

THE IMPACT OF THE PEDAGOGICAL AND PERSONAL HISTORY OF THE TEACHER ON ITS CURRENT TEACHING STYLE

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Abstract: The teaching style is a distinctive process by which the teacher teaches. It includes specific ways of managing pupils' learning activities, choosing teaching methods, principles, organizational forms, prioritizing and utilising certain didactic resources. This is reflected in the methodological process of the teacher, in the way of managing and organizing work on the lesson as well as in the teacher's interaction with the pupils. However, many determinants are entering the teaching process, affecting the teacher's style in a significant or less significant way. The paper presents and analyses previous knowledge and experience of teachers in the context of teaching style. It brings empirical findings on the impact of selected factors related to teachers' pedagogical and personal history and their impact on the current teaching style.

Keywords: teacher, teaching style, pedagogical and personal history of the teacher

1 Introduction

Recently, teaching profession has become a frequently discussed topic, especially as a result of constantly increasing demands for its performance. A greater emphasis has been paid not only to the acquisition of key knowledge and skills, but, above all, to having teachers manage many demanding situations brought about by real educational practice. Teachers are becoming much more important factor in the teaching process, though the profile and status of the profession have been experiencing a decreasing tendency. Many of the requirements for teaching profession have impact on teachers' teaching styles. Since teaching is a dynamic process, there are many factors entering it and influencing the style of teaching. This means that the selection and consequent application of individual didactic procedures may be influenced by various factors. This fact becomes particularly significant as regards primary education which has an important role in the life of every child. Teaching style, as a unique way of applying pedagogical knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes of teachers in pedagogical interaction aimed at learners' personal development, is a key component of the teaching profession. Because of that teaching style should not be understood as just some procedures that could be judged according to what educational aims are set by teachers, what methods and organisational forms are used, or how the role of teachers and learners is perceived. It is a higher construct having a direct impact both on the process of learning as well as on learners' personal development. Thus, the need to analyse teachers' teaching styles, as well as the factors which influence them, is becoming more significant and up to date. Seen from this point of view, the paper discusses the influence of pedagogical and personal history of primary school teachers on their current teaching styles.

2 Definition of teaching style and its determinants

Nowadays, there has been much discussion on what teaching procedures are effective and have positive impact not only on the process of learning, but also on learners' personal development. A teaching style, as a key component of teaching profession significantly influencing the quality of its performance, is coming to the forefront of attention.

The concept of teaching styles has been well discussed abroad, especially by such authors as N. A. Flanders (1970), L. A. Walla (1988), A. F. Grasha (1996), C. A. Evans (2003), J. Maňák and V. Švec (2003), R. Kohoutek (2006), D. Wall (2007), C. A. Evans, M. J. Harkins and Y. D. Yong (2008), G. D.

Fenstermacher and J. F. Soltis (2008), J. Škoda and P. Douřfík (2011), J. Mareš (2013), and many others. However, in Slovak literature not so much attention has been paid to this problem (Rovňanová, L., 2015; Fenyvesiová, L., 2006, 2013; Nikodemová, V., Fenyvesiová, L., 2016; Začková, T., 2008, 2010; Malá, D., 2013; Komárik, E., 2013; Turek, I., 2014). Many of the above authors describe and define the variability of teaching styles one can come across during one's teaching. In addition to their definitions and classifications, the authors provide possibilities of their diagnosing and, last but not least, put them into analogy with students' learning styles. There have been several researches aimed at the analysis of compatibility, or incompatibility of teaching and learning styles and its consequences for the process of pupils' learning (e.g. Walla, L. A., 1988; Gilakjani, A. P., 2012).

Teaching style has been defined by several authors, emphasising not only identical, but, in many cases, relatively different characteristics. It may be understood from the following two aspects:

From a wider aspect, teaching style is characterised as a way of teaching. It is thus „an individually specific way of teaching, which is preferred by a teacher in a certain period and certain context“. It is manifested by concrete strategies and ways of managing the pupils' learning activities, selection of teaching methods, procedures and organisational forms, preference of certain types of didactic means as well as choice of basic communication schemes in teaching (Škoda, J., Douřfík, P., 2011, p. 68).

