

DISCOURSE ON SELECTED TOPICS OF CONTEMPORARY SCHOOL EDUCATION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND SLOVAKIA

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Abstract: The subject of education in our area as discussed in political and other circles does not take place in a vacuum but rather affects all of us. In this contribution we are presenting for consideration our reflections, the nature of which, as we acknowledge, may be influenced by the author's subjectivity and how he sees, understands and evaluates the matter at hand. Despite that fact, however, this is not a simple communication expressing an evaluative judgment. That is not what this is - we have not headed in that direction. We have focused on acknowledging this phenomenon at the level of its theoretical concepts, the theories that are thematically related, in whatever way, to the problem we are addressing. We have followed the published research findings, reviewed the research designs and procedures, and taken an interest in their empirical findings. The findings we arrived at when designing our own projects of a different character (be they research, development, applications, etc.) have understandably also been included in creating this reflection. We also did not forget about the area of the schools themselves, of field work, or the legitimacy of the methodology of our investigations. This aspect of our concept has aided and continues to aid us with investigating, verifying, experiencing, living through, and perceiving what the concepts actually are in the name of which we have designed all of these efforts.

Keywords: reflection, education, research, project, school, inclusion, integration, children, pupils, educator

1 Introduction

The subject of this contribution appears to touch on the particular area of quality of life that is school education, but the scope of general education is so significant for human life that it probably would not be impossible to exactly, statistically determine and calculate precisely how significant it is, how much it determines the existential career in different ontogenetic periods of a human life, or in which segments of a human life the force of school education is decisive and where it is less so.

If we were to design an instrument, a method, through constant, hard work, that would aid us in acquiring such a numerical result, then for the sake of correctness and fairness vis-a-vis science itself we would have to openly state that there are many big holes of the "don't-know-how-to-measure" category within this phenomenon, some of which we have not even been able to record. However, we have taken note of the presented research, in this country and abroad, pointing to the capital that education, in and of itself, constitutes, whether as an axiomatic entity, or as a market characteristic of the contemporary economy, or as a simplified feature of some sort of human capacity that serves people and is beneficial to them in different situations, or at least is subjectively perceived to be so, yielding sometimes a greater and sometimes a smaller benefit.

Comparing those benefits would be statistically irrelevant, as the intensity of their force and the scale of their value as grasped by each individual should be measured by that person's individual life context alone. For the general comprehension of the essential aspects of this entity, what aids us is the overall, relative establishment of an overall generalization about it. Thanks to that generalization, society, in its own perceptions, can better

embody this phenomenon, gain insight into it, work with it cognitively and interpret it. It is exactly in such generally generalized terms that trends in education are established in our country and in the world.

2 Methodology and description of methods of analysis and interpretation of theoretical secondary analysis

The following text, as already mentioned above, represents only a slice of our subjective perceptions in the frame of qualitative methodology of how society in general perceives the issue of inclusion in education, focusing on the analysis of key documents of a national nature in both countries (Czechia and Slovakia) and considering our personal experiences with pedagogical professionals working in different levels of school education system in both countries.

Secondary theoretical analysis is a form of research that uses existing data, or secondary data, collected previously to perform a new study. Indeed Career Guide website (online, published 27th January 2023, cit. 17th July 2024) says: *.....Researchers might use quantitative or qualitative data another research team or agency gathered or produced for different reasons and analyze it in a new way. That data might be publicly available, or the researcher or analyst might need permission to access and use it. The data they use typically comes from trusted government....*

We can state in advance that our ambition is not to extract definitions for the terms comprising the framework of this text or their shorthand (re)presentation. Similarly, the intention of this communication is not to confront other authors, or their (re)interpretations, or their declared perceptions. We refer readers in any event to our previously published work (such as Kaleja, 2015, 2014, 2011) in which they are advised that they can certainly find such confrontations among those publications.

