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The foreign language teacher's role in ICT-supported instruction

Abstract: The main objective of this paper is to present an in-depth analysis of the conception of the teacher's role in ICT-supported foreign language (FL) instruction among teachers in basic and secondary education. In Slovenia, to date, no studies have been conducted in this research field. Therefore, our study aims to fill this research gap. An online survey was used to explore teachers' beliefs about the change of their role in ICT-supported FL instruction in comparison to their role in traditional instruction. The results of the qualitative and quantitative analyses show that the majority of the participants believed that the role of the teacher as a lecturer and information provider changed to that of a facilitator of student learning and provider of student-centred instruction. A minority of the participants perceived their role first as lecturer; for them, ICT is only a tool with its advantages and disadvantages but with minimal or no influence on the traditional role of the teacher. Even though the majority of the teachers believed that their role had changed, the results do not indicate a major shift in the FL teaching paradigm.

Keywords: teacher role, foreign language, foreign language instruction, ICT, teacher training

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Introduction

In this paper, the teacher's role in ICT-supported foreign language (FL) instruction in basic and secondary education in Slovenia is examined. The literature review revealed different approaches to addressing the teacher role in general and ICT-supported language instruction in particular.

The teacher role is closely connected with the task that the teacher is performing (Edmondson and House 2000, p. 262). An example for the task model is Harden and Crosby's (2000) model of 12 roles for the medical teacher. The 12 roles cover six types of tasks that teachers can perform: to facilitate, to play a role, to provide information, to develop resources, to plan, and to assess. The idea of defining teacher roles according to the tasks performed by the teacher is valuable for the context of second and foreign language learning (Samuda 2009, p. 380).

Another approach is to identify the teacher's roles as a series of metaphors. In the traditional presentation, practice and production model, the teacher operates as a language model and provider of comprehensible input, an organiser, and an evaluator giving feedback and assessing students. Different researchers use different metaphors for teacher roles, for example, Harmer (2007): controller, organiser, prompter, participant, resource, and tutor; Brown (1994, pp. 160–162): controller, director, manager, facilitator, and resource; and Kaboody (2013, p. 48): initiator, facilitator, motivator, ideal model of the target language speaker, mentor, consultant, and mental supporter. In the context of task-based language learning, Willis (1996) differentiates between the metaphors of facilitator, course guide, language guide, adviser, chairperson, and monitor.

The role of the teacher in computer-supported learning has also been described in terms of principles that teachers should take into consideration (Urhahne et al. 2009): “to (1) envision the lesson, (2) enable collaboration, (3) encourage students, (4) ensure learning, and (5) evaluate achievement”.

Though new teacher roles emerge alongside the traditional ones, they do not necessarily replace them. Razdevšek Pučko (2004, p. 54) stresses that some traditional roles do become obsolete and are replaced by other roles, “but the challenge of helping students learn meaningfully and effectively remains the same” (Chambers,

Conacher, and Littlemore 2004, p. 24). Also, Krumm states that the teacher role is subject to permanent change and teachers should therefore be ready to learn and reflect on their own roles continually (Krumm 2003, pp. 28–29).

In ICT-supported teaching, the teacher role is challenged. The pervasiveness of ICT allows for instant access to up-to-date, multimodal, authentic material and enables learner communication outside the immediate classroom. ICT is a part of students' everyday life (Lavrič et al. 2011); therefore, it seems “natural” to integrate it into learning. Some teacher roles in the context of ICT-supported classroom instruction identified by researchers (e.g., Murchú 2005) are similar to before the introduction of ICT: instructional designer, trainer, collaborator, team coordinator, advisor, monitoring, assessment specialist, student, and silent partner. Warschauer and Healy (1998) state that “teachers are rarely the sole source of language information in these days of global interconnectedness”. They describe the teacher as “a facilitator of learning rather than the font of wisdom”.

Research has also been conducted on how the teacher role changes during one class. Wang (2015, p. 168) analysed the teacher role in a multiuser virtual learning environment according to the three-phase model (pre-, during-, and post-task phases) introduced by Willis (1996, p. 23) and came to the conclusion that the teacher roles change throughout the phases. In the pre-task phase, the most prominent teacher roles are the technical and social roles, followed by the monitor and motivator roles. In the during-task phase, the most prominent roles are those of motivator, monitor, and task-supporter. In the post-task phase, the most prominent teacher role is that of language guide, followed by the motivator, monitor, and social roles (Wang 2015, pp. 167–170). Another model addressing the various phases is Gilly Salmon's five-stage model (Salmon 2000) for online learning. Her five phases consist of stages (1) access and motivation, (2) online socialisation, (3) information exchange, (4) knowledge construction, and (5) development. In this model, the teacher is referred to as an e-moderator and instructor. Goodyear et al. (2001, p. 69) have described the following main roles of an online teacher: process facilitator, adviser/counsellor, assessor, researcher, content facilitator, designer, and manager/administrator.