As far as the narrower aspect is concerned, teaching style is defined by J. Maňák and V. Švec (2003, p. 37) as “a set of teaching methods applied by a teacher”.

The given definitions allow one to state that teaching style is represented by a way of the teacher's management of educational activity. Teaching style as certain procedures influenced by several aspects is described by J. Mareš (2013, p. 467). According to him, teaching styles may be understood as “procedures typical for a given teacher, preferred by him/her during a certain period and used in education to manage the pupils' learning or work in the classroom. These procedures are influenced by the specificities of teacher's personality, his/her preparation for the profession and further education, pedagogical experience, and, above all, approach to teaching”.

A more detailed analysis of the concept of teaching style may be found in the definition of K. Starý (2007) who sees teaching style as something drawing on the teacher's understanding of teaching, and, consequently, manifested in the projection of concrete lessons, i.e. directly in the teaching, not only in the teacher's implicit thinking, but in his/her teaching procedures. It could seem that so defined teaching style is, in its essence, indescribable and imaginative, outwardly manifested by teaching procedures. V. Švec (1998) claims that the teacher's perception of teaching makes up one of the layers of teaching style. Therefore, in teaching style it is possible to distinguish several mutually interconnected layers, including:

- *Cognitive style*, representing the deepest layer, is to a certain extent inborn, i.e. also difficult to influence.
- *Teacher's approach to teaching*, or teacher's everyday philosophy, related to the way of selecting a teaching material, choice of teaching methods, communication with pupils, etc. It is a layer which is difficult to influence, for example by the teacher's self-education, or his/her further education.
- *Ways of dealing with pedagogical situations, or teaching strategies*, which are, to certain extent, influenced by teachers' education, pedagogical experience and, above all, by the processing of this experience. It needs to be

emphasised, as it is also claimed by the above authors, that teachers' reflected pedagogical experience is more beneficial than the un-reflected, or accumulated, experience.

- *Pedagogical knowledge, skills and experience* that, to a certain extent, overlap with the preceding layer and are most influenceable.

Taking into account the above definitions of teaching style by several authors, it is important to draw attention to the factors, or determinants, which may significantly influence it. In recent years, there have been more frequent discussions concerning teaching profession, especially as regards the changing, as well as increasing, conditions for this work. J. Průcha et al. (2009) claim that for the performance of teaching professions, two-level working conditions have been created within the school system. In case of the first level, it is possible to speak about the conditions given by social factors, legislative norms and higher interventions, that is, conditions from the "outside", or, in other words, out of school. The external conditions of work, as factors influencing the teacher's work as well as, naturally, his/her teaching style, may include *legislative norms, the status of teaching profession, teachers' career possibilities, measure of school's or teacher's competences, financial reward, and many others*. External conditions for teachers work determine not only attractiveness of the profession, but a personal stability of teaching staff or schools educational effects. Internal conditions of teachers work, partially created by the school, include conditions of personal nature (*teaching staff qualification, quality of pupils*), conditions related to technical parameters (*number of pupils in a classroom, material equipment*) as well as social conditions (*school climate, relations among teachers, relations with parents or with the public*), and so on (Průcha, J. et al., 2009). According to M. Siroťová (2000, p. 118), teaching style may be determined by the following factors:

1. *social-historical conditions* (the impact of changing social orders, economic and political conditions in individual periods was changing and shaping dominant styles),
2. *teachers personal experience and qualities* (every teacher's pedagogical impact is affected by his/her own experience, but also his/her personal qualities, education and pedagogical practice),
3. *qualities and experience of pupils* (e.g. behaviours of pupils at lessons).

There is no doubt that many of the mentioned factors have direct impact also on teaching style itself. Having to take into account a great number of factors found in both domestic and foreign literature, we propose to classify them into five groups, not considering their number within the proposed groups to be final. We primarily draw on the research of C. A. Evans (2003), and propose to classify them to the following five groups based on certain signs:

- *factors related to teacher's pedagogical and personal history,*
- *factors related to teacher's individual qualities and characteristics,*
- *factors related to pupils' individual qualities and characteristics,*
- *factors related to school, or educational environment,*
- *other significant factors related to teaching profession.*

The paper is focused on a group of factors related to the *teacher's pedagogical and personal history*. The identification of a measure of influence of individual selected factors on teachers' teaching styles is the subject of the research to which closer attention is paid in the empirical part of the paper. The following factors are included into the given group:

- *style of family upbringing,*
- *teachers' own teaching experience* (their teaching style),
- *knowledge and skills in a given field* (acquired during the professional training, theoretical as well practical),
- *experience acquired in the position of a beginner teacher,*

- *success teachers experienced as pupils/students, or as learners,*
- *knowledge from individual subjects at primary educational level,*
- *previous participation in further education and self-study as forms of self-education,*
- *preferred way of learning, i.e. learning style.*

L. Fenyvesiová (2013) has pointed out that knowing one's own prevailing style is a precondition of effective self-reflection and consequent self-improvement. It is possible to state that consequently also the targeted analysis itself, or self-diagnostics of factors influencing teaching style, may be equally effective means of self-reflection.

2.1 Classification of teaching styles

Teachers differ from one another by a set of personality as well as professional traits. It means that they are reflected in a teacher's teaching style. Nowadays there are several classifications of teaching styles, defined by the authors on the basis of their various criteria. They may include, for example:

- classification of teaching styles according to teachers impact on pupils (Flanders, N. A., 1970),
- classification of teaching styles according to methods applied in teaching as well as type of interaction between teachers and pupils and pupils themselves (Grasha, A. F., 1996),
- classification of teaching styles according to a philosophical and psychological conception (based on the idea of ideal teaching procedure) (Fenstermacher, G. D., Soltis, J. F., 2008),
- classification of teaching styles according to the way of its management, relation to pupils and a classroom climate (Turek, I., 2014), etc.

This paper draws on the classification of teaching styles by A. F. Grasha (1996) who describes five types of teaching styles:

The Expert (so-called information carrier) – having knowledge, skills and expertise needed by pupils. To preserve their expert status among pupils, teachers show detailed knowledge and invite pupils to increase their abilities and competences. They are concerned with the mediation of information, which is to ensure that pupils are well prepared.

Formal authority. Teachers with this teaching style determine criteria and define acceptable ways of work. It is a teacher-centred approach, meaning that teachers feel responsibility for providing as well as control of certain contents expected to be accepted and assimilated by pupils. This teaching style is characteristic by a lack of interest in the creation of a personal attitude to pupils, because what is important is the building of relationships among pupils.

Personal model is a teaching style characteristic by teaching through illustrations and direct example. Like in teacher-centred approach – teachers here demonstrate and model what is expected (skills and processes) and act as trainers or guides, assisting pupils in applying the acquired knowledge. The teachers who prefer a personal model teaching style encourage pupils' participation in and use of variable teaching styles. This style's advantage is its emphasis on direct observation following personal example. A disadvantage of this style is teachers' belief that their approach is the best way to lead pupils to feeling incapable if they fail to fulfil required expectations and standards.

The Facilitator is a teaching style characteristic by its leading and directing pupils through questions, discovering possibilities, proposing alternatives. It is a pupil-centred approach, i.e. teachers facilitate and their attention is focused on activities. What is interesting in this teaching style is that teachers lead pupils to the responsibility to take over the initiative and thus achieve results in various tasks. Independent, active and

collaborating pupils make advances in such environment. Teachers propose group activities that require active learning, solving problems and mutual cooperation among pupils.

The Delegator is a teaching style developing the ability of pupils to act autonomously. This means that it is a pupil-centred approach in which teachers delegate control and responsibility for learning either on individuals, or groups of pupils. Such teachers assume the roles of advisors, often requiring pupils to propose and implement complex learning projects. Pupils are often asked to work either independently or in groups, in which they have to work effectively and be able to perform various interpersonal roles.

With regard to the given classification, or its described individual teaching styles, A. F. Grasha (1996) created a research instrument for the evaluation of teaching styles, which finds its use in this research. Drawing on individual divisions of teaching styles it seems to be evident that every teacher prefers certain teaching style which gets projected to the teaching process and for which are typical certain ways and procedures. G. D. Fenstermacher and J. F. Soltis (2008) claim that it is undesirable to try to shape teachers to use one "ideal" teaching style. Pupils are enriched by various teaching styles, therefore authors rather highlight and point to the procedures how to reflect on their teaching and, at the same time, to become aware of the motives of their acting. We also take the view that teachers should reflect on their own teaching style, and consequently modify it to allow its positive impact not only on their professional development, but, at the same time, to effectively influence the learning process and, last but not least, the development of learners personality. With regard to the above mentioned, also E. Petlák (2000) maintains that the main sense of self-reflection, as a reflection on one's own work, an analysis of one's work, its revaluation, etc., is that teachers not only re-value their work, but, consequently, draw conclusions from it to be used for its further optimisation.

