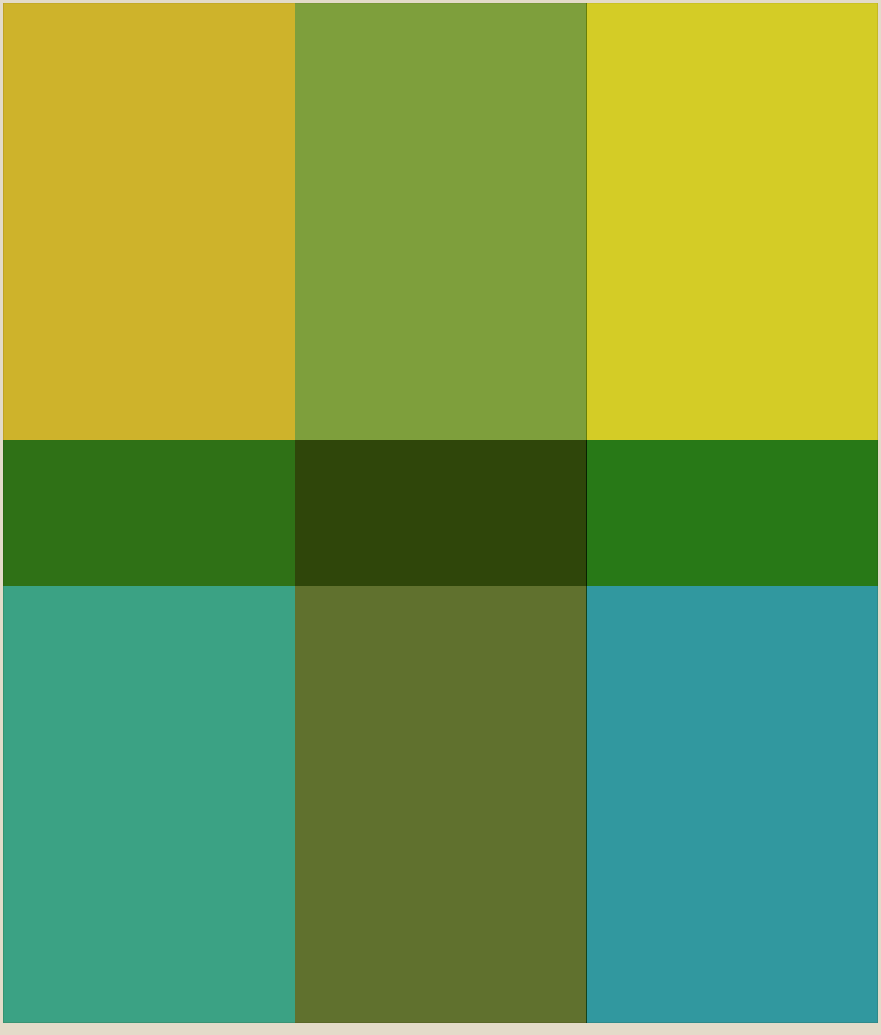
C·E·P·S *Journal*

Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal
Revija Centra za študij edukacijskih strategij

Vol.5 | No1 | Year 2015



Revija Centra za študij edukacijskih strategij
Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal
issn 2232-2647 (online edition)
issn 1855-9719 (printed edition)
Publication frequency: 4 issues per year
Subject: Teacher Education, Educational Science
Publisher: Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia
Managing editors: Mira Metljak / **English language editing:** Neville Hall; one Varia paper Terry T. Jackson / **Slovene language editing:** Tomaž Petek / **Cover and layout design:** Roman Ražman / **Typeset:** Igor Cerar / **Print:** Tiskarna Formatisk, d.o.o. Ljubljana

C·E·P·S *Journal*

Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal
Revija Centra za študij edukacijskih strategij

The CEPS Journal is an open-access, peer-reviewed journal devoted to publishing research papers in different fields of education, including scientific.

Aims & Scope

The CEPS Journal is an international peer-reviewed journal with an international board. It publishes original empirical and theoretical studies from a wide variety of academic disciplines related to the field of Teacher Education and Educational Sciences; in particular, it will support comparative studies in the field. Regional context is stressed but the journal remains open to researchers and contributors across all European countries and worldwide. There are four issues per year. Issues are focused on specific areas but there is also space for non-focused articles and book reviews.

About the Publisher

The University of Ljubljana is one of the largest universities in the region (see www.uni-lj.si) and its Faculty of Education (see www.pef.uni-lj.si), established in 1947, has the leading role in teacher education and education sciences in Slovenia. It is well positioned in regional and European cooperation programmes in teaching and research. A publishing unit oversees the dissemination of research results and informs the interested public about new trends in the broad area of teacher education and education sciences; to date, numerous monographs and publications have been published, not just in Slovenian but also in English.

In 2001, the Centre for Educational Policy Studies (CEPS; see http://ceps.pef.uni-lj.si) was established within the Faculty of Education to build upon experience acquired in the broad reform of the national educational system during the period of social transition in the 1990s, to upgrade expertise and to strengthen international cooperation. CEPS has established a number of fruitful contacts, both in the region – particularly with similar institutions in the countries of the Western Balkans – and with interested partners in EU member states and worldwide.

~

Revija Centra za študij edukacijskih strategij je mednarodno recenzirana revija z mednarodnim uredniškim odborom in s prostim dostopom. Namenjena je objavljanju člankov s področja izobraževanja učiteljev in edukacijskih ved.

Cilji in namen

Revija je namenjena obravnavanju naslednjih področij: poučevanje, učenje, vzgoja in izobraževanje, socialna pedagogika, specialna in rehabilitacijska pedagogika, predšolska pedagogika, edukacijske politike, supervizija, poučevanje slovenskega jezika in književnosti, poučevanje matematike, računalništva, naravoslovja in tehnike, poučevanje družboslovja in humanistike, poučevanje na področju umetnosti, visokošolsko izobraževanje in izobraževanje odraslih. Poseben poudarek bo namenjen izobraževanju učiteljev in spodbujanju njihovega profesionalnega razvoja.

V reviji so objavljeni znanstveni prispevki, in sicer teoretični prispevki in prispevki, v katerih so predstavljeni rezultati kvantitavnih in kvalitativnih empiričnih raziskav. Še posebej poudarjen je pomen komparativnih raziskav.

Revija izide štirikrat letno. Številke so tematsko opredeljene, v njih pa je prostor tudi za netematske prispevke in predstavitve ter recenzije novih publikacij.

Contents

Varia

Reviews

Editorial

"We can measure the ethical level of each society by how the society cares for those who are handicapped or vulnerable. Moreover, the level of social maturity is determined by the place and role taken by the handicapped in the society" (Lopez Melero, p. 132).

The level of maturity of each society is reflected in its care for individuals who, one way or another, are in danger of social exclusion. Two tendencies can be observed in the development of human rights. The first is evident in the universality of rights, in that all people, irrespective of their race, gender, social position or religious beliefs, have the same rights. The second tendency is evident in the expansion and more precise definition of the rights of people whose rights can quickly be threatened. This includes the rights of women, children, prisoners and people with special needs. All declarations link inclusion with fundamental human rights. The concept of inclusion initiates new ways of thinking that advocate life without exclusion. Such a concept of inclusion emphasises a fundamental right of the individual, the right to establishing relationships with others. This opens up philosophical, legal, political, conceptual and professional questions regarding how to conceptualise inclusion in various contexts and, even more importantly, how to realise inclusion in everyday life.

The present edition presents a diverse selection of topics that open a range of questions regarding inclusion in New Zealand, America, Poland and Slovenia. The diversity of the topics, which cover various problems of different age groups, demonstrates the multifaceted nature of the question of inclusion, which requires numerous steps from concept to quality realisation.

In an article entitled *Inclusive Education is a Multi-Faced Concept*, David Mitchell, an internationally recognised expert in the field of inclusion, takes as his point of departure the fact that the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons places the idea of inclusion in the foreground of education throughout the world. The author understands the concept of inclusion in a much broader sense than simply the inclusion of children in the classroom; inclusion in school means a philosophy, a concept that embraces the entire school, its climate, curriculum and relationships. Inclusion conceived in this way is, as the author states, a multifaceted concept that must satisfy numerous criteria – vision, placement, instruction, support, assistance, etc. – and can certainly no longer be conceived purely in terms of placement. In his article, David Mitchell presents a model with indicators that can aid the planning and evaluation of the quality of inclusive education.

The article by Marija Kavkler, Milena Košak Babuder and Lidija Magajne, entitled *Inclusive Education for Children with Specific Learning Difficulties:*

Analysis of Opportunities and Barriers in Inclusive Education in Slovenia, focuses on the inclusion of children with specific learning difficulties in Slovenia. In spite of their average and above average cognitive abilities, these children frequently achieve lower educational outcomes and are often socially excluded. The authors analyse the influence of policy, legislation and practice on the inclusion of children with specific learning difficulties. In Slovenia, the proportion of children with various levels of learning difficulties is approximately 20% of all school-age children, amongst which a distinction is made between general learning difficulties (LD) and specific learning difficulties (SLD). It is precisely for this reason that early diagnostics and appropriate support measures are essential in order to improve the success of these children. On the basis of an analysis of legislation and practice, the authors determine that the development of inclusion in Slovenia is too slow, and the gap between legislation and practice is too wide. They go on to identify the various factors that contribute to this situation.

In an article entitled *The Effects of the Comprehensive Inductive Educational Approach on the Social Behaviour of Preschool Children in Kindergarten*, Robi Kroflič and Helena Smrtnik Virtulić present an evaluation of a five-month implementation of an inductive education programme in kindergarten. In the study, the children in the experimental groups achieved better results on a scale of social behaviour. The theoretical premises of the comprehensive inductive educational approach are based on findings that the introduction of social skills increases prosocial behaviour and reduces internalised forms of behaviour (depression, anxiety, dependence), thus acting preventively against the later emergence of behaviours that could form the basis of personal difficulties.

The article entitled *Mental Lexicon, Working Memory and L2 (English) Vocabulary in Polish Students with and without Dyslexia* by Marta Łockiewicz and Martyna Jaskulska presents empirical research comparing two groups of native Polish speakers learning English as a foreign language, one group with dyslexia and the other without. The researchers' expectations that the group of students with dyslexia would demonstrate poorer access to the mental lexicon and weaker working memory where not entirely realised. They did, however, determine that dyslexia presents a risk of poorer access to the mental lexicon and impairs comprehension and writing competence.

Jeanne Novak's article entitled *Raising Expectations for U.S. Youth with Disabilities: Federal Disability Policy Advances Integrated Employment* analyses a somewhat overlooked topic within the study of inclusion; namely, how young people with special needs make the transition from school to adulthood. Employment of these young people means social inclusion. The article focuses on an overview of the development of legislation in this area, which has a powerful

influence on the employment of young people with special needs. In this regard, important criteria of equal opportunity include full participation, an independent life and economic independence.

The focus articles in this edition highlight many dilemmas associated with the realisation of inclusion both on the legislative and practical levels, including numerous problems associated with inclusive education: how to achieve increased prosocial behaviour and reduce risk factors through emotional and social learning in the preschool period; how to enable children with dyslexia more success and greater inclusion; how to plan and evaluate the quality of inclusive education; and how to ensure an appropriate transition from education to employment. This undoubtedly represents a contribution to ensuring better quality inclusion in everyday life. The employment of young people with special needs most likely represents a major challenge in the majority of countries, and is a touchstone of democratic society.

The question of inclusion is not a question that can be dealt with rapidly and conclusively. Ongoing reflection on inclusion means caring for one's fellow human being and ensuring the rights of people with special needs to enjoy a life in the community.

In the second, Varia part, there are two papers. In the first written by Sanja Tatalović Vorkapić and Vesna Katić entitlet How Students of Preschool Education Perceive Their Play Competences – An Analysis of Their Involvement in Children's Play the main objective of the study was to analyse the roles of students of preschool education in children's play. A qualitative analysis of the students' preparations for their practice showed that the majority of students use didactic play and play with rules with children. Thus, the question of how to improve the acquisition of play competences in students of preschool education is still present. The seconf paper School – Possibility or (new) Risk for Young Females in Correctional Institutions is written by Ivana Jeđud Borić and Anja Mirosavljević. In this paper, the authors deal with the education of girls in a Croatian correctional institution as a risk factor for social exclusion based on the data obtained via semi-structured interviews with experts and the girls and via the documentation analysis method. The authors compare the perspectives given by the girls and experts and explore the questions related to possibilities of the education of girls in correctional institutions.

The number is concluded with a review of a Simola Hannu book – The Finish Education Mystery (2014) prepared by Slavko Gaber.

David Mitchell, Mojca Lipec Stopar and Darja Zorc Maver

Inclusive Education is a Multi-Faceted Concept

David Mitchell[1]

With the impetus of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, inclusive education is an idea whose time has arrived around the world. Its scope goes far beyond learners with disabilities and has now been extended to cover all learners with special educational needs, whatever their origins. It also extends beyond the mere placement of such learners in regular classes to include consideration of multiple facets of education. The present paper examines a model of inclusive education that, in addition to placement, embraces vision, curriculum, assessment, teaching, acceptance, access, support, resources and leadership. For each of these facets, criteria are specified and indicators are suggested.

Keywords: inclusive education, adaptations, resources, leadership, evidence-based teaching strategies

1 College of Education, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand; dmitch@waikato.ac.nz

Inkluzivno izobraževanje je večdimenzionalni koncept

David Mitchell

Vpliv Konvencije Združenih narodov na pravice ljudi s posebnimi potrebami je idejo inkluzivnega izobraževanja po vsem svetu postavil v ospredje. Ideja sega veliko širše kot le na področje invalidnih učencev, ker zajema vse učence s posebnimi izobraževalnimi potrebami, in to ne glede na njihov izvor. Poleg tega ideja ne vključuje samo vključevanja teh učencev v redne razrede, ampak tudi razmislek o različnih vidikih izobraževanja. V prispevku je prikazan model inkluzivnega izobraževanja ki poleg same vključitve obsega tudi vizijo, kurikulum, ocenjevanje, poučevanje, sprejetje, dostop, podporo, vire in vodenje. Za vsak vidik so definirana merila in predlagani kazalniki.

