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Scoring of Essays in L1 in the Secondary School-Leaving Exam

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KLJUČNE BESEDE: esej, maturitetni izpit, sistem ocenjevanja, književna didaktika, ocenjevanje jezika
POVZETEK – V članku predstavimo primerjalno analizo devetih različnih tipov esejev, ki so del maturitetnega izpita iz materinščine ob koncu srednješolskega izobraževanja in smo jih obravnavali z vidika njihovih sistemov ocenjevanja. Z vidika ocenjevanja smo identificirali dva različna tipa esejev: na eni strani eseje, ki dodeljujejo višji odstotek točk kategoriji jezika, ki jo razumejo kot pravilno rabo slovnice, pravopisa itd.; na drugi strani pa so eseji, ki dodeljujejo nižji odstotek točk za kategorijo jezika, ki jo tudi razumejo drugače, in sicer z vidika učinkovite komunikacije, ob tem pa višji odstotek točk dodeljujejo kategorijam, povezanim z vsebino – literarnim znanjem, argumentaciji zamisli itd. Slovenski esej uvrstimo v prvi tip esejev in za izhodišče njegovih morebitnih sprememb predlagamo značilnosti esejev drugega tipa. Predlagamo poudarbo opisno-kriterijskega ocenjevanja z večjim poudarkom na literarnem znanju, argumentaciji in osebnem odzivu.

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ABSTRACT – The article is a comparative analysis of nine different types of essays as a part of the secondary school-leaving exam in L1 on a literary topic from the point of view of their scoring systems. In terms of scoring, two different types of essays have been found. On the one hand, there are essays that give a higher percentage of points in the category of language that is understood as the correct use of grammar, punctuation, etc. On the other hand, there are essays that give a lower percentage of points for the category of language that is understood differently, namely as efficient communication, and give a higher percentage of points for the categories pertaining to content – literary knowledge, argumentation, etc. The Slovenian essay is categorised as the first type; possible changes are proposed for it to be based on the characteristics of the second type of essay. In other words, the use of a descriptive-criteria scoring system is proposed, with a stronger emphasis on literary knowledge, argumentation and personal response.

1 Introduction

The essay as part of the upper secondary school-leaving exam in the first language (L1) is a written assignment, most often on a literary topic, that takes place at the end of upper secondary education. It is a metatext (a text about a literary text) or the candidate's text about their reading or communication with literature, as defined by Krakar Vogel (2008, p. 359). In the essay as part of the Slovenian upper secondary school-leaving exam, the student demonstrates not only their knowledge of the given literary work(s), but also their general literacy, the competence to create a coherent text and the ability to observe, experience, analyse, explain and substantiate, compare, evaluate and actualise literary works (Ambrož, 2015, p. 210). The fundamental goal of teaching literature as part of the classes of Slovenian as L1 at the upper secondary level is the development of a cultured reader that experiences literature deeply (cf. Krakar Vo-

gel, 2004, p. 72), knows the literary system, and deepens their literary knowledge (cf. Žbogar, 2010, p. 425; Krakar Vogel and Blažič, 2012, pp. 12–15). Reading literature, especially classical works, develops the inter- and intracultural dialogue: the mutual recognition and understanding of one's own cultural heritage and the cultural heritage of others in appreciating the differences between cultures (Žbogar, 2018, p. 84). These objectives should therefore be included in the essay on a literary topic in the upper secondary school-leaving examination. In this way, we can cultivate the students' attitude towards books, which depends, among other things, on their experiences with books, the awareness that fiction is important, their emotional connection with reading, the search for values in books, their interest in books, and a developed positive attitude towards them (Linnik and Barna, 2017, p. 33).