3 Research methodology

3.1 Research aims, questions and hypothes

There are many factors entering teaching as a dynamic process and significantly influencing teaching style. Based on what has been said above, including the theoretical starting points for teaching styles and the determinants influencing them, the following research aims were set:

- to explore the measure of influence of the selected factors on the teaching style of primary school teachers,
- to explore styles in a wider contextual frame of the factors that determine them.

Based on the set aims, the following research questions and research hypothesis were formulated:

RQ1: *What impact do the selected factors have on the teaching style of primary school teachers?*

RQ2: *Which factors influence the teachers' individual teaching styles?*

H: It is assumed that teachers' teaching styles are most significantly influenced by a way they prefer and apply during learning, i.e. their learning style.

3.2 Description of research sample

The research sample is made up by primary school teachers. Its selection was defined by the approximation (estimation) of R. V. Krejcie and D. W. Morgan (1970), where the percentual share of research sample corresponded to the percentual share of basic set in individual regions of Slovakia (a minimal estimated number for teachers was N=370). To calculate the research sample, it was necessary to have information on the number of teachers in primary schools in Slovakia, and because of this we drew on the statistical yearbook of educational system, prepared and published by the Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical

Information (2018). The research sample was made up by 404 primary school teachers.

It was then characterised from the aspect of age, pedagogical and regional specificities of teachers, i.e. from the aspect of gender; age; length of pedagogical practice; school locality; its founder and the grade in which teachers teach at primary level. Out of the total number of respondents (N=404), women made up 97% of research sample (N=392), while men reached 3% (N=12).

From the point of view of age, teachers were included into five age categories. The most numerous one was made by teachers at the age of 41 to 50 years (N=154). Approximately groups of the same numbers were made up by the teachers whose age was up to 30 years (N=65), from 31 to 40 years (N=79), and from 51 to 60 years (N=91). The least numerous group were teachers in the age of 61 years and more (N=15).

The research sample was also characterised by the length of teaching practice. Based on this, primary school teachers were put into five respective categories: up to 30 years; from 31 to 40 years; from 41 to 50 years; from 51 to 60 years; and over 61 years. In the category, the most numerous group of the research sample was made up by the teachers with the length of pedagogical practice more than 15 years (N=239), the least numerous group consisted of teachers with their pedagogical practice from 11 to 15 years (N=35). Teachers with pedagogical practice less than 5 years (N=74) and from 5 to 10 years (N=56) were relatively equally represented in the research sample.

As for the locality of the school in which the primary school teachers work, the most represented were cities. If compared with the country (N=99), the research sample was made up by as many as 305 teachers working in the cities, which was 75.5% of the research sample total.

Based on the type of school according to its founder, 369 teachers from state schools participated in the research (91.4%). The representation of teachers working on private (5.4%) and church (3.2%) schools was comparable with the representation of teachers working at state schools.

3.3 Research methods

Based on the set research aims and questions, the following diagnostic instruments were selected:

- *Autodiagnostic questionnaire of factors influencing the teacher's teaching style,*
- *Autodiagnostic questionnaire for the assessment of the teaching style of primary education teachers* (Grasha, A. F., 1996).

As the first research instrument, we designed an auto-evaluation questionnaire that consists of five conceived groups of factors and determines a measure of influence of these factors on teachers' teaching styles. Individual factors and their classification into groups were selected not only as a result of our theoretical starting points, but they were also based on the research of C. A. Evans (2003). The teachers' task within each group was to add points to the factors based on the influence they may have on their own teaching styles, e. g. 1 – the given factor has *least* influence on a teacher's teaching style and 8 – the given factor has *biggest* influence on a teacher's teaching style, and the values added to the factors cannot be within a group repeated.