Ključne besede: inkluzivno izobraževanje, prilagoditve, viri, vodenje, strategije poučevanja, osnovane na podlagi dokazov

Introduction

At its most basic, inclusive education means educating learners with special educational needs in regular education settings. This process involves the transformation of schools to cater for all children. In the present paper, I will elaborate on the notion that inclusive education (IE) is a multifaceted concept, which can be summarised in the formula IE = V+P+5As+S+R+L, where

V = Vision
P = Placement
A = Adapted Curriculum
A = Adapted Assessment
A = Adapted Teaching
A = Acceptance
A = Access
S = Support
R = Resources
L = Leadership

This is shown in Figure 1.

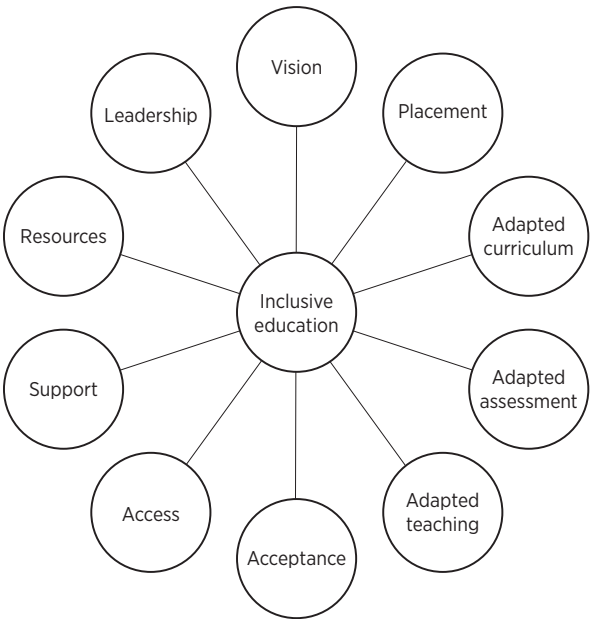


Figure 1. Model of inclusive education

Vision

Inclusive education depends on educators at all levels of the system being committed to its underlying philosophy and being willing to implement it. This means that education systems and schools should articulate an inclusive culture in which "there is some degree of consensus … around values of respect for difference and a commitment to offering all pupils access to learning opportunities" (Ainscow & Miles, 2008, p. 27). It means recognising the obligations that most countries entered into when they signed and ratified the *Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons* (United Nations, 2006), which includes a significant commitment to inclusive education in Article 24, stating, *inter alia*:

1. States Parties recognise the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realising this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels, and life-long learning, directed to: (a) The full development of the human potential and sense of dignity and self worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity; (b) The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential; (c) Enabling persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.
2. In realising this right, States Parties shall ensure that:
   (a) Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability;
   (b) Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality, free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live;
   (c) Reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements is provided;
   (d) Persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education;
   (e) Effective individualised support measures are provided in environments that maximise academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.

Criterion

Educators at all levels of the system are committed to the underlying philosophy of inclusive education and express a vision for inclusive education in legislation, regulations and policy documents at all levels of the education system.

Indicators

1. The principal/head teacher of the school consistently expresses a commitment to inclusive education.
2. Other senior members of the school leadership are committed to inclusive education.
3. The school's board/governing body is committed to inclusive education.
4. The national/regional/local bodies responsible for education are committed to inclusive education.

Placement

Most scholars of inclusive education either explicitly or implicitly state that inclusion refers to the placement of all students in regular schools and classrooms, regardless of their level of ability (Luciak & Biewer, 2011). In an early meta-analysis, 11 empirical studies carried out between 1975 and 1984 were analysed. It was shown that mainstreamed disabled students (mentally retarded, learning disabled, hearing impaired and mixed exceptionalities) consistently outperformed non-mainstreamed students with comparable special education classifications. Two types of mainstreaming were included: part-time with occasional pull-out resource class attendance, and full-time inclusion in general classes. Of the 115 effect sizes calculated, two-thirds indicated an overall positive effect of mainstreaming. The overall effect size was 0.33, which translates into a gain of 13 percentiles for students in mainstreamed settings (Wang & Baker, 1986). In a more recent meta-analysis, Hattie (2009) obtained a somewhat more modest effect size of 0.21 in favour of mainstreaming.

A Canadian study of third-grade students with 'at risk' characteristics (e.g., learning disabilities, behaviour disorders) compared the impact of a multifaceted inclusive education programme on achievement. The intervention group (N=34) received all instruction and support in general education classrooms, while the comparison group (N=38) received 'pull-out' resource room support. Significant effects were found in the writing scores for the inclusive education group. Furthermore, the general education students were not held back by the presence of the at-risk students in the classroom; on the contrary, their reading and mathematics scores benefited from the additional interventions offered by the programme (Saint-Laurent et al., 1998).

A US study addressed the effects of an inclusive school programme on the academic achievement of students with mild or severe learning disabilities in grades 2–6. The experimental group comprised 71 learning disabled students from three inclusive education classrooms. In these classrooms, special

education teachers worked collaboratively with general education teachers, each student's programme was built upon the general education curriculum, and instructional assistants were used to support the students. The control group of 73 learning disabled students were in classrooms in which the students received traditional resource class programmes. The results showed that the students with mild learning disabilities in the inclusive classrooms made significantly more progress in reading and comparable progress in mathematics, compared with those in the resource classes. Students with severe learning disabilities made comparable progress in reading and mathematics in both settings (Waldron & McLeskey, 1998).

In a study carried out in Hawaii, the effects of placement in general education classrooms or in self-contained special education classrooms on the social relationships of students with severe disabilities were reported. Nine matched students were studied in each of the two placements. The results showed that those who were placed in the general education classrooms had higher levels of contact with non-disabled peers, received and provided higher levels of social support, and had much larger friendship networks (Fryxell & Kennedy, 1995).

One of the most comprehensive studies of the effects of inclusive programmes on the development of social competence in students with severe disabilities is that reported by Fisher and Meyer (2002). In a matched-pairs design, 40 students were assessed across two years of inclusive versus self-contained special education classrooms. Those in the inclusive programme made significant, albeit small, gains on measures of social competence, compared with students in self-contained classrooms.

Finally, a Dutch study reported on the differences in academic and psychosocial development of at-risk students in special and mainstream education. It was found that those in special education classes did less well in academic performances and that these differences increased as the students got older. In psychosocial development, variables such as social behaviour and attitudes to work also favoured students in regular classes (Karsten et al., 2001).

Criterion

All learners with special education needs are educated in age-appropriate classes in their neighbourhood schools, regardless of their ability.

Indicators

1. All learners with special educational needs attend their neighbourhood school.

2. They are placed in age-appropriate classes.
3. They are withdrawn for additional assistance no more frequently than other learners in the class.

Adapted Curriculum

Elsewhere, I have argued that making appropriate adaptations or modifications to the curriculum is central to inclusive education (Mitchell, 2014). I pointed out that such a curriculum should be a single curriculum, that is, as far as possible, accessible to *all* learners, including those with special educational needs. (Conversely, special educational needs are created when a curriculum is not accessible to all learners.) In addition it should include activities that are age-appropriate, but are pitched at a developmentally appropriate level. Since an inclusive classroom is likely to contain students who are functioning at two or three levels of the curriculum, this means that multi-level teaching will have to be employed; or, at a minimum, adaptations will have to be made to take account of the student diversity.

With the advent of inclusive education policies and practices, many countries are addressing the need for students with special educational needs to have access to the general education curriculum. In the US, for instance, IDEA 1997, IDEIA 2004 and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 specified that all students, including those with significant cognitive disabilities, must have the opportunity to participate and progress in the general curriculum. Scotland is another country that seeks to ensure that students with special educational needs can access the common curriculum framework, while at the same time ensuring appropriate and targeted support (Riddell, Tisdall, Kane, & Mulderrig, 2006). This arrangement has been in place since the early 1990s, when the *5-14 Curriculum*, with its accompanying *Support for Learning* pack, came into force. This material endorsed five strategies for customising the curriculum: differentiation, adaptation, enhancement, enrichment and elaboration. According to Riddell et al., these strategies would enable teachers to plan a suitable curriculum for individual students, while ensuring that their learning was framed by the national curriculum guidelines.

Several researchers have investigated ways in which IEPs can be connected with the general curriculum. For example, Fisher and Frey (2001) described a study in which students with 'significant disabilities' accessed the core curriculum in several regular classrooms. The authors concluded that, despite there being "a disconnect between the IEP and curriculum and instruction" (p. 148), "the findings... indicated that students with significant disabilities can and do access the core curriculum with appropriate accommodations and

modifications" (p. 155). These accommodations and modifications are worth quoting at length. An *accommodation* is a change made to the teaching procedures in order to provide a student with access to information and to create an equal opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills. Accommodations do not change the instructional level, content, or performance criteria for meeting standards. Examples of accommodations include enlarging the print, providing oral versions of tests, and using calculators. A *modification* is a change in what a student is expected to learn and/or demonstrate. A student may be working on modified course content, but the subject area remains the same as for the rest of the class. If the decision is made to modify the curriculum, it is done in a variety of ways, for a variety of reasons, with a variety of outcomes. Again, modifications vary according to the situation, lesson or activity. The four most common ways are listed here:

- *Same, only less* – The assignment remains the same except that the number of items is reduced. The items selected should be representative areas of the curriculum.
- *Streamline the curriculum* – The assignment is reduced in size, breadth or focus in order to emphasise the key points.
- *Same activity with infused objective* – The assignment remains the same, but additional components, such as IEP objectives or skills, are incorporated. This is often done in conjunction with other accommodations and/or modifications in order to ensure that all IEP objectives are addressed.
- *Curriculum overlapping* – The assignment for one class may be completed in another class. Students may experience difficulty grasping the connections between different subjects. In addition, some students work slowly and need additional time to complete assignments. This strategy is especially helpful for both of these situations (p. 157).

With particular reference to the unique needs of students with mental retardation in accessing the general curriculum, Wehmeyer et al. (2002) presented a multi-step, multi-level decision-making model. It involves three levels of action (planning, curriculum and instruction), three levels relating to the scope of instruction (whole school, partial school and individualised), and three levels of curriculum (adaptation, augmentation and alteration). At one extreme, this model suggests that some students have extensive needs for support, significant alterations to the general curriculum, and individual teaching; at the other extreme, some have only intermittent needs for support, and require minor adaptations to the general curriculum and a school-wide implementation of high quality instructional strategies.

In recent years, writers have been advocating using the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) "as a blueprint or framework for educators in designing flexible curriculum and instruction" (Brownell, Smith, Crockett, & Griffin, 2012, p. 81).

Criterion

The standard curriculum is adapted or modified so that it suits the abilities and interests of all learners. In the case of learners with special educational needs, this means that the curriculum content is differentiated so as to be age-appropriate, but pitched at a developmentally appropriate level.

Indicators

1. The curriculum is broadly similar for all learners (i.e., there is not a separate curriculum for learners with special needs).
2. The curriculum is adapted to take account of the abilities and interests of different groups of learners.
3. The principles of Universal Design are employed in the development of curricula.

Adapted Assessment

Just as learners with special educational needs are expected to participate and progress in the general curriculum, albeit with appropriate modifications and adaptations, so, too, are they increasingly being expected to participate in a country's national or state assessment regimes. Both trends are part of the wider concern for standards-based reform in education that is dominating much of the educational and political discourse around the world.

Until recently, in the US, accountability in special education was defined in terms of progress in meeting IEP goals. That all changed in IDEA 97, which required all students, including those with disabilities, to participate in their states' accountability systems. Both IDEA 97 and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 required the provision of alternate assessment for students who could not participate in state or district assessments with or without accommodations. Districts are permitted to measure up to 3% of their students using alternate assessments (1% against alternate achievement standards and 2% against modified standards).

In England, tasks and tests set for assessment at the end of Key Stages 2 and 3 (for students aged 11 and 14, respectively) are designed to monitor attainment targets for each of the National Curriculum subjects, and are expected to be accessible to the vast majority of students, including those with special

educational needs. However, those children in Key Stage 2 working at level 1 or below of the National Curriculum eight-level scale are assessed by teacher assessment alone. Similarly, at Key Stage 3, students working at or below level 2 of the National Curriculum scale are assessed by teacher assessment and not by statutory national testing. If a student's statement of special educational needs modifies the statutory assessment arrangements, the provisions within the statement should be followed in respect of the statutory tests and tasks. With regard to the GCSEs and GCE A levels, although the same examinations are available for students with special educational needs as for other students, special arrangements in examinations may be made for *some* of them. The nature of these arrangements is determined according to the assessment needs of the individual student, but must not give him or her an unfair advantage over other students. Some may be awarded extra time to complete the assessment task, or may be permitted to take supervised breaks or rest periods during the examination. For visually impaired students, the visual presentation of the papers may be changed by, for example, the use of large print or a simplified layout of the examination paper, or by the use of Braille versions of the papers. Other candidates may have questions read to them, flashcards may be used to assist hearing-impaired candidates in mental arithmetic tests, or typewritten, word-processed or transcribed responses may be accepted from students who are unable to write. Some candidates may also be allowed to take their examinations at a venue other than the examination centre, for example, at home or in hospital (see http://www.inca.org.uk/wales-sources-special.html#31).