The main aim and motivation that has led us to **present this communication is a musing on and also a sharing of our own reflections about the societal phenomenon** that concerns us educators, teachers, pedagogues etc., or experts engaged with different areas of child-rearing and school education and which has for some time been profusely discussed in social circles. This is related to the current form of conceiving of or conceptualizing the scheme of education that the social space is calling "inclusion in education" or "inclusive education". The discussions being conducted are genuinely diverse, as the publicly accessible, published reports demonstrate, and the information submitted, the opinions or perspectives of those involved, has the nature of a broad spectrum of contrasting components that are, in places, misinterpretations or misleading. Sometimes they are inexact in terms of content. One way or another, this is a public matter, associated with the acquisition of awareness, experience, knowledge, and with the cultivation and development of the human personality. It affects all of us, therefore, whether as subjects or objects of education, as legal guardians or parents of children, or as experts – and not just those from the educational profession.

Institutional school education both in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia is regulated by legislative ordinances, and in the European area these are then further corrected through regulations, conventions and ordinances of different natures, or they are customized through strategies, concepts, action plans, etc. The education profession is bound by these circumstances and must follow them. At the same time, the profession must not forget about its own aims and paradigms, based in the facts of the field of pedagogy and most frequently or primarily stemming from the pre-graduate training that each fully qualified educator, teacher, pedagogue etc. must doubtless undergo.

We have to say that integrative or today better to say inclusive school education in both countries - even though at certain points

its interpretation by many domestic authors or coming from abroad has been too fragmented - does not essentially represent an absolutely new phenomenon in our society, as the lay public and some professionals believe. Both the connotative and denotative levels of this "big idea" differ over time, as we can observe from the documented school education field work – whether directly reported or observed by selected authors (Petrasová, 2023, Hlebová, 2018, Šotolová, 2011).

Differences have been and continue to be apparent in the interpreted concepts of such education, the conditions for its delivery, the requirements for pedagogical workers with respect to the objects of the education being realized, its mechanisms, procedures and methods, forms, ways, as well as other aspects of the integratively/inclusively established approaches to education. It is, therefore, logical that the curriculum and the entire previous civic and societal perception of the construction of difference was once perceived, understood, and viewed differently, and that this variation then appeared in the approaches and work of educators.

A crucial Czech national document that is related in terms of subject matter to the Czech Education Ministry is its *Strategy for Education Policy of the Czech Republic up to 2030+*, and many other significant conceptual, methodological and strategic documents at different levels are connected to its substantive framework, in some cases including the action plans for those documents. The previous document titled as Strategy 2020 has three key priorities: Reducing inequality in education; support for quality instruction by teachers, including introducing a career system and/or beefing up the quality instruction of future educators during pre-graduate training; and the effective, responsible management of the education system. The current *Strategy 2030+* has two objectives and a total of five lines. The objectives are:

- focusing school education more on acquiring the competencies necessary for an active citizen, professional and personal life,
- reducing inequalities in access to quality school education and preparing the ground for maximum development potential of children, pupils and students

The strategic lines of the document mentioned above are:

- transforming the content, methods and assessment of education,
- equal access to quality education,
- support for teaching staff,
- increasing professional capacity, trust, and cooperation,
- increasing funding and ensuring its stability.

Long-term plan for education and development of the education system in the Czech Republic 2023–2027 is an implementation document of Strategy 2030+, currently for the second implementation period. It lists the basic tendencies and goals of educational policy for the given period, establishes measures at the state level and defines the space for concrete solutions at the regional level. The key national document in Slovakia is the *Program Statement of the Government of the Slovak Republic 2023-2027*. In the field of educational policy, it defines priorities in the education and university training of teachers. The subsequent *National Program for the Development of Education and Training for the years 2018-2027* aims to achieve educational training at the level of European cooperation. The stated strategy is defined in the areas of:

- improving the quality of education,
- inclusion in education and vocational training,
- lifelong learning and mobility,
- increasing the competences and motivation of teaching staff,
- strengthening European higher education,
- supporting green and digital transformation in education and vocational training.

- *The context of the strategy declares the need for transparency, participation and support in education.*

The strategy of an inclusive approach in education until 2030 is a document aimed at improving the current state of education for all children, pupils and students in all types of schools without distinction. The document presents the basic philosophy of inclusive education in kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools and universities in the Slovak Republic, in the system of counseling and prevention and in lifelong learning. In order to achieve an optimal state, the areas to be achieved by 2030 are defined. These are the areas of destigmatization, provision of support measures in the counseling system, desegregation in education, unbarriering of the school environment and education of teaching staff and professional staff in the issue of inclusion.