The abovementioned roles are very diverse, and there is no single role that exists in all of the cited models. Some roles change in some aspects; for example, the role of adviser/counsellor may include ICT-supported communication, or the social role may include creating a friendly learning environment in virtual contexts. The new teacher roles are that of the researcher, administrator, and technical supporter.

In Slovenia, there has been no research conducted concerning the teacher's role in the ICT-supported FL classroom; therefore, we conducted this study to try to fill this research gap. The aim of the study was (a) to determine whether FL teachers in Slovenian basic (pupil age from 6 to 15 years) and secondary education (student age from 16 to 19 years) believe that their role in ICT-supported FL instruction has changed in comparison to their role in traditional instruction, (b) to examine how language teachers substantiate their opinion in item (a), (c) to examine whether there are any statistically significant differences between the

groups of teachers according to the basic or secondary school parameter and according to the parameter of the teacher's opinion of whether the teacher role has changed or not, and (d) to propose a model of the FL teacher role in ICT-supported FL instruction.

Materials and methods

Participants

A total of 492 FL teachers participated in the study; 292 of them were teaching at basic and 200 at secondary schools. The majority of the teachers in both school types are female (basic school: 93.2%; secondary school: 96%); the average age of the basic school teachers is almost 39, while the average age of the secondary school teachers is 42. The secondary school teachers have, on average, almost 17 years of experience teaching FL, which is three years more than the basic school teachers.

The teachers teach five different foreign languages: English, German, Italian, French, and Spanish. In both groups, the majority of teachers teach English, and in both groups, nearly one-third of the teachers teach German, while Italian, French, and Spanish are taught by 10% or less. The average age in both groups is about 40, with average teaching experience of approximately 15 years. The teachers in our study use ICT very often, not only in school but also in their personal lives. The parameter of foreign languages that the teachers teach reveals the typical picture in Slovenia: the first FL is English, followed by German as the most frequently taught second FL.

Instrument and data-collection methods

The data were collected through an online survey from late October 2012 to early February 2013. The instrument used was an online questionnaire (Podgoršek 2012) containing 24 questions. The survey contained five sections: (1) demographic data of respondents, (2) infrastructure, (3) use of ICT in FL teaching, (4) ICT competences for teaching, and (5) the teacher role in ICT-supported FL instruction. The questions were five-point Likert-type scale questions where 1 was the lowest score and 5 the highest. This paper presents an in-depth analysis of the conception of the teacher role, comparing the opinions of the basic and secondary school teachers. A descriptive analysis regarding the infrastructure, the use of ICT in FL teaching, and ICT competences of teachers has been presented by Podgoršek (2015). The preliminary descriptive results of the analysis of the secondary school teachers' opinions were presented at a conference (Podgoršek and Kacjan 2015).

Data analysis

In order to answer the research questions, we conducted quantitative and qualitative analyses. The SPSS statistical package was used to analyse the quantitative data. The methods used were descriptive statistics and an independent *t*-test to compare the groups of teachers. The qualitative text data obtained from the questionnaire were first organised. Next, the teacher argumentations were numbered. Then, the data were coded and categorised using an inductive approach, meaning that the codes were determined during text analysis (Vogrinc 2008, p. 63). Six codes were determined, after which we combined related codes according to their relevance for our research aim and designed four categories that the majority of teachers addressed. In the text data, word frequency was analysed using the AntConc toolkit for text analysis.

Reliability and validity of the instrument

In order to establish the validity of the instrument, an expert review was first conducted, followed by a pilot study. Sampling adequacy was established via the KMO test. KMO was conducted for the Likert-scale questions. The KMO values normally range between 0 and 1 (Field 2005, p. 640). For the present study, the values for KMO range from 0.64 to 0.92, which indicates the acceptability to a very high level of adequacy of the instrument. The instrument was tested using Cronbach's alpha to establish the level of reliability. The values range from 0.64 to 0.79, indicating moderate reliability, and from 0.80 to 0.94, indicating good reliability.

