring reality into the world of imagination as they also admire a painting because its beauty portrays real things. Bender argues that people admire poems for representing, as if they were real, things which are unreal but probable inventions. Painting is a literal art, but poetry is an imaginative one (Bender 2015: 68). Mikhail Bakhtin, however, once reminded us that language in literature lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention (Gates Jr and Mitchell 2014: 94). Wherever it comes to the readers, then the readers occupy the other half.

Hans Robert Jauss writes that a literary work is not a 'monument' that monologically reveals its timeless essence. A literary event can continue to have an effect only if those who come after it still or once again respond to it – if there are readers who again appropriate the past work or authors who want to imitate, outdo, or refute it (Marsden 2015: 143). Further Jauss figured out. A literary work exists only when it has been re-created or concretised in the mind of its reader. Later on, this idea will inspire the theory of structuralism and post structuralism. We often find this valuable literary work in classical literature. Unfortunately, however, Mark Twain once defined a 'classic' as 'a book which people praise but don't read' (Harris 2015: 55).

When literature talks about a narrative moment recurs in a certain pattern within a given geographical space and becomes, through the force of repetition, the means or only way for (mis)understanding the character of that space, it exhibits tendencies of a negative anthropology and of stereotyping in teasing out the intersection between narrative moment, anthropology, and stereotype (Ede 2015: 80). Moreover, when we discuss the language of literature, we will find out how it reveals about human thought, as well as cultural and ideological influences on the ways people reason and imagine (Gibbs Jr. and Ferreira 2015: 78).

A narrative moment consists of a 'narratable' event or events and cultural phenomena that take on the nature of 'events' as well. The concept of narrative moment (in both singular and plural senses) is simply one made up of a historical or contemporary event or series of events of large or small import in the public or private sphere, affecting individuals or collectives, that can inspire fictional or factional narratives or even, in a personal sense, the memoir or autobiography. It is important to note that events might have the potential for narration but that narrative moments yield their promise only when actually textualized or rendered into other representational forms (Ede 2015: 80).

Take a look at this phenomenon; people can say how reading Sifiso Nyathi's novel *The Other Presence* powerfully posits the fact that human beings are homo narrans (story narrators) and that their stories weave diplomatically into the fabric of human thinking, consciousness, fears and hopes for didactic reasons. Through the novel, Nyathi shows how fiction makes the socio-political, cultural and spiritual find concretisation and become more meaningful, resonant, tangible and imaginatively visible (Mlambo and Kandemiri 2015: 131). On the other hand, a literary critic found out that the specificities of narrative genres, which are studied predominantly in non-psychological, literary work, have been ignored (Parker and Shotter 2015: 25).

Moreover, in modern culture, people are split into 'two sides' – one essentially 'literary', the other essentially 'scientific' – unable to communicate with each other, but also, more controversially, that 'traditional culture' and indeed contemporary culture in general remained in thrall to the 'literary intellectuals', actively hostile to science and industry, and therefore impediments to progress and even more so in the developing world (Mandler 2015: 41).

The problem of criticism

The problem of literary criticism then arises. It is symptomatic of very important contemporary criticism that it has tended to define the text that is before the reader or critic essentially as an interdependent system of functions. Yet, what has given it an unmistakable cast of radicalism is not the novelty or the scope of its techniques of access to the literary text, or its manner of interpreting it; it has, on the contrary, with compelling logic, insisted that the linguistic material as well as its social and poetological conditions require (or make feasible) a form of understanding and systematized 'reading' that differs in essential respects from the traditional exercise of 'interpretation' (Amacher and Lange 2015: 59).

Literary studies in the United States, during the past few decades, have come to be dominated by approaches that emphasize the social, historical, and political significance of literary works. This development can be attributed both to the exhaustion of more formalist approaches, such as the New Criticism or deconstruction – if it happens forever, like other discipline, literary criticism runs the risk of becoming 'sterile, ineffectual, and hopelessly irrelevant to life' (Pollock, Elman, and Chang 2015: 152) – and to specific historical processes that made certain politically charged approaches to literature suddenly more relevant, as when decolonization eventually led to the rise of postcolonial studies, the Civil Rights movement helped spur approaches focused on race and ethnicity in literature, and the Second Wave feminism inspired gender-based approaches to literature (Booker 2015: 33).

The postcolonial method, to put it simply, means to locate texts and criticism in time and place. The insistence upon this 'worldliness' of texts, is a way of recognizing that they are 'always enmeshed in circumstance, time, place, and society – in short, they are in the world, hence worldly'. Following from this, criticism too will require the critic's 'worldly self-situating' and involve an active 'engagement' with texts. This is a 'secular' criticism, secularism being yet another and related meaning of worldliness (Park and Rajan 2015: 138). The next, the process of colonization usually affects socially and culturally, moreover this imperialism occupies for long time. The effects in colonization could be made a myriad of changing socially and culturally like: norms, values, beliefs, and language. The huge problem of identity would be flourished when the colonialists left these colonized countries. The notion of discussing the format of their country and how to regain the identity becomes the salient topic for these countries after colonization era. It is not easy for them due to its influences and also their diversities in tribes, cultures, and languages. This country needs to compromise the old values and new values with all of the people and should dig their social and cultural heritage.

Then, 'modernism' and 'postmodernism' engage in a complicated exchange with poststructuralism. 'Modernism' is generally understood to be a term that applies primarily to art (writers such as William Faulkner or Virginia Woolf and only secondarily to

thinkers such as Freud). Modernism engages with the subjectivity of the individual as irrational, evanescent but knowable, there to be contemplated – if one can only find the way (Souter 2000: 345). While, postmodernism flourished together with the emerging contemporary literature in the United States. It cannot be separated from the history of writer, history of work, and the history of literature. One of the most popular criticism with the postmodern based is the Black American Movement. The awareness to look for the identity as an African American is pioneered by the writers called The Black Art Movements. This movement is much inspired by the Black Power movement and other movements in other countries, mainly the movement in third world countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Patrice Lumumba, Nelson Mandela, Mao Tse Tung and Che Guevara cannot be separated from the black arts movement in America (Harits, p. 151). Most of the political leaders above fought to free themselves from colonialism and the exploitation politically and economically. The wave of anticolonialism in other countries comes to the United States, and Malcolm X, the black leader, struggles to voice the equality of civil rights in the United States and also calls for abolishment of racism. Such political and social movement finally becomes catalystic for poetry and other literary works of African Americans during the second half of the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s. The racism issues and the struggle to end racial segregation *de jure* are the central theme in The Black Arts Movements. The writers use such issues to show their identity as black Americans, African Americans.

On the other hand, Kristeva, a great symbol of French feminist literary theory, goes beyond gender differences; she is not female or male focused; according to her, feminist writing has nothing to do with the sex of the author, it is a character inscribed in the text itself that rises at points when the author is generally not in control of the meaning of the text (M. U. Khan 2015: 21). In the United States the writer who is much influenced by his social writer context is Adrienne Rich, American poet. Her ideology as the feminist is shown in her poems. Most of her works talk about the movement of feminism. Because she uses struggle related with feminism. Adrienne Rich is the feminist writer, thus her works, such as her poems, use feminism themes, like motherhood, woman's oppression, and sexuality (Harits, 2012).

Meanwhile, the term 'close reading' is too ideologically radioactive, and means too many different things, to serve as a name for the kind of reading normally. There are various names for it, which turn up in some discussions:'weak reading', 'minimal reading', 'literal reading', and 'reading for the essentials'. Finally, 'minimal reading' or 'minimal interpretation' are settled. Minimal interpretation assumes that good poems taken more or less at face value, as written, are already doing so many interesting things that it is a shame to start weaving ingenious ideas around them too soon – ideas that might be much less inclined to think necessary, or even relevant (Attridge and Staten 2015: 76).

Another approach, cognitive literary criticism, represents a fairly recent and rapidly growing attempt on the part of scholars with many different aims and methods to bring

literary studies into dialogue with the new sciences of mind and brain. In telling contrast to critics of many other theoretical persuasions, cognitive critics develop their models for understanding subjectivity, agency, consciousness, language, and psychosocial development through critical engagement with the best contemporary work being produced in leading university departments of psychology, linguistics, neuroscience, and philosophy of mind (Waugh 2006: 37). The literary criticism mechanism is also applied to biblical exegesis with the hope that people, especially Christians, can understand it appropriately (Patte 2015: 109).

In Germany, the advances in literary criticism and aesthetics that accompanied the artistic creativity of the Goethean age have long been subjects of scholarly interest. All the time students of a period have sought antecedents for new artistic attitudes. The English garden, the bourgeois tragedy, the sentimental novel, the fairy tale, the poetic descriptions of primordial nature, and the poetic adoration of ruins are regularly considered symptomatic of changes in the premises of taste. The coining of the word 'aesthetics' by Baumgarten, the affirmation of the wondrous by Bodmer and Breitinger, the rejection of predetermined rules by Lessing, and the demand for creative freedom by the *Sturm und Drang* writers are always mentioned as significant indications of the changes that were taking place (Flaherty 2015: 93).

The presence of cultural studies enriches and strengthens literary criticism. Unfortunately, cultural studies do not have a clearly defined subject area. Its starting point is a very broad and all-inclusive notion of culture that is used to describe and study a whole range of practices (Sardar 2004: 61).

Conclusion

Then, what should we do with literary criticism? The answer is up to the critics. They have freedom to define their own area. Many aspects have to be revealed in literature. Does literary criticism have to reformulate or change its orientation towards literature? No exact answers are eligible for the question. Above all, readers and audience need the result of literary critics' analysis to strengthen the judgement upon literature. Without careful examination on the vast are of literature, the substance of judgement will be unexpectedly misleading.

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Foreign Language as Teachers' Skill in the 21st Century

Linda Chmelařová

Abstract

The article analyses English language knowledge as one of the teachers' skills in the 21st century. Emphasis is put on English for specific purposes and its significance for the profession of a lower-secondary teacher. The target group of teachers is so-called non-linguists, i. e. those who are not qualified to teach a foreign language.

The paper also describes new features and demands thattoday's world puts on individuals and which teachers must face. It includes some partial results of a research carried out at the Faculty of Education, Palacký University Olomouc among future lower-secondary teachers. Its aim was to reveal students' opinions on the importance of the English language within their future professional duties.

Key words: lower-secondary teacher, non-linguist, general English, English for specific purposes, teachers' skill.

Abstrakt

Článek se zabývá dovednostmi učitele v 21. století s důrazem na znalost anglického jazyka. Zvláštní pozornost je věnovaná odborné angličtině a jejímu významu pro učitele na 2. stupni ZŠ. Cílovou skupinu tvoří učitelé, kteří nejsou aprobovaní pro výuku cizího jazyka. Příspěvek také popisuje nové požadavky moderní doby, které jsou kladeny na učitele i na jednotlivce. Dále příspěvek popisuje dílčí výsledky výzkumu, který se uskutečnil na PdF UP mezi budoucímu učiteli na 2. stupni ZŠ. Jeho cílem bylo zjistit názory studentů, zda je znalost anglického jazyka důležitá pro vykonávání jejich budoucí profese.

Klíčová slova: učitel 2. stupně ZŠ, nefilolog, obecná angličtina, odborná angličtina, dovednosti učitele.

Introduction

Since the beginning of pedagogy as a science and its theoretical principles, there have always been attempts to define main teachers' skills and competencies which are necessary for effective teaching. The emphasis on particular abilities may have changed depending on the needs and priorities of society in particular historic periods.

Teaching as a human process ought to reflect the world around with its specific demands determined by social development. The few recent decades are characterised by terms such as globalization, multiculturalism, information technologies, internet, social nets etc. The nature of many professions has changed and society puts emphasis on new skills, knowledge and competencies. This trend has also strongly influenced the teachers' profession and caused a shift of the teachers' role within the teaching process.

This article primarily aims at analysing the importance of a foreign language within teachers' skills and professional profile reflecting changing needs of modern society of the 21st century. Firstly, it attempts to specify the social and educational features of modern society which may differ from the previous era. Secondly, it closely defines particular areas of foreign language skills, which could be considered essential for the profession of future teachers.

After the theoretical introduction, it depicts the quantitative research which was carried out at the Faculty of Education among future lower-secondary teachers. The main objective of the research was to reveal students' opinions on the significance of a foreign language (concretely English) within their future profession and their notions about effective and competent foreign language teaching which is compulsorily involved in their study at the Faculty of Education.

Teachers' skills in the 21st century

To begin with, we need to specify 2 terms which may be mixed up: competence and skill. Kalhous and Obs (2002) quote Švec, who points out that competence is a broader term than skill including three main components: behaviour, knowledge and experience. When talking about teachers' skills, it is significant to mention Kyriacou's publication *Essential teaching skills* in which the author says that "successful teaching skills crucially involve knowledge, decision-making and action" (Kyriacou, 2007, p. 1). The need to state and define new skills and competences of a teacher of the 21st century has already been reflected in pedagogical literature. Holoušová (1999) points out that

a teachers' role as the main source of information has been reduced due to a rapid development of technical and scientific progress. Moreover, students have large possibilities to look up information on their own. A teacher then must intensively study the latest trends and have general knowledge relating to the main areas of human life.

Besides gaining new knowledge and information, in the world of media it appears to be necessary to sort this information and critically assess its value which correlates to a skill called critical thinking. As it is indicated in the publication *Man and education in an information society* by Sak and col. (2007), expansion of medial impact has strengthened a human concern about the fact that it could lead to dehumanization of the world and uniformity would prevail over heterogeneity of human opinions and attitudes. On the other hand, Rotherham and Willingham (2010) highlight the fact that critical thinking along with problem solving are not new at all. The difference seems to be in the nature and global overlap of media these days.

The most visible trend of the last few decades is the concept of multiculturalism, i. e. co-living of various nations and ethnic groups with different mother tongue and cultural background. The Oxford Dictionary defines multiculturalism as "the presence of, or support for the presence of, several distinct cultural or ethnic groups within a society". An ability to understand, respect and accept diverse culture has become an important part of modern society. If we demand this skill from the future generations it is then reasonable to demand it from teachers as well. In this respect it is worth mentioning a concept presented in an article *Didactic Principles by Comenius and 21st Century Skills* by Jůvová and Bakker (2015) which contains a set of skills required in the society of the 21st century. In terms of this subject, we can list the following skills and knowledge: Social and cross-cultural skills, cross-cultural understanding, to be prepared to thrive in today's global economy, to understand, negotiate and balance diverse views and beliefs to reach workable solutions, particularly in multi-cultural environments, to communicate effectively in different environments (including multi-lingual), to learn from and work collaboratively with individuals representing diverse cultures, religions and lifestyle in a spirit of mutual respect and open dialogue in personal, work and community context.

When analysing the above mentioned aspects, we can notice they have two features which they have in common: worldwide scope and awareness. To gain the information necessary for having objective and emotionally not affected attitudes and knowledge which overlaps the frame of our everyday life we may need a tool – foreign language which enables us to communicate effectively in a large community and comprehend facts properly.

Based on the information gathered above, it is evident that foreign language competences (primarily English due to its world expansion) are inevitable for human personal and professional life. The Czech school curriculum guarantees teaching of the English language from the third grade of primary education to the final grade of secondary level.

1 General English versus ESP

These days, all university students who are preparing for the profession of a lower-secondary teacher are obliged to study a foreign language as a compulsory subject. Foreign language clases are provided either by language centres included in the faculty or university organizational structure or by departments of foreign languages. In this case, we talk about non-linguists – the students who do not major in a foreign language, or in other words, those who are not specialized in teaching a foreign language as their main subject. Even though non-linguists are not supposed to teach a foreign language in their profession, we can assume that they will need it for their future professional duties. The majority of the students prefer English (as it is called lingua franca of the modern world) to other foreign languages, followed by German, French, Russian or Spanish in this geographical region. Due to dominant role of English as a communicative tool in the social and educational sphere, we will narrow the following parts of the article to this particular language.

The lessons at the Faculties of Education primarily cover only general English including basic grammatical structures and vocabulary describing everyday situations with a small emphasis on register or professional context. A question which arises from this fact is: Is general English sufficient for future lower-secondary teachers, or do they need to acquire any specific language knowledge and skills?

To attempt to answer this question, firstly we need to define "kinds of English" we may take into consideration. Besides general English, we differentiate ESP (English for specific purposes) which is used especially in concrete professionally-oriented areas. On the other hand, "general English provides basic knowledge and skills of the English language at a school level where the occupational/professional and higher educational orientations of the students are not defined properly" (Islam, p. 69).

Schleppegrell and Bowman point out that ESP students are primarily "adults who already have some familiarity with English and are learning the language in order to communicate a set of professional skills and to perform particular job-related functions (Schleppegrell and Bowman, 1986, p. 2). From this point of view, we can agree that university students (future lower-secondary teachers) should have already acquired a certain level of English language competences during their previous studies and are being prepared for a job gaining specific skills and functions.

ESP appeared in English as a second language methodology in the 1960s. Since that time a wide range of ESP syllabi has been designed for particular job-related needs (business, medicine, tourism, IT, engineering etc.). After exploring available and thematically suitable sources, in fact, there are not many of them (if any) which relate to use of ESP for needs of future teachers. Thus, a main benefit of this topic is its novelty, as it has not been properly researched until this time.

Due to a lack of theoretical findings we have assigned 3 areas of English language skills which can be important for future lower-secondary teachers. The reasons for these choices will be explained subsequently.

a) English for information technology
b) English containing pedagogical terminology
c) English covering the subjects teachers will teach

All these "kinds" of English ought to be embodied in ESP since they are characterised by subject specific knowledge as well as by language skills which may prevail when using them.

1.1 English for information technology

It is undeniable that IT as an inevitable tool for all professions has also its place in education. Internet has become the most common source of information, and the majority of worldwide net and computer programs use English as a means of conveying and understanding this information.

1.2 English containing pedagogical terminology

Regardless of the subjects which teachers teach, studying new pedagogical methods, trends and approaches presents a lifelong process which should not be limited only to facts and findings provided in their mother tongue. The amount of Czech or Slovak sources and foreign ones is still incomparable, moreover, the latest pieces of information usually appear first in international articles or monographs.

1.3 English covering the subjects teachers teach

As in the previous two cases, teachers' awareness of the fields they are specialized in may be enhanced by studying relevant sources which are much wider when searching among originally English written ones. Especially more specialized texts require a certain level of EL skills and specific range of vocabulary.

Not necessarily, merely these areas cover all possible needs of future lower-secondary teachers. On the other hand, we have reasonably attempted to define a language and content framework which may determine professional requirements of this target group. The following step is to find out what current students think about and how they specify their language needs to be useful in their professional life.

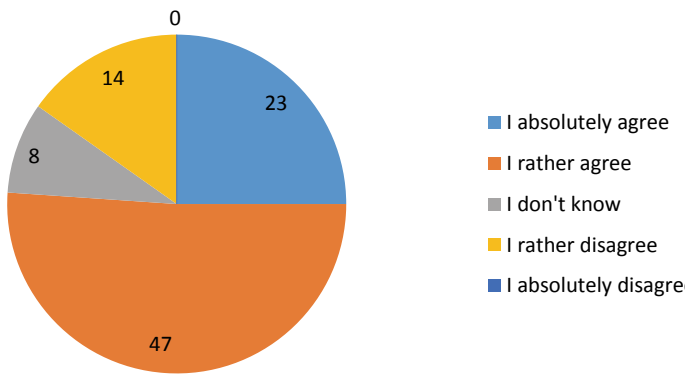
2 Research results

As mentioned above, all the students being prepared for a profession of future teacher are obliged to study a foreign language as their compulsory subject. At the Faculty of Education Palacky University, students (non-linguists) choose among English, German and Russian for non-linguists. Most of them (almost 80%) choose English. The syllabus of the lesson covers only general English, including grammar and vocabulary of basic literature and practising all 4 skills. These students participated in the research whose main aim was to find out students' expectations about EL competences that may be useful and needed when working as lower-secondary teachers.

The students (in total 92 respondents) were given a questionnaire containing 15 items. In this article we will analyse those items which closely relate to an importance of ESP in their curriculum to be well prepared regarding their language competence.

Item no. 7

"Knowledge of English language is important for my future profession of a lower-secondary teacher." Do you agree with this statement?

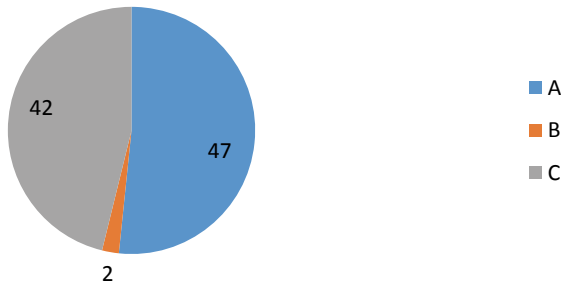


In this item, no student absolutely disagrees with the statement. Approximately 2/3 of all respondents think that English language is important for their future career and only 14 of them rather disagree with it. The next item relates to the "kinds" of English which should prevail in respondents' knowledge.

Item no. 8

Which of these statements do you agree with? Tick only one.

a) For my future profession of a lower-secondary teacher I need only knowledge of general English.
b) For my future profession of a lower-secondary teacher I need only knowledge of English for specific purposes.
c) For my future profession of a lower-secondary teacher I need knowledge of general English and English for specific purposes.



As results show, the majority of students consider only general English as sufficient. The number of other 42 respondents having chosen answer B is not negligible. The next item specifies what concretely respondents find important in ESP.

Item no. 9

If you ticked B or C, which specific knowledge do you need in ESP? Tick one or more options.

a) information technologies
b) pedagogical terminology
c) ESP covering subjects which you are supposed to teach in your specialization
d) other _____

of answers in this item is comparable. It points to the connection between teacher training and students' expectations about their future job.

Conclusion

Social and technical changes which have appeared in the last decades are undeniable. People must be (probably much more than in the past) prepared to face all new challenges and possible obstacles arising from the globalized world. Teachers as main models for young people should possess the qualities which may lead to successful orientation in the modern society. For the above mentioned reasons, knowledge of English language proves to be essential. This article aimed at presenting the needs analysis in the field of English language skills among students being prepared for a profession of a future teacher. Most students realize the importance of English language for their future professional needs but the results are not clear, especially in terms of concrete ESP which should be embodied in teachers' language skills. The next step, which should logically follow, is to do the same needs analysis among practising lower-secondary teachers and compare whether their opinions correspond to each other or are different.

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Gaining Specific Competences from the Perspective of Future Teachers of English

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Abstract

This article concentrates on the specific competences future teachers of English need to acquire and on their ability to use them in class. Within the survey we observed three competences: communicative, linguistic and linguodidactic competence. The aim of the research was to find out how students of English at the Faculty of Education, Palacký University Olomouc assess their competences after completing their first and second compulsory teaching practices. Furthermore, we wanted to compare the students' assessment of the selected competences. For the survey we chose a non-standardized questionnaire which was distributed to the students of the follow-up Master's degree study programme of English.

Key words: specific competence, pedagogical reality, future teachers of English, communicative competence, linguistic competence, linguodidactic competence.

Introduction

During preparation for the teaching profession there are skills and knowledge future teachers need to gain and master before they step into the pedagogical reality. These skills and knowledge can be called by an umbrella term – competences. The aim of

faculties of education is to educate their students in three different areas: pedagogy, psychology and the student's own field of specialization. Through studying subjects and undergoing obligatory teaching practice the students are literally being made competent to follow the teaching profession. Still, this does not mean that all the graduates of faculties of education automatically become good teachers: there will always be a certain aspect of students' character that plays a significant role in this matter and that needs to be taken into consideration.

Theoretical background

Competences in general

Although this article mainly pays attention to the specific competences of future teachers of English, it would be advisable first to look at this term in general. According to D. H. Hymes (1972), a competence is a sum of the abilities emerging from the actual knowledge which is brought to practice by an individual. Similarly, Spilková (1996) states that competences in connection to the teaching profession should cover not only knowledge, skills and abilities but also values and personal characteristics. Průcha, Walterová and Mareš (1998) claim that a teacher's work would not be effective without professional competences. As it follows from Choděra's assertion (1999, p. 102) that a 'teacher's competences should be derived from future knowledge and qualities of pupils', the main impact occurring through the gaining of competences is the fact that it is the pupils who are affected by this process. All these statements might have serious implications for pedagogical preparation at the faculties of education that should build and support the acquisition of these competences during the university studies of future teachers.

Beside professional competences, there are also specific competences following from the study of the subjects students specialize in: both should constitute the educational programme at the faculties of education equally. Professional subject competence is one of the key competences of future teachers, according to Vašutová (2001). In this article we focus on specific competences connected to the studying and teaching of the English language, and therefore we proceed from the division of professional subject competence presented by Hanušová (2005),who segments this competence in terms of foreign language teaching into five categories: communicative, linguistic, socio-cultural and intercultural, literary and linguodidactic competence, of which we investigate three: communicative, linguistic and linguodidactic competence.