In the US, the National Center on Educational Outcomes has published extensively on alternate assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities (see Lazarus, Cormier, Crone, & Thurlow, 2010; Lazarus, Hodgson, & Thurlow, 2010; Olson, Mead, & Payne, 2002; and Quenemoen, Thompson, & Thurlow, 2003). These documents provide information on States' accommodation policies on alternate assessments and guidelines for such assessments. Other useful guides to alternate assessment are to be found in the recently published book by Bolt and Roach (2009) and in publications from the US Department of Education, particularly those relating to its policy for including students with disabilities in standards-based assessment used in determining 'adequate yearly progress' (Technical Work Group on Including Students with Disabilities in Large Scale Assessments, 2006).

Basically, there are two types of adjustments to nation- or state-wide assessments.

- *Assessments with accommodations*. This involves making changes to the assessment process, but not to the essential content. Braden et al. (2001)

described accommodations as alterations to the setting, timing, administration and types of responses in assessments. Here, assessors need to distinguish between accommodations necessary for students to access or express the intended learning content and the content itself.

- *Alternate assessments.* As defined by the US Department of Education (2003), alternate assessments are assessments "designed for the small number of students with disabilities who are unable to participate in the regular State assessment, even with appropriate accommodations" (p. 68699). They refer to materials collected under several circumstances, including: teacher observations, samples of students' work produced during regular classroom instruction, and standardised performance tasks. Furthermore, alternate assessments should have:
  - a clearly defined structure,
  - guidelines determining which students may participate,
  - clearly defined scoring criteria and procedures,
  - a report format that clearly communicates student performance in terms of the academic achievement standards defined by the State, and
  - high technical quality, including validity, reliability, accessibility and objectivity, which applies to regular State assessments as well.

Criterion

The content of assessment reflects any adaptations to the curriculum. In addition, the means of assessment is adapted to take account of the abilities of all learners. Assessment of learners with special educational needs results in individual educational plans.

Indicators

1. The content of assessment tasks reflects any adaptations made to the curriculum.
2. Assessment tasks take account of the abilities of all learners; for example, a blind learner is assessed via Braille or orally, a deaf learner via sign language, etc.
3. Learners with special educational needs have individual educational plans, which form the basis of their assessment.

Adapted Teaching

Educators are increasingly expected to be responsible not only for helping students to achieve the best possible outcomes, but also for using the most

scientifically valid methods to achieve them. Indeed, in the United States, the No Child Left Behind Act requires teachers to use "scientific, research-based programs", defined as: "(1) grounded in theory; (2) evaluated by third parties; (3) published in peer-reviewed journals; (4) sustainable; (5) replicable in schools with diverse settings; and (6) able to demonstrate evidence of effectiveness." As noted by Brownell et al. (2012), "Classroom teachers have the responsibility to provide all students with well-paced, research-based instruction" (p. 12).

In my recent book (Mitchell, 2014), I present some 27 strategies that have a substantial evidence base for improving outcomes for learners with special educational needs. Briefly, I define such strategies as having been "shown in controlled research to be effective in bringing about desired outcomes in a delineated population of learners" (p. 3).

For the sake of brevity, I will provide a short summary of 12 such strategies.

- *Behavioural approaches*. Behavioural approaches focus on how events that occur either before (antecedents) or after (consequences) learners engage in a verbal or physical act affect their subsequent behaviour.
- *Functional behavioural assessment*. Functional behavioural assessment is a subset of the behavioural approaches outlined above. In essence, it refers to the procedures used to determine the function or purpose of a learner's repeated undesirable behaviour and what leads to it being maintained.
- *Review and practice.* This requires planning and supervising opportunities for learners to encounter the same skills or concepts on several occasions. It is aimed at helping learners to 'internalise' concepts and skills once they have been initially taught. This is particularly the case with basic skills that are taught hierarchically, so that success at any level requires the application of knowledge and skills mastered earlier.
- *Direct Instruction*. Direct Instruction (DI) is a multi-component instructional strategy centring on teacher-directed, explicit, systematic teaching based on scripted lesson plans and frequent assessment. Research studies have consistently shown that DI has a positive effect across a range of learners and across various subject areas.
- *Formative assessment and feedback*. Formative assessment and feedback is a combined strategy in which teachers (a) probe for knowledge within lessons, (b) give frequent feedback to learners (sometimes referred to as corrective feedback), and (c) adjust their teaching strategies, where necessary, to improve learners' performances.
- *Cooperative group teaching*. This is based on two main ideas about learning. First, it recognises that when learners cooperate, or collaborate,

it has a synergistic effect. In other words, by working together they can often achieve a result that is greater than the sum of their individual efforts or capabilities. Second, it recognises that a great deal of knowledge is socially constructed; that is, children learn from others in their immediate environments: their families, friendship groups and classmates.

- *Peer tutoring.* Peers play multiple roles in supporting and teaching each other, a 'natural' social relationship that teachers should capitalise on. There is a substantial literature on peer tutoring, i.e., situations in which one learner (the 'tutor') provides a learning experience for another learner (the 'tutee'), under a teacher's supervision.
- *Social skills training.* This is a set of strategies aimed at helping learners establish and maintain positive interactions with others. Most children quite easily acquire the social skills that are appropriate to their culture, but some do not and must be explicitly taught them. Some have poor social perception and consequently lack social skills.
- *Classroom climate.* The classroom climate is a multi-component strategy comprising the psychological features of the classroom, as distinct from its physical features. The key principle is to create a psychological environment that facilitates learning, thus drawing attention to three main factors: (a) relationships, (b) personal development, and (c) system maintenance.
- *Cognitive Strategy Instruction.* Cognitive Strategy Instruction (CSI) refers to ways of assisting learners to acquire cognitive skills, or strategies. It does this by helping them to (a) organise information so that its complexity is reduced, and/or (b) integrate information into their existing knowledge. It includes teaching skills such as visualisation, planning, self-regulation, memorising, analysing, predicting, making associations, using cues, and thinking about thinking (i.e., metacognition).
- *Self-Regulated Learning.* Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) aims at helping learners to define goals for themselves, to monitor their own behaviour, and to make decisions and choices of actions that lead to the achievement of their goals. Ultimately, SRL is directed and regulated by motivation. This strategy can be used in a variety of settings, across a range of subjects, and with learners with and without special educational needs. Most definitions of SRL refer not only to the regulation of cognitive processes, but also to the regulation of behaviour and emotions (Rueda, Posner, & Rothbart, 2011).
- *Memory strategies.* Here, consideration must be given to ways of enhancing primary memory, short-term memory, long-term memory and the

executive system. The principal considerations for developing memory skills include mnemonics, motivation, attention, pacing of lessons, rehearsal, transforming material into mental representations, and chunking. In addition, consideration should be given to the relationship between memory and emotions.

Criterion

As appropriate to the composition of classes and the needs of individual learners, the teaching strategies described by Mitchell (2014) are adopted.

Indicators

1. A substantial number of the classroom-focused teaching strategies outlined by Mitchell (2014) are utilised, where appropriate.
2. Teachers utilise data on learner outcomes to design and evaluate their teaching strategies.

Acceptance

The education system and the school recognise the right of learners with special educational needs to be educated in general education classrooms and to receive equitable resourcing. Acceptance is not only a matter of recognising the rights of such learners, but also, ideally, of teachers and fellow students accepting human diversity at a philosophical level and accepting individuals with special educational needs socially and emotionally.

Criterion

The education system and the school recognise the right of learners with special educational needs to be educated in general education classrooms, to receive equitable resourcing and to be accepted socially and emotionally.

Indicators

1. The school board/governing body recognises the rights of learners with special educational needs to inclusive education.
2. The national/regional/local bodies responsible for education recognise the rights of learners with special educational needs to inclusive education.
3. The principal/head teacher and other staff members recognise the rights of learners with special educational needs to inclusive education.
4. The school accepts individual learners with special educational needs socially and emotionally.

Access

Access is a very broad concept, ranging from access to education, access to the adapted curriculum and assessment (discussed earlier), and adequate physical access to and within classrooms. The latter is provided through such features as ramps and lifts, adapted toilets, doorways that are sufficiently wide to take wheelchairs, and adequate space for wheelchairs to be manoeuvred in classrooms. Physical access also involves ensuring that all of the elements of the indoor physical environment that may affect students' ability to learn are optimal. It involves attending to such matters as the design and arrangement of furniture, acoustics, lighting, temperature, air quality and safety.

For example, it is important to arrange learners' workspaces to facilitate flexible grouping and differentiated instruction by allowing for whole-class, small-group and individual instruction. Some learners with autism may need access to personal space (Vogel, 2008); such learners need to avoid confusing large spaces, and instead require calm, ordered, low stimulus spaces, as well as safe indoor and outdoor places for withdrawal and to calm down (Department for Education and Employment, 2009). Furniture and equipment should be arranged in such a way as to manage inappropriate behaviour and to disrupt undesirable 'traffic' patterns and movement around the classroom (Council for Exceptional Children, 1997). Providing an optimal acoustic environment means attending to three interrelated factors (ASHA Working Group on Classroom Acoustics, 2005): (a) a poor *signal-to-noise ratio* (i.e., an educator's voice compared with background noise). For example, if a teacher's voice arrives at a learner's desk at 50dB and the background noise is 55dB, the resulting signal to noise ratio (SNR) is -5. This compares unfavourably with an optimum SNR of +15dB for learners with normal hearing and very unfavourably with the requirements of learners with special educational needs; (b) *excessive sound reverberation* (i.e., sound bounce, or echo). Technically, this is measured by 'reverberation time', which is the time between the cessation of a sound source and a measured decay of 60db. Ideally, this should be no longer than 0.4–0.6 of a second; and (c) *high levels of ambient noise* (i.e., the noises consistently present in an empty classroom). These should be no louder than 30-35 dB.

Criterion

Adequate physical access to and within classrooms is provided, with such features as ramps and lifts, adapted toilets, doorways that are sufficiently wide to take wheelchairs, and adequate space for wheelchairs to be manoeuvred in classrooms. In addition, the design and arrangement of furniture, acoustics, lighting, temperature and ventilation take account of individual learners' needs.

Indicators

1. The school has adequate physical access features to accommodate people with physical disabilities and visual impairments, e.g., ramps, adapted toilets, adapted playground equipment, and accessible footpaths/sidewalks.
2. Interior design includes doorways sufficiently wide to accommodate wheelchairs and desks/tables that can be adjusted to suit the needs of learners with physical disabilities.
3. Classrooms have appropriate lighting, acoustics, temperature and air quality.

Support

Educating learners with special educational needs requires collaboration between many people, in particular between several professionals and parents. Indeed, there are few areas of education that require such a high level of collaboration and teamwork. This is particularly true in inclusive education, where, ideally, general classroom teachers may work with a range of other professionals: various combinations of specialist teachers, paraprofessionals, special needs advisers, educational psychologists, therapists and other specialists, community agencies (such as welfare services, police and advocacy groups), technology consultants, and, of course, parents (Rainforth & England, 1997). As I indicate elsewhere (Mitchell, 2014), to release the potential of collaboration, participants have to learn the skills of working as a team member for at least part of their work. For those used to working alone as a sole professional, it is a big step to develop new ways of working in which one is expected to share responsibility and expertise with other professionals in other disciplines: the 'private' becomes the 'public'; what was once implicit and unexpressed in professional practice has to become explicit and explained to others; one's autonomy may even seem to be reduced, as one has to adapt to other people's ideas and personalities. Successful collaboration depends on such factors as establishing clear goals, defining respective roles, adopting a problem-solving approach, and establishing mutual trust and respect. Those involved should be trained in the principles of collaboration.

Consideration should also be given to learners' differential needs for support. This draws attention to what is referred to as 'response to intervention' in the USA and 'graduated response' in England. Both of these approaches involve taking account of the severity of individual learners' needs, by (a) tracking the progress of all learners in a class, (b) identifying those whose performance is significantly below their peers, (c) systematically assessing the impact

of evidence-based teaching adaptations on their achievement, and (d) adjusting the level of support accordingly (Mitchell, 2014).

Criterion

A team of professionals provides adequate and appropriate support for teachers. Ideally, this team consists of (a) a general educator, receiving advice and guidance from (b) a specialist adviser, access to (c) appropriate therapists and other professionals (e.g., psychologists, hearing advisers, social workers, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, and occupational therapists), and (d) assistant teachers/paraprofessionals, learning support assistants or teacher aides. The composition of such teams varies according to the needs of the particular learners. Teams should receive appropriate training to carry out their responsibilities. The school should adopt a response to intervention model.

Indicators

1. Teachers have access to specialist adviser(s), appropriate therapists and other professionals (e.g., psychologists, hearing advisers, social workers, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, and occupational therapists), and assistant teachers/paraprofessionals/teacher aides.
2. Team members receive training to engage in collaborative arrangements.
3. The school implements a response to intervention model.

Resources

Clearly, in order for the multifaceted approach to inclusive education outlined in this paper to be implemented, adequate resources must be provided. These include resources to cover the cost of buildings, equipment, transport and personnel. For the past decade or so, funding models for special education have been under review in many countries, driven by rising costs, concerns over efficiency and equity in the use of resources, and concerns about the incentives inherent in funding formulae for contra-indicated practices. Overall, per student education expenditures for those who receive special education services in the US are 1.91 times greater than expenditures for students who received no special education services (Chambers, Shkolnik, & Pérez, 2003). This is comparable to other estimates, although Parrish (2000) cites a ratio of 2.3. For those students who receive services in inclusive education settings, I see no reason why these ratios should not also apply. While I recognise that many developing countries lack the resources to implement specialised technological strategies, viable solutions can be found. As Ainscow and Miles (2008) point

out, these often "involve stakeholders working together to address barriers to participation and learning" (p. 31).

Criterion

Adequate and appropriate equipment and appropriate levels of staffing are provided.

Indicators

1. The national/regional/local education system makes sufficient resources available to the school for it to meet its inclusive education obligations.
2. The school board/governing body ensures that resources are delivered to the school and are utilised for the purposes for which they are intended.
3. The school managers ensure that sufficient resources (material and personnel) are available at the classroom level.