Results

(a) Teachers' opinion on their changing role in ICT-supported FL instruction

The results show that approximately 80% of teachers in both groups answered affirmatively the question: "In your opinion, has the teacher role in ICT-supported FL instruction changed in comparison to traditional instruction?" (see Table 1). In each group, about 15% of the answers were missing. To obtain a clearer presentation of the results, we named the teachers who stated that the teacher role has remained the same Group A and the teachers who stated that the teacher role has changed Group B.

| | | Group A: | Group B: |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Teachers | The teacher role stayed the same f (%) | The teacher role changed f (%) |
| Basic school | N=292 | 49 (19.8 %) | 199 (80.2 %) |
| Secondary school | N=200 | 31 (18 %) | 141 (82 %) |

Table 1: Frequencies of the respondents' answers to the question of whether the teacher role in ICT-supported FL instruction has changed in comparison to traditional instruction

(b) Teachers' conceptions of their role in ICT-supported FL instruction

A total of 334 teachers wrote an argument in support of their opinion, which corresponds to approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ of the teachers (196 basic school teachers and 138 secondary school teachers). The quantitative text analysis of the teachers' opinions showed that Group A wrote longer comments than did Group B. In Group A, the secondary school teachers wrote longer supporting arguments than did the basic school teachers.

Using qualitative data analysis, we designed four categories: (1) the teacher role, (2) the student role, (3) ICT-supported FL classroom instruction, and (4) the categories of change.

The results show that a large number of teachers from Group A, irrespective of whether they teach at the basic or secondary school level, perceived teacher roles as unchanged, saying that the teacher is still primarily lecturing. They argue that the teacher role stayed the same and that it was only the tools that have changed: *"No, the teacher role is always the same, to teach material and to teach students to learn, but the way we teach is different; in my opinion, ICT brings variety to the class and is closer to the students"* (t44) (t=teacher). Another important issue in Group A is personal contact and the connectedness of the teacher and pupils or students. As one teacher stated, *"In my experience, the students don't want to spend more hours behind the computer; they want a live teacher in front of them, someone to communicate with, someone to have personal contact with"* (t208) or *"Without her/him [i.e., the teacher], learning material – a text or a video clip – cannot come to life"* (t221). There are only a few comments on the student role. The teachers stated that the students are no more autonomous in their learning, especially not the weaker students, and their command of the language is no better, although they do have more opportunities for active work when using ICT. Some teachers also wrote that the students must write in their notebooks in order to learn the material. Some of the argumentation shows that the teachers have not yet realised the potential of ICT: *"ICT is only a tool for motivating the children [...]"* (t16) or *"Basically everything stayed the same; now, I just use a computer instead of, for example, an overhead projector"* (t322). Despite the fact that Group A did not attribute as important a role to ICT as did Group B (which will be described in the next paragraph), the teachers also listed the benefits of teaching with ICT, which also reflects the differentiated opinions of the teachers. Examples of the benefits included easier access to information, facilitating communication with students, and the motivational function of ICT: *"The teacher motivates students more easily; they learn the material much faster"* (t190). The teachers in Group A perceive ICT as a tool with its advantages and disadvantages and hold the opinion that ICT does not have any significant effect on the role of the teacher.

The analysis of statements provided by Group B revealed quite a different picture in some respects. The teachers in Group B explicitly mentioned many more roles than did the teachers in Group A. The prevailing roles are those of the teacher as facilitator, manager, and mentor. They stressed that the teacher is no longer the

only source of knowledge and information but that this role remains important to a certain extent: *“The teacher doesn’t have the central role anymore; s/he stands aside and facilitates. S/he can learn a lot from the students, who are very proud of their active role. [...]”* (t144) or *“The teacher is not only a lecturer but is constantly also in the role of a student since s/he has to follow the new developments and train himself/herself”* (t148). The views of the teachers on the student role vary from that of giving students credit for their ability to use ICT – *“The students master the use of the internet, and this way of teaching is close to them”* (t19) – to the opposite opinion, stating that the students have not mastered the use of ICT for learning – *“[the students] have only basic ICT skills (Word, PowerPoint), so the teacher often has to teach them ICT skills”* (t109) or *“The teacher has greater responsibility to direct students and to teach them how to use ICT for learning and not only for pleasure”* (t270). Group B listed similar benefits of teaching with ICT as did Group A, along with some others, including the observation that the more independent students become, the more actively they learn and the more self-confident they are: *“The methods and approaches of teaching have changed, having an influence on those lessons in which the students are more active than in traditional lessons”* (t113). The results of the analysis of Group B revealed five categories of change (see Figure 1): (1) extending approaches to teaching and methods of teaching, (2) shifting the focus to the student, (3) a changed relationship between the teacher and the students, (4) increased workload and preparation time when ICT is used, and (5) the need for new teacher competences.