Communicative competence

Communicative competence can actually be considered as a superordinate term for linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence. This way of dividing up communicative competence is also accepted by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which further states that 'the communicative language competences are those which empower a person to act using specifically linguistic means' (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 9). Communicative competence can basically be summarized as the ability to communicate on a certain level in a particular language. The act of communication includes both receptive (listening, reading) and productive (speaking, writing) skills, these can also be called 'communicative activities' (CEFR, 2001, p. 57). Chocholatá (2011) mentions two areas in which communicative competence is put into practice as far as the teaching profession is concerned. The first one is the area of presenting information and the second one deals with the structure of the subject. This means that teachers need to be prepared to pass their knowledge on to their pupils in an understandable way with respect to the syllabus of the subject they specialize in.

Linguistic competence

Linguistic competence, in other words the knowledge of the theory of language, covers the areas of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, etc., which are fundamentally acquired within subjects such as phonetics and phonology, linguistics (morphology, syntax), lexicology or language practice. According to Stern (1991), knowledge of language theory helps a methodology expert to think about the language in a critical and constructive manner. But, as the CEFR (2001) points out, the language system is so complex that it will never be possible for its user to master the language faultlessly. Another reason for this is the fact that language is constantly going through changes and evolution. In addition to that, there are new linguistic areas such as textual linguistics, pragma-linguistics, sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics, which have a significant influence on linguistics in the field of pedagogy (Hanušová, 2005).

Linguodidactic competence

In each case, it would be useless for students who are expected to become teachers one day to focus only on the theoretical side of the language without being able to pass their knowledge on to pupils. For this reason the students are led to master teaching methods and techniques which are needed for the teaching process. The concept of so called 'pedagogical grammar' by Stern (1991, p. 175) should combine both pedagogical and linguistic knowledge by explaining linguistic terms in a way that is understandable for language learners.

This is the subject matter of linguodidactic competence. The acquisition of linguodidactic competence is the main aim of foreign language teaching methodology courses. Although Choděra (1991) places linguodidactics among the pedagogical disciplines, it includes not only pedagogical and psychological but also linguistic attributes. Linguodidactics is, in a way, a link between the theory and practice of foreign language education. According to research carried out by Babická and Nevařil (2003) among students of English of the Faculty of Education, Olomouc, most of the students mentioned that 'the courses at the faculty are too theoretical and lack an interconnection with practice'. The possible ways to change this belong among the most discussed topics in methodology. An unsuitable balance between theory and practice is also shown by the results of a research study performed by Binarová (2003), who understands the needs of the students but on the other hand claims that the ability to teach can be practised only partially during their studies. In her opinion, it is the aim of faculties of education to prepare students for this life-long expertise in their profession.

Research

As already mentioned, the area of the research is built on three specific competences: communicative, linguistic and linguodidactic competence, all three of which are actually subordinate to one key professional subject competence. The field of study of the research is the English language. The three competences are here investigated from the point of view of students in their follow-up Master's degree study programme. It is actually a self-assessment of students' specific competences, so we need to make allowances for the personal attitude of the students towards themselves as current students of English and future teachers of this language. Therefore the aim of the research is not to measure the quality of the specific competences of the students of English. The emphasis was rather placed on students' opinions in which they express how they feel about being teachers of English in the near future. The substance of the research lies in the students' self-evaluation of the knowledge and skills represented by the three competences and their achievement in using these specific competences in the pedagogical reality.

Aims

- To find out how students assess their specific competences after both the first and the second compulsory teaching practices soon before the completion of their studies at the Faculty of Education.
- To find out whether there are any significant differences in the three competences the students evaluated.

The respondents and the Institute of Foreign Languages

The respondents were second-year master's students of English at the Faculty of Education in Olomouc. These students had completed both their first and second compulsory teaching practices and they served as pilot stage survey respondents for the IGA grant project research. A questionnaire was distributed to them in a printed version in their lessons of methodology. The questionnaire was filled in by 24 respondents.

The aim of the Institute of Foreign Languages is to prepare its students for the teaching profession in two areas. The first one, on which the focus is mainly placed in the Bachelor's degree study programme, is the theory of language presented by the study of linguistics, British and American literature and facts about English-speaking countries. In the follow-up Master's degree study programme the main attention is paid to English language methodology and practical use of the knowledge gained about the English language in the teaching process.

The Method

For the students' self-assessment of specific competences we chose a non-standardized questionnaire with a numeral scale consisting of five points (1 to 5), where 1 meant the lowest level of confidence in a statement and 5 the highest. The questionnaire had three parts, which explored communicative, linguistic and linguodidactic competence. The communicative and linguodidactic competence section was further divided according to productive and receptive skills into speaking, writing, listening and reading, and communicative and linguodidactic competence were also enriched by sociolinguistic and socio-cultural aspects. The descriptors were selected from two sources and all of them were structured as 'Can Do' statements. The communicative and linguistic competence part is based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, or more precisely, the C1 (Effective Operational Proficiency) level of proficiency which should be achieved by students at the Institute during and after the completion of their studies. The second source was the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL), from which we selected the descriptors connected to linguodidactic competence in the four language skills (speaking, writing, listening and reading).

Table 1
Specific competences questionnaire descriptors

COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE
Speaking
I can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured speech, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
I can keep up with a conversation with native speakers.
I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision.
Writing
When writing I can spell accurately, apart from occasional slips of the pen.
I can express myself in writing on a wide range of general or professional topics.
I can vary my vocabulary and style according to the addressee, the kind of text and the topic.
Listening
I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured.
Without much effort I can understand films which contain a considerable degree of slang and idiomatic usage.
I can understand lectures, talks and reports in my field of professional or academic interest.
Reading
When reading I can qualify opinions and statements precisely in relation to degrees of, for example, certainty/uncertainty, belief/doubt, likelihood, etc.
I can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning.
I can extract information, ideas and opinions from highly specialized texts in my own field, for example research reports.
Sociolinguistic appropriateness
I can use language flexibly and effectively for social purposes, including emotional, allusive and joking usage.
I can express myself confidently, clearly and politely in a formal or informal register, appropriate to the situation and person(s) concerned.
LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE
I can define basic English linguistic terminology.
I can describe the sound system of English.
I can classify word classes and their grammatical categories.
I can analyze sentences and relations between sentence elements and clauses in sentences.
I can characterize English vocabulary and explain the relations between lexical units.
I can consistently maintain a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare and difficult to spot.
I can characterize different national varieties of English.
I can vary intonation and place sentence stress correctly in order to express finer shades of meaning.
I can recognize a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms, appreciating register shifts.
I can apply the theoretical linguistic knowledge in my own language production.

LINGUODIDACTIC COMPETENCE
Speaking
I can select a range of meaningful speaking activities to develop fluency (discussion, role play, problem solving, etc.)
I can select a variety of oral activities to develop accuracy (grammar, word choice, etc.)
I can plan activities which link grammar and vocabulary with communication.
I can select a variety of techniques to make learners aware and help them to use stress, rhythm and intonation.
Writing
I can select a range of meaningful writing activities to help learners become aware of and use appropriate language for different text types (letters, stories, reports etc.)
I can use a variety of techniques to help learners to develop awareness of the structure, coherence and cohesion of a text and produce texts accordingly.
I can select writing activities to consolidate learning (grammar, vocabulary, spelling, etc.)
Listening
I can encourage learners to use their knowledge of a topic and their expectations about a text when listening.
I can design and select different activities which help learners to recognize and interpret typical features of spoken language (tone of voice, intonation, style of speaking, etc.)
I can help learners to apply strategies to cope with difficult or unknown vocabulary when listening.
Reading
I can use literary texts as sources of cultural, social and historical information and views.
I can help learners to develop critical reading skills (reflection, interpretation, analysis, etc.)
I can encourage learners to use their knowledge of a topic and their expectations about a text when reading.
Socio-cultural competence
I can select activities (role plays, simulated situations, etc.) which help learners to develop their socio-cultural competence.
I can select a variety of texts and activities to make learners aware of the interrelationship between culture and language.

The results

For each part of the questionnaire (communicative competence, linguistic competence and linguodidactic competence) we counted the number of students who selected one of the points on the scale from 1 to 5. Then we calculated the average percentage of students for each particular point in all the parts of the questionnaire, also counting separately the skills in the communicative and linguodidactic competence section.

Communicative competence

The results showed that the majority of the students are quite confident about their specific competences. On average 45% of the students chose a rating of 4 (very confident) when evaluating their communicative competence, while listening and reading

were evaluated equally by 50.6% of the students as the skills in which they feel very confident. In the second place, characterized as quite confident (rating of 3), were 24.1% of the students, of whom 31% mostly evaluated themselves as being quite confident in socio-linguistic appropriateness. Very close to this degree was a rating of 5, meaning highly confident, which was selected by 23.9% of the students. Only one person felt that they lacked confidence (rating of 1) in one of the descriptors in the reading section. This means that the respondents generally feel either quite confident or very confident in their communicative competence.

Linguistic competence

Linguistic competence was most often given ratings of 3 (quite confident) or 4 (very confident): to be exact, 41% of the students chose rating of 3 (quite confident) and 39.8% of them selected a rating of 4 (very confident). In this competence there were already more cases of the lowest degree (rating of 1): to be exact, in seven descriptors out of 12 there was always one person who felt a lack of confidence. This can mean that the students have problems in the area of linguistics and they do not feel certain enough about this competence.

Linguodidactic competence

Similarly, linguodidactic competence was given an average rating of 4 (very confident) by 48.7% of the respondents, mostly in speaking, reading and socio-cultural competence. 35% of the students felt quite confident in their linguodidactic competence, mainly evaluating writing and listening as the skills where they are quite confident. In this section there were students who were not confident in seven out of 15 'Can Do' statements, particularly in listening, where they chose the first option (rating of 1) four times. It shows that the students are confident about their own listening skill but they are uncertain about how to pass this skill on their pupils.

Overall analysis

When the competences are compared, on average, 23.9% of the respondents evaluated themselves as being highly confident (a rating of 5) in communicative competence with linguodidactic competence in second place in the same rating was 17.33% of the students and linguistic competence last, with 11.3% of the respondents. In comparison to that, there was only one case in which the student felt a lack of confidence, but on the other hand there were more descriptors in the linguistic and linguodidactic section (seven) where the respondents had low confidence (rating of 1) in the descriptors. In the

introduction to the research we mentioned the fact that there is also a personal aspect of either over- or under-estimation. If this is taken into consideration, the research tells us that the students tend to feel rather positively than negatively about themselves. However, this does not have to influence their teaching profession in a bad way. Usually, high confidence serves as a good tool for pedagogical reality, because within a class of pupils it can awaken respect for their teacher's work.

Conclusion

According to the results, it can be claimed that the students of the Faculty of Education studying English at the Institute of Foreign Languages feel quite or very confident in the knowledge and skills they have gained during their studies at the faculty. This is not as positive as we had hoped, but what can bring encouragement is the fact that there was a much lower number of 'Can Do' statements in all the parts of the questionnaire which the respondents did not feel confident about. We found out that the students' assessment of their specific competences is rather somewhere in the middle between the ratings of 3 and 4 on the scale, and this applies to all the competences. Still, communicative competence can be evaluated as the most successful, because of the fact that there was almost no one who did not feel confident in this competence. This survey served as an initial stage of a larger survey that will investigate how future teachers of English assess their competences after their first and second compulsory teaching practices.

Acknowledgement

This paper was written and financed as a part of the project IGA_Pdf_2016_008, Self-assessment of Selected Specific Competences of Future English Teachers in Relation to Pre-service Teacher Training at Palacký University Olomouc.

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Selected aspects of lifestyle of active boys in the older school age

Jana Kvintová, Martin Sigmund, Michal Kudláček, Iva Dostálová

Abstract

The main objectives of this thesis was to identify and evaluate selected aspects of lifestyle (physical activity/inactivity, sedentary behaviour – watching TV and DVD, playing PC games, negative eating habits, substance abuse and sexual experience) in the research sample of 105 young boys from Olomouc, Prostějov and Přerov aged 11, 13 and 15 years, with regularly controlled physical activity (ice hockey) and compare them with the same old boys from the HBSC study (The Health Behavior in School-aged Children). The results show that these young active boys have an overall healthier lifestyle than boys in the HBSC study. This pilot study can become the basis for other possible hypotheses and further research investigations.

Keywords: health, risk factors, school boys.

Introduction

What is being presented to the future teachers in terms of the Framework Education Programme is the fact that "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being. It is formed and influenced by many aspects such as lifestyle, healthily-preventive behaviour, quality of interpersonal relationships, quality of environment, safety of the man, etc." (VÚP, 2007, p. 72). According to the World Health Organization

(WHO) the Health is defined as the state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO, 2003). Machová and Kubátová (2009) emphasize that health belongs to the most important values of every human. Physical activity (PA) has a huge impact on the human health and thus is denoted as a basic element of health and also one of the most significant needs of human being (Mitáš et al., 2013; Sigmund & Sigmundová, 2011). Among the main determinants of health belong- genetic basis, medical care, environment and a lifestyle. (Bouchard, Blair, & Haskell, 2007; Machová & Kubátová, 2009; Dolanský 2008). These determinants of health have an impact on the human health either directly or indirectly, however they always influence one and other. Some of the determinants belong to the genetic makeup of the man (heredity, education) and some are adopted from the environment (nature, society). The influence of these factors may either protect ourselves and strengthen our health (biopositive) or the other way round, weaken it and become the cause of an illness or a health disorder (bionegative). Determinants of health can be divided into internal or external determinants. The internal determinants belong to the hereditary factors. Each human gains the genetic makeup of both parents at the beginning of the ontogenetic evolution. The aggregate of external factors and conditions are described as an external environment. The lifestyle, quality of life, working environment and medical services (its standard and quality of medical care) (Machová & Kubátová, 2009).

The definition of Dolanský (2008), who presents the basic determinants influencing the human health in such proportion – lifestyle – personal behaviour: 50–60%, genetic basis – genetic and constitutional factors: 10–15%, socioeconomic environment – life environment: 20–25%, medical care and services: 10–15%, corresponds to the definition of the authors mentioned above.

The main factor influencing our health is definitely the lifestyle of a human. The term lifestyle is more and more discussed nowdays. Actually, it is one of the most important factors having the impact on the quality of our life. Its individual character varies from the way of life which has group character. Another contrast between the way of life and the lifestyle is different continuity between the factors influencing the lifestyle. For example, there can be mentioned things such as an individual development of the human, the impact of the surroundings, cultural level of man, family traditions and so on. The lifestyle is created during the lifetime and thus is variable at time because of the fact that the human needs change together with the time and alteration of an environment. According to Machová et al. (2009, 16) "the lifestyle includes forms of voluntary behaviour at specific situations that are based on an individual selection of various possibilities." In accordance with Slepičková (2005), the lifestyle can be characterized as a range of all human activities, beginning with thinking or behaviour up to the actions that are very significant in the human life and are typical, predictable and often repeated. Very often, the lifestyle is assessed according to the human opinions,

attitudes and behaviour. Generally, the lifestyle is the manifestation of human personality. It includes forms of voluntary behaviour at specific situations that are based on an individual selection of various possibilities, where the selection depends on the age, temperament, education, economic situation, ethnicity, gender and value orientation of every human (Kubátová & Kroufek, 2006).

The term lifestyle is often associated with the words like active, passive or inactive and sedentary. Generally, it is spoken about "the active lifestyle" or more precisely about the term "healthy lifestyle", which is more discussed in the society and is closely associated with the PA (Stejskal, 2004). "The active lifestyle" is the system of important activities, relationships and term related to it, practice focusing on achievement of the fully-fledged and harmonious relationship between the physical and mental side of the human (Valjent, 2008, 50). The healthier lifestyle is also a topic of one of the priorities of the WHO in the project Health 21(1999, 190) the aim 11 could be found: "People should adopt the healthier lifestyle by the year 2015". The outlook on better health and its quality which is related to the life health may help to motivate adults to the change of the unhealthy lifestyle and thus raise the quality of public health (van Oostrom et al., 2012). It is often mentioned that the lifestyle at childhood, maturing and the middle age is going to have an impact on the health at the old age. The healthy lifestyle is regarded as the most propitious factor influencing the overall health at the old age (Pluijm et al., 2007).

The presented study proceeds from the information mentioned above and with the statement of the WHO at the same time. The statement deals with the fact that behaviour and lifestyle at the adulthood are the results of the evolution during the childhood and maturing. In terms of the public health, the monitoring of behavioural components influencing health is very significant, especially among the young people. The young people with their specific risk factors (physical inactivity, sedentary behaviour, watching TV and DVD, playing PC games, negative eating habits, substance abuse etc.) should be the target group of preventive efforts in the area of health support.

The aim of this study is the evaluation of selected aspects of the lifestyle of boys at the age of 11, 13 and 15 years old with regular PA and the comparison of the aspects with data from HBSC survey (The Health Behavior in School-aged Children).

1 Methods

Research sample

The research sample consisted of 105 active boys at the age of 11 (n = 32), 13 (n = 34) and 15 (n = 39) living in Olomouc, Prostějov, and Přerov. For better understanding of our

research sample, it is important to add that the group consisted of boys with regular, controlled and organized PA with the major focus on ice-hockey.

Data from HBSC study were used for comparison with our data. HBSC study is international research with collaborative character focusing on the lifestyle of children. This study monitors the occurrence of behavioural components influencing health among the children and adolescents. The main aim of HBSC study is to increase the knowledge about their lifestyle and help them understand it (Kalman et al., 2011).

Data collection methods

A data collection took place in the year 2013. The study has pilot character and was accomplished on specific file of active boys at older school age. During the research, the standardized questionnaire of an international study of Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) was utilized. The administration of the questionnaire was based on voluntariness and was also provided by the agreement of a legal representative. It was also realized without the presence of a teacher or a coach. During the study there was always present educated administrator who was willing to help with filling in the questionnaire. The utilization of the questionnaire was accomplished with the agreement of the head director of HBSC study for the Czech Republic, Michal Kalman. A statistical processing of the results was realized with the help of the program, Statistica in 10.0. (Statistica, Tulsa, USA). Evaluation of the differences of relative figures of independent files was accomplished by pivot tables through Chi-square test. Level of statistical significance was tested on the grade of $p \leq 0.05$; $p \leq 0.01$; $p \leq 0.001$.

2 Results

With a regard to the huge amount of ascertained and analysed data, we present selected findings concerning the lifestyle of young boys at the age of 11, 13 and 15 years old at the result part of the research. Presentation of the findings mentioned above was realized in the categories of physical activity and inactivity, selected eating habits, experiences with smoking and drinking alcohol and experience with sexual intercourse.

Physical activity and inactivity

The 95% of all asked active boys was engaged in PA, at least, one hour a day and 3days a week. As it was expected, the results of our respondents were much higher than the results of boys of HBSC study. To be more specific the results were concerning the number of days in PA during a week among all age categories (Table 1). The most evi-

dent difference of 44% could be seen among the 15 years old boys who are engaged in regular PA during all week.

Table 1

The comparison of regular physical activity during a week among active boys and boys from HBSC study at the age of 11, 13 and 15 (%)

Active days in week	11 years			13 years			15 years		
	Active Boys	HBSC	*p*	Active boys	HBSC	*p*	Active boys	HBSC	*p*
<1	0	4	ns	0	3	ns	0	3	ns
1	3	6	ns	6	7	ns	0	6	*
2	3	11	*	3	8	ns	0	10	**
3	6	13	ns	18	13	ns	10	15	*
4	9	16	ns	12	15	ns	10	16	*
5	9	13	ns	15	14	ns	5	15	*
6	28	9	**	12	11	ns	31	10	**
7	42	28	ns	35	30	ns	44	24	**

Legend: p – statistical significance; * – $p \leq 0.05$; ** – $p \leq 0.01$; ns – non significant

The 45% of active respondents spends watching TV, video or DVD 2–3 hours a day during working days. The 28% of respondents watch TV an hour a day. The active boys in comparison with the boys from HBSC study watch TV at shorter intervals, from 30 minutes a day to 1 hour a day. On the other hand, the boys from HBSC study spend by watching TV intervals in the range of 2–6 hours. (Table 2). Concerning the weekend the time spent by watching TV among the 43% of active boys is in the range of 2–3 hours whereas among the boys from HBSC study it is spoken about 40% (Table 2) The increase of time spent in watching TV was recorded in the time range higher than 4 hours a day. The 23% of both active boys and those from HBSC study spends 4-5 hours a day by watching TV at weekend. The 12% of boys from HBSC study spends 6 hours by watching TV while the 4% of active boys watches TV for 6 hours.

Table 2

The comparison of time spent on watching TV, DVD or video at working days between active boys and boys from HBSC study at the age of 11–15 (%)

Watching TV, DVDs, video at week uring the day	11–15 years			Watching TV, DVDs, video at week during the weekend	11–15 years		
	Active boys	HBSC	*p*		Active boys	HBSC	*p*
never	5	4	ns	never	2	5	ns
½ hours	15	9	ns	½ hours	7	7	ns
1 hours	28	21	ns	1 hours	20	13	ns
2–3 hours	45	47	ns	2–3 hours	43	40	ns
4–5 hours	7	13	ns	4–5 hours	23	23	ns
> 6 hours	0	5	*	> 6 hours	4	12	*

Legend: *p* – statistical significance; * – $p \leq 0.05$; ns – non significant

Table 3 presents the proportional representation of respondents of all age categories at time units which are spent by playing games on the computer or on game console during working days and weekend. The biggest proportion of active boys is engaged in computer activities for 1 hour a day during working days whereas the 27% of boys from HBSC spends 2 hours a day at working days. In the same way, as it was with watching TV, the active boys spend shorter time intervals by playing computer games compare to boys from HBSC study. More than 4 hours a day are spent on playing computer games by the boys from HBSC study (23%) which is more than time spent on the same activities by active boys (2%).

The time spent on playing computer games is much higher during a weekend in terms of both, active boys and those from HBSC study. The active boys (23%) play computer games often for 2 hours and the amount of time and respondents spent on that activities is getting higher. The 18% of active boys does computer activities for more than 4 hours. Also, the boys from HBSC study spend more time nearby the PC for more than 4 hours during the weekend (36%).

Table 3

The comparison of time spent on playing games on PC or game console at working days among active boys and boys from HBSC study at the age of 11–15 (%)

Playing PC games at the week during the day	11–15 years			Playing PC games at the week during the weekend	11–15 years		
	Active boys	HBSC	*p*		Active Boys	HBSC	*p*
never	12	12	ns	never	12	12	ns
½ hours	13	11	ns	½ hours	14	8	ns
1 hours	32	19	*	1 hours	19	14	ns
2 hours	27	21	ns	2 hours	23	18	ns
3 hours	15	15	ns	3 hours	15	12	ns
4 hours	1	8	*	4 hours	9	10	ns
5 hours	0	6	*	5 hours	4	8	ns
6 hours	0	3	ns	6 hours	4	6	ns
> 7 hours	1	6	ns	> 7 hours	1	12	**

Legend: *p* – statistical significance; * – $p \leq 0.05$; ** – $p \leq 0.01$; ns – non significant

Selected eating habits

There is higher proportion of active boys who have breakfast regularly in comparison with boys from HBSC study of the same age (Table 4). Concerning the working days, the lower number of active boys goes to school without having a breakfast (0–15% depending on the age) in comparison with boys from HBSC study (15–23% depending on the age). In terms of the snacks at school, the most of respondents, including both active boys and those from HBSC study has a snack at school (90–95%).

The highest proportion of active boys having a lunch at school is among those at the age of 13 (88%), then 15 years old (87%) and the lowest proportion belongs to the active boys at the age of 11 years old (78%). There are more active boys having lunch at school (except for those at the age of 11 years old where the number is the same in both groups) in comparison with boys from HBSC study. The most evident difference is among boys from HBSC at the age of 15 where only 66% has a lunch (Table 5). The afternoon snack belongs among the most skipped meal at school by boys in comparison with a lunch or snack. On the average 75% of active boys of all age categories has a snack as a part of daily diet whereas among the boys of all age categories from HBSC the proportion is only 62%. The highest proportion of boys who have a snack in the afternoon belongs to the group of boys at the age of 15 (82%) while just 88% of boys from HBSC do the same (66%).