Leadership

Creating a positive school culture, or ethos, involves developing and implementing goals for the school. These goals should reflect the shared values, beliefs, attitudes, traditions and behavioural norms of its members, particularly those who are in leadership positions. Leadership should be exercised throughout an education system: by legislators, policy-makers, school governing bodies, principals and teachers. At the school level, Carrington, Bourke and Dharan (2012) determined that leadership from the school principal is "pivotal, and involves him or her understanding, believing in and enabling staff to participate" (p. 351). Similarly, Stanovich and Jordan (1998) found that the strongest predictor of effective teaching behaviour in inclusive education settings in Canada was the subjective school norm, as operationalised by principals' attitudes towards heterogeneous classrooms.

Exercising leadership means (a) developing a strong commitment to accepting and celebrating diversity, (b) developing a sensitivity to cultural issues, (c) setting high, but realistic, standards, and (d) achieving positive outcomes for the most disadvantaged. Leadership should be evidence-driven, focused on student outcomes, and based on recognition of the fact that success comes from individuals working together (Shaddock Nielsen, Giorcelli, Kilham, & Hoffman-Rapp, 2009).

According to Heller and Firestone (1995) and Mayrowetz and Weinstein (1999), in order to bring about an inclusive school culture, the following leadership roles need to be exercised:

(a) provide and sell a vision: this involves defining the philosophy and goals of

inclusion and promulgating them wherever possible, e.g., in school publications, talks to parents and the community, and in casual conversations;

(b) provide encouragement and recognition: this can be formal or informal, public or private, but it has the common feature of recognising those who are promoting inclusion;

(c) obtain resources: since one of the key barriers to the successful implementation of inclusion in many countries is the lack of appropriate resources, leadership has to advocate the provision of adequate resources to the school; once these are in the school, leaders should ensure that they are equitably distributed;

(d) adapt standard operating procedures: this involves recognising that since rules, regulations and requirements may have evolved without the significant presence of learners with special educational needs in the school, they may have to change; examples include the modification of curricula, textbooks and examinations that may be inappropriate for these learners;

(e) monitor improvement: it is increasingly unacceptable for leaders to simply 'do good'; it is necessary for them to demonstrate that what they are doing is having a positive impact on learners' achievements and social behaviour;

(f) deal with disturbances: since inclusive education is rarely a settled and universally agreed policy in any school, there will be an inevitable need to deal with overt and covert resistance.

Criterion

Those who are in leadership positions show a strong commitment to accepting and celebrating diversity, a sensitivity to cultural issues, and set high, but realistic, standards.

Indicators

1. The principal/head teacher of the school consistently expresses a commitment to inclusive education.
2. Other senior members of the school leadership are committed to inclusive education.
3. The school's board/governing body is committed to inclusive education.
4. The national/regional/local bodies responsible for education are committed to inclusive education.

Conclusion

Inclusive education is a multifaceted concept that requires educators at all levels of their systems to attend to vision, placement, curriculum, assessment, teaching, acceptance, access, support, resources and leadership. It is no longer appropriate for policy-makers and researchers to define inclusive education solely, or even primarily, in terms of placement. The criteria and indicators presented in this paper can be used as a basis for planning inclusive education and for evaluating its quality.

References

Ainscow, M., & Miles, S. (2012). Making Education for All inclusive: where next? *Prospect: Quarterly Review of Comparative Education*, *38*(1), 15–34.

ASHA Working Group on Classroom Acoustics. (2005). *Acoustics in educational settings: Technical report*; and ASHA Special Interest Division 16, and Educational Audiology Association (2002). 'Appropriate school facilities for students with speech-language-hearing disorders'. Technical Report, *ASHA Supplement* 23.

Bolt, S. E., & Roach, A. T. (2009). *Inclusive assessment and accountability: A guide to accommodations for students with diverse needs*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Braden, J. P., Schroeder, J. L., & Buckley, J. A. (2001). *Secondary school reform, inclusion, and authentic assessment for youth with disabilities*. Research Institute on Secondary Education Reform for Youth with Disabilities (RISER) Brief, 3 June, 2001. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Center for Education Research. ERIC Digests No. ED467477.

Brownell, M. T., Smith, S. J., Crockett, J. B., & Griffin, C. C. (2012). *Inclusive instruction: Evidence-based practices for teaching students with disabilities*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Carrington, S., Bourke, R., & Dharan, V. (2012). Using the Index for Inclusion to develop inclusive school communities. In S. Carrington & J. MacArthur (Eds.), *Teaching in inclusive school communities* (pp. 343–364). Milton, Qld: Wiley.

Chambers, J. G., Shkolnik, J., & Pérez, M. (2003). *Total expenditures for students with disabilities, 1999- 2000*: Spending Variation by Disability. Report 5. Special Education Expenditure Project. Submitted to: United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.

Council for Exceptional Children. (1997). *CEC Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*. Reston, V. A.: Author.

Department for Education and Employment. (2009). *Building Bulletin 102 (BB102) Designing for disabled children and children with special educational needs*. London, England: Author.

Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2001). Access to the core curriculum: Critical ingredients for student success. *Remedial and Special Education, 22*(3), 148–157.

Heller, M. F., & Firestone, W. A. (1995). Who's in charge here? Sources of leadership for change in

eight schools. *Elementary School Journal*, *96*(1), 65–86.

Lazarus, S. S. Cormier, D. C., Crone, M., & Thurlow, M. L. (2010). *States' accommodations policies for alternate assessments based on modified academic achievement standards (AA-MAS) in 2008- 2009* (Synthesis Report 74). Minneapolis, MN: National Center on Educational Outcomes.

Lazarus, S. S., Hodgson, J., & Thurlow, M. L. (2010). *States' participation guidelines for alternate assessments based on modified academic achievement standards (AA-MAS) in 2009* (Synthesis Report 75). Minneapolis, MN: National Center on Educational Outcomes.

Luciak, M., & Biewer, G. (2011). Inclusive education in Austria: A comparative analysis. In A. J. Artiles, E. B. Kozleski, & F. R. Waitoller (Eds.), *Inclusive education: Examining equity on five continents.* (pp. 17–44). Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Education Press.

Mayrowetz, D., & Weinstein, C. S. (1999). Sources of leadership for inclusive education. Creating schools for all children. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *35*(3), 423–449.

Mitchell, D. (2014). *What really works in special and inclusive education: Using evidence-based teaching strategies*. Second edition. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Olson, B., Mead, R., & Payne, D. (2002). *A report of a standard setting method for alternative assessments for students with significant disabilities* (Synthesis Report 47). Minneapolis, MN: National Center on Educational Outcomes.

Parrish, T. B. (2000). Restructuring special education funding in New York to promote the objective of high learning standards for all students. *Economics of Education Review*, *19*, 431–445.

Quenemoen, R., Thompson, S., & Thurlow, M. (2003). *Measuring academic achievement of students with significant cognitive disabilities: Building understanding of alternate assessment scoring criteria* (Synthesis Report 50). Minneapolis, MN: National Center on Educational Outcomes. Retrieved 12 May 2010 from http://education.umn.edu/NCEO/OnlinePubs/Synthesis50.html

Rainforth, B., & England, J. (1997). Collaboration for inclusion. *Education and Treatment of Children*, *20*(1), 85–105.

Riddell, S., Tisdall, K., Kane, J., & Mulderrig, J. (2006) *Literature review of educational provision for pupils with additional support needs: final report to the Scottish Executive Education Department.* Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh [available at http://www.creid.ed.ac.uk/publications.html]

Rueda, M. R., Posner, M. I., & Rothbart, M. K. (2011). Attentional control and self-regulation. In K. D. Vohs & R. F. Baumeister (Eds.), *Handbook of self-regulation: Research theory, and applications* (2nd edition) (pp. 284–299). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Shaddock, A. J., Nielsen, A., Giorcelli, L., Kilham, C., & Hoffman-Rapp, L. (2007). *What are the critical factors in ensuring successful collaboration between mainstream teachers and teaching assistants?* Report to the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training, Canberra.

Stanovich, P. J., & Jordan, A. (1998). Canadian teachers' and principals' beliefs about inclusive education as predictors of effective teaching in heterogeneous classrooms. *Elementary School Journal, 98*(3), 221–238.

Technical Work Group on Including Students with Disabilities in Large-Scale Assessment. (2006).

Including students with disabilities in large-scale assessment: Executive summary. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved on 16 May 2010 from http://www.osepideasthatwork.org/toolkit/tk_lrgAssmnt_ES.asp

U.S. Department of Education. (2003). *Title I - Improving the academic achievement of the disadvantaged;* Final Rule, 68 Federal Registry 236 (December 9, 2003).

United Nations. (2006). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. New York, NY: author.

Vogel, C. L. (2008). Classroom design for living and learning with autism. *Autism, Aspergerer's Digest,* May/June.

Waldron, N. L., & McLeskey, J. (1998). The effects of an inclusive school program on students with mild and severe learning disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, *64*(4), 395–405.

Wehmeyer, M. L., Lance, G. D., & Bashinski, S. (2002). Promoting access to the general curriculum for students with mental retardation: a multi-level model. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, 37*(3), 223–234.

Biographical note

David Mitchell is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand. He has over 200 publications, mainly in the fields of special and inclusive education. He has held visiting professorships and has presented lectures, workshops and consultancies in 50 countries, many under the auspices of UNESCO. His most recent books are *Contextualizing Inclusive Education* (2005), *What Really Works in Special and Inclusive Education, Second edition* (2014), and *Crises, Conflict and Disability: Ensuring Equality* (2014) all published by Routledge. He is currently working on a book tentatively entitled *Diversities in education: Effective ways to reach all learners* (Routledge).

Inclusive Education for Children with Specific Learning Difficulties: Analysis of Opportunities and Barriers in Inclusive Education in Slovenia

Marija Kavkler*[1], Milena Košak Babuder[2] and Lidija Magajna[3]

Inclusive education allows for universal inclusion, participation and achievement of all children, including children with specific learning difficulties (SpLD). Children with SpLD form a heterogeneous group with diverse cognitive deficits, special educational needs (SEN) and strengths, and have a legislated right to the continuum of both assistance and support programmes. Although their intellectual capacity is average or above average, their learning achievements in some learning domains are modest, and they are poorly integrated into their social environment, which often results in their discrimination. Barriers and opportunities in the area of SpLD were analysed with the aid of Ball's model (1994), with factors and conditions being analysed within the contexts of policy influence, text production and practice. The contexts of policy influence and text production provide the basic conditions for the inclusive education of children with SpLD. The context of influence on inclusive policy for children with SpLD represents a systematic approach to policy initiation and to the prerequisites for its implementation in practice. The context of policy text production focuses on professionals and their impact on the enactment of the rights of children with severe SpLD. The context of practice concerns barriers and opportunities for implementing inclusion in practice. Early identification and diagnosis of pupils' strengths, deficits and SEN, together with intensified treatment corresponding to the SEN of children with SpLD, could significantly influence the efficiency of the educational process. Barriers, primarily of an immaterial nature, are mainly encountered in those schools that do not implement the five-tier Response to Intervention (RTI) approach. This approach enables children with SpLD a continuum of team-based diagnostic evaluation, effective adaptations and assistance. The main reasons for the unfavourable situation concern education professionals

1 * Corresponding Author. University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education, Slovenia; marija.kavkler@guest.arnes.si
2 University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education, Slovenia
3 University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education, Slovenia

and their attitude towards children with SpLD, poor knowledge of SpLD, a lack of teamwork in problem solving, and a lack of partnership commitment between education professionals, parents and children. It is expected that changes could be brought about through innovations in the education of future teachers, and through positive cases of children with SpLD being treated effectively in practice. The conditions for the development of the inclusive treatment of children with SpLD could be created through legislative and systematic work.

Keywords: children with specific learning difficulties, inclusion, the context of policy influence, the context of policy text production, the context of practice, barriers

Inkluzivno izobraževanje otrok s specifičnimi učnimi težavami: analiza priložnosti in ovir inkluzije v Sloveniji

Marija Kavkler*, Milena Košak Babuder in Lidija Magajna

Inkluzivna vzgoja in izobraževanje omogočata vključenost, participacijo in uspešnost vseh otrok, tudi tistih s specifičnimi učnimi težavami. Otroci s tovrstnimi težavami so raznolika skupina otrok z raznolikimi primanjkljaji, s posebnimi potrebami ter z močnimi področji in uzakonjeno pravico do kontinuuma programov pomoči in podpore. So pogosto diskriminirani, saj kljub povprečnim in nadpovprečnim intelektualnim sposobnostim dosegajo nizke izobraževalne dosežke in so tudi socialno slabše vključeni. Analiza možnosti in ovir na področju specifičnih učnih težav je bila izvedena s pomočjo Ballovega modela (1994). V prispevku so analizirani dejavniki in pogoji v kontekstu vpliva na inkluzivno politiko, kontekstu oblikovanja zakonodaje in v kontekstu prakse. Kontekst vpliva politike in kontekst oblikovanja zakonodaje omogočata osnovne pogoje za inkluzivno vzgojo in izobraževanje otrok s specifičnimi učnimi težavami. V kontekstu vpliva na inkluzivno politiko za otroke s specifičnimi učnimi težavami je predstavljen sistematičen pristop k oblikovanju politike in razvoju pogojev za njeno uresničevanje v praksi. V kontekstu oblikovanja zakonodaje pa je predstavljen vpliv strokovne javnosti na uzakonitev pravic otrok s težjimi specifičnimi učnimi težavami. Ovire in možnosti za uresničevanje inkluzije v praksi so prikazane v kontekstu prakse. Zgodnje odkrivanje in diagnosticiranje močnih področij, primanjkljajev in posebnih potreb ter povečevanje intenzivnosti obravnave skladno s posebnimi potrebami otrok s specifičnimi učnimi težavami bi pomembno vplivali na učinkovitost vzgojno-izobraževalnega procesa. Ovire, ki primarno niso materialne narave, so prisotne v tistih šolah, ki ne uresničujejo petstopenjskega modela odziva na obravnavo, ki omogoča otrokom s specifičnimi učnimi težavami kontinuum diagnostičnega ocenjevanja, učinkovitih prilagoditev in oblik pomoči s pomočjo timskega soustvarjanja rešitev. Pomembni vzroki za neugodno stanje so: stališča strokovnih delavcev do posebnih potreb otrok, skromno znanje s področja specifičnih učnih težav ter premalo timskega reševanja izzivov in partnerskega odnosa med strokovnimi delavci, starši in otroki. Spremembe lahko pričakujemo od novosti pri

izobraževanju prihodnjih učiteljev in pozitivnih primerov učinkovite obravnave otrok s specifičnimi učnimi težavami v praksi. S sistemskim in sistematičnim delovanjem bi lahko dosegli pogoje za razvoj inkluzivne obravnave otrok s specifičnimi učnimi težavami.