There are some changes that apply only to the basic or only to the secondary school teacher group. As shown in Figure 2, the basic school teachers still emphasise the directing role of the teacher, but they also mentioned that they are gradually introducing new approaches to teaching into their classrooms (Category 1). In contrast, the secondary school teachers emphasise the opening of the learning process to new approaches and a higher level of student responsibility. Categories 2 and 3 are more present on the secondary school level, where the focus is on the students’ individuality and on more intense interaction between the teacher and the students, also because of the use of ICT. The need for new teacher competences (Category 5) is present in basic and secondary school teaching. In basic school, the competence of teachers to teach students the safe and balanced use of ICT is emphasised, whereas the competence to teach students how to use ICT for learning is the priority for the secondary school teachers.

**Changes
of the
teacher role
relevant for
basic and
secondary
school**

1. Extending approaches to teaching and methods of teaching

- The teacher guides and directs students in obtaining knowledge.
- The teacher's role as a lecturer is supplemented by that of the teacher who guides, directs, and moderates student activities while supervising the learning process.
- The teacher, through his/her command of technology, becomes more modern and interesting.
- The teacher knows how to motivate students in their learning process.

2. Shifting the focus to student-centred instruction

- The teacher is no longer the focal point of instruction.
- The teacher knows how to teach students and how to find, order, and use information.
- The role of transmitting knowledge is not only the teacher's; the teacher is not the sole source of knowledge.

3. A changed relationship between the teacher and the students

- Exaggerated use of ICT can worsen the quality of the relationship between the teacher and the students.
- The students have a better learning experience through personal contact with the teacher.

4. Increased workload and preparation time for teachers using ICT

- The teacher has more work at home when preparing ICT-supported materials; during classroom time, s/he is more in the role of an observer.
- S/he spends more time giving instructions and directions for work than s/he spends on the activity itself.

5. The need for new teacher competences

- Need for additional training.
- Need to keep abreast of developments.

Figure 1: Categories of changes of the teacher role that are relevant for basic and secondary school

**Additional
changes
to the
teacher role
relevant for
basic
school**

1. Extending approaches to teaching and methods of teaching

- The teacher organises the instruction and combines traditional and ICT-supported teaching approaches.
- The teacher role changes from being a transmitter to being a mentor.
- The teacher monitors, supports, and assists learners in their learning process.

5. The need for new teacher competences

- The teacher helps the students to become aware of the safe and balanced use of ICT in contrast with other leisure uses.

**Additional
changes
to the
teacher role
relevant for
secondary
school**

1. Extending approaches to teaching and methods of teaching

- The teacher facilitates different paths in the obtaining of knowledge.
- S/he presents knowledge in a more original and entertaining way.
- The teacher learns from the students.

2. Shifting the focus to student-centred instruction

- The teacher loses control over the process.
- S/he guides students to practice critical thinking.
- The teacher is more focused on the work of the individual.

3. A changed relationship between the teacher and the students

- A more relaxed relationship between the teacher and students.
- Through the use of forums and social networks, the teacher comes into better contact with students.

5. The need for new teacher competences

- S/he teaches students how to use ICT for learning.
- S/he must know how to find the appropriate dosage of ICT in class.

Figure 2: Categories of additional changes to the teacher role that are relevant either for basic or secondary school

(c) *Comparative analysis of teachers' conceptions*

The comparative analysis was conducted between the groups of teachers according to the parameter *basic or secondary school* and according to the parameter *teachers' opinions on their role in the ICT-supported FL instruction*. The tested dimensions were years of work experience and teacher attitudes as well as teachers' perception of learner attitudes toward the use of ICT in class, the frequency of the teachers' use of ICT, and teachers' ICT competence.¹

The results of the *t*-test comparing the variables of the teachers grouped by school type revealed that there was only one significantly important difference concerning the teacher role: the secondary school teachers communicate more often with their students via email than do the basic school teachers. It may be argued that the basic school teachers use face-to-face communication with pupils that are younger than students in secondary school.

The results of the *t*-test comparing the variables of Groups A and B revealed that there were basically two types of significantly important differences – in the attitude of the teachers as well as in the teachers' perception of learner attitude. The results show that the teachers from Group B are convinced of the advantages of ICT, they cannot imagine future teaching without ICT, they believe in the potential of ICT for the improvement of classroom instruction, and they are convinced that their students want ICT and are more motivated when ICT is used in class (see Table 2).