Since the introduction of the general and external upper secondary school-leaving examination in Slovenia in 1995, various proposals for modifying the essay as part of this exam have emerged. With regular evaluations performed by researchers of literary didactics in collaboration with teachers, the essay has developed over the years. Čokl and Bucik (2016, p. 16) proposed a new scoring system for the Slovenian essay: a descriptive-criteria scoring system in which the essay rubric includes a few criteria and each of them is described in the rating scale that identifies different levels of performance. The proposed new scoring system for the Slovenian essay was not explained in detail in terms of the criteria it should include and the proportions of points that should be given in different categories. In this article we propose some further improvements to the scoring system of the Slovenian essay based on our research. We present the results of a comparative analysis of nine different European essays in the upper secondary school-leaving exam. Based on the results, the existing scoring system of the Slovenian essay model is evaluated and some modifications are proposed based on the examples from other European countries.

2 Scoring system of the Slovenian essay in the upper secondary school-leaving exam

The essay in Slovenia as part of the upper secondary school-leaving exam in L1 contributes 50% of all points in the upper secondary school-leaving exam in the Slovenian language. The evaluation of the essay consists of two categories: the first is the category of the essay's content that earns the student 60% of points and the second is the category of the essay's language that earns the student 40% of the points of the essay assignment. The evaluator scores the essay assignment for the secondary school-leaving exam in Slovenian as L1 by first evaluating the written product using the criteria for the holistic scoring system and placing it on a scale from 1 to 5. Then, an analytical evaluation of the content and language takes place and, finally, the evaluator compares this assessment with the overall assessment. If the scores differ significantly, the scoring of the written product is repeated (Krakar Vogel and Šimenc, 2000, p. 26). The way in which the essay is evaluated is important because it influences the preparation of students in class. Borstner (2012, p. 42) states that the only knowledge that the student finds worth acquiring is the knowledge that is evaluated.

3 Research method: a comparative analysis of different essay models

The comparative analysis includes essays as part of the upper secondary school-leaving exam in L1 from various European countries: Slovenia, Austria, Italy, Croatia, Hungary, England, France, Switzerland and Russia. We also discuss the International Baccalaureate. The analysis thus covers nine different models, which are comparable to the Slovenian upper secondary school-leaving exam in L1 because they are essay parts of the upper secondary school-leaving exam in the mother tongue, which foresee a literary theme, i.e., writing about literary texts. In addition, they belong to the external secondary school-leaving exam and determine the completion of secondary education, which corresponds to the Slovenian secondary school programme.

The comparative analysis includes the following examples of essays from the above-mentioned European countries:

- The Slovenian essay in the upper secondary school-leaving exam in L1;
- The Croatian essay called “comparative analysis of two or more texts”, the interpretive and discursive Croatian essay in the upper secondary school-leaving exam in L1;
- The Hungarian essay in the upper secondary school-leaving exam in L1, which includes the analysis of literary texts;
- The optional Italian assignments on a literary topic (type A and B essay assignments) in the upper secondary school-leaving exam in L1;
- The French essay called “the comment and response to the issue” in the upper secondary school-leaving exam in L1;
- The English essay within the literature module in the upper secondary school-leaving exam in L1;
- The Russian essay on a literary topic in the upper secondary school-leaving exam in L1;
- The optional essay on a literary topic in the Swiss upper secondary school-leaving exam in L1;
- The essay at the International Baccalaureate upper secondary school-leaving exam in Slovenian as Language A (mother tongue).

The comparative analysis includes both the essay questions and the scoring systems of the essays that were conducted over the last six years when no major changes in the essay models took place.

The criteria of the comparative analysis are based on the research questions: What scoring system do the essays use? What are the criteria in the essays which use the descriptive-criteria scoring system? What percentage of points is given in the scoring system for the categories of language on the one hand and for the category of content on the other?

4 Results of the comparative analysis

Listed below are the results of the comparative analysis of European essays from the point of view of:

- The scoring systems used;
- The criteria used in the essays with the descriptive-criteria scoring system;
- The percentage of points given for the categories of language on the one hand and for the category of content on the other.

Scoring systems for the essay assignment

There are four scoring systems for essay assignments:

- The holistic scoring system: focused on the general impression of the candidate's achievement;
- The descriptive scoring system: based on a few chosen criteria, the score is described according to the expected knowledge standards;
- The analytical scoring system: the essay is broken down according to the requirements of the essay rubric;
- The descriptive criteria scoring system: the essay rubric includes a few criteria and each of them is described in the rating scale that identifies different levels of performance (Čokl and Bucik, 2016, p. 16; cf. Čokl and Cankar, 2008).