Ključne besede: otroci s specifičnimi učnimi težavami, inkluzija, kontekst vpliva na inkluzivno politiko, kontekst oblikovanja zakonodaje, kontekst prakse, ovire

Introduction

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989, in KOP, 1990) is one of the central documents delineating the rights of all children, including children with SEN. In all social, economic and cultural contexts and policies, children with SEN, as well as children with SpLD, tend to be discriminated against and marginalised too a much greater extent than their peers without SEN. There is too much emphasis on the deficits, disabilities and barriers of children with SEN, while their strengths remain undervalued and their SEN neglected. Although some positive changes have occurred in recent years, there is still a big gap between the needs of children with SEN and the way these needs are addressed in school and society (UNICEF, 2007).

The inclusive treatment of children with SEN (and with SpLD) depends greatly on the model selected: the medical model or the social model. The medical model emphasises the deficits, impairment, disabilities and barriers of an individual, which is why medical-rehabilitative treatment in specialised institutions is, in this model, presented as the most effective way of improving the individual's achievements (Oliver, 2004; Hargrass, 2005). In the social model, attention is shifted from the "personal tragedy" to the need for changing the social environment in which children with SEN live and act (UNESCO, 2001). Inclusion is based on the social model, which is why the social and educational environment should be adapted for children with SEN as much as possible. The social model of including children with SEN has been the focus in the EU since as early as 1991 (Ainscow, 2005). One of the most important factors contributing to inclusive schooling of children with SEN in EU countries is the shift from a medical orientation to a more socially interactive orientation (Meijer, Soriano, & Watkins, 2003; Kavkler, 2011).

Inclusion and the quality of education are interrelated, as the ethics of inclusion contributes considerably to the quality education of all children. Both influence the development of a society that is just and democratic, and that values diversity (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2009). There can be no quick changes in the schooling of children with SEN (Falvey & Givner, 2005). Inclusion is not just another programme or an adapted strategy, it is a way of living together so that everyone gains something, is valued and feels connected with the community. Inclusion should not be equated with integration, nor should it be understood as a mere supplement to the existing school structure; instead, it should be seen as a process of changing society, the environment and institutions, which need to consider and value diversity more (Hegarty, 2003; European Agency for Development in Special Education, 2010).

Child-centred school is a basis for a human-centred society that respects diversity, allows for the optimal development of every individual and their potential, and treats all people with respect (Lorenz, 1999). In the long term, inclusive education eliminates prejudices towards children with SEN amongst their peers (Drabble, 2013). School teams that have opted for inclusion deal constructively with the barriers that all children encounter in the educational process, barriers that children with SEN face to an even greater extent.

Definition and Classification of Children with Low Educational Achievement

Children with low educational achievement may experience a diverse range of problems, which are often complex and difficult to resolve.

According to Lerner's (2003) definition, *children and youth with low achievement* (referred to in the continuation merely as children) are a very diverse group of children with various cognitive, social, emotional and other features, who have significantly greater difficulties in learning than the majority of their peers. Some experience only general learning difficulties (LD), some face only SpLD, while many experience both.

In Slovenia, children with low achievement or learning problems (without intellectual disabilities) account for 20% of all school children, and are classified into general learning difficulties (general LD) and specific learning difficulties (SpLD). The term specific learning difficulties (SpLD) implies a neurobiological nature of the learning impediment in specific learning areas, and includes developmental dyslexia, dyscalculia and nonverbal learning disabilities. Alternative terms in use for SpLD are learning disabilities, specific learning disorder (DSM V in APA, 2013) or specific developmental disorders of scholastic skills (ICD 10, 1996).

Children with SpLD (the entire continuum ranging from mild to severe SpLD) are a very diverse group. Due to known or unknown disabilities or differences in the functioning of their central nervous system, they experience severe difficulties in reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic, despite their average or above-average intellectual abilities. Delays and deficits in attention, memory, thinking, coordination, communication, social skills and emotional maturity are also present. These deficits influence the cognitive processing of verbal and non-verbal information, hinder the acquisition and automation of learning skills, and influence learning and behaviour throughout the individual's lifetime. They are internal and not primarily related to either inappropriate teaching and other environmental factors, nor are they related to impairment of

a visual, hearing or motoric kind, mental disabilities or behavioural and emotional problems (disorders), although they may occur simultaneously with such problems (Kavkler & Magajna, 2008).

SpLD are characterised by the child's strengths and specific disabilities or deficits, causing significantly lower learning achievement in some learning areas (reading, writing, arithmetic and spelling) than would be expected given the child's age, class, social and cultural background, and level of intellectual ability. Such disabilities can occur with gifted children as well, and can be very persistent in spite of hard work and regular training. They hinder learning in specific areas, both in the case of children with socially and culturally disadvantageous backgrounds and of children with adequate support and understanding in their families.

When identified in time and offered suitable forms of teaching and assistance, many children with SpLD can compensate for their problems by using effective learning techniques and activating their strong learning areas, even to the extent that they are successful and need no further guidance and additional professional assistance.

Historical Perspective

A review of past professional endeavours can help us understand the development of the field of general LD and SpLD (Magajna, Kavkler, & Križaj Ortar, 2003). In 1976/77, the share of primary school pupils enrolled in special institutions was as high as 3.4%. Many of these children did not actually have intellectual disabilities, but rather experienced severe general LD and SpLD; they were nonetheless enrolled in schools that implemented programmes with lower educational standards. There was a high dropout rate in primary schools between 1960 and 1980, with only 90% of children completing primary school successfully, prompting responsible education professionals to attempt to address the situation. In order to reduce the dropout rate in primary schools, various preventive measures were introduced in preschool and medical institutions after 1980, e.g., psychological screening of all 3-year-olds and speech-language examinations for 5-year-olds. In addition, 6-year-olds were included in preschool programmes (500 hours) in which they developed the knowledge and skills necessary for the more successful formal education of risk groups. School counselling services were expanded. The reading skills of all 8-year-olds were checked preventively, and assistance was offered wherever needed (Magajna et al., 2003). In Slovenia, a comprehensive and systematic approach helped to significantly reduce the dropout rate.

Analysis of Opportunities and Barriers in Inclusive Education for Children with Specific Learning Difficulties

At the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education of the Council of Europe in 2010, Zgaga (Žolnir, 2010) emphasised a major new challenge facing education professionals: to acknowledge the diversity in the population of children who do not learn with the same eagerness, nor with the same ability and success in all subjects. The diversity of the school population is evident from their learning achievements. In Slovenia, 1.3% of pupils failed to complete primary school in 2010/11 (SURS, 2012). On average, the results of international research were good. PISA results (2012, in Štraus, Šterman Ivančič, & Štigl, 2013), on the other hand, show that approximately 20% of 15-year-olds, many of whom have general LD and SpLD, failed to reach Step 2 in various fields of literacy that would enable their learning achievement (Srebotnik, 2013). Children with SEN, almost 40% of whom are identified as having severe SpLD, have lower learning achievement in comparison to their peers in national testing as well, despite adjustments being made during testing. The National Centre for External Evaluation (RIC, 2013) found that, on average, children with SEN achieved 38.3% points compared to their peers without SEN who achieve 53% points. Some 76.7% of children with SEN achieve 50% points and less compared to 40.2% of their peers with such a result (RIC, 2013). M. Peček Čuk and I. Lesar (2010) examined the differences that primary school teachers (207 class teachers and 207 subject teachers) perceive in the behavioural responses and learning achievement of children with SEN and those of their peers. Overall, the average learning achievement of children with SEN was significantly lower (average grade of 2.70) than that of their peers (average grade of 3.98). Children with severe SpLD have the lowest average learning achievement, at 2.05. Teachers also noted that children with severe SpLD stood out due to their negative self-image.

Children with mild, modest or severe SpLD, amounting to 10% of all children, constitute one of the most numerous groups of children with SEN, which is why the authors of the present article decided to analyse some factors influencing their educational achievement.

Barriers and opportunities for realising inclusive education of children with SpLD were analysed with the help of Ball's model (Ball, 1994; Tikondwe Kamchedzera, 2011; Kavkler, 2011). This model served as an analytical and conceptual framework for exploring the relation between the contexts of policy, legislation and practice in the area of inclusion. The educational and social needs of children with SpLD differ significantly from those of their peers due to

deficits that are neuro-physiological in origin and impair learning. The article focuses mainly on the analysis of barriers and opportunities for the development of inclusion in the area of SpLD. Ball's model includes three interactive contexts: *the context of policy influence, the context of policy text production* and *the context of practice*.

The Context of Policy Influence

The context of policy influence is the context of policy-making in the field of the inclusion of children with SEN, including children with SpLD. Within this context, the formation of an inclusive policy is influenced by participants in power structures, ranging from the government, the relevant minister and representatives of departments of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports, and the National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, to key professional associations and individuals. It is they who have an impact on the choice of the theoretical frameworks used to define special needs, on delineating the population of children with SEN, on selecting either the medical or the social model, and on the social purpose and aims of children with SEN education. Education reforms, especially in the field of SEN, often create an ideological battlefield driven by various economic and other factors, as well as by the perceptions of the participants in power (Levine et al., 2003, in Tikondwe Kamchedzera, 2011; Ainscow, 2003).

Even some influential Slovenian experts in the field of education have a poor knowledge of the complexity and neurobiological background of learning deficits, and of the SEN of the child population with SpLD (the entire continuum ranging from mild to severe SpLD is referred to as SpLD, except in legislative and other definitions, which recognise severe SpLD), tending to deal with learning deficits as transitional, related only to early education. There is a fear that additional methods of professional assistance for the largest group of children with SpLD within the SEN category would require overabundant funding, as severe SpLD accounts for nearly 40% of all children identified with SEN. Those who doubt the complexity of SpLD and the right of children with SpLD to adaptations in their education process, as well as to additional professional assistance, fail to recognise that the financial resources used to finance professional assistance are the most economical investment a state or individual can make, as the adequate treatment of children with SpLD alleviates their educational, employment and social inclusion problems. The financial investment in education later delivers high returns that far exceed the cost of material and scientific resources (Bassanini & Scarpetta, 2001; Jereb, 2011).

The development of the field of SpLD has been based on analyses of practice, examination of foreign models and strategies, and systematic drafting of the required documents to implement changes in practice. In the continuation, some steps will be described that have influenced policy-making and the development of the field of SpLD. Some of the activities that have had a vital impact on the development of the field of SpLD have been implemented as part of the broader realm of low achievement.

The first time the criteria for identifying severe SpLD, the differences between varying degrees of SpLD from mild to moderate or severe SpLD, and the continuum of programmes for children with SpLD (Magajna & Kavkler, 2002) were presented to a professional audience was in 2002. The population of children with severe SpLD was defined in detail in the *Rules on Criteria for Determining the Type and Degree of Disadvantages, Impairments and Disabilities of Children with Special Needs* (Magajna & Kavkler, 2002). Nevertheless, the numerous challenges that still remain in defining and improving the criteria for assessing the severity of SpLD in the continuum of the child population with SpLD led to amendments, adopted in 2014, in the *Criteria for Determining the Type and Degree of Disadvantages, Impairments and Disabilities of Children with Special Needs – Children with Deficits in Individual Learning Areas* (Magajna et al., 2014).

The planned changes in the broader field of low achievement, which include both general LD and SpLD, were based on an analysis of the actual conditions. As part of the project *Pupils with Learning Difficulties in Primary School – Developing a Comprehensive System of Effective Assistance* (Magajna et al., 2005), a study was conducted to analyse the situation in the field of general LD and SpLD. It revealed that treatment of these pupils in Slovenia was not comprehensive, integrated and long term. There was a wide gap between the rapid progress of theory and scientific findings in various disciplines that deal with the different causes of LD, examine effective new approaches to study support and teaching strategies, and work on early identification and prevention, and the implementation of these findings in practice. The study exposed organisational and motivation problems as the most common and critical issues, along with problems related to the competence of teachers to assist children with general LD and SpLD. It was determined that education professionals differ significantly in their perception of LD, as well as with regard to certain other key issues (ways of handling various types of LD). The study showed a clear distinction in assessing the effectiveness of various forms and sources of assistance between children and parents, on the one hand, and education professionals, on the other, while also highlighting challenges in communication and the lack

of teachers' competence to recognise and acknowledge pupils' strengths.

The analysis of the problems in the field of general LD and SpLD, together with certain more recent models and concepts, an in-depth insight into good practice experiences and strengths, critical issues and barriers found in practice in Slovenia, and Slovenian and foreign documents, established the groundwork for a range of experts in various disciplines from faculties of the University of Ljubljana, the Counselling Centre, and the Education Development Office of the Republic of Slovenia, as well as experts from practice, to design a comprehensive and systematic support model entitled *"The Concept of Working with Pupils with Learning Difficulties"* (Magajna et al., 2008a). The document introduces a vision and practical suggestions for overcoming underachievement in education and working with children with general LD and SpLD – but not those with severe SpLD – ranging from identification, assessment, teaching and more specialised forms of assistance, to the team-based creation of solutions that allow for sufficient flexibility and adaptation to the various forms and contexts of difficulties. The emphasis is on a shift from certain traditional perceptions and approaches that insisted on focusing on difficulties and deficits, to the strengths perspective: identification and utilisation of the individual's strengths, and encouraging personal characteristics that can lead to a successful life and career even when some LD remain.