The second research instrument was the questionnaire whose author is A. F. Grasha (1996). It is an auto-evaluation questionnaire to determine the measure of application, or preference of the five categories of teaching styles (i. e. the teacher Expert, teacher Formal authority, teacher Personal model, teacher Facilitator, teacher Delegator), whose classification is given in the theoretical part of the paper. The questionnaire consists of 40 items, and every teaching style in

the questionnaire is saturated by 8 items. The selected diagnostic instrument was adapted to our conditions of primary education. We used quantitative and qualitative methods to process data. The questionnaire was evaluated through mathematical-statistical methods. The new data, acquired through the above methods, are analysed and processed with qualitative methods of logical operations and procedures: deduction, induction, analysis, synthesis, analogy, comparison.

Statistically, the data were processed by the software IBM SPSS ver. 21. For their description, methods of descriptive statistics were used: number, mean, standard deviation, standard error of the mean, and percentages. Before the application of inferential methods, the normality of data distribution was being detected. Based on Shapiro-Wilk test, it was found out that the data are distributed normally, and for further analyses parametric tests were opted for: the Pearson correlation coefficient and Student's t-test.

4 Analysis and interpretation of research findings

The theoretical analysis not only allowed several views of a teacher's teaching style, which can be understood as certain applied didactic procedures and preferred attitudes and opinions on teaching, but also pointed to many factors which may significantly determine individual didactic procedures, attitudes and opinions of teachers. Our aim was thus to explore the extent of the influence of selected factors on the teaching styles of primary school teachers. We searched for an answer to the research question: *What is the measure of the influence of selected factors on the teaching styles of primary school teachers?* Individual selected factors were put into five proposed groups, given in the theoretical part. The following part will present exploration of the factors related to the pedagogical and personal history of the teacher. Table 1 presents factors related to the pedagogical and personal history of teachers and the measure of their influence on preferred teaching styles.

Tab. 1: Factors related to pedagogical and personal history of primary school teachers and a measure of their influence on preferred teaching styles

Variables	N	M	SD	SEM
6. The knowledge I have in individual subjects.	404	5.70	0.091	1.831
8. The way I prefer and apply in learning, i.e. my learning style.	404	5.64	0.108	2.180
7. The history of participation in further education and self-study as forms of self-education.	404	5.32	0.113	2.269
3. Knowledge and skills in a given field (which I acquired the preparation for profession both at theoretical as well as practical level).	404	5.28	0.102	2.054
4. The experience I acquired in the position of a beginner teacher.	404	4.82	0.107	2.145
1. Style of upbringing in the family (in which I was brought up and educated).	404	4.18	0.117	2.355
2. My experience from the teaching of my teachers (their teaching style, or the way in which I was taught).	404	4.15	0.108	2.172
5. The success I experienced as a pupil/student, or learner.	404	3.68	0.105	2.101

Key: N – number; M – mean; SD – standard deviation; SEM – standard error of the mean.

Table 1 results show that average figures range from 3.68 to 5.70. They indicate that the factors whose influence on teaching styles was marked by teachers as most significant are related to their knowledge (items 3, 6, 7), and, consequently, to a way they prefer in learning, i.e. their learning style (item 8). A slightly lesser measure of influence on teaching styles was recorded in item 4 (the experience I acquired in the position of a beginner teacher), while least influential were factors involving some retrospective influence on the teachers' teaching style (items 1, 2, 5). A detailed look at the factors with highest value points to their mutual relation. The highest level of influence was identified with the knowledge from individual subjects (M=5.70), the knowledge and skills in a given field (M=5.28), and a great significance was given by teachers to the