The following table (Table 1) shows which scoring system is used by each analysed essay.

Table 1

Scoring Systems for the Essay Assignment

<i>Essay (country)</i>	<i>Scoring system</i>		
	<i>Holistic scoring system</i>	<i>Analytical scoring system</i>	<i>Descriptive-criteria scoring system</i>
Slovenia	×	×	
Austria			×
Croatia		×	
Hungary			×
Italy			×
France		×	×
Great Britain			×
Russia		×	×
International Baccalaureate			×

The results show that most of the essays use the descriptive-criteria scoring system and that the Slovenian essay is the only one that uses a combination of the holistic and analytical scoring systems. To eliminate the shortcomings of the current scoring system in the Slovenian essay, Čokl and Bucik (2016, p. 15) propose the introduction of the descriptive-criteria scoring system. They argue that this would solve the problems of the current scoring system in the Slovenian essay: the inadequate ratio between the proportion of the score for content and the proportion of the score for language; the 50-point grading scale, which in their opinion is too extensive; the unfounded determination of the scoring system; the unreliable re-evaluation of essays; the unfounded dispersion of positive marks; deducting the same number of points for unequal language skills, etc. (Bucik and Čokl, 2016, p. 15).

But what are the descriptive criteria that the European essays use and which could be integrated into the Slovenian essay-scoring system? The descriptive criteria in the analysed essays refer to the content of the essay on the one hand and the structure, language, style and spelling of the text on the other. We found that in the individual essay rubric this descriptive criteria are included separately or together, and that in essays where there is no specific category for structure, language, style and spelling, such as the Italian and French essays, these aspects are partly included in the criteria of content that may include understanding the essay assignment (e.g., in Austria); taking into account the source text; incorporating literary and general knowledge into the essay (e.g., in Hungary); and argumentation (e.g., in Russia).

The descriptive criteria can also refer to the candidate's personal approach and response (e.g., in Italy and England) or even to the content of the essay, e.g., the French model contains criteria related to the inclusion of examples from the text in the textual analysis and the demonstration of a complex reading and artistic culture (cf. *Textes officiels*, 2016). The International Baccalaureate essay, on the other hand, includes a description of the literary conventions of the genre among the criteria (cf. Paper 2 HL – Essay, 2018).

Scoring of language and content

In addition to the fact that the essays included in the comparative analysis differ in the type of scoring system and the criteria used, they also differ in the proportion of points allocated to the categories of language, style, spelling and structure on the one hand, and to categories relating to content on the other. The following table (Table 2) shows what percentage of points each of the essays included in the comparative analysis assigns to the categories related to language on the one hand, and to the categories related to content on the other.

Table 2*Scoring of Language and Content*

<i>Essay (country)</i>	<i>Percentage of points by categories</i>	
	<i>Language, style, spelling and structure</i>	<i>Content and argumentation</i>
Slovenia	40%	60%
Austria	75%	25%
Croatia	50%	50%
Hungary	50%	50%
Italy	50%	50%
France	10%	90%
Great Britain	25%	75%
Russia	58%	42%
International Baccalaureate	20%	80%

We found that the Slovenian essay assigns 40% of the points to language, style, spelling and structure, and 60% of the points to the content. The Italian, Croatian and Hungarian essays assign 50% of points to both of the above-mentioned categories, whereas the Russian essay assigns 58% to the categories of style, spelling and structure. The Austrian essay model assigns the highest proportion of points among the considered models to the categories of style, spelling and structure, namely 75%, while it allocates 25% of points to the content. The lowest proportion of points for language, style, spelling and structure is assigned by the French essay at around 10%, followed by the International Baccalaureate at 20% and the English essay at 25% for the language-related category.