A conceptual framework for the systemic comprehensive treatment of children with general LD and SpLD, including severe SpLD to a certain degree, was developed to address the key problems of identification and treatment (The Concept 'Learning Difficulties in Primary School', Magajna et al., 2008a). As part of the concept, a five-step model of assistance was devised, based on scientific and material resources already available in the Slovenian school system. The five-tier RTI approach enables children at risk of school failure to be identified early and provided with effective study assistance and support in collaboration with all participants, from the children themselves to their parents and education professionals. As general and specific LD vary in their degree of intensity, there need to be various forms of assistance for children with SpLD, with increasing intensity and specificity on the spectrum from step 1 to step 5 in order to meet children's individual needs. Teaching organised this way and various forms of assistance require increasingly specific knowledge on the part of the education professionals who provide the assistance. The entire spectrum of the five steps of assistance is only effective if education professionals, parents and pupils work together well and deliver on their responsibilities, which, in turn, requires evaluation. By including specific targets and agreed responsibilities, an "individual working project of help", implemented in schools in steps

1–4, helps to provide an overview of the work with a child with SpLD. After each step, a final evaluation assessment must to be made, which includes an assessment of both the child's progress and the effectiveness of the assistance, as well as opinions on and proposals for its continuation. In step 5, a team of the school's education professionals makes an individualised programme for the child with severe SpLD, which serves as a binding document for teachers and other education professionals.

The *Guide to Customized Primary School Curriculum Implementation with Additional Professional Assistance – Children with Deficits in Individual Learning Areas* (Kavkler et al., 2008) features a varied range of adaptations to overcome various deficits of children with severe SpLD.

In the period from 2009 to 2011, as part of the EU project *Professional Basis for Further Development and Implementation of the Concept 'Learning Difficulties in Primary School'*, a project group of staff from the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Social Work of the University of Ljubljana drafted a theoretical background for strategies for identifying and assessing general LD and SpLD, providing assistance and support, and team-based solution finding. Inclusion teams (the project *Using Inclusion Teams to Implement the Concept 'Learning Difficulties in Primary School' 2009–2011*) helped to test the findings in practice. Four books were published and distributed to all primary and secondary schools free of charge with the following topics: *Pupils with Learning Difficulties – Selected Topics*; *Identification and Diagnostic Assessment; Assistance and Support; Individual Working Project of Help*. All of the materials on learning difficulties and SpLD produced as part of the project are still available to interested parents and education professionals on the website www.ucne-tezave.si.

This outline of the Context of Influence indicates that good planning and systematic activities can create the conditions for the development of an inclusive treatment policy for children on the continuum of general LD and the continuum of specific LD.

The Context of Policy Text Production

The *Context of Policy Text Production* is concerned with the drafting of laws and other documents, in this case those that enable the enactment of SEN policy. According to Ball (1994), legal documents are necessarily a product of compromise at various levels of policy-making, from the early conceptual influence of interested parties, to the reading and adoption processes in parliament. E. Tikondwe Kamchedzera (2011) notes that the production of policy text in the field of SEN depends on the motivation of the elites for inclusion implementation,

on the perception of inclusion and special needs concepts, and on the choice of paradigms that influence the policy and the rights of people with SEN.

Internationally, inclusive education is seen as a reform that supports diversity amongst all children, and as a principle that defines education as a basic human right and the foundation for a more just and equal society (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010). The following international documents are some of the key policy texts comprising the legal framework that supports inclusion: *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948); *The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989); *The World Declaration on Education for All* (1990); *The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities* (1993); *The Salamanca Declaration* (1994); *The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion* (2001); *The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (2006), etc. (in UNESCO, 2005; UNESCO, 2009).

Vital for the development of the field of SpLD is the *Written Declaration 64/2007 on "dys"crimination and social exclusion affecting children with "dys"abilities*, adopted in the EU Parliament on 12 November 2007 (Rejouis-Panayotopoulos, 2007). The declaration was signed by the majority of Slovenia's MEPs.

As the SEN of children with SpLD range on a continuum from less to more explicit, legislation in Slovenia governs the rights of children with SpLD with two acts: the Elementary School Act (1996), and the Placement of Children with Special Needs Act (ZUOPP, 2000). *Children with mild and moderate SpLD* are entitled to the same forms of support as children with general LD, and their rights are defined in the Elementary School Act (1996, Article 11, Paragraph 2). These include the right to remedial education, adaptation of working methods and approaches, and individual and group support. With the amended Elementary School Act of 2011, however, children with mild and moderate SpLD were denied the status of SEN, but retained the right to educational assistance, adaptation of working methods and approaches, and individual and group support (Article 12a of Elementary School Act, 2011).

In enacting the right of *children with severe SpLD* to major adaptations in their education process and more specific forms of additional professional assistance, the proposer of ZUOPP was compelled to yield to pressure from professionals and parents and make compromises. The inclusion of children with severe SpLD in ZUOPP (2000) allows for additional rights to more effective treatment of these children (Vršnik Perše, 2009). A team of experts (S. Tancig, L. Magajna, & M. Kavkler, in Vršnik Perše, 2009) drafted an amendment that specifies the need to include children with severe SpLD in ZUOPP (Article 2 of ZUOPP, 2000). MP Ana Kragelj-Zbačnik submitted the amendment for a

decision procedure on the inclusion of children with severe SpLD in ZUOPP (2000). During the second reading of ZUOPP (2000) to discuss the amendment on the inclusion of children with severe SpLD in Article 2 of ZUOPP (2000), the proposer justified their disagreement with the proposed amendment by noting that children with severe SpLD had already been categorised as *children with a long-term illness*, fearing the placement of the entire 20% of children with low achievement rather than just 2–4% of children with severe SpLD (Poročevalec 2000, No. 71, p. 11, Paragraph 2). The reasoned opinion on the importance of the specific treatment of children with severe SpLD submitted by professionals from the Counselling Centre for Children, Adolescents and Parents Ljubljana was instrumental in the ZUOPP (2000) proposer's decision to include children with severe SpLD in ZUOPP (2000) as SEN. However, in the subsequent version of the draft ZUOPP (2000, Article 2), the proposer referred to children with SpLD as *children with developmental and neurological disorders*. Ravnik (2000) and the Child Neurology Department of the Slovenian Medical Association (2000) opposed this term and the inclusion of a neurologist in the assessment of severe SpLD, emphasising that the assessment and treatment of severe SpLD is primarily an educational issue, even if the causes of the disability are neuro-physiological. In the second reading, the proposer decided to include children with severe SpLD in ZUOPP (2000) as a separate category; however, prior to the adoption of the act in the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, a team of experts (M. Kavkler, L. Magajna, L. Marjanovič Umek, Čuk, & Opara, in Vršnik Perše, 2009) had to formulate a term that would clearly delineate severe SpLD from LD. Thus, the term *deficits in individual learning areas* was formulated to denote severe SpLD. By including them as SEN in ZUOPP (2000), children with severe SpLD gained the right to adaptations in their education process and testing, and to additional professional assistance (1–5 hours).

Two laws have been adopted within the context of policy text production that allow for the implementation of the continuum of rights of children with SpLD. Children with severe SpLD were included in ZUOPP (2000) following pressure from professionals and parents of children with SpLD. One of the decisive factors behind the adoption of the amendment to ZUOPP (2000) was the support of 80 influential professionals from the fields of medicine, education and social services. Later, the amendment also gained support from members of the Slovenian Special Education Association and representatives of parliamentary groups. A number of compromises were required in all stages of adopting ZUOPP (2000), from conceptual influence by interested parties, to the reading and adoption processes in the National Assembly.

The Context of Practice

The context of practice concerns the reinterpretation and implementation of inclusive policy in education practice. In schools, those entrusted with the implementation of the legislated inclusive policy in practice include teachers, principals and other education professionals, but rarely pupils and parents. Education professionals interpret the policy in accordance with their own views, perceptions, experience, history, aspirations, values, knowledge, intentions, meanings and the preferred approaches. These factors, and many more, have an influence on how successfully inclusion is implemented in practice.

Despite being recognised as effective in the EU and many other countries, and despite being corroborated by a number of studies and international declarations, inclusive practice is still a major challenge for many teachers and other education professionals in Slovenia when it comes to its implementation in practice (Kavkler, 2011). Indeed, as Zgaga (Žolnir, 2010) emphasised at the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education of the Council of Europe, teachers should gain the competence to teach their subject, as well as the ability to do so with a varied population of children in the classroom.

The *Written Declaration 64/2007 on "dys"crimination and social exclusion affecting children with "dys"abilities* emphasised the importance of promoting good practice, access to information, systematic and early diagnostics, lifelong assistance and support, and treatment of persons with SpLD by designing effective pedagogical approaches that improve standard and special pedagogical assistance and support for children and adults with SpLD (Rejouis-Panayotopoulos, 2007).

In Slovenia, the development of inclusive practice for all children, especially those with SpLD, has been too slow, with education policy and efforts in practice more focused on knowledge standards and the results of national and international testing rather than on children's needs. The attention of the media is attracted by individuals who stand out for their talents despite their SpLD. More often than their peers without SpLD, children with SpLD are frustrated with their underachievement and are poorly integrated into their social environment. Those who lack adequately adapted demands from the early stages of their education process, and who are given no effective professional assistance, struggle with the successful continuation of their education process and with integration into society. Above all, the quality of inclusive practice in the classroom, manifested as various inclusive or non-inclusive teaching methods that have a vital impact on the performance of children with SpLD, depends on teachers' perceptions, knowledge and teaching strategies (Vidovich, 2001;

Kavkler, 2011). In the teaching and testing processes, the school's education professionals often merely reduce the complexity and abstractness of assignments instead of enabling children specific adaptations in reading, writing, arithmetic and spelling (e.g., adjustments in study materials, the use of study and technical aids, longer times, etc.), as required by their SEN. Problems with adequate adjustment of demands are related to the perceptions, readiness and competence of education professionals to use the five-step RTI approach. Any child who fails to meet education targets should have his/her education process adapted by the teacher, and should be given assistance by a school counsellor, as well as individual or group study support. When it comes to selecting professionals for intensive and specific forms of assistance, the focus is all too often on the opportunity to increase staff rather than on providing effective assistance for a child with SpLD. Many of those who practice additional assistance have not been adequately trained, or lack the required knowledge and strategies to effectively diagnose and provide assistance and support to children with severe SpLD, who need the most intensive and most specific forms of assistance. Unfortunately, unlike the performance of children with severe SpLD, the effectiveness of either implementing adaptations in the teaching process or providing additional assistance is never subject to evaluation.

Children with SpLD can achieve their fullest potential if they have access to high-quality instruction based on research findings, taking account of the SEN of the individual and including ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the child's progress, which enables education professionals to adequately adapt the teaching process and treatment of children with SpLD (NRCLD, 2007; RRCNA, 2010). There are a number of successful professionals in Slovenia who believe that inclusive education of children with SpLD is possible and rational, and who have the required knowledge for its implementation. This is the practice in schools with a clear policy towards inclusion and with a principal who supports his/her staff by giving them access to material and scientific resources and helping them acquire the knowledge and skills required to provide inclusive education to all children with SEN, including those with SpLD (European Commission/EACEA/Eurodyce, 2012).

As changing perceptions, learning new approaches and implementing team work are long-term processes, no change of school practice is quick or easy. Advice alone is not enough for teachers and other education professionals to change their teaching process and treatment of children with SpLD; the implementation of these tasks takes effort and time. Education professionals need positive perceptions, knowledge, experience and support, which is why "Inclusive Education" is part of students' curricula in education faculties in Slovenia,

so that all future teachers can learn about the basics of the identification and treatment of children with general LD and SpLD. In addition, the Faculty of Education of the University of Ljubljana organises a one-year training programme on working with children and adolescents with SpLD and emotional and behavioural disorders for education professionals in schools. Many seminars are also organised by other institutions.

Another organisation committed to developing the full potential of children with SpLD is the *Bravo Association for Helping Children and Adolescents with SpLD* (www.drustvo-bravo.si), which focuses on raising public awareness about the typical features and SEN of persons with SpLD, producing publications and organising international conferences, seminars and other forms of training for persons with SpLD, their parents and education professionals.

As is clear from the context of practice, the implementation of changes towards inclusive educational practice for children with SpLD is slow. The enacted rights of children with SpLD are repeatedly disregarded. All too often, the effectiveness of assistance depends on the perceptions and knowledge of the education professionals who teach the children in the classroom or provide them with study support and additional assistance. On the other hand, there are education professionals with positive perceptions and knowledge who are ready to work with all of the participants in the education process in order to create the conditions for children with SpLD to achieve the best possible results.

Conclusions

In Slovenia, the development of inclusive practice has been too slow. Legal grounds for its implementation are provided, but the gap between legislation and practice remains all too wide. While focusing on SpLD, the present article has attempted to analyse different factors that hinder the development of inclusive practice. With Ball's model (1994), we were able to analyse the situation from the contexts of policy influence, text production and practice. Within the context of inclusive policy influence, we presented the key elements of forming the conceptual framework for the treatment of children with SpLD, together with part of the materials enabling the conditions for the implementation of inclusive policy in practice. Within the context of policy text production, we explained how professionals influenced the drafting of the law that enabled children with severe SpLD to acquire the status of children with SEN, and thus gain more rights to adapted education and to additional professional assistance. Policy and legislation offer the conditions for the implementation of inclusive education of children with SpLD. In practice, however, children

with SpLD are often discriminated against, and their learning achievements are generally much lower than the achievements of their peers without SpLD. By implementing the five-tier RTI approach, which includes appropriate adaptations and effective forms of both learning and additional professional assistance, many children with SpLD could attain significantly better learning achievements and social inclusion.