3 The framework for institutionalized preschool education as currently conceived

The Czech Republic, through its relevant legislative ordinances (inter alia Act No. 1/1993, Coll. and 2/1993 Coll., as amended) guarantees rights and freedoms and establishes them at the level of being inalienable, irrevocable, non-derogable and not statute barred. The state's legal code includes the right to education and the freedoms flowing from the letter of the law. The Czech legal order establishes attendance at school as compulsory. In the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms (Act No. 2/1993, Coll.) it is stated that: "All persons have the right to education. School attendance is compulsory for the time established by law." An amendment to the Education Act defines compulsory attendance of education in the system of primary schooling as taking nine school years, and a one-year compulsory preparation for that school attendance according to an institutionally conceived scheme has recently been integrated into that framework. Another innovation is the state's guarantee of preschool education through the relevant curricular documents, which is to be delivered not just at nursery schools, as it was heretofore, but the delivery of which is also possible in the preparatory classes of primary schools or through home schooling.

In Slovakia, according to *Act No. 245/2008 Coll., on Education and Training* (School Act) and on Amendments to Certain Acts), education is compulsory and mandatory pre-primary education is also mandated for children who have reached the age of 5 by 31.8. of the relevant calendar year, which precedes the beginning of the school year. Currently, education in kindergartens takes place according to the state educational program, which is valid for all kindergartens, which establishes basic requirements such as communication, mathematical, digital, civic, work, social competences, solving problems, critical thinking, while these competences are developed in further education. Education and training of children with disabilities takes place in kindergartens and kindergartens for children with disabilities.

With the obligation to educate 5-years-old children in preschool institutions, there was a problem with the insufficient capacity of places in state kindergartens and the lack of teaching staff. Parents can place their children in private kindergartens, which becomes a financially demanding event for families. Municipalities and cities that establish kindergartens are looking for opportunities to expand spatial and personnel capacities to accept a larger number of children in kindergartens. Financial resources are created through transnational resources (Recovery and Resilience Plan), from the state budget and the budget of public municipalities.

The entire system of obligatory education, the conception, content and processes of it, including those who contribute to delivering it, must absolutely, certainly, permanently consider basic, constant paradigms that include the following (Kaleja, 2017):

- The child and pupil, during the period described by law, is obligated to participate in institutionalized, state-

guaranteed education, which counts on being delivered for that amount of time.

- The child/pupil enjoys rights in the process of education. They are enjoying their right to education, or rather, that right is being claimed for them by their legal guardians.
- The educational framework must present a concept that is designed and systematized. Those delivering the educational process and other entities contributing to that process must be fully competent and qualified to engage in this profession. There are, therefore, certain requirements placed on them by the state.
- The content, the means and methods, the forms and the nature of the education must lead to developing the child's and pupil's personality and must lead to the enjoyment of freedoms.
- Neither the personality profile of the child or pupil, nor the socio-educative profile, nor any other characteristic that encumbers the child-rearing and education process can be allowed to constitute a pretext for arguing that there is a reason to exclude such a child or pupil from education, nor can it be allowed to constitute a pretext for lowering the level or quality of that education.
- All children and pupils in the class collectives of all schools have duties, freedoms, and rights irrespective of the establisher, focus, profile, references or structure of the institution itself.

Practical work in the field shows that professional educators welcome the change associated with the introduction of compulsory preschool education. However, they are critically commenting on the visible drawbacks according to which the intention of the law cannot be delivered to the full extent. The implementation of this change:

- Did not provide all of the children affected by this innovation with backup in terms of physical space, as the capacities of the facilities offering institutionalized preschool education are insufficient. When the relevant part of the law took effect, the age of children in the ontogenetic preschool period was an indicator that could have been rather significant when choosing schools and including the appropriate units of education in them, or in requests for home schooling.
- The implementation did not provide for even adequate preparedness in terms of the personnel capacities of the schools or school facilities affected. The overall change to the content of the curriculum for education, including demarcating its educational outputs, took place quickly and in an unbalanced way from the standpoint of the adequate preparedness needed to perform this profession – there was not enough time for it. The procedure for the formal, technical implementation of the curricular changes at issue approximated the standard formal, technical tasks that accompany activities of the regular (school) administration.
- The implementation caused a time-bound, temporary transformation of part of one unit of the system of primary education. More concretely, it affected the preparatory classes of primary schools when, according to the intention of the established changes, their educational aims and principles, and considering the fact of who was meant to access this education and for whom it was being designed, the form, so to speak, of that education was changed.
- The implementation essentially counted on the automatic, latent approval of requests for home schooling submitted to institutions by parents or legal guardians. It is, therefore, a matter for discussion and investigation what this state-established legislative change is meant to achieve and what purpose it is meant to serve.
- In the curriculum of preschool education, when it comes to delivering requests for home schooling and then having them approved by a school principal, no indicators, parameters or standards exist according to which a school, as a child-rearing, educational institution, would be able, through its own educators, to test the (undefined) framework and level of the educational outputs at issue.