Table 4

The comparison of the number of working days when boys have a breakfast during a week between active boys and boys from HBSC study at the age of 11, 13 and 15 (%)

Active days in week	11 years			13 years			15 years		
	Active Boys	HBSC	*p*	Active boys	HBSC	*p*	Active boys	HBSC	*p*
0	0	15	ns	15	23		0	23	**
1	0	3	ns	0	4		5	4	ns
2	3	4	ns	6	5		5	5	ns
3	3	5	ns	3	6		8	6	ns
4	13	5	ns	9	5		3	5	ns
5	81	69	ns	68	58		77	58	**

Legend: *p* – statistical significance; ** – $p \leq 0.01$; ns – non significant

Table 5

The comparison of eating habits between active boys and boys from HBSC study at the age of 11, 13 and 15 (%)

Eating habits	11 years			13 years			15 years		
	Active boys	HBSC	*p*	Active boys	HBSC	*p*	Active boys	HBSC	*p*
Snack at school	100	95	*	100	90	**	97	90	*
Lunch at school	78	78	ns	88	76	*	87	66	**
Afternoon snack	75	60	*	68	62	Ns	82	66	**

Legend: *p* – statistical significance; * – $p \leq 0.05$; ** – $p \leq 0.01$; ns – non significant

The consumption of fruit, vegetables and sweets

The consumption of fruit, vegetables and sweets were another part of this study. More than half of the monitored boys (active boys and those from HBSC) eat fruit at least once a week. The 44% of active boys at the age of 11, 33% of boys at the age of 13 and 16% of boys at the age of 15 eat fruit once or more times a day (Table 6). Regarding the HBSC study, there is a lower representation of boys consuming fruit regularly. The proportion of boys who eat fruit once or more times a day is about 23% among boys at the age of 11 and 28% of boys at the age of 13. The most evident difference is only in the case of boys from HBSC study at the age of 15 who consume fruit more times (30%) than the active boys (16%) (Table 6).The boys from HBSC study eat vegetables

once or more times a day while the active boys consume vegetables in lower proportion. Concerning the HBSC the proportion of consumption of vegetables is about 30% of boys at the age of 11, 27% of boys at the age of 13 and 21% of boys at the age of 15 (Table 7). In terms of the active boys, 15% of boys at the age of 11, 18% of boys at the age of 13 and 16% of boys at the age of 15 consume vegetables regularly. The biggest representation of consumption of vegetables is at least once a week among both, the active boys and boys from HBSC.

Table 6

The comparison of consumption of fruit between active boys and boys from HBSC study at the age of 11, 13 and 15 (%)

Consumption of fruit	11 years			13 years			15 years		
	Active boys	HBSC	*p*	Active boys	HBSC	*p*	Active boys	HBSC	*p*
Never	3	4	ns	0	2	ns	0	1	ns
Rarely	3	14	**	3	8	ns	0	8	**
once of week	50	60	ns	64	63	ns	84	62	**
every day	25	15	ns	21	19	ns	8	22	**
> every day	19	8	*	12	9	ns	8	8	ns

Legend: *p* – statistical significance; * – $p \leq 0.05$; ** – $p \leq 0.01$; ns – non significant

Table 7

The comparison of consumption of vegetables between active boys and boys from HBSC study at the age of 11, 13 and 15 (%)

Consumption of vegetables	11 years			13 years			15 years		
	Active boys	HBSC	p	Active boys	HBSC	p	Active boys	HBSC	p
Never	9	5	ns	0	5	*	3	3	ns
Rarely	0	7	ns	0	7	**	5	7	ns
once of week	69	58	ns	82	61	**	76	69	ns
every day	6	21	**	15	17	ns	8	16	ns
> every day	13	9	ns	3	10	*	8	5	ns

Legend: *p* – statistical significance; * – $p \leq 0.05$; ** – $p \leq 0.01$; ns – non significant

The most of the respondents consume sweets at least once a week. Concerning the active boys, the proportion is ranged between 61–72%, depending on the age. Regarding boys from HBSC, the proportion ranged from 60 to63%, depends on the age (Table 8).

In terms of the daily consumption of sweets (at least once or more times a day), the 12% of active boys at the age of 11, 33% of boys at the age of 13 and 26% of boys at the age of 15 consumes such amount. On the other hand, the 23% of boys from HBSC study at the age of 11, 28% of boys at the age of 13 and 30% of boys at the age of 15 consumes such amount.

Table 8

The comparison of consumption of sweets between active boys and boys from HBSC study at the age of 11, 13 and 15 (%)

Consumption of sweets	11 years			13 years			15 years		
	Active boys	HBSC	*p*	Active boys	HBSC	*p*	Active boys	HBSC	*p*
Never	0	4	ns	0	2	ns	0	1	ns
Rarely	16	14	ns	3	8	ns	13	8	ns
once of week	72	60	ns	64	63	ns	61	62	ns
every day	6	15	*	24	19	ns	26	22	ns
>every day	6	8	ns	9	9	ns	0	8	**

Legend: *p* – statistical significance; * – $p \leq 0.05$; ** – $p \leq 0.01$; ns – non significant

Experiences with smoking tobacco, drinking alcohol and sexual intercourse

Concerning the smoking tobacco, there is a strong imbalance between active boys and boys from HBSC study. The results of boys from HBSC are manifoldly higher at all age categories than those of active boys. In other words, there is 76–94% of active boys without any experience with smoking. On the other hand, a number of boys from HBSC without any experience with smoking is ranged between 30–75%, depends on the age. However, the differences concerning a drunkenness at least twice per life between active boys and those from HBSC study is are much more evident.In terms of the experiences with drunkenness among active boys, the 3% of boys at the age of 13 has such experience, 8% of boys at the age of 15 experienced drunkenness and boys at the age of 11 have no experience with it. On the contrary, 5% of boys from HBSC at the age of 11 confirmed drunkenness, 17% of boys at the age of 13 experienced it as well and the highest proportion of experience with drunkenness is in 47% of boys at the age of 15.

Regarding the experiences with sexual intercourse, that type of question was laid just to the boys at the age of 15. It was discovered that that kind of experience had 19% of active boys. The 24% of respondents abstained in the question. There is a mildly

higher proportion of the experience with sexual intercourse among boys from HBSC study, however, the difference is not so significant in that case (Table 9).

Table 9. The comparison of experiences with smoking tobacco, drunkenness and sexual intercourse between active boys and boys from HBSC study at the age of 11, 13 and 15 (%).

Addictive substances	11 years			13 years			15 years		
	Active boys	HBSC	*p*	Active boys	HBSC	*p*	Active Boys	HBSC	*p*
Smoking	6	25	***	24	50	***	18	70	***
Alcohol intoxication	0	5	*	3	17	**	8	47	***
Sexual intercourse							19	22	ns

Legend: p–statistical significance; *–$p \leq 0.05$; **–$p \leq 0.01$; ***–$p \leq 0.001$; ns–non significant

3 Discussion

The research dealing with a growth and evolution of children is focused on an evaluation of lifestyle, especially on the growing prevalence of overweight and obesity among young population (Bunc, 2008). The presented facts have been monitored not only at the domestic circumstances, but it has been discussed all around the world (Ng et al., 2014). Important factors influencing health, growth and evolution of young organism and overall lifestyle in the holistic context are related to things like PA, nutrition, reduction of stress and its control, the issue of drug addiction, elimination of social pathological phenomenon and also the period of the start of a sexual life of a young human. Above mentioned factors could be considered as significant factors having an impact on the health of a human. In the context of the issue mentioned above and findings, we discuss the topic further.

The adequate PA and healthy eating habits are considered to be significant factors influencing the regulation of body weight (Kirschenbaum & Gierut, 2013). It was found that children who are engaged in a physical activity, at least, an hour a day have healthier eating habits than the inactive children. The active children have also breakfast more often than the inactive children and their consumption of fruit and vegetable is much higher (Morin, Tursotte, & Perreault, 2013). According to Machová and Kubátová, et al. (2009) the daily consumption of fruit and vegetable should reach the value about 600 g in a ratio of 5:3 in favour for vegetable. Based on the Tables 6 and 7, it is evident that 31% of active boys consume fruit, and 17% of them vegetable on a daily basis. According to boys with regular physical activity, the most frequent consumption of fruit and vegetables was reported only once a week. The higher the age, the higher is the daily

consumption of sweets. Just 8% of monitored active boys at the age of 11 consumed sweets every day. In the case of active boys at the age of 13 the proportion is 24% and the highest proportion has boys at the age of 15. The ascertained findings among Czech boys are similar to the research carried out among children in Slovakia. According to Babinská, Vituriášová and Rosinký (2007), the highest the age, the higher the proportion of children having fast food or sweets regularly is. What has been monitored is the increase from 3% of children at the age of 6–8 to 25% of children at the age of 15–26.

The eating habits are adopted from our own environment, often from our parents. If a child sees his parents having breakfast since his early childhood there is a big chance that these habits will be used in the future. The three-quarters of active boys have breakfast every day during working days. Only 15% of surveyed active boys at the age of 13 do not have a breakfast at all on working days. Concerning the HBSC study, the higher the age of children was, the lower the number of children having breakfast became. There was the most evident decrease among the active boys having breakfast from the age 11 to 13 in the research sample. In comparison with boys from HBSC study, there is higher proportion of active boys having breakfast in all age categories. Concerning the weekends, the breakfast of active boys is more regular, which can be result of the parent's supervision. The best results have been discovered in the morning snacks. All active boys at the age of 11 and 13 have a snack at school regularly. In terms of all monitored boys at the age of 15, the proportion was 97%. Despite of the fact that the proportion of active boys having snack regularly is evidently higher, we can say that the number of boys from HBSC study having snack regularly is satisfying (90–95%, depending on the age).

Active boys have lunch at the average of 84%. In the comparison with boys from HBSC study who have lunch at the average of 73%, the difference is statistically significant. Just 34% of children at the age of 11, 13 and 15 in Scotland has lunch at school (Kirby & Currie, 2010).

Regarding the afternoon snack, the proportion among active boys is 75% and concerning the boys from HBSC study, the proportion is getting lower (63%).

The World Health Organization published a recommendation in relationship to PA in the year 2010. Children at the age of 5 to 17 should spend at least 60 min on PA a day. The aerobic activity is generally preferred (WHO, 2010). With respect to the health of the young organism, it is important that the principle of optimal development and adequacy of PA should determine the controlled PA and exercise of young organism. The capacity of daily physical performance on the level of 12–14 thousand steps on middle intensity exercise with the duration of 90 min, focusing on versatile physical development is recommended for a healthy growth and evolution of boys at the age of 6–11. Concerning the boys at the age of 12–18, the capacity of daily physical activity performance on the level of 11–13 thousand steps with middle intensity and the duration of 60 min or the performance of the high intensity with the duration of 20 min

3 times a week is recommended (Kudláček & Frömel, 2012; World Health Organization, 2010). A specialized sports preparation among children and youth should not be realized in the higher extent until they reach the period of pubescence. That kind of sports preparation is bio-psycho-social acceptable only if the versatile physical development is preserved (Šafář, 2012).

Regarding physical, mental and social development, the quality of PA and the way of spending free time in the life of young people play an important role (Currie et al., 2012). According to the research HBSC from the year 2010, three-quarters of Czech children do not fulfil the recommendations published by WHO. There is a growth of PA among boys from HBSC study at the age of 11–13. At the age of 15, physical activity has a tendency to decline back to the level at the age of 11. In terms of the active boys, there is a decline in PA at the age of 13. Physical activity tends to rise at the age of 15 to the level of children at the age of 11.

In the context of the enormous development of modern information technologies, the sedentary behaviour as the significant phenomenon important for the human health has emerged (Hallal et al., 2012). This phenomenon has gradually become a part of regulations and international recommendations, which states that acceptable daily time spent on watching TV should not exceed 2 hours (American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Public Education, 2001). Excessive watching of TV among children is also connected with an increased consumption of sweet drinks, fat meals and a lower consumption of fruit and vegetables. The relation between the excessive TV watching among children and a higher consumption of sweet drinks, fat meals and a lower consumption of fruit and vegetables were found (Currie et al., 2008).

In a comparison of active boys and boys from HBSC study, apparent differences could be seen, especially in the category of playing computer games longer than four hours. To be more specific, it is spoken of the difference between 23% of boys from HBSC study and 2% of active boys. The time spent on playing computer games is increasing at weekends (18% of active boys and 36% of boys from HBSC play PC games more than four hours). According to the official information (2008), the 5.4 mil. of people dies as consequences of smoking tobacco. The most frequent causes of death, in that case, are cardiovascular diseases and malignant tumors. About 90% of smoker has started to smoke before the age of 18 (Ellickson, McGuigan, & Klein, 2001). In terms of the smoking in Europe, the 21% of boys and 17% of girls at the age of 13–15 smokes at least once a month (Warren et al., 2008). Regarding our research, evident differences have been found between experience with smoking among active boys and boys from HBSC. The most evident difference could be seen among boys at the age of 15, where 18% of active boys versus 70% of boys from HBSC study confessed such experience (Table 9). In comparison with Cnger than four2001). yences havR 42.5197 96.4(1 TfB)/M

is also possible to implement presented findings to pedagogical training and other work with a youth.

Acknowledgements

The study is dedicated to the following projects. Internal grant of PDF UP: Psychosocial determinants of health among subjects in educational environment and IGA_PdF_2016_020 Selected psychosocial factors affecting the health of current University students of teaching.

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Professional Reflection and Self-reflection in the Educational Work of Secondary School Teachers

Michal Novocký

Abstract

This paper will discuss the issue of teachers' reflection and self-reflection within the scope of teaching and extracurricular educational activities. Every teacher should realise the significance of the elements of reflection and self-reflection as they may help to improve their educational work. Only those teachers who evaluate and revise their decisions on a regular basis and rectify individual educational elements have an excellent starting point to achieve progressive changes in their work. Teachers with routine educational methods should be replaced by reflective professionals aware of the need of their continual improvement, therefore they should permanently contemplate about themselves, the students and external and internal teaching conditions. The research focuses on determining the frequency of teachers' reflection of educational elements and the frequency of their professional self-reflection from the point of view of the career level and the type of education. The tool used for the collection of data was a questionnaire of our own design, mostly based on response scales.

Key words: professional reflection, professional self-reflection, education, secondary school.

Introduction

Teaching is a demanding profession. It requires continuous study and constant self-reflection, revaluation and revision of one's own teaching theory. Teachers need to be reflective and never become fully satisfied with their work but constantly look for ways to improve and avoid routine approach towards education. It will be greatly appreciated by students, and it may manifest in improved school results, activity or behaviour because the influence the teacher has on them is also of crucial importance. Self-reflective teachers make use of several reflective and self-reflective methods and sources in his/her work; is aware of what he/she needs to learn and is able to describe and analyse the relationship with other people within the school environment.

1 Professional self-reflection as an important part of educational work of secondary school teacher

The educational process is complex, and dynamic and it should be implemented by every teacher in a deliberate, systematic and methodical way in order to optimally fulfil specified educational targets. These targets must be met by means of relevant didactic and educational methods, as well as other educational means. Thus, not only getting to know students but also the knowledge of one's own capabilities and their further improvement should be a platform for every teacher.

The educational process must be dialectical and it is the teacher who should have the greatest interest in ensuring that individual elements are balanced and in harmony. The teacher's potentiality and possibilities are important conditions of education. It shouldnot be forgotten that it is these conditions that are rudimentary determinant responsible for the effectiveness of the educational process.

What is important for the teacher is to be satisfied with his/her own educational work and for the student to feel motivated to study further and to change his/her behaviour and way of acting. To achieve that, the teacher must employ professional self-reflection.

"Professional self-reflection means that the teacher employs retrospection to focus on his/her teaching methods and actions within the classroom, thoughts, attitudes, emotions and activities that also apply to other educational activities" (Švec, 1997, p. 3).

We find it necessary to explain the difference between reflection and self-reflection. These terms are often incorrectly considered identical.

Kasáčová (2005) draws upon Wright and points out the difference between reflection and self-reflection. Reflection means rational thinking and contemplating about

one's ongoing or past activities, while self-reflection is connected with meta-cognition and aims to modify and rectify the teacher's own recognition processes in concrete educational situation with the help of monitoring, evaluation and clarification of their regulation.

An interesting opinion is offered by Smytha (1989), who considers reflection to be a preliminary stimulus for self-reflection. To build on his idea, we may say that reflection and self-reflection cannot be strictly separated from each other but rather have to be understood holistically.

The purpose of professional self-reflection is not only about getting to know yourself but also about creating a relationship towards yourself, the students and other educational staff. Thus the important thing is the so called self-concept of the teacher. The core of professional self-reflection is formed by three aspects:

1. Self-realisation, self-concept – this is a cognitive structure recorded in the consciousness that corresponds to understanding of oneself and the effort to know oneself (Výrost – Slaměník, 1997). There are two levels of self-concept in the personality psychology; a real ego (actual self-reception) and an ideal ego (desired notion of oneself; what kind of teacher one wants to be or could be). The degree of conflict between the level of the real ego and the ideal ego determines mental maturity, the mental level of personality and the ability to adapt to different situations in the educational process. Dissatisfaction with oneself or having a weak ego can often lead to uncertainty and to confusing behaviour of the teacher (Nakonečný, 1998).
2. Self-evaluation as a process, but also as the result of the self-evaluation process – this aspect presents the emotional side of professional self-reflection. Self-evaluation generally means mental exponent of the emotional relationship towards oneself (Blatný – Plháková, 2003). The development of the relationship with oneself is based on 4 basic processes:
   - The phenomenon of mirror "me" – other people serve as a mirror and enable us to see ourselves. A teacher's "me" is the concept of how the teacher believes he/she is evaluated by other people, students, colleagues at work;
   - Social comparison – a person may use it to verify what is considered appropriate and what is unacceptable and undesirable,
   - Acceptance of social roles – one assumes roles which are globally accepted and socially valued rather than those which are less accepted;
   - Perception of social difference – every person (every teacher) has a need to point out his/her originality in a new environment (Gergen In Výrost – Slaměník, 1997).
3. Conduct – describes the behavioural aspect of professional self-reflection. Conduct may be understood as readiness to act in accordance with the knowledge and evaluation of oneself (Výrost – Slaměník, 1997). The teacher may find more important his/her personal success or expectations of the others; that is, how the teacher

is perceived by other people and what advice they are providing. The former refers to a teacher with a low level of self-monitoring while the latter refers to a teacher with a high level of self-monitoring (Hupková, 2006).

The degree of self-monitoring is also important. The personality of the teacher should be autonomous and authentic.

Professional self-reflection in educational and didactic work of a teacher implies the following:

- it avoids stereotyping because the teacher strives to find methods and forms of work which may have not been used very often;
- it allows the teacher to verify these methods and forms and to compare previous results of educational work with current results acquired by means of these new, infrequently used educational means;
- by means of professional self-reflection the teacher learns to anticipate possible consequences of his/her educational influence;
- it inspires the teacher to confront his/her current "me" with the concept of an ideal teacher;
- no less important is the fact that it leads to the modernisation of education and extracurricular educational activity (Petlák, 2000).

2 Content orientation of professional reflection

When we talk about teachers' reflection, it is obvious that its content orientation will be based on the scope of work and on everyday activities with the students in school and school educational facilities. We will discuss 4 categories which are becoming the object of contemplation for the teacher. The teacher is looking retrospectively on individual elements constituting these categories, contemplates about achievements or failures at work and collects necessary information from students and colleagues that could form the basis for correction and innovation. These categories are:

- education and extracurricular educational activity,
- curriculum,
- ethical principles of education and extracurricular activity,
- social context of education and extracurricular educational activity (adjusted according to Hupková, 2004).

These elements shall be named and further analysed in the following text. We will draw upon the practice and requirements imposed on teachers and tutors from public and private point of view (every person creates an idea about oneself and has own targets that he/she wants to achieve).

1. **Education and extracurricular educational activity:**
   a) *educational target* – its correspondence with the abilities and knowledge of the students; developing every aspect of students' personalities while respecting their individual skills;
   b) *educational, didactic and diagnostic methods* – variability of the use of methods; following a strict procedure for their use; their use should be compliant with educational principles and targets; combining methods with various organizational forms of education;
   c) *classroom climate* – relations between the students; relationship between the teacher and students; knowing the boundaries in relationships (the teacher cannot be a friend to students but an authority); support of pair and group work in students;
   d) *pedagogical communication* – its adjustment to actual knowledge of the students (understanding of terms when explaining the curriculum; minimum use of special expressions and foreign words; presenting easy to follow examples in order to comprehend new knowledge); asking the students specific and comprehensive questions during various activities; using pedagogical humour and tact;
   e) *subject of study* – the teacher should take into account that students also have other subjects (or interest group, educational activities) on which they have to focus their efforts and educational activities. The teacher should not leave out the introductory diagnosis that will provide information not only about the abilities, knowledge and skills students have but also what are their interests, what subjects they are interested in or why they show aversion to certain subjects, etc.
2. **Curriculum:**
   a) *structure of the curriculum* – logical composition of knowledge within the curriculum, differentiation of key, supplementary and expanding content of the curriculum;
   b) *content of the curriculum* – must be in line with a specified educational target, that is to focus on the cognitive, affective and psychomotoric areas which are particularly important (understand before remember, respond before receive, manipulate before imitate, etc.), emphasise appropriate use of various thought operations (analysis, synthesis, comparison, analogy, abstraction);
3. **Ethical principles of education and extracurricular activities:**
   a) *comply with set rules for all students* – the teacher makes sure that same rules apply to all students in the classroom where he/she performs didactic and educational activities (exams, gaining points for activity, punishing students for misdemeanour, dealing with learning difficulties of every student);

b) *avoid denial of students' qualities and values by underestimating and insults* – the teacher shouldnot make any prejudiced judgements and opinions about his/her students. When expressing an opinion about a student the teacher must avoid the use of pejorative and vulgar expressions. Trust between the teacher and students is very important (they should hold their discussions private);
c) *assertiveness, congruence and acceptance* – the teacher must know how to say no. The teacher should be able to openly and fairly express dissatisfaction or lack of time to address a specific issue. The teacher's thinking and acting must be congruent. This means accepting students and their uniqueness;
d) *demonstrate satisfaction with one's own work* – the teacher must demonstrate to students that he/she enjoys teaching, wants to become an expert in his/her subject area and expand his/her professional competence. Students must understand that teaching is a job, not a diagnosis;
e) *cope with stressful situations* – the teacher's personal life cannot be a part of their work. Students will protest against irrational punishments and shouting (by means of intentional distraction, not listening to instructions) or they will become irresponsible towards given tasks and will not be willing to complete them.
f) *constructively solve problems* – private conversation during a break about a problem in the classroom or outside the classroom is more acceptable than talking to a student or lecturing him in front of the whole class. It is important to know the nature of the problem and then try to reach a consensus between the parties.

4. **Social context of education and extracurricular activities:**
   a) *school culture* – "It is a set of ideas, attitudes and values which are generally accepted and maintained for relatively long time" (Harkabus, 2004, p. 1). The teacher should have an interest on the overall picture of the school. The teacher should be thinking about the following: evaluation of the school, application of innovative approach towards the student (principles and methods of constructivism and socio-constructivism, multicultural education, etc.).

Self-reflection is a tool that helps us to become aware of our behaviour and understand what we do and why. At the same time it also supports learning and is one of the main professional qualities. It may be said that self-reflection contributes to proper and effective acquirement of teaching skills and techniques.

3 Frequency of self-reflection of the secondary school teachers and their frequency of reflection of educational elements presented in partial results of the research

In 2015, we conducted an empirical research at secondary schools in the Orava region (districts of Námestovo, Trstená, Dolný Kubín). The research sample consisted of teachers. The research was conducted among 82 teachers (6 young teachers, 23 independent teachers, 27 teachers with the 1st attestation, 26 teachers with the 2nd attestation/46 general education teachers, 36 vocational education teachers/17 teachers of interest groups, 12 teachers with other educational activities – classroom related classes, remedial classes). We have strived to make an even selection of the research sample, at least in the categories of individual teachers, teachers with the 1st attestation, teachers with the 2nd attestation/general education teachers, vocational education teachers. The number of young teachers was small (therefore evenness could not be achieved). Our sample group wasnot representative since we had no information about the basic group, i. e. about the division of teachers according to career level and type of education in the Slovak Republic. The results of the research are therefore generalised only on the research group. We used the questionnaire method and predominantly made use of a frequency scale. Its validity was ensured by precise defining of the frequency (every day, 3 times a week, once a week, once every 2 weeks and never). The respondents also had the opportunity to report another frequency, if none of the above applied to them. We compared the opinions of the teachers by means of a comparative analysis.

Primary focus has been on:

- frequency of teachers' self-reflection from the point of view of their career level and type of education,
- frequency of reflection of educational elements from the point of view of teachers' career level and the type of education,
- frequency of reflection of educational elements from the point of view of teachers' educational activity in extracurricular time.

The results of the research are included in the following tables T1, T2, T3, T4 and T5. We made use of descriptive statistics (modus, average order) and inductive statistics (Kruskal-Wallis test, Mann-Whitney test).

Table 1
Frequency of professional self-reflection from the point of view of career level of the teachers

Frequency of professional self-reflection	Career level of the teachers				P-value (P ≤ 0.1)
	Young	Individual	1st attestation	2nd attestation	
	Average order				
	35.33	46.61	35.94	44.17	0.264

Source: Michal Novocký, 2015

Table T1 shows that there is no statistically significant difference (P-value = 0.264) in the frequency of professional self-reflection, when it comes to teachers' career levels (mostly daily, 3 times a week). The result suggests that the respondents prepare regularly for their teaching obligations. Preparation for the lessons is one of the key self-reflective methods while it also has a taxonomic character because it employs asking various questions regarding the educational elements. These questions are:

- Are my learning objectives reasonable and well controlled? Do I communicate the content of the curriculum in a clear and understandable way?
- Do I always have material prepared for the lesson?
- Do I give the students easily understandable instructions?
- Do I give questions to the whole class? Do I use open as well as closed questions?
- Are my classes appropriate for all my students?
- Do I support the use of several learning activities?
- Do I maintain such discipline during the classes that is helpful for the students in the process of learning? etc. (Kyriacou, 2004).