participation in further education and self-study (M=5.32). It may be stated that the acquired high scores in these items gives a clear picture of the fact that pedagogical knowledge and skills are the most influenceable layers of teachers' teaching styles. The group of factors with the highest score also includes the teacher's preferred way of his/her own learning, i. e. his/her learning style (M=5.64). The results indicate that what procedures teachers use in their own learning may significantly influence the procedures applied in their teaching. In this context, it is important to compare and consequently modify one's own teaching style with pupils' learning styles. Some kind of harmonisation, or respect of pupils' learning styles, may significantly increase the teacher's role in the successful learning of his/her pupils. Somewhat lower figures were recorded with the factor experience acquired in the position of a beginning teacher (M=4.82). It may be inferred that teachers give great significance to the experience acquired in the position of a beginning teacher. This experience may thus have significant influence on their teaching style. Therefore, it is assumed that a teacher's teaching style at the beginning of his/her teaching career may be quite different from the teaching style applied with the increasing length of his/her pedagogical practice. I. Turek (2014) claims that it is the beginner teachers for whom a nondescript teaching style is typical. At the beginning of their profession teachers as if they were looking for themselves, applying teaching styles depending on the situation (especially on the attitudes of pupils), once trying to be authoritative, another time liberal or democratic. It is important to draw attention also to the factors with the lowest figures in the monitored group (items 1, 2, 5). They may be characterised as the factors involving a kind of retrospective influence on a teacher's teaching style, namely style of family upbringing (in which the teacher was brought up and educated); experience from his/her teachers (or their teaching style) and success the teachers experienced as pupils/students, or as learners. These factors may be considered to have direct influence on teaching styles, but, in comparison with the above-mentioned ones, teachers attribute a lower measure of impact to them.

Based on the analysis and interpretation of research findings, it may be stated that the hypothesis assuming that teaching styles are most significantly influenced by the way teachers prefer and apply in their learning, i.e. their learning style, has not been proved.

May authors agree with the idea that teachers pay only very little attention to the evaluation of educational process, its conditions or overall performance. A greater attention is paid to the acquisition of a set of key competences for successful performance of the teaching profession. Attention is focused on teachers' use of a wide spectrum of activating methods, modern technology, various alternative conceptions of teaching, and many other approaches of making educational process more effective. However, the real way of the effective performance of teaching profession does not lie in the application of ever new and modern approaches. What is important is that teachers reflect their strategies, procedures, theories, opinions, attitudes and convictions. But individual strategies, procedures, preferred attitudes and opinions may be influenced by various factors. The aim of this part of our research was to analyse teaching styles in a broader contextual framework of factors determining them. We were searching for an answer to the following research question: *Which factors influence teachers' individual teaching styles?* The previous part of the research brought relevant findings on the factors which are related with pedagogical and personal history of teachers and influence, to various extent, the teaching styles applied by teachers at primary level of education. A more detailed analysis is focused on the relation between individual teaching styles and the selected factors which influence them. The findings are given in Table 2.

Tab. 2: Relation between the applied teaching styles and the factors influencing them

Variables		1	6
Formal authority	r	0.131**	0.141**
	p	0.008	0.005
	N	404	404
1. Style of upbringing in the family (in which I was brought up and educated).			
6. The knowledge I have in individual subjects.			
Variables		6	
Personal model	r	0.109*	
	p	0.028	
	N	404	
6. The knowledge I have in individual subjects.			
Variables		5	6
Facilitator	r	0.110*	0.109*
	p	0.027	0.029
	N	404	404
5. The success I experienced as a pupil/student, or learner.			
6. The knowledge I have in individual subjects.			
Variables		6	7
Delegator	r	0.154**	0.105*
	p	0.002	0.035
	N	404	404
6. The knowledge I have in individual subjects.			
7. The history of participation in further education and self-study as forms of self-education.			

Key: N – number; r – Pearson coefficient, p – statistical significance level.

Table 2 presents the results which indicate a relation between the applied teaching styles of primary school teachers and the factors which influence them. Using the Pearson coefficient, it was found out that between the variables there is a statistically significant relation at the level of 0.01, and statistically significant relation at the level of 0.05, but the relation is not evident between all analysed variables. In view of the length of the data, Table 1 shows the variables between which this relation is evident.

The proved results indicate that a statistically significant relation is evident for the variables Formal authority, Personal model, Facilitator and Delegator, and certain factors determining them. This relation was not recorded, however, with regard to the Expert teaching style. It means that the application of this style is not determined by the factors associated with teachers' pedagogical and personal history. It is assumed that the Expert teaching style may be influenced by factors of different kind.