4 The framework of institutional primary and secondary school education at present

Obligatory primary education of nine school years is delivered at a primary school, the structure of which is differentiated into two levels: The first is grades one through five (ISCED 1) and is oriented primarily toward achieving literacy and numeracy. The next level comprises grades six through nine (ISCED 2) and its concept inclines toward acquiring the defined key competences for that educational level. The Appendix to the Framework Educational Program for Primary Education, regulating the education of pupils with mild mental disability (RVP ZV - LMP) has been abolished by the ministry. The compulsory primary education of pupils with mild mental disability is, therefore, delivered according to an individual education plan on the basis of a recommendation by a counseling facility. The ISCED 2 level of education, in accordance with the Education Act, can also be acquired by fulfilling compulsory school attendance at a multi-year gymnasium (college preparatory school), or by graduating from a conservatory with the corresponding scope of study. Education at a gymnasium is perceived by educators and parents to be systemized preparation of a pupil to successfully complete education at the general secondary level (ISCED 3) with the assumption of subsequently beginning the first level of college study (ISCED 6), then a second level (ISCED 7), and eventually a third level (ISCED 8), the highest possible level of educational attainment) of various focuses. When a pupil graduates from primary education in a primary school (ISCED 2) specially designed for pupils with moderate to severe mental disability, or with multiple disabilities, or with autism, the law counts on extending the length of time to 10 school years. In such a case, it is differentiated into two levels, the first of which comprises grades one through six and the second, grades seven through 10. If the education in such a school is preceded by preparation, that preparation is delivered over the course of three school years at the preparatory level of a special primary school.

In Slovakia, school education is compulsory for ten years, which is provided at primary school, and secondary school until the end of the school year in which the pupil turned 16 years old (§ 19, paragraph 2 of Act 245/2008 on education and training (school law) and on amendments to certain laws). Primary school education has nine grades formally divided into primary school education (ISCED 1) and lower secondary education (ISCED 2) (Act 245/2008 on Education and Training (School Act) and on Amendments to Certain Acts). Compulsory school attendance of students with disabilities takes place in elementary schools in an inclusive form, in elementary schools for students with disabilities. Pupils with mental disabilities or in combination with other disabilities are educated according to variant A, variant B, variant C. Education according to variant A is intended for pupils with a mild degree of mental disability, variant B for pupils with a moderate degree of mental disability and variant C for pupils with a severe, profound mental disability.

The system of secondary schooling in the Czech Republic facilitates selection in relation to the demands and focus of the concept of the education delivered and in relation to its outcomes and the level of education acquired. Secondary education (ISCED 2) with a professional orientation is delivered at secondary school or secondary vocational school. In the case of pupils with combined and more severe forms of disability, it is delivered in a practical school. In both cases, the length is a maximum of two school years. Secondary education with an apprenticeship certificate (ISCED 3) is delivered over a maximum of three school years at a secondary vocational school with a professional focus and with differentiated content in the curriculum that either does or does not reflect the potential for further study leading to the acquisition of a diploma. Secondary education with a graduation exam (ISCED 3) is delivered at a secondary professional school, is focused on a profession, in standard cases lasts four school years, is associated with the performance of professional activity, and its successful completion involves competencies required for lower management functions.