5 Discussion

With the comparative analysis of the scoring types of nine different essay models in the upper secondary school-leaving exam in L1 that include a literary topic, we found two different methods of grading essays: some essay assignments allocate a higher proportion of points to the categories of grammar, style, spelling, and structure than to content-related categories; in others more points are assigned to categories related to content. We found that in the first type of essays language is assessed from the point of view of correctness of grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc.; while in the second type of essays, this category is understood differently, that is from the point of view of the communicativeness of language: a clear, comprehensible presentation of content and an effective, coherent and organised presentation of ideas. These two types of scoring models imply different descriptions of the category of language: the first type of essay assesses language from the point of view of communication; on the other hand, there are essays

that describe language from the point of view of its correctness and errors. For example, in the International Baccalaureate, as the first type of essay, clarity, diversity and accuracy, appropriateness of register, style and terminology (Paper 2 HL, 2018), as well as organisation and coherence of the presentation of ideas in the written product (Paper 1 HL, 2018) are part of the scoring categories. For example, the Russian essay as the second type includes adherence to spelling, language and punctuation rules (Ruski, 2016, pp. 5–6). The definition of what constitutes effective use of language in essays varies; it is important because it has a direct impact on the essay scoring and consequently on the preparation for the upper secondary school-leaving exam in the classroom.

The Slovenian essay in the secondary school-leaving exam in L1 includes the scoring of grammar, style and structure, so it is a type-two essay. More precisely, the scoring system of the Slovenian essay includes spelling, textual structure, coherence, the use of appropriate and rich vocabulary and literary terms, the way the initial topic is treated, and the use of argumentation. Moreover, the Slovenian essay evaluates the category of language by deducting points according to specific types of grammatical and other errors. Thus, the points are not a consequence of using language effectively, however, you lose them for using it incorrectly, which is the only such example among the essays discussed. We found that compared to the Slovenian model, some of the analysed essay models that are type-one essays give a lower percentage of points for the category of language (from 10% to 25%). If the Slovenian essay gave a lower percentage of points to the category of language as those essays do, it could give a higher percentage of points to the category of content, literary knowledge, argumentation of ideas, and the interpretation of the emotional and other dimensions of the given literary works.

The Slovenian essay is the only one of the discussed models that uses both holistic and analytical scoring systems. The evaluator first evaluates the content analytically, according to the requirements of each essay question, which means that the possible correct answers are broken down and scored accordingly. A similar breakdown of possible essay answers as in the Slovenian model can be found in the Austrian model, but it is only a support for the evaluator in evaluating the content according to descriptive criteria and is not connected to the analytical criteria. Essay assignments that appear in the Croatian essay are also scored analytically, but the content is evaluated using general criteria, e.g., the structure of argumentation, the description of the reading experience (Ispitni, 2018/2019), not with criteria linked to the concrete content of the essay. Using the comparative analysis, we found that, except for Croatia and Slovenia, the examined European essays in the upper secondary school-leaving exam in L1 use the descriptive-criteria scoring system where the essay rubric includes a few criteria and each of them is described in the rating scale that identifies different levels of performance (Čokl and Bucik, 2016, p. 16; cf. Čokl and Cankar, 2008). Because of the common use and efficiency of this scoring system, which has been proposed for the Slovenian essay before (Čokl and Bucik, 2016, p. 16; Čokl and Cankar, 2008), we discuss possible descriptive criteria that the Slovenian essay could implement. Examples can be found in the English and French essays: the English essay includes descriptive criteria knowledge (the ability to respond to literary texts of three central genres: lyric poetry, epics and dramas, of different types and from different cultures); communication (clear wording of knowledge, understanding and insights that correspond to the literary theme); understanding (understanding how the author's choices of form, structure and language

affect the meaning of the text); personal response (forming informed and independent opinions and judgments about literary texts) (Scheme, 2017); researching literary texts from the point of view of different interpretations (A Level, 2014, p. 6). The French essay includes the following descriptive criteria: the development of a relevant problem; a large number of in-depth examples that clarify the topic; diverse examples that refer to texts from the corpus or outside it and their commentary; thinking that fully responds to the given problem; a broad reading and artistic culture.