The table clearly shows that the individual teachers (46.61) and the teachers with the 2nd career level (44.17) have the highest frequency of professional self-reflection. This is a positive finding because it shows that the teachers strive to avoid routine in their jobs and that is helpful for improving students" motivation.

Table 2
Frequency of professional self-reflection from the point of view of the type of education of the teachers

Frequency of professional self-reflection	Type of education of the teachers		P-value (P ≤ 0.1)
	General	Vocational	
	Average order		
	42.42	40.32	0.676

Source: Michal Novocký, 2015

The data from table T2 indicate that there is no connection between the type of education of the teachers and their frequency of professional self-reflection (P-value = 0.676). However, the average order indicates that general education teachers have a higher level of professional self-reflection when compared to vocational education teachers. Regardless of the nature of the study subject, the respondents replied that they engage in professional self-reflection mostly every day and 3 times a week. Most of the teachers prepare for their classes beforehand. However, there may be some differences in the frequency of reflection of the educational elements.

It must be noted that a reflective professional always has a range of questions prepared about himself, his job and the students. By engaging professional self-reflection the teacher confirms the level of development of his/her professional competences and eliminates the danger that these competences will be decimated by a stable routine that limits improvement.

Table 3
Frequency of reflection of educational elements from the point of view of the type education of the teachers

Elements of education	Type of education of the teachers		P-value (P ≤ 0.1)
	General	Vocational	
	Average order		
Use of activating methods	37.20	47.00	0.054
Comprehensibility of the questions	46.92	34.57	0.015

Source: Michal Novocký, 2015

It is clear from the data in table T3 that in connection with the type of education of the teachers there are some statistically significant differences in the reflection of compli-

ance with a detailed procedure of using activating methods and asking the students comprehensible questions. The first element is highly reflected (mostly 3 times a week) by vocational education teachers (47.00). The reason may be that the teachers of vocational subjects can make use of several activating methods, such as the role-playing method, situational method, case method and didactic games.

However, vocational education teachers pay less attention to asking students comprehensible questions (34.57). As has been pointed out in the previous table, we believe that if students have no problems understanding the questions asked and responding to them, then the teachers do not find it necessary to contemplate about them more frequently. On the other hand, we think that when activating methods are used care must be taken as to what types of questions are addressed to students and if these are comprehensible for all of them. Just in case, the teacher should have some alternative questions prepared.

Table 4
Frequency of reflection of educational elements from the point of view of the career level of the teachers

Elements of education	Teachers' career level				P-value (P ≤ 0.1)
	Young	Individual	1st attestation	2nd attestation	
	Average order				
Ensuring that set targets has been met	23.17	51.63	40.02	38.31	0.023
Knowledge of the students' learning styles	70.17	41.26	40.76	35.87	0.010
Use of activating methods	41.17	50.98	33.50	41.50	0.063
Satisfaction with work	29.33	49.54	35.98	42.92	0.099
Comprehensibility of the questions	22.08	51.24	37.44	41.58	0.021

Source: Michal Novocký, 2015

Table T4 presents a statistically significant difference in the frequency of reflection of educational elements in the educational process in relation to the teachers' career level. The highest frequency of reflection (mostly 3 times a week) was recorded in the group of the independent teachers (51.63). In our opinion, this result is due to their length of practice. It may be seen that more regular reflection in terms of ensuring that set educational targets have been met has a great effect on the effectiveness of educational process and learning results of the students.

Young teachers strongly reflect (mostly 3 times a week) their knowledge of the students' learning styles from the point of view of the used didactic methods (70.17).

This is one of the key capabilities teachers should be able to manifest in their work. The independent teachers and teachers with the 1st attestation do not underestimate this fact either (their frequency of reflection is 3 times a week and once a week).

The above suggests that the respondents are familiar with the professional standard, and the knowledge of students' learning styles lets them chose more adequately what the other education methods and organizational forms to exploit.

Reflection of the compliance with exact procedure of the use of activating methods (mostly 3 times a week) in teaching was one of the priorities for the independent teachers (50.98). Again, the influential factor is the length of practice. We think that a teacher who uses activating methods is aware of the fact that an exact procedure of their implementation ensures stronger motivation of the students to be active while their use may also help develop students' higher thinking operations, such as analysis, synthesis, abstraction, etc.

Every teacher must show his/her satisfaction with his/her job as it may ultimately have a motivational effect on students. The independent teachers (49.54) and the teachers with the 2nd attestation (42.92) consider reflection of this element to be crucial for their job (mostly 3 times a week). The young teachers do, however, underestimate this element (29.33). The reason may be that they need some time to adapt to their new jobs, and therefore they initially pay attention to other elements which may affect the level of satisfaction with their job.

Reflection of addressing students comprehensible with questions is underestimated by the young teachers (22.08) as opposed to the independent teachers (51.24). The independent teachers reflect this element mostly 3 times a week. This may be affected by the length of practice but also by the targets and educational strategies of the young teachers which are only in their initial, forming phase. On the other hand, we must note that there are many factors in the educational process that guide the reflection of the teachers to the important elements. We think that if students understand the questions asked by teachers and their answers are correct, then teachers do not feel the need to contemplate about them.

Table 5
Frequency of reflection of educational elements from the point of view of extracurricular educational activities of the teachers

Elements of education	Extracurricular educational activity		P-value (P ≤ 0.1)
	Interest groups	Classroom related classes/ remedial classes	
	Average order		
Knowledge of the students' learning styles	12.94	17.92	0.119
Students' respectful treatment of each other	17.47	11.50	0.055
Use of activating methods	17.59	11.33	0.039

Source: Michal Novocký, 2015

Table T5 indicates a statistically significant difference in the frequency of reflection of knowing students' learning styles from the point of view of used didactic methods in connection with the educational activity of the teachers. Those teachers who lead classroom-related classes use this time to expand the content of the curriculum or to strengthen it. They may also use the classroom-related classes to check students' prerequisites and levels of knowledge (personality tests, tests of skills, etc.).

Students' respectful treatment of each other from the point of view of used educational methods is reflected more frequently (mostly 3 times a week) by the teachers of interest groups (17.47). It may be assumed that the teachers of interest groups meet new students each year and it is desirable that they pay attention to their discipline and create opportunities for them to develop their interests and shape relationships.

Reflection of the compliance with an exact procedure of the use of activating methods is the domain of the teachers of interest groups (mostly 3 times a week). Interest groups provide space for the performance of several practical tasks and activating methods, and we think that the respondents are aware of that. The underlined P-value was crucial for the research (we assume that statistical significance could be demonstrated with a greater number of the respondents).

Conclusion

Conclusions cannot be considered generally valid, since our sample group was not representative. Despite that, we shall specify some recommendations for practice:

- Young teachers should think more frequently (at least 3-times a week) about ensuring that set educational targets are met; otherwise they cannot be sure that the education is effective, and also about addressing the students with comprehensible questions as it can make the work with them much easier;
- Reflection of the knowledge of the students' learning styles from the point of view of used didactic methods should be equally dominant for teachers with the 2nd attestation (at least 3 times a week) as it is for lower career levels.

Professional self-reflection is an inseparable part of educational work of the teachers. It is a tool that allows further personal and professional growth (Kouteková, 2006). Every teacher should be aware of their thoughts, feelings and reasons behind their actions in a specific teaching situation that would help them achieve optimal working results.

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Lower Secondary School Pupils' Perception of e-Textbooks

Josef Moravec, Karolína Pešková

Abstract

The presented study aims to build on pupils' perception of textbooks in respect to the kind of textbook (printed or electronic) pupils prefer to use at school. The main research aim of the study was to investigate pupils' perception of the (future) use of e-textbooks as pupils are the population who are the textbooks primarily intended for. The partial aim was to find out advantages and disadvantages of printed textbooks and e-textbooks from the pupils' point of view. A questionnaire with demographic and context focused items, 5-point scale Likert type items and open-ended items was chosen as a research tool. The sample included 250 lower secondary school pupils from the Czech Republic. To analyse the data, methods of descriptive and inferential statistics were used. The results of the study showed that no matter if pupils use e-textbooks, the majority of respondents would like to use the e-textbooks in the future. In addition, according to the study pupils have more positive perception of the e-textbook than the printed textbook.

Keywords: E-textbook, lower secondary school pupils, perception, printed textbook.

The presented investigation aims to build on pupils' needs in respect to the learning materials they prefer to use at school and at home. More specifically, the research attention is paid to textbooks – traditional printed and electronic textbooks (e-textbooks). Since there is a huge expansion of ICT use in education, the question of the future of printed textbooks is essential (Terpend, Gattiker & Lowe, 2014; Heejeong & Kok-Lim, 2015).

After discussing appropriate definitions of e-textbook the authors of this study deal with a brief theoretical introduction to the issue of learning with e-textbooks. Further on with reference to the gap in the related research area, the authors investigate pupils' perception of the (future) use of e-textbooks and present results of a pilot questionnaire study.

1 Definition of e-textbook

The term e-textbook (electronic textbook) is in this study considered subordinated to the term e-book (electronic book). Therefore, at first the term e-book is discussed. Although e-textbooks have been available for several years, the terminology and definition of this technology are still disputed (Bennett, 2006). Some older studies are also taken into account in this study because of their steady relevance in the present. According to the study of Vassiliou & Rowley (2008) 37 different definitions of the term e-book were found. The reason of this disunity might be fast development of technologies and devices which enable to read the e-book (Martinez-Estrada & Conaway, 2012). Every device (PC, notebook, tablet, smartphone or another electronic device) enriches the e-book with other elements which affect the way of work with the e-book and different designation of the e-book. In order to clarify the disunited terminology of this issue, first of all the definition of e-book and then definition of e-textbook and its kinds are presented in this chapter.

In a broader context, e-book can be defined as a text converted to an electronic (Hawkins, 2000; McKnight & Dearnley, 2003) or alternatively a digital form (Reitz, 2004; Gardiner & Musto, 2010). It is an electronic equivalent of a printed book (Gay, 2007). It is made available electronically (or optically) for any device (handheld or desk-bound) that includes a screen (Armstrong et al., 2002). In comparison with the printed book, the e-book consists of some in-use features (search functions, highlights, hypertext links etc.) which are specific only for an electronic environment (Vassiliou & Rowley, 2008). More precisely in the school context, the e-book can be termed as e-textbook, which is an instructional text in an electronic (digital) form (Cutshall, Mollick, & Bland, 2009; Landoni & Diaz, 2006; Simon, 2001).

According to the content and device which is possible to read the e-textbook on, several kinds of the e-textbook can be named. If the e-textbook consists of multimedia components (text, animation, audio, video), it is possible to name it as *multimedia textbook* (Bradshaw, 2005). If it incorporates interactive components (reacting on the human touch), it can be named as *interactive textbook* (Miller & Ranum, 2012; Mitropoulou, 2012). But it is necessary to differentiate between interactive textbooks for the use of interactive white boards and for tablets or another electronic device because

this differentiation reflects the options of tools which are possible to use during the work with the textbook.

As it is obvious from above, the terminology of the e-textbook has been changing and there is no universally accepted definition. However, most authors choose only one term to use in their study and they do not present its definition (see e. g. Bryant & Mims, 2012; Nicholas & Lewis, 2010; Woody, Daniel, & Baker, 2010). For the purpose of this study, only the term e-textbook is used and considered superordinate to its other forms (multimedia and interactive textbook). In the next chapter greater focus is put on the e-textbook in the learning context by taking into consideration its advantages and disadvantages.

2 E-textbook in the context of learning

There is no doubt that one of the main roles of the e-textbook at school is its contribution to pupils' motivation to learn (see e. g. Jones & Brown, 2011). Besides, according to theoretical and empirical studies the e-textbook has many other advantages. For example, according to Bradshaw (2005) it employs a style well-suited to learner's needs, and works in the opportunity to practice and elaborate upon what students have learned. Cavanaugh (2002) stresses the advantage of the e-textbook for teaching special needs pupils and exceptional pupils who need more challenging information than a printed textbook can provide. One of the most frequently named advantages of the e-textbook is the relationship between its specific hardware and software parameters for reading and displaying e-textbooks (Beer & Wagner, 2011; Vassiliou & Rowley, 2008) which provides other opportunities to support cognitive processes of pupils than the printed textbook can do. So learners may interact with the content of e-textbooks more actively than just reading them (Nelson, 2008). For example, 3D animations presented in the e-textbook can serve pupils as a means of dealing with normally invisible structures and phenomena, such as a structure of an atom (Wang, Chang, & Li, 2007). What is more, concerning affective processes Niegemann et al. (2008) mentions that audios can contribute to the authenticity of the instructional material and so enable to raise pupils' emotions. Last but not least advantage is that a learner can be collaboratively involved in activities based on the e-textbook (see the concept of *Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning*, Zurita & Nussbaum, 2007).

Disadvantages of e-textbooks must be mentioned as well. One of the few authors who present disadvantages connected with components of e-textbooks is Mangen (2008). For example, concerning the already mentioned 3D animation he points out that this animation detracts from fantasy development and disables to produce own mental maps. Regarding hypertexts e. g. Arnold et al. (2013) draw attention to the danger of cognitive load (see Mayer, 2009), as the pupil can be overloaded while concentrating

and searching for information, which causes failing of deeper information processing. In contrast to the cognitive theory of multimedia learning (see Mayer, 2005), some authors (e. g. Paas, Renkl, & Sweller, 2004; Sweller, Ayres, & Kalyuga, 2011) even argue that the use of multiple representations (in this case different e-textbooks components) can negatively affect learning. This can occur when pupils are exposed to multiple sources of information that are self-contained and can be used without reference to each other (*redundancy effect*) or when pupils have to mentally integrate relevant sources of physically separated information (*split-attention effect*; Liu, Lin, & Paas, 2013).

From the above introduced brief outline of strong and weak sides of learning with e-textbooks a question of acceptance of e-textbooks by their users may emerge. When discussing the context of electronic environment, the *Technology Acceptance Model* (TAM) which has captured the most attention of the Information System Community (Chuttur, 2009) ought to be mentioned. It answers the question how users accept new technologies, how they use them and what factors influence users while deciding when and how to use these technologies (Benbasat & Barki, 2007). Despite the fact that much attention has been paid to the TAM in many studies (see e. g. Park, 2009; Shroff, Deneen, & Ng, 2011, Yousafzai, Foxall & Pallister, 2007), the model has also faced strong criticism concerning its application and theoretical accuracy (Chuttur, 2009). For this reason, in this study the TAM is found a fundamental piece of the theoretical background, but its application is being considered for the next research phase. In the following chapter attention is paid to the acceptance and perception of e-textbooks by having a deeper look at some present empirical findings.

3 Review of literature

The review of literature shows that the use of e-textbooks has been a widely researched issue in the last years. However, it is possible to consider perception of e-textbook from the pupils' point of view still insufficiently empirically investigated. Studies investigating the effect of learning with e-textbooks seem as more frequent. The most commonly used research tool in mentioned studies is a questionnaire.

Several studies confirm little to high significant difference in pupils/students' performance in favour of learning with e-textbooks compared to printed textbooks (e. g. Maynard & Cheyne, 2005; McFall, Dershem, & Davis, 2006; Staehr & Byrne, 2011). For example, Maynard and Cheyne (2005) explored the potential e-textbooks have to enhance learning of children in History lessons. The study included 60 pupils, split into five groups of 12 participants (6 boys and 6 girls), which were afterwards split into two sub-groups of six (3 boys and 3 girls) so that one sub-group used the printed textbook, while the other used an e-textbook. The observation and questioning of pupils revealed

that the e-textbook was widely accepted (according to pupils it made History easier and more fun) and motivated group participation.

Regarding the acceptance of e-textbooks, many studies focusing on university students can be referred to (e. g. Bryant & Mims, 2012; Falc, 2013; Sun, Flores & Tanguma, 2012). As an example, the study of Bryant and Mims (2012) can be named. Their study showed that students considered e-textbooks more current and timely than their print counterparts. On the contrary, according to Walton (2007, in Nelson, 2008) American college students expressed little to no preference for e-textbooks. A study by Elias et al. (2012) indicated that printed textbooks were preferred over e-textbooks. When asked if print or electronic texts were preferred, 84 % of teachers and 78.7 % of students responded that they preferred printed texts. 40 % of teachers agreed that if their texts were available electronically, they would take them to class, with approximately 56 % of students either agreeing or strongly agreeing with that statement.

Woody et al. (2010) carried out a questionnaire study of factors influencing preference for e-textbooks as well as reported use of e-textbook content. 59.3 % of participants (university students) had decided to use an available e-textbook in a previous course. No significant correlations existed between the number of e-textbooks previously used and overall preference of e-books. Gender did not predict e-textbook use. Gender and e-textbook were not significantly associated.

Researchers Noor et al. (2012) investigated the presence and preference of e-textbooks in the lower secondary school classrooms. It was discovered that a majority of these pupils liked using the e-textbook. But only 16 % used the e-textbook on a daily basis. The majority (65 %) used the e-textbook sometimes, while 19 % rarely. More than half the pupils used the e-textbook to study at home (55 %). About 75 % reported that they were able to follow lessons taught in the classroom using the e-textbook. When asked if they wanted to use the e-textbook during school hours, only 41 % were willing while 32 % were not. Concerning their preference between e-textbooks and textbooks, 43 % preferred the e-textbook.

Oliveira et al. (2013) explored the perceptions of the use of e-textbooks in a primary school classroom held by a teacher and his pupils who do not use printed textbooks (n = 14). The study examined pupils' meaning-making practices and the views that teachers and students have on engagement in learning activities in this context. Data were collected by means of video recording, class observational notes, in-depth focus group interviews and an e-textbook online platform. All students stated they liked the e-textbook and they preferred using it to traditional textbooks. However, they also found the information presented in the e-textbook insufficient. Easiness to do activities and to find information, the possibility to see images and videos, and the novelty of e-textbooks were considered positive aspects of e-textbooks highlighted by the pupils.

When reviewing literature it is obvious that there is little evidence on the perception or acceptance of e-textbooks among lower secondary school pupils. According

to a questionnaire study focusing on the use of textbooks conducted in Slovakia, one fourth of 15-year-old respondents prefer e-textbooks (Nogova, 2009). Nevertheless, similar studies carried out in the Czech Republic are missing.

4 Purpose of the study

The study tends to react on the situation of missing investigations into the acceptance of e-textbooks by lower secondary school pupils (in the Czech Republic). As the present Czech textbook market offers plenty of e-textbook titles mostly intended for lower secondary school pupils (the offer for upper secondary school and university students is limited), research in this sample is necessary. Pupils are the population who are the textbooks primarily intended for, so the following research aim was formulated: *to investigate pupils' perception of the printed and e-textbooks*. This aim is specified by three research questions: *1. To what extent do pupils' prefer e-textbooks to printed textbooks? 2. What advantages and disadvantages do e-textbooks and printed textbooks have from pupils' point of view? 3. Is there a difference in the perception of printed textbooks and e-textbooks by pupils using only printed textbooks and pupils using both printed and e-textbooks?* Based on the last question the following null hypotheses were formulated:

H_{01}: There is no statistically significant difference in the perception of the use of e-textbooks by pupils using only printed textbooks and pupils using both printed and e-textbooks.
H_{02}: There is no statistically significant difference in the perception of the use of printed textbooks by pupils using only printed textbooks and pupils using both printed and e-textbooks.
H_{03}: There is no statistically significant difference in the perception of the use of e-textbooks and the use of printed textbooks by pupils using only printed textbooks.
H_{04}: There is no statistically significant difference in the perception of the use of e-textbooks and the use of printed textbooks by pupils using printed textbooks and e-textbooks.

The presented investigation is a pilot study of research focused on pupils' perception of e-textbooks. This study was conducted to undertake the first step to investigate pupils' perception of learning with e-textbooks. Therefore, it approaches the issue at a rather superficial level to find out if pupils perceive e-textbooks positively at all. Then in the next step, the focus will be laid on deeper understanding of learning with e-textbooks from the pupils' point of view, especially in relation to pupils' motivation to learn as a factor which may impact learning with e-textbooks in the future.

5 Methodology

To fulfil the research aim and answer the research questions the following methodology based on a questionnaire as a research tool was used.

Research tool

As a research tool a questionnaire with following types of items was used: First 10, mainly dichotomous and polytomous, were demographic and context focused items (referring to gender, age, grade, use of PC, use of the Internet, favour of the IT subject, use of the e-textbook at school, use of the e-textbook at home, use of other electronic learning aids). 4 open-ended questions (referring to advantages and disadvantages of printed and e-textbooks) were included in order to gain free opinions of pupils independently on their statements to Likert type items. Following 10 Likert type items with a 5-point scale (agree – slightly agree – nor agree/nor disagree – slightly disagree – disagree) were focused on advantages and disadvantages of the use of printed textbooks and e-textbooks and pupils' preferences for printed textbooks/e-textbooks. They included 7 positive items focused on e-textbooks (e. g. *I would like to use the e-textbook as the main learning aid*) and 3 negative items focused on advantages of printed textbooks (e. g. *Learning with the printed textbook suits me*). The questionnaire was administrated among pupils who use and do not use e-textbooks. For the pupils who do not use e-textbooks at school and at home, the wording of items referring to the use of e-textbooks was slightly modified (transformed into conditional sentences). A definition of e-textbook was provided at the beginning of both questionnaire versions.

Sample

The study included 250 lower secondary school pupils (127 girls, 123 boys coming from 7 different schools) from the Czech Republic using e-textbooks or/and printed textbooks (across different subjects). The pupils were 12–16 years old, which corresponds with the 7th–9th grade. Most of the pupils came from the 9th grade (63 %) and were 15 years old (54 %). Schools were from the South Moravian Region, the city of Brno in the Czech Republic. The schools were selected by means of convenience sampling.

Data Collection

The author of the research tools for pupil's questionnaire handed them personally in paper form. Before completing the questionnaire, students were informed about the research topic. For students who had not had the opportunity to work with an electronic

textbook, this type of textbook was described before executing the questionnaire. Students filled out a questionnaire with a pen. Upon completion of all questionnaires in class, questionnaires were personally collected and switched to data analysis.

Data analysis

First collected data were coded into a numeral form. The expressed degree of agreement-disagreement of pupils was coded in descending order with 5–1 points in positive items and reversed in ascending order with 1–5 points in negative items (coded in an opposite way). To analyse the data methods of quantitative and qualitative research were used. Methods of descriptive statistics were used to analyse the demographic, context focused and Likert type items (mean score, standard deviation). Proportional representation (percent frequency) of statements to single items was also computed. According to the obtained scores of statements to Likert type items it was stated whether pupils' perception of printed textbooks and e-textbooks is negative, neutral or positive (negative perception was considered when the score was 1–2.75, neutral 2.75–3.25 and positive 3.25–5). The t-test for independent samples was used to investigate the statistical difference of views of pupils divided into the following groups: (1) views of pupils using printed textbooks on printed textbooks, (2) views of pupils using e-textbooks on printed textbooks, (3) views of pupils using printed textbooks on e-textbooks, (4) views of pupils using e-textbooks on e-textbooks.

To analyse the open-ended items, the procedure of open coding was used. First the hand written answers of pupils were transcribed into an electronic form and coded by one researcher (by using the pencil and paper method). In the next phase, the most frequently occurred codes were recorded and transformed into more abstract categories. Three main categories referring to the advantages and disadvantages of printed textbooks and e-textbooks occurred: issues of technical background, issues of learning background and issues of health background. The whole procedure was revised by another researcher.

Reliability and validity of the study

Concerning the open-ended items of the research instrument, the coding procedure and development of categories were peer reviewed. The reliability of the Likert type items of the research instrument was verified by the Cronbach's alpha coefficient ($\alpha = 0.81$). The validity was proved by factor analysis (principal component analysis with Varimax rotation), which divided items focused on printed and e-textbooks (see Table 1). The suitability of factor analysis was confirmed by the value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (0.87) and Barlett's test of sphericity ($X^2 = 1273.98$; $df = 45$; $p < 0.001$).

Table 1
Results of the factor analysis.

	I.	II.
Items focused on printed textbooks		
1. If we had the e-textbook at school, I would like to use it.	**0.82**	0.23
2. Learning with the e-textbook would suit (suits) me.	**0.84**	0.29
3. I (would) like videos, audios and animations on the e-textbook.	**0.70**	–0.18
4. The e-textbook is (would be) more entertaining than the printed textbook.	**0.76**	0.25
5. When working with the e-textbook I (would) have bigger interest in the subject.	**0.75**	0.36
6. I would like to use the e-textbook as the main learning aid)	**0.79**	0.43
Items focused on e-textbooks		
7. Learning with the printed textbook suits me.	0.22	**0.63**
8. The printed textbook has more advantages than the e-textbook.	0.22	**0.62**
9. The advantage of the printed textbook is its portability.	0.06	**0.73**
10. The printed textbook is useless.	0.37	**0.62**
eigenvalue	4.83	1.30
variance (%)	48.26	13.00

6 Results

Furthermore, we present the results of an analysis that focused on the (preferred) use of e- textbooks in instruction at lower secondary school.