Depending on the type of field studied, professional training may be a component of the curriculum. Gymnasium (college preparatory) education leading to the same level of education, unlike these other types of secondary schools, has a general, not a professional, focus. Successfully passing gymnasium graduation examinations is the prerequisite for study at colleges, universities, or conservatories with a relevant educational program. Graduating from conservatory means development of the knowledge, skills and other capabilities already acquired by a pupil in primary and primary arts education has been provided. This includes preparation to perform ambitious artistic or arts-educational activities in the fields of music, dance, singing and the musical dramatic arts. In association with the length of a pupil's education, the study ends with the performance of examinations (minimally after four school years) and acquisition of a secondary general education, or by being discharged after a minimum of six school years, thanks to which higher professional education is acquired (ISCED 6).

Inclusion, in the context of those whose socio-educative profiles indicate a need for support measures so they can adequately access all of the relevant aspects involved at the level of social justice, lags significantly in the Czech Republic when it comes to arts education. Educators have earmarked (primary) arts education as excluded from the obligatory curriculum, in accordance with regulations of a legal nature. The intention of those legal regulations does not address issues of (social) justice. Children and pupils with special educational needs are still included in this education system and are designated as needing support measures although the letter of the law does not count on such measures in such settings.

Secondary school education with baccalaureate is higher secondary education (ISCED 3) in Slovakia takes place in gymnasiums, secondary vocational schools, conservatories, schools of art industry, secondary sports schools. If a student has been admitted to a secondary school while completing compulsory schooling, he/she continues to complete it until its completion or turning 16 years of age. Gymnasiums prepare students for university studies, but also for activities in administration and culture. Secondary vocational education prepares pupils for pedagogical, social, health, economic, technical, cultural and other activities. The conservatory prepares students for pedagogical and artistic activities. Art industry schools provide comprehensive artistic education in the field of art and design. Pupils with sports talents are prepared in secondary sports schools for professional sports activities (§ 32 paragraphs a) to e) of Act 245/2008 on Education and Training (School Act) and on Amendments to Certain Acts). Pupils with mental disabilities receive professional education in a vocational school and a practical school. In a vocational school, students prepare to perform simple work activities that they perform independently under the guidance of another person. The practical school prepares students to perform simple practical work under supervision.

5 Selected crucial problems of contemporary institutional school education

The contemporary school grapples with many requirements related to different legislative, societal, social, pedagogical and other aspects of education in the schools. In the foreground, among others, is the concept of the child-rearing and educational processes, their content, and procedural questions of quality, including the instituted requirements for the pedagogical workers responsible for managing those processes. Some components of the political and professional pedagogical discussions are the phenomena of integration and inclusion, the systems and mechanisms of the support measures, the system of educational psychological counseling, etc. The main topic of Czech education in total is the issue of equal, fair access to education by all children and pupils irrespective of their socio-educative or other characteristics. (Kalejka, 2015, 2014)

The inadequate approach taken by educators themselves toward this issue, their negative attitudes toward such access, as well as their discriminatorily established schemes, insufficient

orientation, ignorance, or ignoring of legislative ordinances and methodological instructions regulating the education of those affected, signals the existence of a societal problem. On the front line, this problem is projected into the life of the individual impacted by this fact.

A second line comprises those who constitute the individual's educational space and enter it. This includes those with whom the individual becomes part of an educational context after the processes of secondary socialization end and the tertiary ones begin in parallel. Because this is an across-the-board phenomenon that contradicts both the stated aims of pedagogical science and the uncodified ethics of the profession of an educator, as well as essentially impacting the entire population, this phenomenon must be critically perceived, critically assessed, and adequately corrected through statewide intervention. What is at issue is a basic deficiency of the scholastic system, or the educational policy system, that the Czech Republic should begin to address as soon as possible, and far more effectively and systematically than it has so far. It is not possible to state that many such steps have been undertaken. The perspective taken of the changes instituted, their intentions, their contents, and the outputs of each individual step are what has, among other things, brought about the state in which our education finds itself today.

Table 1 Comparison of society's perception of school inclusion - the past state

PAST STATE
A disunity among the implemented approaches, procedures and ways of interpreting the content of educational careers occurred in relation to the subject of that education, whether in respect of individuals or institutions. A lack of consistency , an inconstancy of the attitudes, opinions, and procedural matters that coordinate, direct, enter into, regulate and even determine the character and form of educational careers was recorded to a great extent.
Transition from dominant support for integration in education to minimal advocacy of inclusion in education.
The state of affairs can be perceived as a shift from an individualistic perspective to a collectivist one. This happened despite resulting in differentiating what was individual and establishing an individualized perception of the context.
Openness toward criticism, in the form of objective reflection about oneself and others, was then replaced by subjective, uncritical assessment of the relevant facts involving proxies for the representation being aimed at. In this context, we can describe this as the development of a collective, elevated egotism.