In several studies, Čokl (2013, 2016) and colleagues (cf. Čokl and Cankar, 2008; Čokl and Bucik, 2016) argue that the proportion of points in the Slovenian essay which is intended for assessing the language is too high, proposing that language should not account for more than 25% of the points (Čokl, 2016). Čokl and Cankar (2008, p. 56) argue that because 40% of points in the Slovenian essay are aimed at the category of language it overshadows the category related to content and literary knowledge. One possible way of modifying the Slovenian essay is a lower proportion of the language score which would give more weight to the categories related to the content of the essay. Furthermore, in the analysed European essays the content is not only understood in the sense of the predetermined content of the essay (i.e., what information the essay assignment should contain) as in the Slovenian essay, but also in the sense of the organisation of the content with argumentation, substantiation of claims, demonstration of literary knowledge, etc. The essay as a part of the Slovenian secondary school-leaving exam is the only model included in the comparative analysis that is based on literary works which are known in advance. In other models the candidates do not know on which literary works their essays will be based so they have to study a wider literary corpus. Moreover, in the Slovenian essay model the scoring precisely specifies the content of the essay assignment, but in the other analysed European essays the criteria connected to the content are linked to the candidate's competence of argumentation of their own ideas and their literary knowledge. Their essay rubrics include categories that emphasise literary knowledge, argumentation, a personal approach to interpretation, and a reflexion of the values in literary works that could serve as an example for possible changes of the Slovenian scoring system: taking into account the given literary work and integrating literary and general knowledge (Hungary); argumentation (Russia); the personal approach of the candidate (Italy, Great Britain); the integration of examples from the literary work into textual analysis (France); the description of the literary conventions of the genre (International Baccalaureate). With the wider inclusion of knowledge about the literary system, the argumentation of ideas and the personal response, the Slovenian essay would more efficiently reach the principal learning objective of literary classes at the secondary school level: the evolution of the cultured reader with a well-developed literary competence – the competence to receive literary texts (cf. Grosman, 2004; Župan Sosič, 2011a, 2011b; Zajc, 2019; Žbogar, 2020). It is the competence to experience, analyse and critically read literary works, create and recreate literature, and recognise its fictionality, aesthetic, ethical and cognitive effects (Žbogar, 2015, p. 1221). The cultured reader has a positive attitude towards reading, is motivated to experience a variety of literary works in depth, and knows how to articulate their content, form, their textual and intertextual components with the help of his/her knowledge (Krakar Vogel, 2004, p. 72). He or she reads and interprets literature by knowing, understanding and valuing the different parts of the literary system as part of the socio-cultural system

(Krakar Vogel and Blažič, 2012, p. 15). The reflexion of values such as success, solidarity, responsibility, equality, honesty and personal growth are increasingly important in contemporary education in Slovenia (Drobnič et al., 2021, p. 123) and literature enables the reader to explore different values through fictional worlds. The cultured reader also gets to know the context of the creation of literature and thus gains literary knowledge, which is also foreseen by the curriculum for secondary schools (Žbogar, 2018).

In the article, we present some options for changing the scoring system of the Slovenian essay in the secondary school-leaving exam in L1 based on examples from other European countries; however, we point out that any modifications to this essay are complex. The possible changes we identify in this paper are connected to the evaluation process and to the essay assignments, and should be evaluated within the framework of the outlined direction of the possible renovation of the Slovenian essay as a whole. These are the areas that will need to be addressed in future research, as changing a certain element of the essay consequently causes new changes in its other aspects. All innovations must be thoroughly thought out and coordinated with the central goal of literature classes at the secondary school level.