Use of e-textbooks

76 % of pupils from the whole sample (n = 250) do not use e-textbooks at all, 11 % use them in one subject and 12 % use them in more subjects. More than 75 % would like to use the e-textbook at school (25 % rather agree, 52 % agree). Furthermore, it was found out that boys have a closer relationship to technology than girls. More concretely, the majority of both girls and boys would like to use the e-textbook in the future (74 % of girls rather agree or agree, 81 % of boys rather agree or agree).

Pupils' preferences about printed and e-textbooks

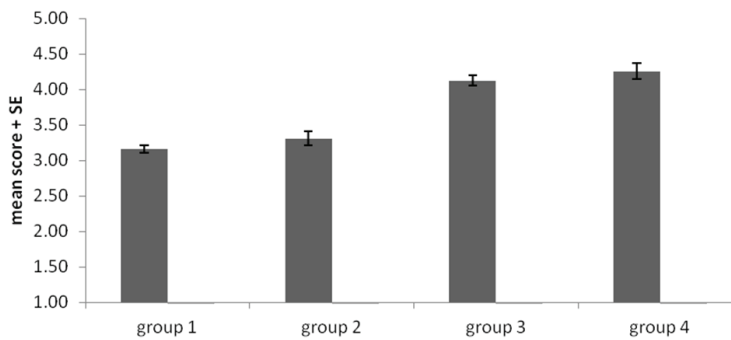
90 % pupils (would) like videos, audios and animations in e-textbooks (15 % rather agree, 75 % agree). 80 % find the e-textbook more entertaining than the printed textbook (19 % rather agree, 61 % agree).

Concerning the printed textbook, pupils were not unanimous in their views. The highest number of pupils (30 %) nor agree/nor disagree that the printed textbook is useless. Similarly the highest number of pupils (36 %) nor agree/nor disagree that the printed textbook suits them.

Comparison of the views of pupils on printed and e-textbooks

The results of the t-test showed that pupils using only printed textbooks have similar views on printed and e-textbooks as pupils using e-textbooks. Concerning the views on e-textbooks, no significant difference between pupils using printed textbooks and pupils using e-textbooks was found out ($t = 0.97$; $p = 0.33$), so H_{01} can be accepted. Similar conclusion might be drawn concerning the views on printed textbooks (H_{02}), because no significant difference between pupils using printed textbooks and pupils using e-textbook was found out ($t = 1.44$; $p = 0.15$). In contrast, the results showed that pupils using only printed textbooks have different views on printed and e-textbooks – a significant difference within the group was discovered and H_{03} was rejected ($t = 11.43$; $p < 0.001$). Similarly pupils using e-textbooks have different views on printed and e-textbooks, H_{04} is rejected ($t = 6.55$; $p < 0.001$). Further details are shown in

Figure 1
Comparing the views of pupils on printed and e-textbooks (group 1: views of pupils using printed textbooks on printed textbooks, group 2: views of pupils using e-textbooks on printed textbooks, group 3: views of pupils using printed textbooks on e-textbooks, group 4: views of pupils using e-textbooks on e-textbooks).



As it is obvious from Figure 1 (group 1 and 2), pupils have rather neutral perception of the printed textbook since the score 2.75–3.25 is considered neutral. More positive perception of the e-textbook both by pupils who use them and who do not was observed (group 3 and 4).

Advantages and disadvantages of printed and e-textbooks

The analysis of open-ended items discovered that pupils are aware of advantages and disadvantages of printed and e-textbooks at a rather superficial (material) level. In their statements the occurrence of issues of technical background prevailed. In this aspect, the advantages of printed textbooks were especially portability and independence on electricity, in case of disadvantages, liability to damage and heaviness were considered. In contrast, the advantage of e-textbooks is that in case of tablets all textbooks can be comprised into one device, so the textbook is lighter. On the other hand, pupils mention necessity of an electronic device to read the e-textbook (reader) and its inaccessibility (probably because of the financial dependence on schools). Pupils consider features of printed textbooks which are beneficial for them from the health point of view (not affecting their eyes in comparison with e-textbooks). Concerning issues of learning background they stay at a superficial level. They think that they learn from printed textbooks more easily, but they find e-textbooks more entertaining, interesting and interactive and appreciate learning with multimedia. Regarding disadvantages of e-textbooks they are aware of the fact that e-textbooks can distract their attention from learning (by the access to the Internet). All in all, the analysis of open-ended items showed that pupils assign more advantages to e-textbooks, but they still appreciate, however sometimes contradictorily, several distinctive features of printed textbooks.

7 Discussion and conclusion

The presented study pointed out the gap in research of acceptance of e-textbooks by lower secondary school pupils. It discussed the e-textbook term and outlined some aspects of the relevant learning context. It aimed to investigate pupils' perception of the printed and e-textbooks. This aim was specified by three research questions. As a research tool a questionnaire with demographic-context, Likert type and open-ended items was distributed to lower secondary school pupils using e-textbooks and/or printed textbooks.

The results of the study showed that no matter if pupils use e-textbooks or not the majority of respondents (both girls and boys) would like to use the e-textbook in the future. What is more, it was discovered that pupils have more positive perception of the e-textbook than the printed textbook. This statement might be influenced by pupils'

preference of the attractive entertainment function of the e-textbook, especially due to the multimedia it offers, which might be seen as an effect of novelty (see Maynard & Cheyne, 2005; Oliveira et al.; 2013). However, pupils do not consider the impact of the e-textbook on their learning. Therefore, pupils' superficial responses to the open-ended items showed limits of the questionnaire. Thus further research is necessary to enable a more in-depth view into pupils' preferences of learning with e-textbooks (by means of including more items into the questionnaire, applying the TAM (see chapter 3) and conducting interviews with pupils).

Another limit of the study might be seen in the sample. In comparison with studies conducted abroad (e. g. Noor et al., 2012), it was revealed that the majority of respondents do not use e-textbooks at school, even at home. This was caused by the limitation of availability of schools using e-textbooks. The research could be broadened out to involve a larger number of e-textbook users. However, despite the fact that many pupils expressed their views on e-textbooks only based on the offered definition of the term or on their image of the e-textbook, the t-test showed that it had no influence on their views (in comparison with pupils using e-textbooks).

Pupils' rather neutral perception of the printed textbook indicates that pupils are not determined about the future of the printed textbook. They prefer to use e-textbooks at school but do not strictly refuse their printed counterparts. Therefore, a possible solution to the future is to combine both types of textbook and find an appropriate way how to exploit their specific advantages complementing each other.

The limits of the study offer further research in this area. Specifically, further interrogation of pupils is needed. In-depth interviews with pupils are necessary to penetrate through the superficial level of description of advantages and disadvantages of both types of textbooks. Moreover, trial of instruction with e-textbooks in different subjects is essential to gain direct feedback of pupils on the use of e-textbooks. Investigation of teachers' views (about their preferences and experience with e-textbooks) in order to take into consideration a didactical point of view on this issue is welcome as well.

Acknowledgement

The study was supported by the project MUNI/A/1360/2014 Kurikulum základní školy: metodologické přístupy a empirická zjištění (KUME 2015).

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Development and Reflection on Early Childhood Education in U. S. Higher Schools

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Abstract

Early childhood education at higher schools is a type of education to train early childhood teachers for children 0–8 years old that have developed very quickly and made a great progress in the United States of America. The paper is to introduce the developmental status and features of early childhood education at the U. S. higher schools. Investigation shows that there are at least 228 colleges and universities with early childhood education major, focusing on "higher educational level", "various major fields", "practicable degree plans", "diverse instructional methods", "strict teacher certification" and "networking". At meantime, there is a "confused professional boundary" about early childhood education at the U. S. higher schools, which has some negative influences on training early childhood teachers. We consider that "preschool education" is more suitable than "early childhood education" as a major paralleled with "elementary education", "secondary education" and "higher education" at higher schools.

Key words: early childhood education; preschool education; teacher education; higher schools; United States of America (U.S.A.).

Introduction

Teacher education includes pre-service and in-service training, and early childhood education at higher schools is the main aspect of early childhood teacher education. Early childhood education[1] at higher schools is a type of education to train the early childhood teachers for children 0–8 years old and has developed very quickly and made great progress in the United States of America (U.S.A.).

At present, more and more researchers have paid attention to issues about early childhood teacher education of the U. S., and they have mainly involved in its developmental history, features and trends (Yang, 2006; Wang, 2008, pp. 8–11; Li, 2011; Blank, 2010; Yang & He, 2013); educational aims or quality requirements (Cao, Wang, Tian & Shmizu, 2013; Bueno, Darling-Hammond & Gonzales, 2010; Mevorach & Miron, 2011; Ganey, 2010; Romeyn, 2010; Kim & Kemple, 2011; Xie & Lu, 2008), curricular (Kim, 2013; LoCasale-Crouch et al., 2011), methods (Androutsos, 2014; Chapman, 2014; Conroy, Sutherland, Vo, Carr & Ogston, 2014; Curenton & Zucker, 2013; Souto-Manning & Biglan, Layton, Jones, Hankins & Rusby, 2013; Weigel, Weiser, Bales & Moyses, 2012; Singh, Lancioni, Winton, Karazsia & Singh, 2013; Heisner & Lederberg, 2011; Ji, 2011; Dunst, Trivette & Deal, 2011; Mead & Carey, 2011, p. 3; Mitchell, 2010; Tal, 2010; Bayat, 2010; Morris, Raver, Millenky, Jones & Lloyd, 2010); reflections on the training programmes (Saracho, 2013; Chen & McCray, 2012; Fults & Harry, 2012; Piasta et al., 2012; Kim, Chang & Kim, 2011; Pelletier, 2010; Wang & Ding, 2010) and strategies (Rivkin, 2014; Whitebook at al., 2012, p. 27; Bridges, Fuller, Huang & Hamre, 2011; Abbate-Vaughn, Paugh & Douglass, 2011; Pianta, 2011; Nicholson & Reifel, 2011; Guo, Justice, Sawyer & Tompkins, 2011; Lasser & Fite, 2011; Arslan, 2010). However, there are still few studies analyzing the developmental status of early childhood education at the U. S. higher schools. The purpose of the paper is mainly to introduce the status and features of early childhood education at the U. S. higher schools in order to provide some experiences for the other countries.

1 Historical context on early childhood education at the U. S. higher schools

Early childhood teacher education in the United States has a long history and rich experiences. Without early childhood normal school, early childhood teacher education has at present changed from directed normal education to non-directed normal education in the United States; and the history is roughly divided into the normal school period (18th century to the end of the 19th century), the normal college period (end of the

[1] "Preschool education" means a type of education for 0–5 or 6 years old children in the paper.

19th century to the middle of the 20th century) and the normal university period (Yang & He, 2013; Li, 2011; Blank, 2010; Wang, 2008, pp 8–11; Yang, 2006).

1.1 Normal school's period (18th century – end of the 19th century)

In the 19th century, Froebel kindergarten was introduced into the United States and not paid too much attention because there was then no example for a woman and teacher to be provided college level training, and early childhood teacher were trained by means of *Apprenticeship Training*. In the period, preschool education in the United States had changed from nursery schools into the charity kindergartens into public kindergartens; during the 1820s – 1830s, some secondary normal schools were established, where enrolled in the graduates in primary school (eight-year), trained about 1–4 years and mainly provided general education and teacher certification. In 1868, Elizabeth Pebody (1804–1894) set up the first preschool normal school in Boston; and in 1874, the Department of Preschool Teacher Training was established at the City College of New York and provided young women with pre-service training with preschool education courses such as "Theory of Froebel", "Game", "Music" and "Art", etc.; and in 1880, Eudora Hailman established the first pre-school teacher training constitution "Wisconsin State Normal School". During the 1880s – 1890s, there were eight preschool normal schools with the "Infant observation" course and made the preschool teachers learn the "Methodology of Kindergarten".

1.2 Normal college's period (late 19th century – middle of the 20th century)

Before and after the first world war, kindergartens had already been attached to primary schools in the United States, and higher normal colleges have gradually trained teachers at all levels, mainly enrolled the graduates from senior high schools, and there are few teachers with a four-year bachelor degree. Before the World War II, early childhood teachers were mainly trained at normal colleges with 250 in 1948, and the number of preschool normal schools had decreased from 325 in 1919 to 60 in 1947.

1.3 Normal university's period (after the middle of the 20th century)

Since the middle of the 20th century, due to national policies and guidance, the United States have further reformed and improved the training modes of early childhood teachers and established a high starting point, complete system and an operative early childhood teacher education system. After the World War II, more and more normal colleges had gradually been expanded into comprehensive universities or subsumed

into comprehensive universities, and early childhood teachers had mainly been trained at the Department of Education of Arts and Sciences Colleges and the College of Education of the Comprehensive University. On the one hand, preschool normal schools were gradually disappeared, and there are less and less normal colleges. There was no preschool normal school, and there were 100 normal colleges in the 1960s, however, there were only 7 normal colleges in 1980s. On the other hand, there were stricter requirements for enrollments qualifications, academic years and educational levels for early childhood teachers. For example, after 1970, the grade points of the teachers applicants GPA should be more than 2 or 2. 5 (out of 4), and after 10 years, academic years of the teacher applicants were extended to 4 or 5 years, early childhood teachers had to at least earn an associate degree (most with a bachelor's degree), and succeed in the training programs of professional accreditation and gotten "early childhood teaching certificate" or "elementary school teacher's certificate" (usually dominated by early teacher certification). At present, there are at least 228 higher schools with early childhood education major in the United States[2].

In summary, the United States had more than 150-year developmental history and has at present set up an open, professional, diverse and high-quality system in early childhood teacher education.

2 Developmental status of early childhood education at the U. S. higher schools

In order to understand the developmental status of early childhood education at the U. S. higher schools, we mainly analyze the total status, professional focuses, curricular system, graduation requirements and career options of early childhood education majors at 228 U. S. higher schools.

2.1 Total status

Investigation tells us that there are at least 228 higher schools with early childhood education and four-level degrees including 210 colleges or universities with undergraduate programs, 162 with master programs, 78 with doctor programs and 33 with specialists in the United States; at the meantime, there are more colleges and universities in the

[2] We mainly investigate the status on early childhood education majors in 170 best universities with education, 201 best comprehensive universities and 180 best arts and sciences colleges in 2014 (Retrieved from http://www.coe.uga.edu/academics/degrees/eds; http://usa.bailitop.com/ranking/20130111/20053.html; http://www.zinch.cn/top/university/367584/2014/367595; http://usa.bailitop.com/ranking/20121031/16561.html.)

Middle Atlantic, Upper Mississippi (Great Lakes) and South East than the Rocky Mountain state, New England and the Pacific (see table 1).

Table 1
Number and distribution of early childhood education in USA higher schools

Districts	Number of States	Number of Universities	Number of Bachelor	Number of Master	Number of Doctor	Number of Specialists
New England	6	14	12	12(2)	4	1
Middle Atlantic	8	62	51	41(11)	14	4
South East	4	27	27	17	9	6
South	6	19	19	16	11	6
Mid-west	8	20	20	16	10	6
Upper Mississippi (Great Lakes)	5	40	39	22(1)	10	6
Rocky Mountain state	6	10	10	10	8	2
Pacific	5	17	13	13(4)	4	2
South-west	3	18	18	15	8	0
Total	**52**	**227**	**209**	**162(18)**	**78**	**33**

Especially, the Education Specialist or Specialist in Education (EdS) are an advanced terminal degree in the United States that are designed for individuals who wish to develop advanced knowledge and theory beyond the master's degree level, but may not wish to pursue a degree at the doctoral level and provide the necessary background and professional expertise for students planning to go into university teaching, supervisory or leadership roles in post secondary schools, curriculum planning, consultant work, or similar positions.

2.2 Professional focuses

Investigation shows us that instruction and research on early childhood education at 228 U. S. colleges and universities with the early childhood education major mainly focus on some fields or issues such as "early childhood education" (birth – Grades three), "early childhood and special education", "early childhood and elementary education", "early childhood and middle childhood education", "early childhood and child development", "early childhood and family", "early childhood and languages education", "early intervention", etc. (see table 2).

Table 2
Focuses and its frequencies of early childhood education major in USA higher schools

Educational levels	Bachelor	Master	Doctor
Focuses and frequencies	(1) Early childhood education (preschool) (141); (2) Early childhood special education (43); (3) Birth-grade 3 (Prek-grade 3, P-grad 3) (29); (4) Grade 4–12 (24); (5) Child development (26); (6) Primary or elementary education (19); (7) (Middle) childhood education (11); (8) Family (10); (9) (Dual) language or bilingual education (6); (10) Early intervention (6); (11) Science education (mathematics) (4); (12) Multicultural education (2); (13) Society (2); (14) Arts and physical education (2); (15) Interdisciplinary early childhood education (1); (16) Technology education (1); (17) Play (0); (18) Child psychology (0).	(1) Early childhood education (preschool) (130); (2) Early childhood special education (53); (3) Primary or elementary education (18); (4) (Middle) childhood education (15); (5) Birth-grade 3 (Prek-grade 3, P-grad 3) (13); (6) Grade 4–12 (7); (7) Child development (9); (8) Family (5); (9) (Dual) language or bilingual education (4); (10) Early intervention (7); (11) Interdisciplinary early childhood education (4); (12) Science education (1); (13) Multicultural education (1); (14) Arts education (1); (15) Child psychology (1); (16) Society (1) ; (17) Play (1); (18) Technology education (0).	(1) Early childhood education (preschool) (40); (2) Early childhood special education (11); (3) (Middle) childhood education (4); (4) Family (3); (5) Child development (3); (6) Birth-grade 3 (PreK-Grad 3, P-Grad 3) (2); (7) Primary or elementary education (2); (8) Society (2); (9) Early intervention (2); (10) (Dual) language education (1); (11) Child psychology (1); (12) Interdisciplinary early childhood education (1); (13) Multicultural education (1); (14) Play (1); (15) Grade 4–12 (0); (16) Arts education (0); (17) Science education (0); (18) Technology education (0).

In addition, "interdisciplinary early childhood education", "play" and "child psychology" are in some degree strengthened in graduate education of some higher schools.

2.3 Curricular system

About the curricular systems of early childhood education at the U. S. universities, there are mainly "vertical" and "horizontal" modes, the former directly introduces the curricula according to the academic years, and the latter does the curricula according to different

classification standards. It is true that curricula are usually divided into different types at different U. S. higher schools.

Curricula for the bachelor at the U. S. higher schools are mainly divided into two types such as "General Educational Requirements" and "Core Professional Requirements" at the University of New Mexico[3]; three types such as "General Courses", "Major Courses" and "Elective Courses" at the Wittenberg University[4]; four types such as "General Studies Requirements", "Required Studies in Psychology", "Required Studies in Mathematics" and "Required Studies in Education" at the Saint Vincent College[5]; and five types or more than five types such as include "Social Contexts of Early Childhood Education", "Critical Perspectives in Early Childhood Education", "Global, Comparative Early Childhood", "Major Theorists in Early Childhood", "Early Childhood Education Programs", "Theories of Curriculum for Prekindergarten and Kindergarten ", "Parents and Education", "Play & Early Development" and "Early Childhood Education Program Development" at the University of Texas at Austin[6].

Curricula for the master of early childhood education at the U. S. higher schools are mainly divided into two types such as "Required Courses" (3 credits each) and "Approved Electives" (Choose Three Courses, nine credits total) at the George Mason University[7]; three types such as "Required Core Courses", "Professional Area" and "Specialty Area" at the East Carolina University[8]; four types such as "Core Requirements", "Specialization Requirements", "Exit Examination/Final Project" and "Thesis" at the he Ohio State University[9]; and five or more than five types such as "Critical Perspectives on Childhood Education", "Early Childhood Education Programs", "Early Childhood Teacher Education", "Inquiry in Play", "Parents and Education", "Research Seminar", "Social Construction of Thinking in Childhood", "Social Contexts of Childhood Education" and "Theories of Childhood" at the University of Texas at Austin[10].

Curricula for the doctor degree at the U. S. higher schools are usually divided into three types such as "College of Education Professional Core", "C & I Professional Core" and "Early Childhood Specialty Area" at the Southern Illinois University[11]; four types such as "Research Methods and Tools", "Required Concentration Courses", "CELS Professional Development Courses" and "Dissertation" at the University of South Florida[12]; and

[3] Retrieved from http://coe.unm.edu/departments/programs/bachelors-degrees.html

[4] Retrieved from http://www.wittenberg.edu/academics/education/requirements.html

[5] Retrieved from http://www.stvincent.edu/Majors_and_Programs/Majors_and_Programs/Education/Education_K-12/

[6] Retrieved from http://www.edb.utexas.edu/education/departments/undergrad/

[7] Retrieved from http://cehd.gmu.edu/academics/master

[8] Retrieved from http://catalog.ecu.edu/content.php?catoid=3&navoid=186

[9] Retrieved from http://tl.ehe.osu.edu/academic-programs

[10] Retrieved from http://education.oregonstate.edu/academics

[11] Retrieved from http://gradschool.siu.edu/academics/curriculum-instruction.html

[12] Retrieved from http://www.coedu.usf.edu/main/programs.html

mainly five or more than five types such as "Core Classes", "Specialty Area", "Research Methodology", "Research Internships" and "Dissertation Research" at the University of Alabama at Birmingham[13].

Curricula of early childhood education specialist are mainly divided into "major", "foundation" and "elective" curricular at the Indiana University[14]; and "educational theory and curriculum and methods" courses in major areas such as language and literacy, mathematics, science and social studies and "research-based course" where they design and carry out projects in elementary classrooms at the University of Georgia[15].

2.4 Graduation requirements

There are a lot of specific requirements for degree or teacher certification of early childhood education major at the U. S. higher schools. For example, the bachelor degree of early childhood at the Wittenberg University needs satisfactory completion of all the general courses requirements, and the major courses 51 hours plus 14 hours in related areas and additional electives to meet graduation requirement of 130 semester hours[16]; the master degree of early childhood education at the Florida International University requires all the students to take 15 hours of foundation courses in curriculum and instruction and in methods/statistics, the students take an additional 18 hours within early childhood education/development, and 3 hours of education-related electives[17]; the specialist in early childhood education at the Florida State University will be equipped with "Research", "Theory Base for Childhood Education", "Evaluation", "Curriculum", "Instruction", "Special Field Experience", "Practicums" and "Directed Research"[18]; and the students awarded a Ph.D. of Education including early childhood education at the George Mason University must satisfactorily complete all the courses listed on the student's approved program of doctoral study, have at least a B average on all the coursework included in the program of study, satisfactorily complete a comprehensive portfolio assessment and an accepted dissertation and the oral defence of this dissertation (CEHD, 2012, p. 9).

[13] Retrieved from http://www.uab.edu/education/home/future-students/degrees-programs

[14] Retrieved from http://www.coe.uga.edu/academics/graduate

[15] Retrieved from http://education.indiana.edu/graduate/programs/index.html

[16] Retrieved from http://www5.wittenberg.edu/academics/education/requirements.html.

[17] Retrieved from http://education.fiu.edu/masters_degrees.html?expanddiv=ms13.

[18] Retrieved from http://www.coe.fsu.edu/Current-Students/Departments/School-of-Teacher-Education-STE/Current-Students/Early-Childhood-Education/Specialist.

2.5 Career options

Early childhood education at the U.S. higher schools usually provides the students with some specific career options for the future. For example, opportunities for bachelor degree of "infant through early childhood education" at the Barry University include "classroom teacher (Grades K-3)", "preschool teacher (Infancy – Prekindergarten)", "advocate for an early childhood readiness coalition" and "museum educator with an art, science or children's museum"[19]; career opportunities of the master of early childhood education at the Monmouth College include pre-school teacher at private schools, pre-school teacher at public schools, P-3 teacher at public school, early intervention specialist, head start coordinator and parent educator[20]; and "The Child Development/ Early Childhood Education Ph.D." at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln provides students with rigorous education, research, and teaching experiences that will prepare them as professionals qualified to work at universities, in private research firms, and public policy institutions[21].

From above all, the early childhood education major at the U.S. higher schools has not only made a great progress in number and educational level, but also has specific and operatable training plans.

3 Features of early childhood education at the U.S. higher schools

According to the history and status, we consider that early childhood education at the U.S. higher schools has developed very quickly and focused on "the higher educational level", "various major fields", "practicable degree plans", "diverse instructional methods", "strict teacher certification" and "networking".

3.1 Higher educational level

"High-level" means that early childhood education teacher training including training institutions, students, curriculum, education levels and other aspects and non-directional preschool teacher training system in the United States, are non-direction, diverse and high-level in modes, curriculum, and teacher certification (Wang, 2008, pp. 13–14) and has paid attention to multicultural awareness and inclusive education ability of the teachers; and high-quality and social justice are its value-orientation (Yang & He, 2013;

[19] Retrieved from http://www.barry.edu/education-undergraduate/about/infancy-early-childhood.html.

[20] Retrieved from http://www.monmouth.edu/.

[21] Retrieved from http://cehs.unl.edu/cyaf/programs/child-developmentearly-childhood-education-phd.