Table 2 Comparison of society's perception of school inclusion - the past state

PRESENT STATE
Not only does the public not know what inclusion (in education) means, what it contributes, what its importance is and whom it serves, even the pedagogical community itself does not perceive inclusion clearly or favorably. Among pedagogues there is inconstancy of opinion about the content, form and importance of inclusion.
In practice, integration in education is being implemented, but even professionals perceive this step as constituting inclusive education and are unaware of the difference between inclusion and integration.
Social irritation has appeared toward the inclusively attuned steps that essentially serve all, not just those for whom education is primarily implemented.
The attitudes of society toward those for whom the inclusive processes are beginning - to also arrange for them what others can achieve and handle without the existence of such processes - will contribute to support for those inclusive aims. However, an elevated, undesirable animosity and antipathy toward such persons is becoming associated with these processes. A negativistic perspective is growing in society toward persons living with disabilities, or disadvantage, or persons who are different in any way.

Schooling, its crucial conceptions, the content of its child-rearing and educational mechanisms and processes, as well as those who are responsible for it, involves many steps that have demonstrable impacts not just on the educational careers of the objects of education, but that also represent an input, with a certain potential for change, into the overall life course of a person and contribute to shaping the form of that person's quality of life.

This actual school education practice in the field demonstrates that pedagogical workers are not sufficiently prepared to educate all children, pupils and students as part of a concept of educating all kinds of children, pupils and students together. While the state-guaranteed curriculum counts on differences and latently encourages the implementation of educational processes, assuming that those delivering instruction will be aware of and maintain their own pedagogical and professional correctness, it cannot be said that those aspects of managing instruction that form educators' attitudinal schemas and opinions toward difference are shaping up favorably. The child-rearing and educational aims stated in the relevant curricula are binding. Pedagogical workers are, therefore, obligated to respect them and to create contents for educational units accordingly, to apply approaches and strategies the intentions of which will lead to fulfilling what those educated in institutional schooling are meant to acquire.

We see a problem in inclusive education in Slovakia in the formation of support teams in schools at a time when Slovakia will not be able to use funds from operational sources. State administration, founders will have to find funding to maintain and create support teams from public funds.

6 Big challenges and recommendations

It is a big challenge to plan the entire schooling period responsibly and systematically in terms of time. The framework of that time must include defined phases, or stages; the workers to be entrusted with it must be identified; their competences, work tasks and duties must be defined; and everything must be balanced with a view toward the scope of work and the ambitiousness of the workers, including in terms of time.

The framework must adequately include controllable outputs and a process that is defined in terms of the course and character of the direction of that process, its consequences, and its form.

The work-related needs of pedagogical workers, especially the needs directly associated with their pedagogical activity with children and pupils, must be monitored.

A professional pedagogical team must be put together critically and prudently, and in addition to fulfilling the formal requirements related to their education achieved and the relevant qualifications in accordance with the letter of the law on educational workers and related legislative regulations, the team must be characterized by actual erudition when it comes to working with children and pupils, the socio-educative characteristics of whom are known to the team. The team must comprehend the canvas before them and see meaning in their own work.

The team must be rid of those attitudinal schemas, the contents of which reproduce the principles of discrimination, ethnocentricity, racial superiority, or any other distinction through which an individual or individuals in the class collective can be labeled.

The team must frame its activity within the intentions of child-rearing and education and, through its declared models of behavior, support the heterogeneity of society. The team must not interact with the children's and pupils' integrity, either that of their family or that of their person, with the aim of adversely affecting, harming or hurting the child. On the contrary, the educator must care about communicating with the family of the child who is being educated and must perceive that

communication as a crucial link in the chain which, if it is mutually optimally established, will support the educator's pedagogical activity in the children's family environment.