Dr. Ivana Zajc

Ocenjevanje esejev na maturitetnem izpitu iz materinščine

Od uvedbe splošnega eksternega maturitetnega izpita v Sloveniji leta 1995 so se pojavljali različni predlogi za spremembo eseja kot dela tega izpita pri predmetu slovenščina. Z rednimi evalvacijami raziskovalcev s področja slovenske literarne didaktike in ob sodelovanju učiteljev se je podoba maturitetnega eseja pri slovenščini skozi leta spreminjala, sistem ocenjevanja pa je ostal enak. Navodila za ocenjevanje maturitetnih esejev pri slovenščini so bila ob uvedbi splošne mature v Sloveniji sprva analitična, nato še komplementarno celostna, kar je oblika navodil, ki se je ohranila do danes. Esejsko nalogo pri maturi iz slovenščine ocenjevalec, kot navajata Krakar Vogel in Šimenc (2000, str. 26), točkuje tako, da pisni izdelek najprej oceni z merili za celostno ocenjevanje ter ga uvrsti na lestvico od 1 do 5. Zatem analitično oceni vsebino in jezik, to oceno pa na koncu primerja s celostno oceno. Če se oceni v veliki meri razhajata, točkovanje pisnega izdelka ponovi. Čokl in Bucik (2016, str. 16) sta predlagala nov sistem točkovanja maturitetnega eseja, in sicer opisno-kriterijski sistem točkovanja, pri katerem ocenjevalni obrazec vključuje kriterije, ki so opisani v ocenjevalni lestvici z različnimi stopnjami. V članku se ukvarjamo z vprašanjem, katere kriterije naj bi opisno-kriterijski sistem točkovanja slovenskega eseja vseboval in kakšna naj bi bila razmerja točk za različne kategorije – na eni strani kategorije, povezane z jezikom, na drugi tiste, povezane z vsebino esejske naloge. Na to vprašanje odgovorimo na podlagi rezultatov primerjalne analize ocenjevanja devetih evropskih esejev na literarno temo pri materinščini, ki so del eksterne mature ob koncu srednješolskega izobraževanja, ki ustreza slovenski gimnaziji. Primerjalna analiza vključuje eseje v okviru maturitetnega izpita iz različnih evropskih držav: Slovenije, Avstrije, Italije, Hrvaške, Madžarske, Anglije, Francije, Švice in Rusije, pa tudi mednarodne mature. Analiza tako zajema

devet različnih modelov, ki so primerljivi z maturitetnim esejem pri slovenščini kot materinščini v Sloveniji, ker gre za esejske dele mature iz maternega jezika, ki predvidevajo literarno temo, to je pisanje o književnosti, so del eksterne mature in zaznamujejo zaključek srednješolskega izobraževanja v programu, ki ustreza slovenskemu gimnazij-skemu programu. Primerjalna analiza evropskih maturitetnih esejev je temeljila na naslednjih kriterijih: sistemi točkovanja, ki jih eseji uporabljajo; tipi opisnih kriterijev, ki jih uporabljajo eseji z opisno-kriterijskim tipom točkovanja; odstotek točk za kategorijo jezika na eni strani in kategorijo vsebine na drugi. Na podlagi rezultatov primerjalne analize esejev v članku izoblikujemo predloge za možne modifikacije slovenskega eseja pri slovenščini na splošni maturi in predstavimo primere dobre prakse. Izhodišče za predlagane spremembe je bil temeljni cilj pouka književnosti, tj. vzgoja kultiviranega bralca, ki ima visoko razvito literarno zmožnost kot eno temeljnih zmožnosti, ki jih razvijamo pri pouku književnosti in vključuje književno in bralno kulturo (Žbogar, 2020, str. 38–39). Gre za zmožnost branja in interpretacije književnih besedil (prim. Krakar Vogel, 2004; Grosman, 2004; Zupan Sosič, 2011a; Zupan Sosič, 2011b; Krakar Vogel in Blažič, 2012; Zajc, 2019; Zenuni, 2021; Žbogar, 2020).