Peng, 2008). Investigation shows that there are no secondary preschool normal school, and pre-service training of the early childhood teachers are mainly done at graduate schools, colleges of early childhood education, Colleges of Human Development, 2-year community colleges, 4-year colleges and universities, and there are more bachelors than associate bachelors and masters; and 71% higher schools with master degrees, 34.2% with doctor and 14.5% with education specialist degrees at 228 U. S. universities. In fact, the state pre-k programs with higher teacher qualification requirements improve children's school readiness so the states get the most out of their investment in early education, and educators with at least a bachelor's degree coupled with specialized training in early childhood are best able to foster the development of the cognitive, social and emotional skills children need to be ready for kindergarten (Bueno, Darling-Hammond & Gonzales, 2010).

3.2 Various major fields

At the U. S. higher schools, early childhood education is usually divided into different fields and attaches importance to individual differences of the early childhood teachers. For example, undergraduate education of early childhood education at the Wittenberg University involves "Early Childhood (P-3)", "Middle Childhood (4–9)", "Early childhood (P-3)" and "Intervention Specialist" of "Mild/Moderate Educational Needs (K-12)", "Early Childhood Generalist (4–5)", "Middle Childhood Generalist (4–6)"[22]; the master of early childhood education at the University of Massachusetts Amherst includes "Child Study and Early Education", "Early Intervention (0–3 years)", "Early Childhood Education (0–5 years)", "Family Services", "Public Policy for Children and Families", and "Interdisciplinary Work in Childhood Studies"[23]; and the doctorate program of early childhood and childhood education at the New York University involves in "Human and Child Development", "Social Contexts of Learning", "The Influence of Culture on Teaching and Learning", "Multiple Ways of Knowing", "Families as Partners in Children's Schooling", "The Uses of Evaluation and Assessment in Teaching and Learning", "The Impact of Language and Literacy Development on Children's Learning" and "Curriculum Development"[24]. At meantime, some universities in the United States pay more attention to interdisciplinary research of "Early childhood education", especially between early childhood education and special education/elementary education/child development/educational leadership/family education, etc. For example, there is a major of "Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (IECE)" for the bachelor, master and doctor degrees at the University of Kentucky[25]; and "Early Childhood Education" at the Montana State University involves

[22] Retrieved from http://www5.wittenberg.edu/.

[23] Retrieved from http://www.umass.edu/.

[24] Retrieved from http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/.

[25] Retrieved from http://www.uky.edu/.

"Child Development", "Developmentally Appropriate Practices", "Early Intervention with Children with Special Needs", and "Assessment and Intervention, Advocacy, and Program Administration"[26]. All the different fields do not only train wide learning and research interests of the early childhood education students but also meet the various needs of preschool education of individuals and society.

3.3 Practicable degree plans

The early childhood teacher education programmes at the U. S. higher schools usually consist of recruitment and selection, general education, professional foundations, instructional knowledge, field experiences and clinical practice, and programme evaluation (Saracho, 2013). Pre-service trainings for kindergarten teachers pay more attention to widely general knowledge, knowledge on pedagogy and psychology, children's ages and related teaching methods, the influence and guidance of preschool teachers' skills, and practical ability; and in-service trainings think much of professional, student-based, kindergarten-based and "higher-quality" (Yan, 2008, pp. 31–36). For example, the program overview of the bachelor of "Infancy Through Early Childhood Education (Birth – 3rd Grade)" at the Barry University introduces *"who will I teach", "what will I learn" and "where can I teach"*[27]; master program of "early childhood education" at the Lesley University shows the meaning, features and outcomes of learning[28]; and the doctor degree of early childhood education at the University of Houston includes "*Is this Program for Me*", "*What will I learn*" and "*What can I do with my degree*"[29]. Thus, the degree plans are usually easy to be operated and practiced.

3.4 Diverse methods

Early childhood education at the U. S. higher schools thinks much of not only operativity of the degree plan but also diversity of training methods including discussion, speech and debate in classrooms; communication out of school; and online. For example, based on the six competency goals, the Child Development Associate (CDA) training program provides three different types of the training patterns about Center-Based, Family Child Care and Home Visitor and a candidate can earn his CDA credential through the CDA Professional Preparation Program or local college training and direct assessment (Ji, 2011); a multi-year action research study paid particular attention to the process whereby an early childhood teacher investigated, problematized, and challenged the

[26] Retrieved from http://www.montana.edu/.

[27] Retrieved from http://www.barry.edu/education-undergraduate/about/infancy-early-childhood.html.

[28] Retrieved from http://www.lesley.edu/early-childhood-education/

[29] Retrieved from http://www.coe.uh.edu/academic-departments/cuin/

nature of curriculum and practices in a diverse preschool classroom and can foster culturally-relevant teaching and shifting early childhood teachers' perceptions of what it means to engage in culturally-relevant teaching, respecting and honoring cultural diversities (Souto-Manning & Mitchell, 2010); pre-service early childhood educators presented with the PulpMotion created an anchored instructional video where experiences were shown to have a marked increase of on-line discussion board postings and reviews of "non-required" reading of early childhood special education (Chapman, 2014); three types of workshops (half day/full day or multi-day) or one of two types of onsite, field-based training (basic and enhanced) of in-service training could improve early intervention practitioners' abilities to use family-systems intervention practices (Dunst, Trivette & Deal, 2011); and the journals and video-recording could promote self-conscious productive reflections and clarify content knowledge and link theory to practice (Bayat, 2010).

3.5 Strict teacher certification

Strict professional standards are designed to promote the professional development and enhance the quality of early childhood teachers. On the one hand, the nation and states have thought much of improving standards of early childhood teachers. National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Amendment in 2003 published a new standard which stressed preschool teachers in the 21st century should have "knowledge" and "skills" about how to promote the children's development and learning, establishing a harmonic relationship between family and the community, observation records and evaluation, teaching and learning, and become the experts and the new standard of NAEYC in 2004 focused on linguistic and cultural diversity, integration of children with special needs among ordinary children, subject knowledge, supervised living communities, assessing children's learning and development, teaching strategies and ways to promote children's development and learning standards and learning experience (Xie & Lu, 2008).

On the other hand, there have been strict programs for teacher certification at the U. S. higher schools. In the past ten years, the U. S. higher schools have paid much attention to the preschool teacher education reform so as to promote teachers' professional development and improve the quality of preschool education, and the initial teacher training reform laid emphasis on cultivating students' practice ability, and in-service teacher training is aimed at improving teachers' professional level (Cao, Wang, Tian & Shmizu, 2013). At present, there are some certification departments and standards for early childhood teachers at the U. S. colleges and universities. For example, *"OAR584-018-0115 Early Childhood Education Authorization"* from *"14-15-early childhood-hand-*

book in Lewis and Clark College" introduces five specific standards of preschool teacher in Oregon in the following (p. 12)[30].

3.6 Networking

The Internet may be a practical alternative for providing high-quality, research-based training, information, and resources to these professionals (Weigel, Weiser, Bales & Moyses, 2012). Distance education is a planned learning experience or a method of instruction characterized by quasi-permanent separation of the instructor and learner, and has been used as a method of the pre-service teacher preparation and an in-service training to fulfil a mandate to upgrade the knowledge/skills/qualifications of teaching abilities; and includes correspondence model, audio-based models, televisual models, computer-based multimedia models, web-based models and mobile models (Burns, 2011, pp. 9–10). There are rich internet resources about early childhood education major at the U. S. higher schools such as online courses, online learning, distance education, continuing education and adult education, and the learners will not only easily get their net information and resources but also apply for online degrees. For example, there are online bachelor and master degrees at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill[31]; and doctor and educational specialists degrees at the the University of Alabama[32].

All in all, early-childhood teacher education at the U. S. colleges and universities has experienced 140 years, been one of the most developed countries with rich experiences, and formed its own characteristics.

4 Problems on early childhood education at the U. S. higher schools

Although early childhood education at the U. S. higher schools has made great progress, we consider that the main disadvantage is "confused professional boundary ", which is shown in the following.

1. "Elementary education" includes "early childhood education", and there is no independent "Early childhood education" major at some higher schools. For example, "Elementary education" at the University of Wisconsin includes "Early Childhood/ English as a Second Language", "Middle Childhood – Early Adolescence/English as a Second Language", "Middle Childhood – Early Adolescence/Special Education"and

[30] Retrieved from http://graduate.lclark.edu/live/files/17429-14-15-ecel-handbook-finalpdf.

[31] Retrieved from http://www.unc.edu/academics/.

[32] Retrieved from http://bamabydistance.ua.edu/degrees/.

"Middle Childhood – Early Adolescence/Content-Focused Minor"[33]; the **Elementary Teacher Preparation Program** at the Duke University prepares candidates for critical thinking and decision making that will be required of them as caring and reflective educators in **K-6 classrooms**[34]; the master's Degree of Early Childhood Education Specialization within the Elementary Education at the Indiana University is designed for individuals who have completed a degree in early childhood education or elementary education and who have a teaching license in early childhood education (preschool), elementary/primary grades (K-3), or elementary education (K-6) [35].

2. "Childhood education" includes "early childhood education", and there is no independent "early childhood education" major at some higher schools. The master programs childhood education at the Ripon College are of the early childhood/middle childhood level (grades PK through 5) and the middle childhood/early adolescence level (grades 1 through 8)[36]; the School of Education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill offers three undergraduate programs in teacher education such as "Middle Grades Education (Grades 6–9)", "Elementary Education (Kindergarten – Grade 6)" and "Child Development and Family Studies (Birth – Kindergarten)", which is grounded in the disciplines of "Child Development", "Early Childhood Education" and "early childhood special education"[37].
3. "Early childhood education" parallels with "elementary education" or "childhood education" at some higher schools. For example, the "Elementary and Kindergarten Education" major offers teaching options in "Early Childhood Education" and in "Elementary Education" at the Pennsylvania State University – University Park where "Childhood and Early Adolescent Education" has met all of the requirements for "the PK-4", "English Education 4–8"or "Social Studies Education 4–8"[38]; the master of "Early Childhood/Elementary Education" at the Rutgers University is intended for certified teachers who wish to continue their study of learning and teaching in early childhood/elementary settings[39]; and "Early Childhood and Childhood Education" at the State University of New York at Buffalo deals with children from preschool up to the middle school years; and the students may choose to emphasize early

[33] Retrieved from http://pubs.wisc.edu/ug/education_Outlines_ElemEd.htm.

[34] Retrieved from http://educationprogram.duke.edu/teacherpreparation/elementary.

[35] Retrieved from http://education.indiana.edu/graduate/programs/early-childhood/Early%20Childhood%20Ed%20 Master%20Info.pdf

[36] Retrieved from http://www.ripon.edu/education/.

[37] Retrieved from http://soe.unc.edu/academics/cdfs/.

[38] Retrieved from http://bulletins.psu.edu/undergrad/campuses/details/26/.

[39] Retrieved from http://gse.rutgers.edu/academic-programs/edm-programs/early-childhoodelementary-education.

childhood (birth – grade 2), childhood teaching (grades 1–6), or both, or a specific childhood curriculum field, such as literacy or mathematics[40].

Reflecting above problems, we consider that the main reason lies in "confused professional boundary" of "Early Childhood Education" for the children with 0–8 years old as a major at higher schools. In fact, "Early Childhood Education" is not only a part of "Childhood Education"[41] but also involves in "Preschool Education" (0–5 or 6 years old) and "Elementary Education" (5 or 6–12 years old), which usually causes some problems and difficulties such as aims, curricula, method, and evaluation of teaching and learning in colleges and universities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the United States is one of the best developed countries in early childhood teacher education and has accumulated a lot of experiences and formed some features in early childhood education major at the higher schools. As to the other countries, it is very necessary to learn from early childhood education at the U. S. higher schools.

In addition, we consider that it may be more reasonable to make "early childhood education" a parallel research field with "middle childhood education" and "advanced childhood education" or "adolescent education" than as a major paralleled with "elementary education", "secondary education" and "higher education" at the higher schools; and we consider that it is better to make "preschool education" a parallel major with "elementary education", "secondary education" and "higher education" than "early childhood education" at the higher schools. Only like that, "preschool teacher education" and "elementary teacher education" will have more specific and pertinent purposes, curricula and methods, which means the "preschool education" major at the higher schools will train teachers at nurseries and kindergartens and "elementary education" is to train teachers at elementary schools or primary schools.

[40] Retrieved from http://grad.buffalo.edu/Academics/academic_programs.html?CFC_target= FWtuWCmzf92jBK0WxkYiOjhG3g-http%3A%2F%2Fwww.gradmit.buffalo.edu% 2Fgrad%2Facademics%2Facademicprograms2.asp%3Fid%3D34

[41] "Childhood Education" may be divided into "Early Childhood Education", "Middle Childhood Education" and "Advanced Childhood Education" or "Adolescent Education".

Acknowledgement

This research is supported in funding by the China Scholarship Council and the Association of Philosophy and Social Science of Sichuan Province in PRC, and we would like to thanks to them.

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Developing Professional Skills in Pre-primary Teachers via Reflexion and Self-Reflection

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Abstract

This study brings for discussion on pre-primary education the view upon developing reflective skills of students of pre-primary teaching as well as using self-reflection in the work of kindergarten teachers. The authors talk in the introduction to the study about reflection as in teaching as the key factor in the professional growth in both the pre-service teachers as well as the in-service teachers. They are presenting the information on the state of the art findings in this field. The key part of the text is devoted to action research within which the video recording of the teacher's own work was used and reflected upon subsequently (*reflection on action*). Analysing and evaluating one's own work brings the teacher information on the positive moments of his/her approaches, on the education management as well as on the critical moments of the educational reality. In the conclusion of the study the authors reflect upon the possibilities of action research in connection with developing reflective skills as well as its use in implementing more effective educational strategies in pre-primary education.

Key words: reflection, self-reflection, kindergarten teacher, student, pre-service teacher training, professional development.

Introduction

In the recent years the Czech Republic has been facing increasing interest in pre-primary education (Kropáčková, Janík, 2014; Strategie 2020), which is opening the discussion regarding the professionalisation of kindergarten teachers (Wiegerová et al., 2015, p. 12). University education seems to be the inevitable qualification prerequisite for becoming a pre-primary education teacher (Helus, 2014; Oberhumer, Schreyer, & Neuman, 2010).

The world witnesses the enforcement of the reflective model of teacher training education or so-called realistic approach in teacher training (Korthagen et al., 2011). "The starting point being the conception of a teacher as a reflective practitioner, who thinks in depth about his/her activities, analyses and evaluates it in the relationship to the planned objectives to be able to modify his/her teaching strategies and methods and to propose alternatives" (Spilková et al., 2015, p. 8).

The theoretical and research discourse more and more frequently focuses on the reflective skills of teachers both in Czech as well as foreign pedagogical literature. A team of Spanish and Dutch authors (Marcos & Tillema 2006), who carried out metaanalysis of texts dealing with the said subject matter pointed out that majority of such studies were focusing upon determining the level or type of reflection (e.g. Hatton & Smith, 1995; Mezirow, 1997; Zeichner & Liston, 1996), or ways of thinking (King & Kitchener, 1994; Baxter 2004), however, only a few of those studies provide information on the conduct of reflection and its use for improving the teaching practice.

The above stated facts led the authors of the current study to their aim to introduce the action research of a student of the life-long study programme of teacher training for kindergarten teachers. The stated research was based upon reflection over the video recording of her own work. The results show how the individual steps were helping the student to realise the critical moments of education and to find more effective ways of implementation.

1 Theoretical background

The discussions regarding the professionalisation of teaching profession calls upon the need of change in the curriculum of the pre-service teacher training in the direction to the reflective practitioner.

The development of reflective thinking can be designated as a cumulative process (Fig. 1), in which the individual is consciously researching his/her own personal experience gained in the teaching practice, is dividing them into partial steps, is searching for connections and is substantiating them.

The evaluation of the educational results, professional decisions and the subsequent discussion about them are, therefore, becoming an important part of the tuition

of pre-service teachers (Pollard et al., 2008). This is the only way for the students to learn "via their own experience and from their experience with the aim of gaining new understanding of oneself and/or the practice" (Píšová et al., 2011, p. 43). The reflection is becoming a building stone of the professional development of teachers as a basis for the continuous professional learning (Finlay, 2008; Hatton & Smith, 1995; Schön, 1987; Korthagen et al., 2011; Shulman, 1987), which is starting in the pre-service education (La Boskey, 1993).

Figure 1
The process of developing reflective skills

There are more reflective models and they differ mainly in the viewpoint upon the individual phases. Some authors look upon reflection by the prism of questions, which are asked (Smyth, 1989), some through the cognitive operations, which are taking place in reflection (Píšová, 2005). The most famous is the Korthagen's ALACT model (2011, p. 58).

Due to the fact that observing video recordings is becoming an integral part of education at the faculties that are preparing pre-service kindergarten teachers (Horká, Syslová, & Grůzová, 2014; Navrátilová, 2015), it is inevitable to focus upon the standpoint of the process and to ask questions, which are inviting us to deeper analytic work. Mere looking at a video recording enables one to catch the sight of only external aspects of the pedagogical phenomena, however, it does not lead to any deeper understanding of them.

One of the possibilities is the use of the hierarchy of questions according to their cognitive sophostication, as stated in Janík and Miková (2006, p. 118). *The first level of*

questions is aiming at the description of what can be seen and heard in the video recording. *The second level of questions* is dealing with feelings and the sense of what has been recorded. *The third level of questions* is searching for the meaning of the acting of the people in the video recording. *The fourth level of questions* is related to searching for new solutions, alternatives of the situations recorded in the video recording. These questions became an integral part of the design of the action research presented in this study.

The research studies of reflection in pre-school teachers are quite rare (Pihlaja & Holst, 2013; Syslová & Hornáčková, 2014). The results show that frequently the level of reflection is only on the technical or practical level, and only in minimum rate it reaches the critical level (Syslová, 2015). On the technical level it is usually the description of the work, which is connected to the question "What is happening?" On the practical level there are evaluations regarding the fact what is or is not right. On this level the questions and answers regarding what and how it is happening are sought. On the critical level the answers are given regarding the questions of what, how, and why it is happening. It is the analysis of the phenomena in connection with the social context or with scientific theories (Farrell, 2004; Van Manen, 1977).

Higher level of cognitive operations can be seen in the kindergarten teachers who have reached higher (i. e. university) qualification. The professional skills of these teachers are directed to the "anticipation of the events occurring in the classroom as well as more long-term planning (in a wider context) supported by the analysis of real situations" (Syslová, Hornáčková, 2014, p. 556).

2 Methods

The aim of the action research was to find out, if and how the teacher supports the children's learning in harmony with the constructivist approach. To fulfil the aim we have chosen the criteria from the evaluation tool "Framework of profession qualities of kindergarten teacher" (Syslová, Chaloupková, 2015). The set out criteria were projected into the well-arranged record sheet, which served for the record of the ascertained situations including the time of the occurring situation, which facilitated the orientation in the recording.

The action research was conducted by a life-long student of the teacher training programme for kindergarten teachers, who had been working in a kindergarten. The research was conducted within the framework of her final work. In action research the researcher, in our case a kindergarten teacher, focuses on the acting – action with the aim to increase its effectivity. Action research was accurately described by Pavelková (2012, p. 8): "Action research is trying to bridge the gap between the theory and the practice. While the academic research results influence practice only in a limited way, action research is a suitable tool how research results can be transferred into practice

and thus speed up the process of needed changes." Action research is formed by three components: action, research, and formative. It is not only a detailed description of the situation, however, it is the analysis and the subsequent intervention as well as implementing the proposed measures. It is a cyclic process within which permanent reflection is taking place regarding new findings, and reactions upon the situation in the classroom. The formative effects are shown in the changes of the relationships in the group but also in the changes in the attitudes and values of the individual participants. In the case of pre-primary education it means the changes in the relationships of the teacher and the children, but also among the children themselves.

The concrete selection of the monitored aspects fundamentally changed the viewpoint upon the whole recording from the mere unaimed observation and description of events to systematic discovering and realising the individual situations, their evaluation to the consideration of possible changes.

The video recording was taken in May 2015 in a kindergarten in Hradec Králové in a heterogeneous classroom with 24 children. It shows the activities connected with their water project. The teacher gained the written consent for the video recording from all the legal representatives from all the children in the recording. The recording lasted approximately 13 minutes and was taken by a teacher, who is working in the classroom with the student conducting the research. The recorded activity shows preparation of "ice brushes". In terms of organisation the activity was planned as group work. The groups were to be created from the children according to a selected criterion. In the next step the teacher is explaining the work procedure to the children. Before starting the activity itself the children together with the teacher are determining the rules for managing it, followed by the offer of the needed tools and material. The children are choosing and preparing their workplace themselves. The children are starting to work in group, they are working independently, the teacher is monitoring them, she is walking around the groups, asking children, how they were involved in the preparation of the colours, she stops at a group of boys and by asking questions she is aiming at solving a problem that came into being in that group. The recording finishes by the children washing their hands.

The work with the video recording was carried out in the subsequent steps as described by Janík and Miková (2006, p. 118): (1) Description of the video recording, taking down the first impressions, (2) Analysis of the recording on the basis of the selected criteria, (3) Discovering the causes of critical moments (4) Searching for possibilities how to make the children's education more effective.

3 Findings

Then analysing the video recording al, the above stated levels of question according to Janíka and Miková were kept (2006). Subsequently, the findings have been structured according to those stated levels.

3.1 Description of the educational reality

The first level comprised of a very detailed description of all that one could see and hear in the recording. This detailed written description helped to uncover hidden moments, which would have probably stayed unnoticed if watched only ones. We are included part of the description to illustrate the aforesaid as the whole description is 3 pages of text.

I am speaking to the children who are sitting in a semicircle on the carpet and I am in a semi-squat facing them. I am telling them what they are going to do in the following moments. They are learning that they will, themselves, make ice colours, and I am holding a bowl with ice. I am telling them that tomorrow we are going to become ice painters. One boy is telling me with sorrow that he is not going to be in the class tomorrow. I am asking: How come?", he is answering, that he will go to Trutnov and has to repeat it to me as I do not understand. I am telling him that we are going to speak to him about it and that we will show him the pictures that we will paint with the ice colours tomorrow. He nods in agreement. I am explaining to him that he is in the class today and that he is important. He is nodding and he is content…

3.2 Analysis of the video recording

The second step was the analysis of the individual parts of the video recording. First, the situations fulfilling the set criteria were looked for (see the extract from table 1).

Table 1
The record sheet for fulfilling the set criteria arch

Criterion	FULFILLED YES/NO	A brief description of the situation in which the set criterion is fulfilled	Time The concrete time in the video recording
Teach by experience	YES	The children are experimenting with water and food colouring, they are adding colour into water or the other way round, they are mixing the colours, they are observing the way the colours are diluting.	9:50 11:04
Determine and keep rules together with the children	YES	The children are asked to determine the rules for the work with water and colours, work in groups.	5:21
Give concrete feedback	YES	I am giving children negative feedback that one of the groups is not fulfilling the set criteria – there is no pre-schoolar. I am reassuring Karolínka, that she has managed her task and to be sure I am explaining the function of the stick put though the cardboard stripe.	2:45 3:11 9:25

After that the teacher was going through the video recording several more times and she found out that she was using a lowered position when communicating with the children, which brings the feeling of being closer to the children (0:11), she is showing empathy and she is helping a boy who has a problem to find the solution to his situation (0:23), she is giving the children space for solving the problem and for their own choices (8:32), she is trying to be consistent, i. e. if the conditions for a certain activity have not been fulfilled, the next activity could not start (3:05), she is training to respect the proposals of children: *it was the situation of mixing the colours, first I am hesitating, then I am admitting this possibility under certain conditions, and I am glad, that the children came up with their own idea* (9:07). She is paying her attention to the groups individually being interested what each child has tried (10:56).

3.3 Alternative proposals

Whem analysing the videorecording there are also critical moments and situations that the teacher would like to solve and change in the future. *Above the list of all the positive as well as critical moments there is the beginning of thinking over the causes of their coming to existence, why it took place the way it did, why it happened – which is the third level of the questions. It is usual that questions are answered. Questions led me to creating a plan for improvement, for proposing a completely different way os management that gives the child space to activate his/her thinking and fulfils the essence of experiential learning.*

The teacher has noticed that the word "so" has been used very often. She said, "*even I was disturbed by it when watching the recording.*" It is probably a parasitic word, i. e. an overused word, which has no syntactic relation to the content of the communication. Furthermore, she noticed that when setting the management task: "*Create four groups in such a way that there is at least one pre-schooler",* she used a condition, which was not later used in the activity and, moreover, she confused the children with the concept of "at least" by which she unnecessarily lengthened the time of forming the groups (00:40). *The children were given space to choose any member for their groups, she, the teacher, was subcounsciously putting the pre-schooler into the position of a group leader, which was unnecessary, eventually it seemed that the given condition was even to the detriment as the oldest pre-schoolers wanted to do majority of the activities on their own and smaller children thus did not have the access to try the experiment.*

She found out that she was repeating the instructions several times (3:31, 3:52, 4:13, 7:05). *I have realised that it is important to eliminate the excess of one's own management and let the children have enough space and time, I will be using my information and instructions in a more thought up way, briefly, loud enough, emphatically, and only once.*

She is completely unnecessarily and often expressing her fears of damaging the furnishing of the classroom or the children's clothes (4:06, 5:29, 6:12, 7:37, 8:25). *I have found the cause of my fear of making the carpet or the children dirty, firstly it is my own experience of a mother, and, secondly, the unpleasant experiences I have had with some parents. My worries regarding the damaging of the furnishings or children's property can be avoided by using protective equipment, adjust the workplace to the planned activity, at the meeting wth the parents at the beginning of the school year I will introduce the parents with the fact that if their children are to discover the world with joy, neither the children or*

The whole analysis of the recording enabled the teacher to have a critical look at her own teaching activity, it led her to thinking over the effectivity of her work as well as to looking for better solutions. She realised that the skills needed for self-reflection have to be worked upon all the time to improve them.