An essential condition for successful pedagogical work by a subject with the target group that is the object of child-rearing and education, whatever their socio-educative profile, is the constant perception of one's own, actual, pedagogically oriented activity. This means the pedagogical worker is able, in practice, to set aside pedagogical scientific paradigms for conducting this activity because the worker is now controlling his or her own work process systematically, connecting that theoretical knowledge with the actual field.

The worker must use the appropriate communications channels, must deliver, as part of the child-rearing and educational processes, appropriate, current, and valid content that supports the interests and the overall development of the personalities of those being educated.

When delivering the content of education, the worker must pay attention to cultivated speech and its form, to procedures, to verified methods and techniques, including undertaking regular monitoring of academic achievement, both in aggregate and at the individual level, followed by the processes of analyzing and internalizing the findings acquired thereby. In addition, the worker must perform an ongoing evaluation of his or her own performance.

The worker must assess curricular content in terms of how they were developed for the class collective and understood, and what ability that content had to have implications for the regular course of the lives of those being educated. (Štech, 2009, 2007)

The factors and mechanisms of formative impact and socialization processes must be kept in mind by the educator, who must develop communication potential and provide room for the self-realization of the entire class collective, respecting individuality and support social skills development. Scholastic difficulties must be addressed coherently, constructively, and in some cases in consultancy with the colleagues and experts concerned with the facts and procedures of the matter.

The educator must strive for family participation in the relevant activities organized by the school. The educator must take an adequate interest in the children's home environments, in the context of that environment in relation to education at school, and in the consequences of that environment for that education.

The educator must never, through his or her opinions, incite class collectives of children and pupils to follow attitudinal schemas, axiomatic structures, or models of behavior that would endanger any of levels or phases of their ontogenetic development.

The educator must take into consideration the children's biological attributes, the formation of their morality and spirituality, their psychological characteristics, and their social fitness and skills.

The educator must maintain active communication with parents and take an interest in the legal guardians and parents' interest in their children's education. The educator must provide guardians with advice within the scope of the educator's own institutionalized activity.

When speaking, the educator must be adequately and authentically balanced and open, and must refrain from aggressive, denunciatory, impulsive or negativistic approaches.

The educator must be aware of the entire scope of his or her competences with respect to both the job and the profession. The former competences are related to performing the function, the position in which the educator is hired at that particular workplace, while the latter competences immediately flow from performing the function of a pedagogue, or rather, their basis

consists of the very ethos of the profession itself (the professional ethics of an educator). (Šiler, 1999)

The educator must perceive the gravity of performing this profession, must participate in events in the continuing education system, and must choose from the courses, programs, seminars or other educational events on offer that aim to support the development of his or her competencies for the job and the profession or that yield either an extensive or intensive, favorable benefit for all involved. Specifically, this has to do with:

The individual dimension of the pedagogical worker, where the benefit targets the structure of the development of his or her personality as an individual, or indirectly as an individual pedagogical worker who, when performing the profession, will construct, have available, integrate and use the benefits acquired.

The dimension of the class collective, which is created individually, just as it is for the educator – both in the case of the pupils as individuals, and then created in aggregate (collectively, or as a group) in the case of an entire individual class.

The benefit, and it is not a small one, for the school as a child-rearing, educational institution, of the pedagogical faculty members and work teams comprising its professional capacity. The prestige of the school will grow because of its educators, not just in the eyes of legal guardians and parents, but also among the broader public. The attitudes of civil society, legal guardians and parents, as well as the mutual attitudes of the pedagogues involved toward each other will subsequently be transformed and this change will be projected into the mutual interactions of all those involved and their perceptions of the axiomatic value associated with the outcomes of both their job and their profession.

7 The Ideal Conditions as a Conclusion

What is characteristic of any society is its heterogeneous variety, and differences that do not harm the health of a group or individuals, that do not deny anybody his or her rights, that do not limit anybody in his or her freedoms, and the displays of which do not negatively interfere either with the lives of others or the life of the individual characterized by the difference, are accepted by society.

Class and school collectives, family-member communities, hobby and recreational groups, work teams, or any other groups of people that come together must not differentiate others on the basis of any naturally existing, spontaneously arising characteristics that are determined by different causalities. This abuse of the social context in interactions and interpersonal communications causes a social stratification tied to social inequality, on the basis of which either covert or overt discrimination arises from which flows feelings of inferiority and superiority, and on that basis others are denied their rights, their lives are negatively impacted, limits to their freedoms are erected, and barriers arise thanks to which the person labeled as different will not receive what the rest are receiving, through no fault of his or her own.