¹ The rating scale for *teachers' ICT competence* consisted of 17 items structured on a four-point scale ranging as follows: 1 (no competence), 2 (satisfactory), 3 (good), and 4 (very good competence) (Podgoršek 2016, p. 96).

| | N | Group | n | M | SD F | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------|-----|-------|---------|-----------------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------|---------|-------|
| | | | | | | P | t | df | 2P | |
| I cannot imagine future teaching without ICT. | 412 | A | 79 | 3.61 | 1.181 | 13.186 | 0.000* | 3.917 | 102.176 | 0.000 |
| | | B | 333 | 4.17 | 0.931 | | | | | |
| The students have to become acquainted with learning supported by ICT since later on they will reap professional benefits. | 411 | A | 78 | 3.67 | 0.963 | 12.878 | 0.000* | 4.235 | 97.069 | 0.000 |
| | | B | 333 | 4.16 | 0.703 | | | | | |
| ICT has the potential to improve teaching. | 414 | A | 80 | 3.95 | 0.899 | 9.018 | 0.003* | 1.526 | 102.268 | 0.130 |
| | | B | 334 | 4.11 | 0.688 | | | | | |
| Students are seeking ICT-supported instruction. | 417 | A | 80 | 3.81 | 0.873 | 9.237 | 0.003* | 2.504 | 98.904 | 0.014 |
| | | B | 337 | 4.07 | 0.623 | | | | | |
| The students are more motivated to learn a foreign language when learning with ICT. | 420 | A | 80 | 3.70 | 0.920 | 23.201 | 0.000* | 2.747 | 100.145 | 0.007 |
| | | B | 340 | 4.00 | 0.717 | | | | | |
| The students show a greater interest in the subject matter if I use authentic texts from the internet. | 419 | A | 80 | 3.66 | 0.841 | 10.732 | 0.001* | 3.316 | 107.720 | 0.001 |
| | | B | 339 | 4.00 | 0.717 | | | | | |
| The students help one another and learn from one another when learning with ICT. | 418 | A | 80 | 3.44 | 0.840 | 20.023 | 0.000* | 3.025 | 100.924 | 0.003 |
| | | B | 338 | 3.74 | 0.628 | | | | | |
| The frequency of teachers' use of ICT for class preparation. | 417 | A | 78 | 4.28 | 0.851 | 0.12 | 0.914 | 1.418 | 415 | 0.157 |
| | | B | 339 | 4.42 | 0.790 | | | | | |
| The frequency of teachers' use of ICT in class. | 418 | A | 80 | 3.94 | 0.817 | 1.738 | 0.188 | 1.787 | 416 | 0.075 |
| | | B | 338 | 4.12 | 0.830 | | | | | |
| The frequency of teachers' use of ICT in private life. | 415 | A | 77 | 4.30 | 0.974 | 0.069 | 0.739 | 0.893 | 413 | 0.373 |
| | | B | 338 | 4.40 | 0.907 | | | | | |
| Teachers' ICT competence.** | 390 | A | 75 | 42.19 | 0.974 | 0.069 | 0.739 | 0.893 | 413 | 0.373 |
| | | B | 315 | 41.18 | 0.907 | | | | | |
| Years of work experience. | 420 | A | 80 | 14.71 | 8.207 | 0.000 | 0.998 | 0.508 | 418 | 0.612 |
| | | B | 340 | 15.23 | 8.121 | | | | | |

Table 2: Comparison via t-test of the variables of Groups A and B

Legend: Group A=the teacher role did not change, B=the teacher role changed, 1 – strongly disagree, 5 – strongly agree; 1 – never, 5 – always; N, n – number of samples, M – arithmetic mean, SD – standard deviation, F – score, df – number of degrees of freedom, P – statistical significance.

* P values of 0.05 or less are considered significant.

** M values for teachers' ICT competence (41.18 and 42.19) mean that teachers estimated their ICT competence as satisfactory (however, its values are very close to 42.50, the value for good ICT competence, which ranges from 42.50 to 55.25).

The results reveal that the teachers' attitude towards the advantages of ICT for FL instruction is the most significant difference between Groups A and B. Surprisingly, there were no significant differences concerning the frequency of the teachers' use of ICT, their work experience, or the level of their ICT competence. This indicates that Group B perceives ICT as a crucial factor influencing the changes in the FL teacher role.