Conclusion

The above stated findings lead to considering the fact that video camera can become a good aid in thinking on the professional skills of teachers. It is the silent scrivener who does not evaluate, does not criticise and lets the person to see themselves in action. The video recording as a tool for the development of reflective skills enables to open the door to a better professional self-cognition. It gives the opportunity to repeated observation of the educational situation. We can analyse it into the tiniest details, we can return to the individual moments as many times as we want, it activates our thinking, it forces us to look for connections and causes. It provokes us to searching for more effective solutions of similar situations. It teaches us to view oneself critically in the relationship to the educational process. It leads us to the professional improvements. It is important that each teacher stayed open to the changes occurring in the teaching profession as only in that way her professional competences can develop.

The question is how to start the non-ceasing process of self-awareness, self-evaluation and self-actualisation. One of the answers could be creating electronic educational environment, which uses video recordings from real lessons in the combination with questions and tasks (Minaříková, Janík, 2012, p. 199), and so provide the students with the support in observing and reflecting of "another person's teaching" mediated by the video recording and thus supporting the development of professional vision. If a student is able to see the important aspects of education, he/she can improve reflecting upon his/her own practical experience (Syslová et al., 2014, p. 26).

Even though we trust in the potential of such pre-service teacher training, it seems to be necessary, to subdue the efficacy of work with video recordings to further research.

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Preschool Teacher Education in China: History, Achievements, Problems and Prospects

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to sum up the pros and cons of preschool teacher education in China. Preschool teacher education has experienced a century, formed more perfect management system and internal structure, produced some useful research results, and greatly promoted the development of preschool education in China. However, Chinese preschool teacher education has still imperfect management systems and structure, and impertinent practice and research. Therefore, China should further improve ecological environment and structure, enhance the effectiveness of theory and practice in preschool teacher education and pay deeper attention to the rural preschool teacher education in the future.

Key words: preschool teacher education, preschool education, preschool children; rural, China.

Introduction

Preschool teacher education is an integral part of teacher education, which is the main method of training the preschool teachers for 0–6 years old children in China. At present, the scholars have done a lot of analysis and reflection on history, status and

problems and put forward some useful advice. However, there are few literatures uniting history with reality, theory with practice and pre-service with in-service training in preschool teacher education. Therefore, it has important theoretical and practical meaning to further probe into the developmental history and sum up the pros and cons of preschool teacher education in China.

1 History of preschool teacher education in China

Preschool teacher education originated in the late 19th century in China and has gone through 100-year history. Some scholars believed that history of preschool teacher education in China should be divided into four stages, three stages, etc. Reflecting on present research results, we believe that preschool teacher education in China has experienced the following six stages.

1.1 Initial stage (late 19th century – 1920s)

During the late 19th century and early 20th century, with promotion of the early reformer of teacher education and advocacy of the Western Church, secondary preschool normal education system was formally established, but preschool teacher education had obvious "introduction" to foreign experiences especially Japan and had no "normal features" (Li, 2004).

About the practice and theory of the early reformers, Guan-ying Zheng in detail introduced western teacher education in his paper *"School"* in 1892; Qi-chao Liang systematically described his thoughts about teacher education in *"On Normal Education"* published in the "*Times Newspaper"* in 1896*;* Zhen-yu Luo discussed about establishment, admissions, schooling, teachers and funding of the secondary normal schools in 1901; Zhi-dong Zhang set up Hubei Kindergarten in Wuchang and invited Japanese teachers to train the preschool teachers in 1903, which meant origin of the public preschool education and preschool teacher education, and after that, there were step by step some training institutions for preschool teachers in 1905 Tianjin, 1907 Shanghai and 1916 Hangzhou; and United Kingdom-Presbyterian did the first independent secondary preschool normal school – *Huai-de Preschool Normal School* in Xiamen in 1912.

About legal systems of preschool teacher education, *"Presented School Regulation"* (1904) and *"Women Normal School Regulation"* (1907) meant beginning of the institutionalization of preschool teacher education in China (Chen, 2009). The former made "Meng-yang-yuan" as institution of preschool education for 3–7-year-old children; and the latter required that *Women Normal School* be responsible for training caretaker. At meantime, *"Preschool Education Act"* was published by *Chinese Book Company* in 1907; *"Normal Education Order"* and *"Normal School Regulation"* (1912) required that *Women*

Normal School train the teachers for kindergartens and primary schools. Especially, *"Renzhi-Kuichou Schooling System"* (1912–1913) first divided normal education institutions into secondary and higher normal schools, and caretakers must be trained in higher women normal schools; and *"Implementation Rules of National School"* (1915) first provided the qualification of caretakers.

1.2 Hard exploration (1920s – 1940s)

In the period, many early educationists summed up the past experiences and carried out more in-depth exploration in theory and practice, and preschool teacher education had some scientific and local characteristics in modern China (Li, 2008) and opened a native "flower" (Lv, 2003).

As for theory and practice of preschool teacher education, Xing-zhi Tao set up *Shanghai Institute of Preschool Education* in 1925 and *Nanjing Xiao-zhuang Preschool Normal School* in 1929; Mo-jun Zhang set up *Department of Preschool Normal Education* in *Jiang-shu Women Normal School* in 1922; He-qin Chen presided in the journal *"Preschool Education"* (Nanjing) in 1927, *"Curriculum Criteria for Kindergarten"* in 1932 and *National Preschool Normal School* of Jiangxi Province in 1943; and Jia-gen Chen set up *Xia-men Ji-mei Preschool Normal School* in 1927.

As for management systems of preschool teacher education, *"Ren-Xu Schooling System"*(1922) officially set up the kindergartens with elastic courses about life for the children under six years old, and proposed to established the secondary normal school for preschool teachers; *"Interim Curriculum Standards for Kindergarten"* (1929, 1932, 1936) is the independent law about courses and teaching plan of preschool education; and *"Normal Education Act"* (1932) and *"Normal Education Procedures"* (1933, 1936, 1947) clearly proposed that *Department of Preschool Education* should be set up in *Secondary Normal School*, and have two or three-year preschool normal courses such as *"Child Psychology", "Kindergarten Administration", "Preschool Education law"* and some training about vocational morality.

1.3 Tortuous development (1940s – 1960s)

After the establishment of new China, China had officially formed preschool teacher education system including secondary and higher normal education, which thought much of systematic and scientific subject-instruction and "planning", and were short of "flexibility" (Huang & Yu, 2005).

About management systems for the preschool teachers, *"The decision on Reforming the Schooling System" (1951)*, *"The Provisional Regulation of Normal School" (1952)*, *"The Instructional Plan of Kindergarten"* (1956) identified academic years (3–4 year) and courses of preschool normal school; *"On Determination of Higher Normal School"* (1952)

and *"Provisional Instructional Plans of Preschool Education of Department of Education in Normal College"* (1956) determined the academic years and courses of higher preschool normal education; and *"Instructions on Training Teachers in Primary school and Kindergarten"* (1956) and *"Instructional Plan of Secondary Preschool Normal School with 3-year"* (1961) provided some specific requirements of training preschool teacher.

About preschool education study programs, preschool education majors were set up in *Beijing Normal University* and *Nanjing Normal University* in 1952; and there were 89 preschool normal schools and 69278 students in 1960. During 1963–1965, there were 19 secondary preschool normal schools, where mainly train preschool teachers (Chen & Wang, 2010).

1.4 Stagnation stage (1960s – 1970s)

In this period, preschool teacher education in China had had a serious setback, and especially ten-year *"Cultural Revolution" (1966 – 1976)*, been almost completely at standstill.

Since 1961, preschool education majors were gradually stopped enrollment in higher normal schools including *Beijing Normal University* and *Nanjing Normal University*. During *"Cultural Revolution"*, all majors with preschool education in normal universities fully stopped enrollment, and only a few provinces such as Zhejiang had some trainings of preschool teacher.

1.5 Recovery (1970s – 1990s)

From the *Third Plenary Session (1978)* to the late 1990s, China actively developed preschool teacher education, secondary preschool normal schools were the main places for training the preschool teachers, and three-level system of preschool teacher education became more and more perfect.

As for management systems of preschool teacher education, *"Opinions on Strengthening and Developing Teacher Education"* (1978) proposed each county should set up independent secondary preschool normal school or department of preschool teacher training in secondary normal school; *"Preschool Normal School Plan (draft)"* (1985) further showed the uniqueness of preschool teacher training and laid the foundation for the future courses of preschool teacher education; and *"Teacher Act"* (1993) required that preschool teachers should graduate from secondary preschool normal schools or higher normal schools with *"Children Health Care", "Children Psychology", "Introduction to Preschool Education" and "Design and Guidance of Kindergarten Activities"*, and should build a three-level preschool teacher education system including secondary preschool normal schools, higher normal schools and adult continuing education.

As for preschool teacher education institutions, there were 22 secondary preschool normal schools in 1979 and preschool education majors restored enrollment in higher

normal universities such as *Beijing Normal University*, *Nanjing Normal University*, *Southwest Normal University*,*Northwest Normal University*, *Northeast Normal University*, etc.; *Beijing Normal University* started to enroll in graduate students in 1984 and *Nanjing Normal University* in 1986; there were 63 secondary preschool normal schools with 35,600 students in 1989; there were 17 preschool education majors in higher normal universities in 1990; the first doctoral program for the preschool education was set up in higher school in 1994; and there were about 84,300 students in secondary preschool normal schools in 1996.

1.6 Mature stage (since the 1990s)

Since the late 1990s, secondary preschool normal education became less and less, and preschool teacher education has gradually transferred from three-level to two-level and become more and more diverse and open.

About management systems of preschool teacher education, *"Several Points on Structural Adjustment of Normal colleges"* (1999) put forward diminishing the number of secondary normal schools and increasing the number of junior colleges and universities; *"Regulation on Continuing Education for the Primary and Middle School Teachers"* (1999) required that the initial preschool teachers should have 120-hours pre-service training and 240-hours in-service training during each five-year; *"Program on the National Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010–2020)"* (2010) put forward setting up the compulsory system of preschool education, generalizing preschool education and implementing "*National Training Programs*" of the rural preschool teachers; and *"Professional Standards of Preschool Teachers (Trial)"* (2011) put forward quality standards of preschool teachers and training preschool teachers.

About the internal structure of preschool teacher education, the structure of teacher education has been adjusted from three-level to second-level by means of expanding the enrollment, upgrading the levels and merging with other colleges in China since 1997. For example, *Shanghai Junior College of Preschool Teachers* incorporated into *East China Normal University* in 1997; *Cheng-du Preschool Normal School* and *Sichuan Normal University* cooperatively hold five-year preschool vocation education in 1999; *Changsha Preschool Normal School* changed into *Changsha College for Preschool Education* in 2005; and there are preschool education majors in 289 universities with bachelor degree, 45 universities with master degree and 8 universities with doctorate degree in 2014[1].

[1] We have mainly investigated the "Admission Brochures" of higher schools in China (Retrieved from http://gaokao.chsi.com.cn /zyk/zybk/ schools.action? specialityId=73383291&ssdm=)

2 Achievements of preschool teacher education in China

From the 100-year history, China has not only made great progress and formed own characteristics, but also made achievements in practice and theory of preschool teacher education.

2.1 Setting up the more perfect management systems

On the one hand, China has set up the more perfect legal systems about education, which put forward basic rights and responsibilities of government, schools and teachers, and have formed macro-management system of preschool teacher education, such as "*Compulsory Education Act*" (1986), *"Teacher Act" (1993),"Education Act" (1995) and "Higher Education Act" (1998)*. On the other hand, China has published a lot of management systems about preschool education, which put forward curricular and quality criteria and evaluation mechanism of preschool teacher and education, and have formed the micro-management of preschool teacher education, such as *"Preschool Normal School Plan (draft)" (1985), "Statute on Kindergarten Management" (1989), "Several Opinions on Reform and Development of Preschool Education" (2010) and "Professional Standards of Preschool Teachers (Trial Implementation)" (2011)*.

2.2 Forming the more reasonable structure

On the one hand, China has formed higher-level pre-service and in-service training system of preschool teacher, and preschool teacher education has changed from three-level (including secondary normal school, junior normal college and normal university) to two-level (including junior normal college and normal university). On the other hand, China has set up a lot of modes of preschool teacher education, which have paid more attention to uniting pre-service with in-service training, and theory with practice of preschool education. For example, the modes of pre-service training mainly include "Knowledge Mode" / "Capacity Mode" / "Emotion Mode" / "Practice Mode", and "three-year" or "five-year" junior college / "2 + 2" or "3 + 1" or "4 + 0" undergraduate programs, "4 + 1" or "4 + 2" master programs, and "3 + 3"or "3 + 2" doctorate programs for preschool teachers, etc.; and the modes of in-service training include "Participating Training mode", "Kindergarten-based Training Mode" and "Situational Training Mode", etc.

2.3 Promoting professional development of preschool teachers

On the one hand, there are more and more universities with preschool education major to train the preschool teachers. For example, there are 289 universities with more

than 24,000 bachelors each year, 45 with more than 300 masters and 8 with more than 20 doctors for preschool education in 2014 China[2]. On the other hand, there are more and more preschool teachers having taken part in in-service trainings. *Ministry of Education of China* put forward spending five-year in training 500,000 preschool teachers from rural kindergartens and set up one kindergarten in each town since 2010, and at present have trained large number of rural preschool teachers by means of various training projects.

2.4 Publishing a lot of research achievements

On the one hand, China has set up a lot of research institutes of preschool education such as "*Association of Chinese Preschool Education", "Institute of Preschool Education" in higher schools and "Centre of Preschool Education Research" in provinces, etc.* and journals such as *"Studies of Preschool Education", "Early Childhood Education", "Preschool Education", etc.* which have laid solid foundation for research and academic communication for preschool teacher education. On the other hand, Chinese scholars have done their best publishing papers and works about preschool teacher education. For example, there are more than 50,000 papers about preschool teacher education published in 2014 *Chinese National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI)*, which involve in history, policy, purpose, curriculum and modes about preschool teacher education; at meantime, since the 1980s, there are more than 200 works about preschool education published and usually used as the textbooks in colleges and universities such as *"Preschool Education", "Curriculum Design for Kindergarten", "Evaluation of Preschool Education", "Activity Design for Kindergarten", "Research Method of Preschool Education", "Teaching for Game", "Preschool Physical or Music or Art Education",* etc.

3 Problems of preschool teacher education in China

Reflecting theory and practice of preschool teacher education, we find that there are some problems such as imperfect managing systems and mechanism, imbalance of internal structure, low efficiency and unsatisfied research achievements in China.

3.1 Imperfect managing systems

Although some managing systems have been established in China, there are imperfect investment system not to meet the needs of pre-service and in-service training for

[2] Information does not involve in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan (Retrieved from http://gaokao.chsi.com.cn/zyk/zybk/schools. action?specialityId=73383291&ssdm=)

preschool teachers; unreasonable enrollment system with less number and ratio of male of college students with free normal education; imperfect teacher management mechanism where preschool teachers have little chance of training, applying for the title and increasing the income; and imperfect quality management paying more attention to result rather than process. Especially, the rural preschool teacher education lacks of enough human, material and finance, and system support and social identity, fewer students of pre-school education majors in universities are willing to roots in and commit to rural preschool education, and fewer rural preschool teachers can truly benefit from a lot of "*National Training Programs*", and rural kindergartens have still poor infrastructure and teaching conditions in China (Tian & Zhou, 2009).

3.2 Imbalance of internal structure

There are still some imbalance in preschool teacher education such as district distribution, pre-service and in-service training, and different educational levels. For example, there are 272 universities with undergraduate program, but only 45 with master program and 8 with doctor program; and most of them are distributed in East, North and Middle China, where have more universities with preschool education and receive more undergraduate, master and doctorate students each year (see table 1).

Table 1
Number distribution of preschool education study programs at universities in 2014 China

District	North	East	Middle	South	West-south	West-north	East-north	Total
Number of universities	45	82	41	26	45	28	22	289
and bachelors	4,222	6,765	2,843	1,551	3,348	3,693	2,456	24,878
Number of universities	6	14	4	4	4	4	7	45
and masters	33	137	30	27	58	19	41	345
Number of universities	1	3	1	0	2	0	1	8
and doctors	4	11	4	0	3	0	4	26

Explanation:
1. Information does not include Hong Kong, and Macao and Taiwan in South China.
2. Number of bachelors or master or doctor is "mean" because some universities enroll in college students not according to major of education but discipline.

In addition, there is no independent teacher education system for rural preschool children and education; and the preschool teachers in rural areas have little chance receiving continuing education and full-time learning, and their diplomas lack of pertinence in rural preschool education (Tian & Zhou, 2009).

3.3 Low-efficiency of preschool teacher education

On the one hand, Chinese higher schools not only train limited undergraduate, master and doctor students for preschool education each year but also they are imbalance in district distribution (see table 2); and some in-service trainings usually short of pertinence due to "formalism", "utilitarianism" and "pragmatism" orientation.

Table 2
Ratio distribution of universities per province and college students per university of preschool education study programs in universities in 2014 China

District	North	East	Middle	South	West-south	West-north	East-north	Mean
Ratio of universities and Provinces	9.0	11.7	13.7	8.7	9.0	5.6	7.3	9.3
Ratio of bachelors and universities	93.8	82.5	69.3	59.7	74.4	131.9	111.6	86.1
Ratio of masters and universities	5.5	9.8	7.5	6.8	14.5	4.8	5.9	7.7
Ratio of doctors and universities	4.0	3.7	4.0	0	1.5	0	4	3.3

Explanation:
1. Information does not involve in Hong Kong, and Macao and Taiwan in South China.
2. Number of bachelors or master or doctor is "mean" because some universities enroll in college students not according to major of education but discipline.

(Retrieved from http://gaokao.chsi.com.cn/zyk/zybk/schools.action?specialityId=73383291&ssdm=)

On the other hand, the simple purpose pays more attention to training "subject expert", the simple curricula lack of "teacher education" or "normal" features and rural pertinence, the methods and modes are simple, and valuation is "utilitarian" (Chen & Wang, 2010); and pre-service trainings pay more attention to educational theory than practical skills and abilities (Wang, 2012), on the contrary, in-service trainings pay more attention to teaching skills and abilities than educational ideas and practical wits and some are repeated and "formalism" (Guo, 2012).

3.4 Dissatisfied research achievements

As for research about preschool teacher education, the scholars seem to think much of applied research such as investigation and pay little attention to theoretical innovation; pay more attention to in-service training than pre-service training and more attention to urban preschool teachers than rural ones. For example, as for works about

"preschool education", few discussed "preschool teacher education", and there is no systematical textbook on how to train preschool teacher in higher schools; as to the present literatures about "modes of preschool teacher modes" in CNKI, the scholars thought much of investigation and experience summary on "in-service training of rural preschool teacher", and paid little attention to "pre-service training of rural preschool teacher" and "integration of pre-service and in-service training", and especially had no deep analysis on "essence", "basic factors", "theoretical basis" and "influencing factors or causes" of rural preschool teacher education.

4 Prospects of preschool teacher education in China

Facing up to the problems of preschool teacher education, we consider that it is imperative to improve ecological environment and structural system, and enhance pertinence and effectiveness of practice and research quality of preschool teacher education in future China.

4.1 Improving the ecological environment

From 1978 to now, Chinese government has invested considerable human, material and financial resources in preschool teacher education, but due to some historical reasons and practical factors, managing system and mechanism of preschool teacher education are still imperfect, there are poor infrastructure and teaching condition in some higher schools and rural kindergartens, the preschool teachers in rural areas are facing up to low income, poor living condition and less chance of training. Thus, it is very necessary to further increase the investment in human, material and financial resources, improve infrastructure and teaching condition of pre-service training and in-service training and the living environment of the rural preschool teachers, and build new investment system of combination with a public financial support, community and family involvement (Shi, Jiang & Hong, 2013).

4.2 Improving the structural system

Although China has established more perfect structural system, it cannot still meet the needs of development of preschool children and preschool education because of fewer universities with preschool education study programs and the imbalance in distribution and levels of preschool teacher education. Investigation shows that there are at least 228 higher schools with early childhood education and four-level degrees including 210 universities with undergraduate programs, 162 with master programs,

78 with doctor programs and 33 with specialists in America (Li, 2015). Therefore, it is necessary to promote the integration of pre-service and in-service training for the pre-school teacher, adjust the district distribution of preschool teacher education in higher schools and especially increase the enrollments in free preschool normal education to train more and more rural preschool teachers in West China, and strengthen graduate education including master, specialist and doctor of preschool education in Chinese higher schools.

4.3 Enhancing practical pertinence

Besides improving management and structural systems, China should further set up more reasonable purposes, curricula, modes and evaluation in order to enhance the pertinence and efficiency of preschool teacher education. On the one hand, pre-service training for preschool teacher should think much of learning and reflective abilities and application of information technology, the core purpose should promote children development; general or common curricula involved in both arts and sciences mainly be selective; professional curricula research children; and educational practice be wide, dispersed, long-term and back and forth with theoretical learning (Fang, 2011). On the other hand, the in-service trainings for the rural preschool teachers should pay close attention to rural life, widely absorb native resources, make high-quality kindergarten fully play leading role; and develop their professional autonomy, professional ethics and professional wisdom and enhance their subjective consciousness and autonomy of the professional development by means of action research, instructional reform and reflection.

4.4 Enhancing the efficiency of research achievements

As for preschool teacher education, papers and works published are at present main forms of research achievements. On the one hand, China should enhance the quality of research achievements. In fact, China need producing a set of systematic and high-quality teaching materials and publishing a series of achievements for pre-service and in-service training of preschool teachers in higher schools. On the other hand, China should further strengthen poor research fields. Chinese scholars should pay more attention to connotation/ factors/ theoretical foundation/ evaluation mechanism, further sum up and develop practical experiences, and deeply research issues of rural preschool teacher education.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Chinese preschool teacher education has gone through 100 years and built up a lot of experiences in management system, internal structure, practical modes and research achievements. It has not only played a great role in training preschool teachers, but also made great contribution to healthful and balanced development of rural and urban preschool education in China.

At meantime, it will be very necessary to improve ecological environment, adjust internal structure, enhance quality of educational practice and research achievements of preschool teacher education and give deeper concern rural preschool teacher education in future China.

Acknowledgement

This research is supported in funding by China Scholarship Council and Association of Philosophy and Social Science of Sichuan Province in PRC and we would like to say "thanks" to them.

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Pre-service Teachers' Sentiments, Attitudes, and Concerns about Inclusive Education in Chongqing, China

Xinrui Li, Suqiong Xu, Youyu Xiang, Miloň Potměšil

Abstract

This paper reports on pre-service teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education, concerns about inclusive education and sentiments toward individuals with disabilities in Chongqing, China. It uses the Sentiments Attitudes and Concerns about Inclusive Education Scale Revised (SCACIE-R), designed by Forlin, Earle, Loreman, & Sharma (2011), with 424 pre-service teachers involved. It was found that variables such as interaction with persons with disabilities and previous training had a significant impact on the participants' attitudes toward inclusive education. The implications for the further improvement of pre-service teacher education programs for inclusive education in China are briefly discussed.

Keywords: Pre-service teachers, Inclusive education, Sentiments, Attitudes, Concerns.

Introduction

The philosophies in relation to educating children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have changed dramatically since the 1950s, when a series of successive movements, such as the civil rights movement, as well as the normalization principle and mainstream movement, happened in Western countries. This led to a worldwide trend toward including children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities into general schools to learn together with their intact peers. A lot of countries have made efforts to design and implement policies toward inclusion, fostering the integration or inclusion of these students into mainstream environments. A key factor in successfully implementing the inclusive policy is related to the beliefs and attitudes of the mainstream teachers who carry the main responsibility for catering to special educational needs or individual differences. It has been stated that the mainstream teachers' acceptance of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, as well as their commitment to the government policy of inclusion, has a great impact on their actual practice regarding these students in the general classroom (Norwich, 1994; Avramindis & Norwich, 2002). Since the start of inclusion, a great number of research studies have been conducted to investigate mainstream teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, proving which ones have the greatest impact on the efficacy of the implementation of the inclusive policy. Recently, more and more researchers have concentrated on investigating pre-service teachers' attitudes and beliefs before and after training or programs relevant to inclusion, for the purpose of exploring how to improve the programs or training courses that prepare pre-service teachers. It was found that variables such as the length of training, gender, interaction with persons with disabilities, knowledge about local legislation, and level of training involved had a significant impact on the participants' attitudes toward inclusive education (Forlin, Earle, Loreman, & Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2014; Thaver, Lim, & Liau, 2014).