In pedagogical practice, the principle of equal treatment is not being enforced. Pedagogical workers must be aware of their not inconsiderable role in the process of secondary socialization, a role played by those who, while exercising their profession, are performing a public service for which the founder of the institution where they operate adequately guarantees their continued income and takes care of their professional development given the extent of their competence. Educators must be, in their work, proactive about their own lifelong learning, about caring for the development of their own personalities, taking an interest in innovative approaches, methods, procedures and ways for forming those who attend school under the terms that are legally defined (as well as other terms), those for whom, during their processes of (self) evaluation, they are constructing the content and form of the

child-rearing, educational and educative reality. When it comes to certain periods, these realities are not being reproduced to the full extent from the perspective of their content and the overall scheme – on the contrary. While the content, the instruction and the scheme are formally declared to be a whole with an unchanged form, educators well know that they must take into consideration all crucial, legitimate attributes when delivering education in practice.

In the schools, people who are different from each other encounter one other – their ages, cultures, languages and other aspects all differ. The family of each person is different, although for some it can be assumed that they share one or more characteristics. For that reason, it is essentially necessary and socially strongly desirable to transform the general (generally academic, generally factual) level of the content of the curriculum at all levels of education in such a way that its context takes into consideration the existing diversity of Czech/Slovak civil society, instead of constantly establishing the perspective of the ethnic majority population as an ego-dominating, nationally superior, stratified population living on the territory of the Czech/Slovak Republic, because the citizens of this state are not a nation, but citizens holding state citizenship of the Czech/Slovak Republic. The degree of gravity, the force, the weight of any state citizenship is, from a statistical standpoint, absolutely irrelevant and misleading. At its core, it is established by a qualitative perspective that is measured by different standards.

The above-mentioned transformation may be perceived as radical by groups or individuals. It requires an across-the-board intervention and transformation of the establishment not just of the systemic mechanisms of education, but also a significant change in the ranks of the pedagogical personnel who should be the first, in the processes of institutional scholastic education, to implement this change in a prepared fashion. That should prevent any attitudinal or cognitive incoherence with respect to accepting the heterogeneity of individuals and of the whole.

Quality education must be effectively, systematically supported and effectively implemented, in accordance with the defined aims of the curriculum, assuming the heterogeneity of the socio-educative characteristics of those being educated, including those who are the subject of the scholastic or school-related processes of integration/inclusion as part of the concept of educating everybody together.

We must fully arrange for the scholastic institutions in which lawfully-required education is being implemented within the terms of the state-guaranteed curricula that affect those subject to the Constitution of the Czech/Slovak Republic and the Education Act to represent prepared environments for school socialization, with completely, fully qualified pedagogical personnel, including completely staffed scholastic advisory workplaces and the provision of all the necessary conditions and requirements for an equal, fair, quality education for all.

It is necessary to precisely define what needs changing in contemporary education. The adaptation needs to be comprehended, seen in a hierarchically designed scheme in which all the entities impacted by this area of endeavor are involved. What is desirable for that input is the definition of its extent, including the degree of its activity and the weight of its impact on this or that change.

We must intentionally ignore and set aside the declared slogans that have been appearing for several decades now in the different conceptual, methodological or strategic documents, which the public does not absolutely comprehend. Materializing those slogans is difficult for the actors of the political adaptations at issue, as the political pressures and tendencies known to us all are adding to the problems associated with discovering the essence of what we are addressing, with comprehending its circumstances and structures. At the conclusion of a long attempt, of a willingness to quest for this problem, its solution has just been the creation of a new problem, or rather, the

transformation of the original problem into a form that is put together differently, but that of course is having an identical - or sometimes even a worse - impact.

Ignorance of the conditions of the school education of children and pupils with special educational needs among pedagogues in the primary schools may be an indicator of educators' laxity, or of their lack of interest, or of an uneven distribution of competencies in the workplace, or of the educators external or internal motivations, or of a lack of control on the part of the school management, as well as other relevant circumstances. However, all these determinants are able to have a significant influence on the course and outcomes of the educational trajectories of the pupils affected by them.

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