The indicated results also allow one to notice that the common factor influencing the styles *Formal authority*, *Personal model*, *Facilitator*, and *Delegator* is the *knowledge teachers have in individual subjects*. Given the fact that teachers at primary level teach subjects of different nature, it is desirable that they have enough and adequate knowledge from all the taught subjects. It may be said that knowledge, and consequently also experience, make up one of the layers of teaching style, the one which is considered most influenceable. This fact brings a very interesting result. Nowadays teachers use various forms of further education and self-study. One may claim, to a certain extent, that the acquired knowledge then influences the selection of didactic procedures by the teacher, i. e. his/her teaching style. One can assume that it is based on further education that teachers vary, or change, their teaching styles, while teachers who do not show any interest in self-education apply routine and well-established teaching procedures.

Similarly interesting is the finding that teaching styles Formal authority, Personal model, Facilitator and Delegator are influenced by the *knowledge in individual subjects*, though the teaching style characteristic by its presentation of detailed knowledge and invitation of pupils to increase their abilities and competencies is the Expert teaching style.

As for the teaching styles Formal authority, Facilitator and Delegator and factors influencing them, certain differences could be identified as well. While the Formal authority teaching style is influenced by the *style of family upbringing*, the Facilitator is

influenced by the *success teachers experienced while they were learners*. What is interesting about the Facilitator teaching style is that teachers lead pupils to responsibility to take over the initiative to reach the results in various roles, and independent, active and collaborating pupils move forward in such environment. Thus, the results indicate that the Facilitator style teachers try to lead pupils to reach success in learning themselves. This analogy means that teachers want to achieve the same success with their students as the success they experienced when they were learners.

The factors influencing the Delegator teaching style include not only the *knowledge teachers have in individual subjects*, which is a common factor for several other teaching styles, but, at the same time, *participation in further education and self-study*. There is a certain relationship between individual variables. The application of the Delegator teaching style assumes the development of pupils' abilities to act autonomously. It is a pupil-centred approach. The teacher takes the role of a guide and often requires pupils to work either independently or in groups in which they have to work effectively and manage various interpersonal roles. It may be estimated, from what has been said, that teachers with the Delegator preferred teaching style attribute an essential influence on their procedures exactly to the self-study and further education. It thus means that these teachers do not only try to act autonomously themselves, but develop this ability in their learners as well.

5 Conclusion

In recent years, the teaching profession has become a frequently discussed topic, especially because of constantly increasing demands and requirements put on it. Contemporary teachers are no longer only mediators of knowledge to pupils, they are expected to meet requirements connected with the necessity to develop the pupils' personalities as regards their individual needs and possibilities. Increased demands are becoming the key in case of pre-primary and primary level of education where teachers educate children at the age of their most rapid development. The quality performance of teaching profession is significantly influenced by teachers' teaching style, which is a key component in this process. Our research shows that one may speak about various factors determining, to certain extent, teaching style. It follows that contemporary teaching styles of primary schools teachers are to the greatest extent influenced by the knowledge in individual subjects, knowledge and skills in a given field as well as participation in further education and self-study, with a relatively high figure recorded also for such factor as the teacher's preference of the way of his own learning, i.e. his/her learning style. In comparison with the previous ones, the learning style is less influenced by the experience acquired in the position of a beginning teacher. However, the lowest level of influence on teachers' teaching styles is exerted by such factors as style of family upbringing (in which the teacher was brought up and educated); experience from the teaching of their teachers (or their teaching style) and the success the teachers experienced as pupils/students, or as learners. Consequently, research results showed that there is a statistically significant relation between teaching styles and factors influencing them, but this relation is not evident for all the analysed variables. The findings indicate that the application of the teaching styles Formal authority, Personal model, Facilitator and Delegator is significantly influenced by the knowledge teachers have in individual subjects, while there is no a statistically significant relation between the selected factors and the Expert teaching style. Moreover, it was found out that the Formal authority teaching style is influenced, in addition to the knowledge in individual subjects, also by a style of family upbringing, the Facilitator style is influenced by the success teachers experienced when they were learners, and the Delegator style is influenced by the history of participation in further education and self-study. Because there are many factors influencing the style of teacher education, we feel free to claim that the most important, if not decisive, role in teaching profession is played by the reflection of one's own pedagogical activity, and, consequently, its determinants as well. Drawing on the above mentioned, we also

agree with the ideas of G. D. Fenstermacher and J. F. Soltis (2008), who have noticed that teachers become real professionals only when they reflect and attentively consider the approach to their profession, which directs and support them in such important work as the education of people.

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