In China, Learning in the Regular Classroom (LRC) was initiated in 1994, as a national movement in inclusive education to meet the expanding enrollment of students with SEN, which responds to the international trend of inclusion (Deng & Poon-Mcbrayer, 2004; Deng & Pei, 2009). Although there are differences between the Chinese LRC program and the Western inclusion movement, the LRC program has resulted in tremendous changes in China, which has gradually taken steps to move towards a harmonious society for all people, including those with disabilities. The expansion of the LRC program has been demonstrated by the increasing enrollment of school-aged children with SEN every year, which has broken the imperforation of special education in China (Xiao, 2005; Hua, 2003). In the LRC program, teachers are expected to take on important roles in catering for individual diversity, changing the one-size-for-all teaching model, strengthening interaction and cooperation with classmates, etc. The teachers' attitudes toward integration and inclusion have received unprecedented interest over

the past 20 years, being regarded as a key factor for successful inclusion (e.g., Peng, 2003, Deng, 2004).

However, there is a lack of research that investigates pre-service teachers' concerns and preparedness for teaching children with diverse needs in China. There is not any empirical evidence that could be provided to the teacher training institutions, as well as the policy makers, for the preparation of future teachers to face the challenge of inclusion and the crucial task of catering to diversity in the mainstream classroom. This study thus reports data collected prior to pre-service teachers having any exposure to university training in special education. The aims of this research study are to identify pre-service teachers' concerns, attitudes towards persons with disabilities, and levels of discomfort in interacting with people with a disability prior to involvement in training for inclusive education and to identify demographic variables that may account for the differences in attitudes.

1 Methodology

1.1 Participants

The participants were purposive sampling, including freshmen and sophomores at the Normal University in Chongqing, China. All the participants were preparing to be mainstream teachers of a general major in the primary phase. A total of 424 pre-service teachers participated in this study, with 68 males and 352 females (Table 1).

Table 1
Demographic information of the questionnaire sample (n = 424)

Variables	Category	Frequency	%
Academic Major	Primary/Elementary	416	98.11
	Special Education	8	1.89
Gender	Male	68	16.04
	Female	352	83.02
Age	< 25	421	99.29
	26–35	3	0.71
Highest qualification obtained	Secondary School	424	100.00
Interaction experience	Yes	225	53.07
	No	199	46.93

Variables	Category	Frequency	%
Training level	None	309	72.88
	Some	111	26.18
	High (> 40 hours)	4	0.95
Knowledge of local legislation	Very good	3	0.71
	Good	7	1.65
	Average	48	11.32
	Poor	139	32.78
	None	226	53.30
Confidence in teaching	Very high	15	3.54
	High	79	18.63
	Average	267	62.97
	Low	52	12.26
	Very low	11	2.59
Teaching experience	Nil	286	67.5
	Some	131	30.9
	High (>30 days)	7	1.6

1.2 Instrument

The Sentiments Attitudes and Concerns about Inclusive Education Scale Revised (SCACIE-R) (Forlin, Earle, Loreman, & Sharma, 2011) was used to collect the data. The traditional Chinese version of the SCACIE-R used in Hong Kong had been translated into a simplified Chinese version by three of the authors of this study, who have a good command of both Chinese and English. The simplified Chinese version was further adapted in terms of specific words and expressions according to the original version in English, for the purpose of fitting in with the language habits of people in mainland China. The SCACIE-R contained two parts. Part One referred to general demographic information; the pre-service teachers were asked to provide information on six variables, including age, gender, interaction with people with disabilities, previous training, knowledge of local legislation, and their level of confidence in their ability to teach students with disabilities. Part Two involved 15 items that investigated the pre-service teachers' sentiments, attitudes, and concerns regarding inclusive education. Each item on the SCACIE-R is rated on a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree), 2 (agree), 3 (disagree), to 4 (strongly disagree).

1.3 Statistical Testing of Results

All the data were analyzed with SPSS 17.0, including descriptive analysis, Pearson correlation analysis, and T-test and Analysis of Variance, with an inspection level of $\alpha = 0.05$, in order to perform a mean comparison between different groups.

1.4 Results

Of the total number of pre-service teachers nearly 84% were female (n = 352) and the rest male, with the majority being 25 years old (n = 421) or older. 53.3% of the pre-service teachers (n = 226) were not familiar with the local legal regulations or policy in relation to children with disabilities, 32.78% (n = 139) were slightly familiar, 11.32% (n = 48) understood it quite well, and only 2% (n = 10) were quite clear about it. 22.17% of the pre-service teachers (n = 94) had faith in their ability to educate students with disabilities, while 62.97% (n = 267) displayed a general level of faith.

Means and standard deviations for SACIE-R are reported in Table 2.

Table 2
Mean and Standard Deviation for SACIE-R (n = 424)

Category variable	Sentiments			Attitudes			Concerns		
	n	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Gender									
Male	68	2.58	0.43	68	2.61	0.43	68	2.32	0.41
Female	348	2.54	0.49	352	2.66	0.46	350	2.30	0.47
Interaction with people with disabilities									
Yes	223	2.61	0.46	225	2.70	0.43	223	2.32	0.45
No	197	2.48	2.70	199	2.61	0.48	199	2.29	0.47
Previous training									
None	306	2.52	0.47	309	2.66	0.45	308	2.27	0.45
Some	110	2.63	0.52	111	2.65	0.48	110	2.40	0.47
High > 40 hours	4	2.85	0.34	4	2.70	0.62	4	2.30	0.53
Knowledge of local legislation									
Very good	3	2.80	0.60	3	2.60	0.53	3	2.87	0.23
Good	7	2.34	0.38	7	2.34	0.32	7	2.34	0.32
Average	47	2.52	0.62	48	2.61	0.53	48	2.33	0.49
Poor	139	2.58	0.50	139	2.67	0.48	137	2.33	0.47
None	223	2.54	0.44	226	2.67	0.43	226	2.28	0.45

Category variable	Sentiments			Attitudes			Concerns		
	n	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Confidence in teaching									
Very high	15	2.60	0.55	15	2.80	0.71	15	2.41	0.57
High	79	2.71	0.51	79	2.66	0.53	78	2.35	0.47
Average	264	2.52	0.46	267	2.66	0.42	266	2.32	0.44
Low	51	2.44	0.43	52	2.64	0.42	52	2.17	0.45
Very low	11	2.62	0.62	11	2.45	0.44	11	2.13	0.71

Note: Mean response range 1 (strongly agree), 2 (agree), 3 (disagree), to 4 (strongly disagree).

An examination of Table 2 and Table 3 reveals that 53% of the pre-service teachers (n = 225) had interacted with people with disabilities, whilst 47% (n = 199) had no experience of interaction with people with disabilities.

Table 3
Impact of Demographic Variables on Sentiments, Attitudes, and Concerns

	Category variable	*t*	*p*
Sentiments	Gender	0.58	0.56
	Area teaching	–1.71	0.09
	Interaction with people with disabilities	2.64	0.01*
Attitudes	Gender	–0.85	0.40
	Area teaching	–1.05	0.29
	Interaction with people with disabilities	2.00	0.04*
Concerns	Gender	0.25	0.80
	Area teaching	–2.30	0.02*
	Interaction with people with disabilities	0.77	0.44
	Variable	*F*	*p*
Sentiments	Previous training	2.82	0.06
	Knowledge of local legislation	0.72	0.58
	Confidence	3.37	0.01*
Attitudes	Previous training	0.07	0.94
	Knowledge of local legislation	1.02	0.40
	Confidence	0.94	0.44
Concerns	Previous training	3.30	0.04*
	Knowledge of local legislation	1.44	0.22
	Confidence	2.00	0.09

Note: *$p < 0.05$. Mean response range 1 (strongly agree), 2 (agree), 3 (disagree), to 4 (strongly disagree).

The different interactive experiences of the pre-service teachers with people with disabilities had a significant impact on their sentiments and attitudes toward inclusive education ($P < 0.05$). Specifically, those pre-service teachers who possessed interactive experience with people with disabilities held relatively positive and active attitudes toward inclusive education. Moreover, there was an insignificant difference in concern on inclusive education between them with and without interactive experience with people with disabilities.

72.88% of the pre-service teachers (n = 309) did not have any training experience in relation to special education, and 26.18% (n = 111) had received some training. Whether they were trained in special education did not significantly affect their sentiments and attitudes toward inclusive education ($P > 0.05$). Those with experience of training in special education actually showed more concern about inclusive education than those without experience of training in special education.

2 Discussion

Understanding pre-service teachers' beliefs about inclusion is important as positive attitudes toward inclusion are amongst the strongest predictors of the success of the inclusion reforms (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Forlin, 2010a). This study explored pre-service teachers' sentiments when engaging with children with disabilities, acceptance of learners with special needs, and concerns about implementing inclusion. Several demographic variables were found to have a significant impact on the pre-service teachers' sentiments, attitudes, and concerns about inclusive education, such as interaction with persons with disabilities and previous training. The results of this study indicated that the pre-service teachers' major concerns were their lack of skills to teach students with disabilities effectively and a lack of resources to accommodate individual differences.

In this study, the majority of participants indicated having poor or nil knowledge of legislation, a similar trend was observed for the confidence variable as a large majority of participants indicated having average or low level of confidence in teaching students with disabilities. The level of confidence was associated with beliefs about adopting inclusion in the classroom, but there was no significant difference in terms of attitudes toward including students with disabilities and concerns about inclusion. Prior experience and knowledge about students with disabilities were linked with more positive attitudes on the part of the pre-service teachers toward inclusion. Chambers (2011) reported that level of confidence and knowledge of legislation were positively and significantly correlated with attitudes towards including students with disabilities and conversely negatively correlated with concerns about inclusion. In China, the majority of pre-service teacher training programs for general education teachers do not include

any special education content. Teachers with limited prior interaction with individuals with disabilities are often found teaching these students. This lack of experience and expertise inevitably affects the quality of instruction in mainstream classrooms (Deng & Poon-Mcbrayer, 2012). It is necessary to extend beyond course content knowledge in order to produce positive attitudes of pre-service teachers.

The findings of this study have some important practical implications for preparing pre-service teachers to work in inclusive schools. It is particularly important that pre-service teachers' training must consider the sentiments, attitudes, and concerns of teachers in training and ensure that their courses provide the most appropriate preparation to enable them to be better prepared for inclusive education. Teacher training must provide a relevant pedagogy to enable pre-service teachers to develop appropriate dispositions and positive attitudes toward inclusive education. In future studies, we will report how teacher preparation programs impacted on pre-service teachers' dispositions towards inclusion, their sentiments about engaging with persons with disabilities, their attitudes towards inclusive education for students with disabilities, and their concerns about implementing inclusive practices.

Acknowledgment

This research was supported by the grant UPOL IGA_PdF_2015_013.

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Reviews

A Practical Guide for Practitioners in Inclusive Early Childhood Classrooms

Yuntong Peng

Gruenberg, A. M., & Miller, R. *A Practical Guide to Early Childhood Inclusion: Effective Reflection*. Boston: Pearson, 2011, ISBN 978-0-13-240279-8.

Since "inclusion" was proposed in the *Salamanca Statement* in 1994, over two decades have passed. Today, inclusive education has become prevalent in many countries. At the World Education Forum held in Korea in 2015, a renewed education agenda, the *Education 2030 Incheon Declaration*, was adopted, in which equity and inclusion were reaffirmed as major goals (UNESCO et al., 2015). With the advocacy of inclusion, great efforts have been made to ensure its implementation.

Inclusion indeed brings about great opportunities to realize educational equity for children with SEN; however, it also poses challenges. Teachers in inclusive classrooms are confronted with difficulties of meeting diverse educational needs of all students. They have to address issues regarding exceptional development that they might rarely encounter.

This book, *A Practical Guide to Early Childhood Inclusion: Effective Reflection* by Ann M. Gruenberg and Regina Miller, which is focused on inclusive education in preschool settings, aims to help practitioners cope with issues they face during the implementation of preschool inclusion. It places great emphasis on supporting practitioners to adapt curriculum for effective inclusion of children with SEN and to use reflective practices; it can be used in the entire continuum of placement options. As stated by the

authors, it "provides a working model that enhances the process of problem solving to address each child and family's unique needs" (Gruenberg & Miller, 2011, p. 2).

Based on its aim, rather than being focused on conceptual frameworks and theories about inclusive education, this book is structured to be a practical guide for reflection. There are overall ten chapters, which can be mainly categorized into four major parts. Chapter one is the first part, which has briefly introduced the goal, content, and structure of the book and has also covered the historical evolvement of the provision of special education services. The second part (chapter two to chapter four) elaborates on some critical elements in inclusive education context, including developmentally and individually appropriate practices, trans-disciplinary teamwork, and assessment. The third part (chapter five to chapter nine) is focused on curricular adaptation. In this part, topics of curricular adaptations have been addressed according to developmental areas. Chapter six is on play and social development, chapter seven on language and literacy, chapter eight on the arts, music and movement, and chapter nine on math, science and problem solving in everyday life. The fourth part (Chapter 10) elaborates on lifelong learning and professional development of teachers in the continuously changing world. Within each chapter, the content has been closely related to practices of preschool teachers. The authors try to provide user-friendly guide for preschool education practitioners.

Throughout the whole book, there is a core concept – **reflection**. What is reflection? According to the authors, reflection is a consideration of multiple factors that might impact the outcomes of children, such as intrapersonal, interpersonal, and environmental factors; reflection is also "the process that team members engage in to determine the effect of what is being done in the classroom" (Gruenberg & Miller, 2011, p. 46). Therefore, it is not only an individual but also a team practice. It is not a one-off event, but an ongoing problem-solving process. It plays a vital role throughout the inclusive practice, from assessment, decision making, the development of IEPs, collaboration of team members, curriculum adaptation, and even to teachers' professional development.

Reflection does not grow out of the void, but is based on practitioners' knowledge and abilities, as well as evidence. It requires practitioners to carefully consider every influencing factor, be open to feedback and be flexible in adaptation. For instance, in order to conduct effective reflection on the interventional strategies, the teacher should have a well-established repertoire of possible strategies and responses to situations, and the ability to determine the appropriate interventional options. Reflection is also evidence-based. For example, the reflection on the effectiveness of intervention is based on evidence collected through methods such as observation. In addition, reflection also needs support from others. As stated by the authors, reflection can be very effective and useful "when practitioners have both an internal ability to consider various options and an external support system" (Gruenberg & Miller, 2011, p. 123). The authors have made the reflection process very clear by demonstrating it in each step and aspect of the inclusive practice.

Overall, this book is particularly useful for preschool teachers to cope with the problems that they face during their teaching in inclusive classrooms, and to meet the diverse needs of each individual child. First, it provides a comprehensive description of elements and a thorough discussion of important aspects that should be considered in inclusive education. It offers working models for practitioners to match the characteristics of children with supports supplied. Second, important areas of development such as social development, arts, language, and problem solving have been addressed respectively. In-depth discussion and detailed examples are provided to support practitioners to develop curriculum adaptation strategies. Furthermore, the reflective process, which has been elaboratively explained throughout the book, has offered an effective and practical approach for practitioners to monitor what they are doing, to reflect on the decisions made, and to adjust their strategies in order to meet the individual needs of children. Besides, extended resources are recommended at the end of each chapter, so readers can easily explore some interested topics through those links.

However, there are also issues worth mentioning is this book. The sub-structures of some chapters are a little confusing. Certain topics are repeatedly discussed under different subtitles, and some paragraphs do not quite match with the subtitles. Therefore, efforts were made to figure out the inner logic and structure of some sub-sections.

On the whole, this book is a very practical guide for practitioners in preschool inclusive education settings. Teachers and students who are interested in preschool inclusion or are teaching in inclusive classrooms can benefit from it. I would definitely recommend this book.

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Professionalization of Kindergarten Teachers from the Perspective of Curriculum Reform

Alena Jůvová

Wiegerová, A. et al. PROFESIONALIZACE UČITELE MATEŘSKÉ ŠKOLY Z POHLEDU REFORMY KURIKULA (Professionalization of Kindergarten Teachers from the Perspective of Curriculum Reform). Zlín: Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně, Fakulta humanitních studií, 2015. 115 pp. ISBN 978-80-7454-555-9.

The publication by an international team of authors led by doc. PhDr. Adriana Wiegerová, Ph.D., vice dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Tomas Bata University in Zlín, comes when the view of preschool education and early childhood education is changing fundamentally, not only in the Czech Republic but also in other European countries. Systematic Early Childhood Education is today regarded fundamental for upbringing of children and their preparation for entering school education which is understood as one of the most important transition periods in children's lives. Thus, the growth of endeavour to establish preschool pedagogy in the system of pedagogical sciences is in concordance with current trends.

The team of authors introduces new topics in preschool pedagogy into the specialized discussion and presents outcomes of their researches.

In the first chapter, Adriana Wiegerová and Zuzana Danišková present a new discourse of preschool pedagogy and kindergartens and changes of education of preschool children both in the Czech and Slovak Republics where the main responsibility for education of preschool children is on family. In view of the fact that kindergartens

start to be attended by two-years-old children, it is necessary to significantly change the kindergarten functioning. The authors present two main streams of opinions. One of these is the psychological-medical concept emphasizing mothers and families' duty within caring for little children who can be stressed out by early entering a kindergarten. The opposite opinion is held by supporters of the sociological stream who accent the necessity to offer parents a possibility of meaningful educational influence even in relation to children of 2+ years of age. "The protagonists of this stream (Hašková, 2012) state that abroad (Sweden, U.S.A.) the children who started to attend a quality preschool facility before reaching three years of age show the ability to actively participate in the educational process and are more successful than children staying at home" (Wiegerová et al., 2015). The author adds in relation to the Czech Republic that there are kindergartens working with children of 2+ years of age in so-called heterogeneous groups of children, and this work is appreciated by their parents.

The second chapter by Zuzana Danišková is titled Professionalization of Kindergarten Teachers and gives reasons for implementation of university education for kindergarten teachers. In her short survey the author quotes research outcomes by some authors, e. g. Koťátková (2014), Syslová and Hornáčková (2014), who speak of the kindergarten teachers' need to achieve deeper education, mainly in pedagogical and psychological disciplines. Criteria set for the profession of kindergarten teacher are discussed here too. The entire chapter is topped off with a philosophical reflection on the core and ideas of university as an institution where not only practice should be interconnected with theory but where students should receive also basic philosophical education.

The Chapters 3 and 4, by Hana Navrátilová (Chapter 3) and Zora Syslová (Chapter 4), focus on professional training of kindergarten teachers in relation to important milestones of their professional development and the subsequent transition into practice and the status of young kindergarten teachers. Hana Navrátilová presents examples of the use of analysis of video recordings in practise as well as in training of future kindergarten teachers and also some outputs of the carried out surveys in pre-service and in-service teachers and their everyday interactions in the environment of kindergartens, including nonverbal and verbal pedagogical communication. The text by Zora Syslová reflects the way kindergarten teachers perceive educational reality and makes it her goal"… to introduce the readers in the phenomenon of professional vision, or its partial aspect which is attention concentration" (Syslová in Wiegerová et al., 2015). The author presents outcomes of a survey focused on professional vision and also deals with the influence of teachers' perception of educational reality on their decision making and conduct. She related this perception to reflective skills that become an important part of the discourse of teachers' professionalism.

The issue of the development of literacy in preschool children that is not only a priority for schools but has also become an important academic as well as social-political

topic in the learning society is dealt with by Zuzana Petrová in the fifth chapter. Besides an analysis of the literacy development within school education, the chapter's aim is to clarify priorities in the development of literary in pre-primary education, namely with the example of the Slovak Republic.

The authors of the sixth chapter, Hana Horká and Veronika Rodová, focused on personality of teachers as initiators of the development of creativity from the perspective of pedagogical constructivism, learning by play and experience. The issue is completed with two case studies and a subsequent analysis.

The important role played by pedagogical practice in professional training of kindergarten teachers is analysed by Adriana Wiegerová in the seventh chapter of the monograph. The author regards practical training to be the outcome of interconnection of theoretical preparation and practical application of acquired knowledge and presents a model of practice trainings applied at the Faculty of Humanities, Tomas Bata University in Zlín, study major Kindergarten Teaching.

The final chapters are focused on the issue of preschool curriculum. In Chapter 8, Jana Vašíková describes the concepts of education of children of up to 3 years of age in the Czech Republic and selected European countries. She describes the system of early children education in the United Kingdom as an example of good practice.

The monograph is concluded by the ninth chapter by Beáta Kosová, dedicated to the process of implementation of the curriculum reform in Slovakia. The author deals in detail with the course and consequences of the curriculum reform of the pre-primary level of education in the Slovak Republic with specialist erudition, gives external evaluation of this reform and the fundamental points of the new State Educational Programme ISCED 0 from 2015. She also adds what attitudes to this reform are taken by kindergarten teachers and states that it is the teachers who are the central agents of implementation of the reform.

The entire book is complemented with a large list of references and indexes of names and topics. The monograph contains valuable information and observations not only about the issue of professionalization and professional course of preschool teachers but also their professional training and the curriculum issue and a further discussion of the pre-primary pedagogy discourse. Despite the fact that it gives an inhomogeneous impression in some parts, it can be recommended to academics, practising teachers as well as specialists.

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Art in History, History in Art Chapters from British History Seen Through Works of Art

Ondřej Duda

OBENAUSOVÁ, S. *Art in History, History in Art.* Olomouc: Palacký University 2015, 176 p. ISBN 978-80-244-4659-2.

As suggested by the title itself, this book offers reflections on moments of British history through works of art. Yet it is much more than a reader might assume from the title. There is a profound academic insight into the history and art in this publication. Of course, one may say that history and its significant events as well as artists and their iconic works of art have been a target of interest of many scholars since 19th century. Truly there are numerous academic works dealing with history and art matters from various angles. Only few of them, however, provide a combinatory attitude of insight regarding both previously mentioned fields. Instead of purely descriptive text, the author of this book has chosen a combination of knowledge of both fields without separating it. Through this merge, the author has developed a captivating commentary on history and art as an inseparable unit.

The book is intended as an academic paper yet it is, in my opinion, meant to capture the attention of even wider audience. It is divided into ten chapters with the first one being an introductory section to provide readers with author's motives for writing the book as well as to suggest the content for readers to prepare for what is coming. Each of the nine chapters deals with one significant work of art, author or set of artistic works or idealistic movements. For instance, the journey starts with the chapter devoted to

the Bayeux Tapestry, in which we learn about historical customs, fashion and ideology from the displayed sceneries on the tapestry. In other words, through the picture and what is in it we uncover the wide-ranging history. This pattern has been applied throughout all chapters.

There is a wide range of art works selected representing different eras. As suggested before, the book starts with the Bayeux Tapestry telling us about the invasion of England by Normans and continues with the next chapter in which we learn about the 16th century England through portraits of the Queen Elizabeth. We discover the 17th century London through St. Paul's Cathedral, an architecture monument designed by Sir Christopher Wren. Also, there is an appreciative attention payed to the sociology, ideology and customs of the times seen in the sections about William Hogarth and His Morality Tales and William Turner and Slave Trade. Then we move to the Victorian era in England and learn about the uniqueness of the Crystal Palace, the 19th century masterpiece of architecture. In the next two chapters we stay in the time of industrial revolution to explore the Arts and crafts movement, Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Story of Wealth and Art in Glasgow. The depictions of art and historic events escalate the atmosphere as the last chapter deals with tough times of Britain at wars. The abilities of royal artists to capture the moments of war are as vivid for the reader as they can be in a picture.

The text itself, supported by numerous pictures and photographs, is structured chronologically in a way the reader feels like reading a story or a novel. This is, in fact, a refreshing way of providing the readers with one's ideas. Personally, it sometimes feels as the author really experienced the events or actually was present at the time. It gives something more to the content of this book, something special which can be compared to the *'uniqueness of spirit of the place'*. It is a quality, or a feeling, often being appointed to significant places where historical events and their importance have left an unspecified, yet glorious aura. This phenomenon is often referred to as *'Genius Loci'* and I can honestly say that, when reading the chapters of this book, I caught myself feeling a bit excited, almost as the spirit of the past had spoken to me. There is no wonder I felt emotional when finishing the book. If you are a fan of history and art I honestly recommend the book to you to enjoy the extraordinary journey. For those who are new to the fields, this piece may be just the right one to begin with.

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e-PEDAGOGIUM

An independent scientific journal for interdisciplinary research in pedagogy

Volume 2016, issue II
Ev. No. MK ČR E 13459

Published and printed by Palacký University, Olomouc
Křížkovského 8, 771 47 Olomouc
www.upol.cz/vup
Registration number 61989592
Olomouc 2016

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Four issues published a year

On-line journal site: http://www.upol.cz/fakulty/pdf/e-pedagogium/

ISSN 1213-7758 printed version
ISSN 1213-7499 electronic version