Evropske modele ocenjevanja esejev smo glede na rezultate primerjalne analize razdelili v dve skupini: prvi dodeljujejo višji odstotek točk v okviru kriterijev, ki so povezani z jezikom (pravopis, skladnja ipd.), drugi pa dodeljujejo višji odstotek točk v okviru kriterijev, ki so povezani z vsebino eseja, književnim – literarnoteoretskim in literarnozgodovinskim – znanjem, argumentacijo ipd. Poleg tega omenjena tipa ocenjevanja kategorijo jezika razumeta različno: prvi z vidika pravopisne, slogovne ipd. pravilnosti, drugi z vidika komunikativnosti, jasnosti in učinkovitosti jezikovne rabe. Implicitne opredelitve kategorij v ocenjevalnih obrazcih maturitetnih esejev so pomembne, ker povratno vplivajo na priprave na pisanje eseja in širše na pouk slovenščine na gimnaziji. Slovenski maturitetni esej spada v prvi tip esejev in je edini med analiziranimi, pri katerem se točke za določene pravopisne ipd. napake odštevajo. V primerjavi s slovenskim esejem evropski eseji drugega tipa dodeljujejo nižji odstotek točk (od 10 do 25 %) kategoriji jezika. Slovenski esej 40 % točk pripiše jeziku, slogu, črkovanju in zgradbi ter 60 % točk vsebini, medtem ko italijanski, hrvaški in madžarski esej pripišejo obema omenjenima kategorijama 50 % točk, ruski esej pa kategorijam sloga, pravopisa in strukture dodeljuje 58 % točk. Avstrijski esej kategorijam sloga, pravopisa in strukture pripisuje največji delež točk med obravnavanimi eseji, in sicer 75 %, medtem ko za vsebino namenja 25 % točk. Najnižji delež točk za jezik, slog, pravopis in strukturo predvidi francoski esej, in sicer približno 10 % točk, sledita mu mednarodna matura z 20 % točk in angleški esej s 25 % točk. Če bi pri slovenskem esejem zmanjšali delež točk, ki jih lahko kandidat prejme znotraj kategorije jezika, bi lahko večjo težo pri skupni oceni maturitetnega eseja doprinesla vsebina eseja, ki je povezana s kategorijami književnega znanja, argumentacije lastnih zamisli, osebnega odziva kandidata itd.

Slovenski esej je edini od obravnavanih esejev, ki uporablja tako celostni kot tudi analitični sistem točkovanja. Ocenjevalec vsebino najprej analitično ovrednoti glede na zahteve posameznega opisnega vprašanja, kar pomeni, da možne pravilne odgovore razdeli in ustrezno točkuje. Podobno razčlenitev možnih esejskih odgovorov kot v slovenskem modelu najdemo tudi v avstrijskem modelu, vendar gre le za oporo ocenjevalcu pri ocenjevanju vsebine po opisnih kriterijih in ni neposredno povezana z analitičnimi kriteriji kot pri slovenskem esejem. Esejske naloge, ki se pojavljajo v hrvaškem esejem, se