(d) *Model of teacher roles*

Based on the literature review in the introduction and on the results of our study, we developed a model of FL teachers' roles in ICT-supported FL that would most suit our context of face-to-face instruction including ICT-supported phases.

The model consists of 12 identified roles and corresponding tasks: (1) facilitator, manager, mentor, (2) leader, guide, (3) lecturer, information provider, (4) assistant, (5) motivator, (6) planner, (7) monitor, (8) technical supporter, (9) assessor, evaluator, (10) resource developer, (11) creator of a friendly social environment, and (12) language role model.

The frequency analysis of the words used for the roles and tasks of Group A indicate that the most often-used role-related verbs (indicating the tasks) were *direct* (3x), *guide* (4x), *work* (5x), *help* (4x), and *motivate* (3x). Group B prefers the verbs *guide* (27x), *provide knowledge* (25x), *search* (24x), *prepare* (22x), *motivate* (16x), and *help* (7x). The focus of Group A is on leading the students, while the focus of Group B lies in the preparation phase and in the teacher's role as the helping motivator during the lesson. A greater difference between the two groups occurred when the role names used were compared: the most frequently used nouns in both groups were *teacher* and *ICT*. However, after these two expected nouns in Group A, only three more nouns describing teacher roles appeared: *guide* (4x; to be understood as director), *leader* (3x), and *mentor* (2x). The diversity of the role names was much higher in Group B, where the following nouns were used: *moderator* (23x), *assistant* (22x), *transmitter* (16x), *mentor* (10x), *coordinator* (10x), *leader* (9x), *guide* (7x), *consultant* (8x), *organiser* (6x), *facilitator* (3x), and *planner* (2x). The word used for the term *facilitator* in Slovene is not yet a commonly used word, so the teachers used either the English word or several other Slovene equivalents, such as *manager*, *mentor*, and *moderator*, that describe certain aspects of the role of facilitator. The results of both the frequency analysis and the qualitative analysis (presented in Paragraph b) are presented in a variable teacher-role model in the form of a flower; each of the twelve petals stands for one role. Two flowers were designed, one for Group A and one for Group B. As seen in Figure 3, the flower for Group A presents the conceptions of the teachers who stated that their role did not change. The biggest petals for Group A indicate that the most mentioned roles, tasks, and activities are those of lecturer/information provider, facilitator/manager/mentor, and guide. Important roles are those of motivator and the social role of creating a friendly social environment. Three roles are mentioned only implicitly: monitor, resource developer, and language role model. For Group B (Figure 4), the

flower looks different: the most prevalent role by far is the facilitator/manager/mentor role, followed by the lecturer/information provider role. Often-mentioned roles are those of the planner and the motivator. Similar to Group A, some roles are not often explicitly mentioned, namely technical supporter, language role model, and creator of a friendly social environment. However, they are mentioned indirectly: “*I believe that the relationship between the students and the teachers is much more relaxed when the students realise that you are in favour of the use of the new technologies [...]*” (t99); “*The students learn autonomously; we only prepare the materials and stand aside in case some problems occur. [...]*” (t328); and “*In foreign language classes, access to authentic texts, original recordings (native speakers) [...] is very welcome [...]*” (t60). The language role model of a teacher may be losing its importance since the internet provides a lot of opportunities for authentic language input.

The biggest difference between Groups A and B is in emphasising either the lecturer (Group A) or the facilitator role (Group B). However, the differences are not big enough to indicate a totally different image of the teacher role. The size of the petals differs depending on many factors, such as the teacher’s perception of her/his role, the characteristics of her/his class, the phase of classroom instruction, or the task being conducted at the particular moment.