No change in the area of educating children with SpLD can be achieved quickly. Positive changes can be expected with future teachers, who now acquire at least basic knowledge about SpLD during their studies. Moreover, positive changes can be expected due to the many school education professionals who already share a positive attitude towards children with SpLD, who know how to find solutions in collaboration with other participants, and who possess the knowledge and strategies for effective teaching and for offering various forms of both learning and additional professional assistance. Education professionals should stop focusing only on deficits and shift to the prospects of the ability, identification and utilisation of the individual's strengths, encouraging the factors that can lead to a successful life and career even when some SpLD remain.

References

Ainscow, M. (2003). Developing inclusive education system: what are the levers for change? *International conference on inclusive education*. Hong Kong, 16.–19. 12 2003.

Ainscow, M. (2005). From special education to effective school for all. Inclusion celebrating diversity. *Inclusive and Supportive Education Congress*. Glasgow, 1.–4. August 2005.

Ainscow, M., & Sandill, A. (2010). Developing inclusive education system: the role of organisational cultures and leadership. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *14*(4), 401–416.

American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (Fifth ed.). Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing.

Ball, S. J. (1994). *Education reform: A critical and post-structural approach.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Bassanini, A., & Scarpetta, S. (2001). The driving forces of economic growth: Panes data evidence from OECD countries. *OECD Economic Studies, 33*, 9–53.

Drabble, S. (2013). *Support for children with special educational needs (SEN).* Brussels: European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.

European Agency for Development in Special Education. (2010). *Teacher Education for inclusion – International Literature Review*. Odense, Denmark: Author. Retrieved 21 May 2011, from www.european.agency.org

European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice. (2012). *Developing Key Competences at School in Europe:*

Challenges and Opportunities for Policy. Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education. (2009). *Key Principles for Promoting Quality in Inclusive Education – Recommendations for Policy Makers.* Odense, Denmark: Author.

Falvey, M. A., & Givner, C. C. (2005). What is an inclusive school? In R. A. Villa & J. S. Thousand (Eds.), *Creating an inclusive school* (pp. 1–26). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Hargrass, H. (2005). Definitions of disability and disability policy in Egypt. In C. Barnes & G. Mercer (Eds.), *The Social Model of Disability: Europe and the Major World* (pp. 148–162). Leeds: The Disability Press.

Hegarty, S. (2003). Inclusion and EFA: Some perspectives from outside education. *International conference on inclusive education*. Hong Kong, 16.–19.12. 2003, pp. 23–32.

ICD-10 – International classification of diseases and related health problems, 10th revision. (1992). Geneva: World Health Organization.

Jereb, A. (2011). Ekonomske posledice učne neuspešnosti. In S. Pulec Lah & M. Velikonja (Eds.), *Učenci z učnimi težavami v osnovni šoli: izbrane teme* (pp. 52–66). Ljubljana: UL, Pedagoška fakulteta.

Kavkler, M. (2011). Konceptualne osnove obravnave učencev z učnimi težavami. In M. Košak Babuder & M. Velikonja (Eds.), *Učenci z učnimi težavami v osnovni šoli: pomoč in podpora* (pp. 8–42). Ljubljana: UL, Pedagoška fakulteta.

Kavkler, M., Bregar-Golobič, K., Čačinovič Vogrinčič, G., Magajna, L., Klug, M., Pečjak, S., & Vernik, H. (2008). *Otroci s primanjkljaji na posameznih področjih učenja: navodila za prilagojeno izvajanje programa osnovne šole z dodatno strokovno pomočjo.* Ljubljana: Zavod RS za šolstvo.

Kavkler, M., & Magajna, L. (2008). Opredeltiev, razsežnost, podskupine učnih težav. In L. Magajna, S. Pečjak, C. Peklaj, G. Čačinovič Vogrinčič, K. Bregar Golobič, M. Kavkler, & S. Tancig, *Učne težave v osnovni šoli – problemi, perspektive, priporočila* (pp. 23–32). Ljubljana: Zavod RS za šolstvo.

KOP (Konvencija OZN o pravicah otrok, 1990). Ljubljana: UNICEF.

Lerner, J. (2003). *Learning Disabilities: Theories, Diagnosis and Teaching Strategies*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Lorenz, S. (1999). Making inclusion work for children with Down syndrome. *Down Syndrome News and Update, 1*(4), 175–180.

Magajna, L., & Kavkler, M. (2002). Primanjkljaji na posameznih področjih učenja (PPPU). In M. Kavkler (Ed.), *Razvijanje potencialov otrok in mladostnikov s specifičnimi učnimi težavami – zbornik prispevkov. Kranjska Gora, 26.–28.9.2002* (pp. 3–6). Ljubljana: Svetovalni center za otroke, mladostnike in starše Ljubljana, Društvo Bravo; Different, d.o.o.

Magajna, L., Kavkler, M., & Križaj Ortar, M. (2003). Adults with Self-Reported Learning Disabilities in Slovenia: Findings from the International Adult Literacy Survey on the Incidence and Correlates of Learning Disabilities in Slovenia. *Dyslexia, 9*(4), 229–251.

Magajna, L., Pečjak, S., Peklaj, C., Bregar-Golobič, K., Čačinovič Vogrinčič, G., Kavkler, M., & Tancig, S. (2005). *Učne težave v osnovni šoli – razvoj celovitega sistema učinkovite pomoči : raziskovalno*

poročilo. Ljubljana: Razvojno-raziskovalni inštitut Svetovalnega centra.

Magajna, L., Kavkler, M., Čačinovič Vogrinčič, G., Pečjak, S., Bregar-Golobič, K., & Nagode, A. (Ed.) (2008a). *Učne težave v osnovni šoli: koncept dela*, (Program osnovnošolskega izobraževanja). 1. natis. Ljubljana: Zavod RS za šolstvo.

Magajna, L., Pečjak, S., Peklaj, C., Čačinovič Vogrinčič, G., Bregar-Golobič, K., Kavkler, M., & Tancig, S. (2008b). *Učne težave v osnovni šoli – problemi, perspektive, priporočila.* Ljubljana: Zavod RS za šolstvo.

Magajna, L., Kavkler, M., Košak Babuder, M., Zupančič Danko, A., Seršen Fras, A., & Rošer, A. (2014). Otroci s primanjkljaji na posameznih področjih učenja. VII. In N. Vovk Ornik (Ed.), *Kriteriji za opredelitev vrste in stopnje primanjkljajev, ovir oz. motenj otrok s posebnimi potrebami* (pp. 23–31). Ljubljana: Zavod RS za šolstvo.

Meijer, C., Soriano, V., & Watkins, A. (Eds.) (2003). *Special needs education in Europe. Thematic Publication.* Middlefart, Denmark: European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education.

National Research Centre on Learning Disabilities NRCLD. (2007). *Core concepts of RTI.* Retrieved 26 January 2009, from http://www.ncrld.org/about/research/rti/concepts.html

Oliver, M. (2004). The social model of disability in action: if I had a hammer. In C. Barnes & G. Mercer (Eds.), *Implementing the Social Model of Disability: Theory and Research* (pp. 18–31). Leeds: The Disability Press.

Peček Čuk, M., & Lesar, I. (2010). Učitelji o vedenjskih reakcijah in učnem uspehu učencev s posebnimi potrebami v redni osnovni šoli. In A. Kobal (Ed.), *Izstopajoče vedenje in pedagoški odzivi* (pp. 165–208). Ljubljana: UL Pedagoška fakulteta.

Poročevalec DZ, no. 71/2000.

Ravnik, M. I. (2000). Dopis državni sekretarki Ministrstva za zdravstvo SRS Dunji Kosmač Piškur. Ljubljana: Sekcija za otroško nevrologijo.

Reading Recovery Council of North America RRCNA. (2010). Response to intervention in grade one: Reading recovery. Summary report. Retrieved 15 August 2012, from http://www.nrcld.org/about/research/rti/concelts.html

Rejouis-Panayotopoulos, M. (2007). Opening Adress at EDA Conference. *EDA NEWS*, *1*(5), 21–28.

Republiški izpitni center (RIC). (2013). *Splošne informacije o NPZ.* Retrieved 12 November 2013, from www.ric.si/preverjanje_znanja/splosne_informacije

Sekcija za otroško nevrologijo SZD. (2000). *Poročilo Upravnega odbora sekcije za otroško nevrologijo.* Ljubljana: SPS Pediatrična klinika.

Srebotnik, I. (2013). Spodbudno in zelo sporočilno. *Šolsko razgledi, LXIV* (7, 12. April).

SURS (2012). *Osnovnošolsko izobraževanje mladine in odraslih v Sloveniji ob koncu šolskega leta 2010/2011.* Retrieved 16 September 2013, from http://www.stat.si/novica_prikazi.aspx?id=4636

Štraus, M., Šterman Ivančič, K., & Štigl, S. (2013). *OECD PISA 2012 : matematični, bralni in naravoslovni dosežki slovenskih učencev: program mednarodne primerjave dosežkov učencev 2012 : nacionalno poročilo.* Ljubljana: Pedagoški inštitut.

Tikondwe Kamchedzera, E. (2011). *Education of pupils with disabilities in Malawi's inclusive secondary*

schools: policy, practice and experiences. Doctoral thesis. Warwick: University of Warwick, Institute of education.

UNESCO. (2001). Open file on inclusive education: the rationale for inclusive education. *Support Materials for Managers and Administrators*. Paris, UNESCO.

UNESCO. (2005). *Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for ALL.* Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

UNESCO. (2009). *Inclusive and Child Friendly Education*. Retrieved 10 October 2010, from http://unesco.org.pk/education/icfe/

UNICEF. (2007). Promoting the rights of children with disabilities. *Innocenti Digest*, (13). Florence: Innocenti Research Centre.

Vidovich, L. (2001). *A conceptual framework for analysis of education policy and practices: paper proposed for presentation at the Australian Association for Research in Education*. Fremantle, December 2001.

Vršnik Perše, T. (2009). *Izobraževanje otrok s posebnimi potrebami.* Znanstvena poročila Pedagoškega instituta 05/2009. Ljubljana: Pedagoški institut.

Zakon o osnovni šoli (1996). Uradni list Republike Slovenije, Nu. 12, 29. 11. 1996.

Zakon o osnovni šoli (2011). Uradni list Republike Slovenije, Nu. 87/11, 2. 11. **2011.**

Zakon o usmerjanju otrok s posebnimi potrebami (ZUOPP) (2000). Uradni list Republike Slovenije, Nu. 54/2000.

Zakon o usmerjanju otrok s posebnimi potrebami (ZUOPP-1) (2011). Uradni list Republike Slovenije, Nu. 58/2011.

Žolnir, N. (2010). Časi elitizma v šolstvu so minili. *Delo*, 7. 6. 2010, Year 52, No. 129, p. 4.

Biographical note

Marija Kavkler, PhD, is an Associate Professor of special and rehabilitation education at the Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana. Her knowledge and experience is transferred to undergraduate and postgraduate students and academic professionals in various forms of training. Her field of research is related to inclusive education for children and adolescents with special needs, especially those with general and specific learning difficulties. She was involved in a number of national and international projects dealing with school underachievement of children and adolescents. She has participated in the preparation of key documents in the field of special education in Slovenia. By combining theoretical knowledge and practical experience she strives for inclusive education which will largely take into account the needs of a diverse population of children and adolescents.

Milena Košak Babuder, PhD, is an Assistant in the Department of Special education at the Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana. Her fields of research are the exploration of the effects of poverty and general and specific learning difficulties on educational performance of primary and secondary school students and development of strategies and models of support and treatments in these areas. She also runs many workshops and seminars on specific learning difficulties for in-service teachers and school counsellors.

Lidija Magajna, PhD, received her doctorate in psychology from the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana. She is currently working as an assistant professor of psychology in education at the Department of Special and Rehabilitation Education at the Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana and as head of the research unit at the Counselling Centre for Children, Adolescents and Parents in Ljubljana and has extensive clinical experience in assessment, counselling and prevention of learning and psychosocial problems. Her research interests include cognitive, developmental and neuropsychological aspects of learning disabilities, school underachievement and related psychosocial problems and comparative studies of early reading and arithmetic development.

The Effects of the Comprehensive Inductive Educational Approach on the Social Behaviour of Preschool Children in Kindergarten

Robi Kroflič*[1] and Helena Smrtnik Vitulić[2]

The aim of the present study was to ascertain the effects of the five-month implementation of the comprehensive inductive educational approach on the social behaviour of kindergarten children. The sample consisted of 52 children in the experimental group and 48 children in the control group, aged from 2.6 to 6.0 years. The kindergarten teachers responsible for the two groups completed the Slovenian version of the *Social Competence and Behaviour Evaluation* questionnaire before and after the implementation of the approach. The children in the experimental group achieved higher scores than those in the control group on five of the eight basic scales of social behaviour, and on two of the three composite scales, as well as on the general result of social adaptation. It can be concluded that the implementation of the comprehensive educational approach influenced various aspects of the children's social behaviour.

Keywords: inductive educational approach, early childhood, kindergarten, social behaviour

1 *Corresponding Author. University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, Slovenia; robi.kroflic@gmail.com

2 University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education, Slovenia

Učinki celovitega induktivnega vzgojnega pristopa na socialno vedenje predšolskih otrok v vrtcu

Robi Kroflič* in Helena Smrtnik Vitulić

Namen prispevka je prikazati učinke petmesečnega uvajanja celovitega induktivnega vzgojnega pristopa na socialno vedenje vrtčevskih otrok. Vzorec je zajemal 52 otrok v eksperimentalni skupini in 48 otrok v kontrolni skupini, starih od 2,6 leta do 6 let. Predšolske vzgojiteljice, zadolžene za obe skupini otrok, so izpolnjevale slovensko različico Vprašalnika o socialnem vedenju otrok pred uvedbo celovitega induktivnega vzgojnega pristopa in po njej. Otroci v eksperimentalni skupini so dosegli boljše rezultate kot otroci v kontrolni skupini na petih od osmih osnovnih lestvic, nadalje na dveh od treh sestavljenih lestvic pa tudi v skupnem rezultatu socialne prilagojenosti. Sklenemo lahko, da je implementacija celovitega induktivnega vzgojnega pristopa pozitivno vplivala na različne vidike socialnega vedenja otrok.