točkujejo tudi analitično, vsebina pa se ocenjuje po splošnih kriterijih, npr. struktura argumentacije, opis bralne izkušnje (Ispitni, 2018/2019), in ne s kriteriji, vezanimi na konkretno vsebino eseja. S primerjalno analizo smo ugotovili, da z izjemo hrvaškega in slovenskega obravnavani evropski eseji na maturi uporabljajo opisne kriterije, ki so povezani z ocenjevalno lestvico, ki identificira različne stopnje uspešnosti (Čokl in Bucik, 2016, str. 16; prim. Čokl in Cankar, 2008). Zaradi pogoste uporabe in učinkovitosti tega sistema točkovanja, ki so ga za slovenski esej raziskovalci že predlagali (Čokl in Bucik, 2016, str. 16; Čokl in Cankar, 2008), se ta model ocenjevanja kaže kot možna modifikacija slovenskega eseja na maturi, vendar raziskovalci doslej niso podali konkretnih predlogov opisnih kriterijev, ki bi jih uporabili. Primere opisnih kriterijev, ki bi jih lahko implementirali v slovenski esej, najdemo v angleških in francoskih esejih: angleški esej med drugim vključuje merilo vključevanja književnega znanja, kandidatovega razumevanja, kako avtorjeve izbire oblike, zgradbe in jezika vplivajo na pomen besedila, pa tudi njegovega osebnega odzivanja (oblikovanje ozaveščenih in neodvisnih mnenj in sodb o literarnih besedilih) (Scheme, 2017) ter raziskovanja literarnih besedil z vidika različnih interpretacij (A Level, 2014, str. 6). Francoski esej vključuje naslednja merila za opisne kriterije: relevantno soočanje z zastavljenim problemom, številčni poglobljeni primeri, ki pojasnjujejo tematiko, raznoliki primeri, ki se nanašajo na besedila iz korpusa ali zunaj njega, komentar, ki v celoti odgovarja na dani problem, široko bralno in umetniško kulturo (cf. *Textes officiels*, 2016). Slovenski esej je edini izmed analiziranih, pri katerem so literarna dela, o katerih učenci pišejo, znana vnaprej, pri drugih evropskih esejih pa kandidati s tem niso vnaprej seznanjeni in se pripravljajo na podlagi širšega korpusa literarnih besedil, kriteriji ocenjevanja teh esejev pa ob tem izpostavijo književno znanje, argumentacijo in osebni pristop k problemu. Med primeri dobre prakse in učinkovitih opisnih kriterijev, ki bi jih ob morebitnih spremembah lahko vključili v ocenjevalni obrazec slovenskega eseja, so: uporaba književnega in splošnega znanja (madžarski esej), zmožnost argumentacije (ruski esej), osebni pristop kandidata (italijanski in britanski esej), vključevanje primerov iz literarnega dela v besedilno analizo odlomka (francoski esej), opis literarnih konvencij žanra (esej na mednarodni maturi). Z večjim poudarkom na književnem znanju kot poznavanju literarnega sistema, argumentaciji lastnih zamisli in osebnem odzivu bi slovenski maturitetni esej učinkoviteje dosegal osrednji cilj gimnazijskega pouka književnosti pri predmetu slovenščina: vzgojo kultiviranega bralca, ki ima visoko razvito literarno zmožnost (prim. Grosman, 2004; Zupan Sosič, 2011a; Zupan Sosič, 2011b; Zajc, 2019; Žbogar, 2020). Gre za zmožnost doživljanja, analiziranja in kritičnega branja literarnih del, ustvarjanja in poustvarjanja literature ter prepoznavanja njene fikcionalnosti, estetskih, etičnih in spoznavnih učinkov (Žbogar, 2015, str. 1221). Kultivirani bralec ima do branja pozitiven odnos, je motiviran za poglobljeno doživljanje najrazličnejših literarnih del in zna s svojim znanjem ubesediti njihovo vsebino, obliko, njihove besedilne in medbesedilne sestavine (Krakar Vogel, 2004, str. 72). Literaturo bere in interpretira s poznavanjem, razumevanjem in vrednotenjem različnih delov literarnega sistema kot dela družbeno-kulturnega sistema (Krakar Vogel in Blažič, 2012, str. 15). Kultivirani bralec spoznava tudi kontekst literarnega ustvarjanja in tako pridobi literarno znanje, ki ga predvideva tudi učni načrt za gimnazije (Žbogar, 2008). Čeprav v članku predstavimo nekaj možnosti sprememb ocenjevalnih obrazcev slovenskega maturitetnega eseja na podlagi konstruktivnih tujih zgledov, pa hkrati opozarjamo, da so vsakršne modifikacije maturitetnega eseja kompleksne in zahtevajo tako spremembe ocenjevalnih obrazcev, ki jih predlaga-

mo v pričujočem prispevku, kot tudi procesa ocenjevanja in vzporedne spremembe esej-skih nalog v okviru začrtane smeri prenove eseja kot celote, kar vključuje med drugim tudi učinkovito usposabljanje učiteljev za pripravo dijakov na pisanje esejske naloge in njeno ocenjevanje. To so področja, ki jih bo potrebno obravnavati v prihodnjih razi-skavah, saj sprememba določenega elementa maturitetnega eseja posledično povzroča nove spremembe v njegovih drugih vidikih, vsakršne novosti pa morajo biti temeljito preiščljene in usklajene z osrednjim ciljem pouka književnosti na gimnaziji in učnim načrtom za slovenščino v gimnazijskih programih.

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