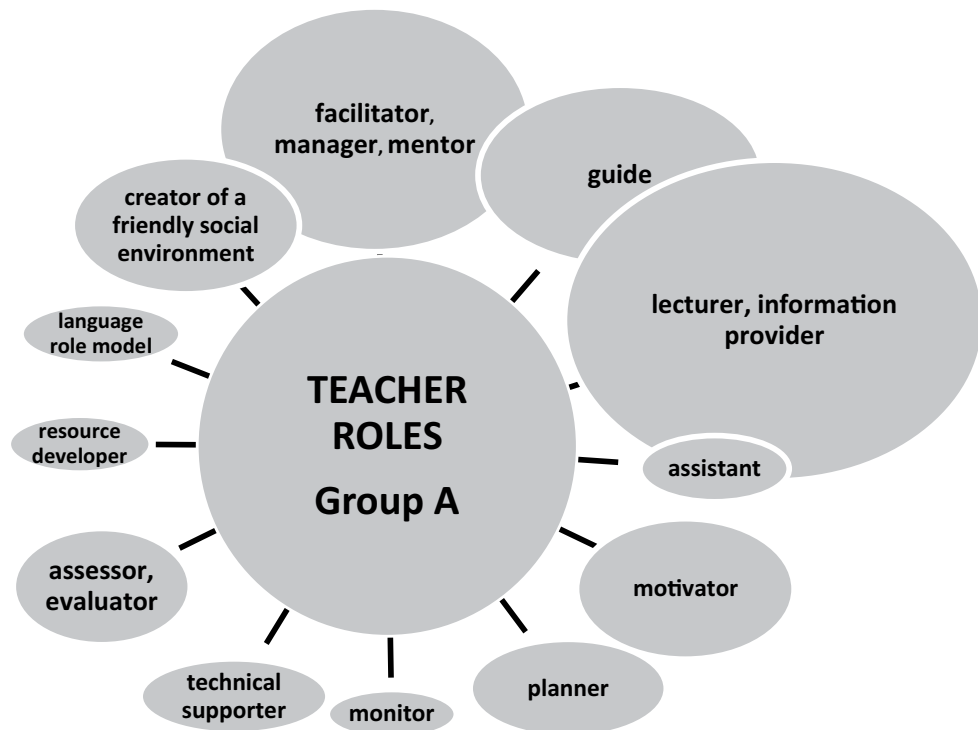


Figure 3: The model of teacher roles according to the answers of Group A (the role has not changed)

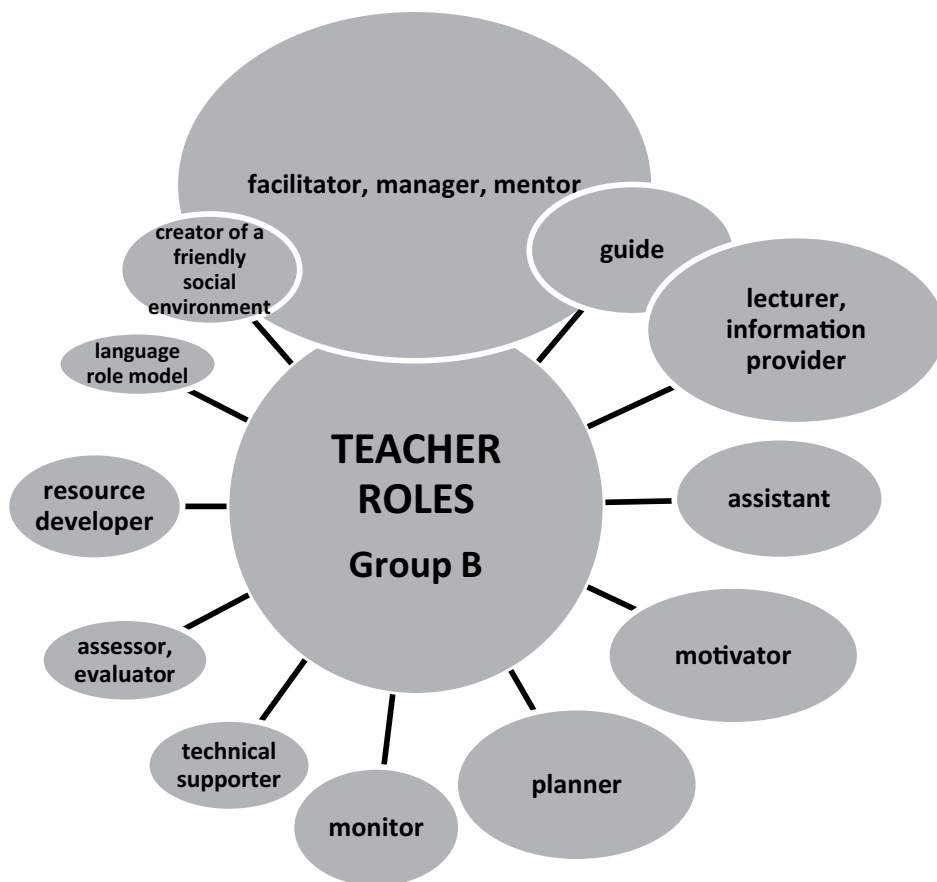


Figure 4: The model of teacher roles according to the answers of Group B (the role has changed)

Discussion and conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate teachers' conception of their role in ICT-supported FL instruction in basic and secondary education in Slovenia. Though the literature review revealed that there has been rather extensive research done on the teacher role and quite a few models presented, none of them really applied to our context of FL learning in schools. In order to get a deeper insight into the researched topic, we conducted qualitative and quantitative analyses.

The results show that about 80% of the FL teachers who participated in our study believe that the teacher role has changed. These results are consistent with previous research findings (Jimoyiannis and Komis 2007; Schulz-Zander 2005).

Group B, the teachers who stated that the teacher's role in the ICT-supported FL classroom changed compared to traditional classroom instruction, differs significantly from Group A in their positive attitude towards the advantages of ICT,

which is a crucial factor for the success of technology use (Al-Zaidiyeen, Mei, and Fook 2010; Survey of Schools 2013; Fernández Cruz and Fernández Díaz 2016). They also differed in their belief that the students are more motivated when ICT is used in class. These results coincide with those of other researchers (García-Valcárcel, Basilotta, and López 2014; Wang 2015). However, there were no significant differences regarding the teachers' ICT competence, years of work experience, and the frequency of the teachers' use of ICT.

The teachers in Group A perceive their role first as lecturer, while the teachers in Group B see theirs as facilitator. For Group A, ICT is only a tool with its advantages and disadvantages but with minimal or no influence on the traditional role of the teacher. The teachers in Group B described a shift in their teacher role as lecturer and information provider to that of a teacher who also facilitates student learning by including ICT, which contributes to a more interesting, complex, and diverse class. Furthermore, a shift towards student-centred instruction was detected, in which the teacher stands aside and facilitates. One teacher from Group A wrote a very concise argument that reflects the teachers' conception of their role regardless of whether they were in Group A or B: *"Yes and no would be my answer. The teacher is still the one who is leading the work, as before; however, better students can be more independent during their work (individualisation), while the teacher can devote more attention and time to weaker students. This contributes to the variety of classwork, and the teacher is expected to do more preparation work before the class"* (t3).

Even though 80% of the teachers believe that their role has changed, the results neither indicate any great differences nor any major shift in the FL teaching paradigm, as some other Slovenian researchers (e.g., Skela 2011) have previously reported.

Based on the literature review and on the results of our study, we developed a model of FL teacher roles in ICT-supported FL instruction. The model consists of 12 identified roles and corresponding tasks: (1) facilitator, manager, mentor, (2) guide, (3) lecturer, information provider, (4) assistant, (5) motivator, (6) planner, (7) monitor, (8) technical supporter, (9) assessor, evaluator, (10) resource developer, (11) creator of a friendly social environment, and (12) language role model. The metaphor used to present the model is a flower; each of the twelve petals stands for one role. The model can contribute to a better understanding of the teacher role and can be used in planning and designing a curriculum for FL teacher training regarding the teacher role; however, further work and other qualitative methods, such as classroom observations and interviews with teachers and students, are needed to identify the competences associated with the tasks and roles and to discuss, refine, and validate the model presented.

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VLOGA UČITELJA TUJEGA JEZIKA PRI POUKU, PODPRTEM Z IKT

Povzetek: Glavni cilj prispevka je predstaviti poglobljeno analizo pojmovanja vloge osnovnošolskih in srednješolskih učiteljev pri pouku tujih jezikov (TJ) s podporo informacijske in komunikacijske tehnologije (IKT). V Sloveniji to področje do sedaj še ni bilo raziskano, zato je cilj naše študije zapolniti to raziskovalno vrzel. S spletno anketo smo raziskali prepričanja učiteljev o spremembi njihove vloge pri poučevanju TJ s podporo IKT v primerjavi z njihovo vlogo pri tradicionalnem pouku. Rezultati kvalitativne in kvantitativne analize kažejo, da večina udeležencev meni, da se je vloga učitelja kot predavatelja in vira informacij spremenila v vlogo učitelja, ki omogoča učenje in ustvarja na učence osredotočen pouk. Za manjši delež udeležencev raziskave ostaja glavna vloga učitelja predavatelja, za njih je IKT le orodje s svojimi prednostmi in slabostmi, ki ne ali le minimalno vpliva na tradicionalno vlogo učitelja. Kljub temu, da večina udeležencev meni, da se je njihova vloga spremenila, pa rezultati ne kažejo na večji premik v paradigmi poučevanja tujih jezikov.

Ključne besede: vloga učitelja, tuji jezik, pouk tujega jezika, IKT, usposabljanje učiteljev

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