Ključne besede: induktivni vzgojni pristop, zgodnje otroštvo, vrtec, socialno vedenje

Introduction

Recently, there has been increasing interest in the emotional, social and affective dimensions in examining moral development and how it is influenced by education, whereas in the so-called pre-Kohlbergian period (Kristjansson, 2004) these dimensions were notably neglected. In the philosophy of education, there is increased awareness of the importance of relational ethics, particularly the ethics of care and Levinas' ethics of "face-to-face" encounter (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005; Kroflič, 2010). In his ethics, Levinas highlights responsibility towards other human beings and suggests that contextualised reasoning should replace submission to universal norms, as well as emphasising a respectful attitude towards difference (Levinas, 2006; Moss, 2008). A similar trend can be observed in numerous psychological studies (Eisenberg, Losoja, & Guthrie, 1997; Eisenberg et al., 2001; Eisenberg, Cumberland, Guthrie, Murphy, & Shepard, 2005; Horvat & Zupančič, 2010) underlining the importance of the child's encounter with the real other person, leading to the emergence of complex prosocial emotions, which represent the core foundation of children's social competence. The latter is closely linked to the developing ability of social perspective-taking, representing the individual's cognitive and emotional ability to understand other people's emotions, motives and intentions (Eisenberg & Mussen, 1997). Children's social competence also includes effective emotional regulation. Emotionally well-regulated people are capable of managing their emotions in a flexible and socially acceptable way. "Optimal emotion regulation is not a developmental task to be mastered at a certain age […], but rather a 'moving target' that is continually sensitive to changing goals and contexts" (Diamond & Aspinwall, 2003, p. 149).

These findings have led to the construction of three crucial components of the main educational approaches: (1) the realisation that children are more cognitively and socially sensitive than they were seen to be in traditional stage theories of moral, cognitive and socio-cognitive development (Moss, Dillon, & Statham, 2010); (2) the recognition that prosocial emotions such as emphatic guilt (a child's ability not only to empathise with the victim's distress but also to be aware of his/her responsibility for it (Krevans & Gibbs, 1996), which is not a result of the internalised moral norms of the child's social environment, typical of so-called anxiety-based and inhibitory psychoanalytic guilt) and compassion, which represent the main basis of prosocial sensibility, arise in children even before they are fully capable of competent moral reasoning (Kristjansson, 2004); and (3) the realisation that moral consciousness is always linked to our basic responsibility towards other human beings and their well-being

(Levinas, 2006). When responsibility is perceived in this way, it clearly cannot be achieved through discipline as a form of achieving submission to the established social norms and values, but rather through encouraging the child to enter various social relations in the social arena in a respectful manner. Secondly, educational activities should not be reduced to inductive discipline practice, but should also include a variety of activities that promote positive social experiences. Today, there are various educational concepts coming to the fore that are based on these postulates; two prominent examples worth mentioning are relational pedagogy (Bingham & Sidorkin, 2004) and the pedagogy of listening (Rinaldi, 2006). Similar starting points provide the basis of the comprehensive inductive educational approach that we put forth in the present paper.

Approaches to inductive discipline

Hoffman (2000) was the first to report endeavours to form an inductive approach to discipline in the context of family upbringing. According to the inductive approach to discipline, when a child misbehaves, one should clearly state disapproval of the behaviour. This should then be followed by drawing attention to the distress of the person harmed by the child's actions and highlighting the child's role in causing this distress, thus prompting the emergence of empathic guilt in the child (Hoffman, 2000). Such an approach encourages the development of prosocial emotions in the wrongdoer, and the child is much more likely to feel the need and willingness to correct his/her "wrong".

Since the 1990s, various authors have echoed Hoffman's model of inductive discipline. Krevans and Gibbs (1996) reported findings about the inductive approach to discipline successfully encouraging children's prosocial behaviour. As one of the challenges of inductive discipline, however, the authors stated that better distinctions need to be found between empathy-based and psychoanalytic guilt, as well as between love withdrawal, other-oriented induction and parental disappointment. On the other hand, Eisenberg et al. (1997) stated the advantages of the inductive discipline approach, emphasising that using the inductive educational method it is possible to encourage the development of perspective-taking in children, to teach children how to take responsibility for their actions, to develop internal motivation and to promote prosocial behaviour.

Theoretical premises of the "comprehensive inductive educational approach" (CIEA) and its application in kindergarten

The principal aim of moral education is, in our view, captured in Levinas's provocative claim that morals are not primarily concerned with the

individual's attitude towards social rules and ethical principles, but rather with a respectful attitude towards other human beings and the environment, and towards building a meaningful existence (Kroflič, 2007). This means that, as ethically responsible beings, we have a responsibility to direct our intentions by taking into account the well-being of other people and the environment, as opposed to merely subjecting our actions to social norms.

With regard to the question of shaping a stimulating environment, the CIEA is built on the finding that children's primary prosocial skills develop through their interactions with significant others (adults) and with their peers, i.e., through genuine relationships characterised by love and friendship. In a stimulating environment with emotionally positive adults and children, the child's ability to form such relationships develops already in earliest childhood (Marjanovič Umek & Fekonja Peklaj, 2008). In addition to inductive discipline enabling systematic mediation in the case of conflicts, the CIEA applied in kindergarten as an "elaboration" of inductive approaches also comprised other educational activities, such as encouraging prosocial activity (mutual help, for example), minimising fear of difference, promoting team work, and finally, one of the most efficient activities, education through art (Kroflič, 2011).

Based on the theoretical premises described above and on an array of educational activities, we determined the basic structure of the comprehensive inductive model of encouraging prosocial and moral development:

1. even though ethical consciousness demands complex cognitive capacities, children are capable of entering relations characterised by love and friendship already in early childhood, enabling them to develop *relational response-ability* and *normative agency* for prosocial activities in a truly genuine way;
2. given that in personally engaged relations one may also sometimes harm a person, the second step is *developing a sense of respect* towards specific persons or activities, and towards action;
3. the last step of moral education is to become aware of ethical principles and humanistic demands, especially concerning human rights and ecological values, and to learn how to use them as a basis for democratic negotiation in cases of interpersonal conflicts (Kroflič, 2007, 2011).

These guidelines were used by kindergarten teachers to plan their activities when working with children. In order to encourage the development of *relational response-ability* and *normative agency*, the teacher should introduce an array of activities that encourage various routes of communication between children and their peers, as well as between children and adults, and that lead to

closer personal attachment relationships. A *sense of respect* towards the feelings of others develops as the child engages in experimentation and begins testing, in various ways, how adults and peers respond to his/her actions. When children's actions lead to another person's negative emotional response, children often try to avoid being confronted with the consequences of their own actions. In this case, the inductive role means that the teacher should, first of all, prevent children from avoiding the unpleasant feeling that comes from facing the other person's emotional distress caused by them. Secondly, the adult should refrain from explaining to the child why a certain action is inappropriate. In this way, the teacher enables children to grasp the connection between "cause" and "effect" on their own, and to themselves realise what they have done wrong. Insisting that children take "responsibility" for the consequences of their actions does not mean that one should issue disciplinary warnings (statements like "you shouldn't do that"), but that children should face the emotional distress of the other person, which frequently leads to their own feelings of hurt, empathic guilt and compassion, as well as to the cognitive processing of the event. If children are enabled to do this, they will try to make the wrong right in order to end their own distress, while at the same time strengthening their image of what (dis)respectful relationships look like. It is only in the third step of education that generalisations are used in the form of *understanding the meaning of specific values and ethical principles*, as well as bringing insight into the fact that the easiest way to regulate life in a community or an institution is through rules agreed upon in advance. Research focusing on the understanding of rules that prevent moral conflicts demonstrates that preschool children are already capable of understanding such rules and using them in choosing their actions (Durkin, 1995).

The present research was guided by the aspiration to develop a CIEA that would encourage children's prosocial and moral development, and that could be used in the everyday institutional practice of kindergartens as well as in primary education. We gathered the outcomes of the five-month implementation of the CIEA regarding various aspects of kindergarten children's social behaviour. Specifically, we sought to determine whether the CIEA (through fostering the development of empathic guilt) influences the promotion of prosocial behaviour and has a positive effect on the reduced internalisation of behaviour problems (less depression, anxiety, isolation and dependency), as previous findings regarding the use of inductive educational discipline in the family context indicate the need for better distinctions between empathy-based and psychoanalytic guilt, as well as between love withdrawal, other-oriented induction and parental disappointment (Krevans & Gibbs, 1996).

Method

Research design and procedure

In order to identify the effects of the CIEA on conventional education, the study employed a quasi-experimental "equivalent Control Group with Post-Test" (Berg & Latin, 1994, in Hossain, Tarmizi, Aziz, & Nordin, 2013, p. 45). Prior to the experiment treatment, the two groups involved should be similar in terms of the measured characteristics. Consequently, if one group receives experimental treatment and post-treatment group differences appear at a dependent variable, these differences may be understood as a result of the treatment (Leedy & Ormroad, 2002, in Hossain et al., 2013).

Prior to conducting the study, the kindergarten management, kindergarten teachers and parents involved agreed to the implementation of the CIEA and to obtaining data about the selected children by signing a written agreement. After the pre-test (the kindergarten teachers completed a questionnaire about each child's social behaviour) in the control group (CG) and the experimental group (EG), we commenced the implementation of the CIEA in the EG. The experimental kindergarten teachers who were assigned to the implementation group were properly trained, attending three lectures with discussions, where they were acquainted with the main theoretical framework of the educational approach and with their active role in promoting children's prosocial and moral behaviour. The main purpose of this training course was to enable teachers to understand the basic ideas of the CIEA model of promoting the prosocial and moral development of preschool children, and to help teachers to distinguish the CIEA from the classic fostering of psychoanalytic guilt as a method of emotional conditioning with love withdrawal and as a means of promoting the child's ability to adapt to the social order of the kindergarten environment. The implementation of the CIEA in the group of kindergarten children took place from mid-January to mid-June 2010. Once a month, the experimental kindergarten teachers evaluated examples of the implementation of the CIEA with three pedagogues who participated in the project and were trained to use this method.

The post-test of children's social behaviour was administered to both the EG and the CG; the kindergarten teachers answered the same questionnaire of social behaviour as in the pre-test for each child participating in the study. The second measurement took place at the end of June 2010.

Participants

From a total of 114 children in the chosen kindergarten unit in Ljubljana, where the children participated in the comprehensive educational approach,

52 children (60% girls) were selected for the EG. The selection of children was done by sampling according to alphabetical order and selecting every other girl and every other boy from each group following the alphabetical order of their surnames. The lower age limit (2.5 years) was also taken into account in the sampling procedure, as the questionnaire chosen is designed for evaluating children older than 2.5 years. The same sampling method was used to obtain a comparable sample of children for the CG at another unit of the kindergarten, where children were not taught according to the principles of the comprehensive induction approach. In the CG, 48 children (55% girls) were selected to participate in the research.

Eight kindergarten teachers completed questionnaires for each of the 52 selected children from the EG, while nine kindergarten teachers from the CG completed questionnaires for each of the 48 selected children. Measurement was repeated in both groups after five months. At the time of the first measurement, the age of the children from the EG ranged from 3.4 years to 6.0 years (M = 4.8 years, SD = 0.2), while the age of children from the CG ranged from 2.4 years to 6.0 years (M = 4.9 years, SD = 0.3).

Instrument

The SV-O questionnaire (LaFreniere, Dumas, Zupančič, Gril, & Kavčič, 2001), the Slovenian version of the *Social Competence Behaviour Evaluation* questionnaire (*SCBE,* LaFreniere & Dumas, 1995, in LaFreniere et al., 2001), with norms for Slovenian children, was used to evaluate social behaviour. The questionnaire is primarily designed for kindergarten teachers and teachers in the first year of primary school to evaluate the behaviour of individual children in the educational institution. The SV-O questionnaire consists of 80 statements about the child's behaviour rated on a 6-point scale (from 1 = *the behaviour never or almost never occurs* to 6 = *the behaviour almost always occurs*). The items are then combined into eight basic scales. The first three basic scales (Joyful-Depressive, Secure-Anxious and Tolerant-Angry) describe the *emotional adaptation of the child* (general mood, feelings of safety within a group, and coping with situations), the next three basic scales (Integrated-Isolated, Calm-Aggressive and Prosocial-Egotistical) define the main characteristics of the *child's social interaction with peers* (the level of the child's integration into the peer group, aggressive behaviour towards peers, and expressed sensitivity to the needs and wishes of others), and the last two basic scales (Cooperative-Oppositional and Autonomous-Dependent) measure the *child's interaction with adults* (the level of the child's cooperation in interactions with the kindergarten teacher and the child's independence from the teacher in the group).

The basic scales combine into four *composite scales*, i.e., Social Competence (the positive poles of all eight basic scales), Internalising Problems (the negative poles of four basic scales: Depressed, Anxious, Isolated and Dependent), Externalising Problems (the negative poles of the other four basic scales: Angry, Aggressive, Egotistical and Oppositional), and General Adaptation, which represents the general score for the 80 items. A higher result (*T* value) on each individual and composite scale indicates a higher level of the child's socially competent behaviour. According to the norms in the manual, the range between 38*T* and 62*T* represents an "average result" (80% of the normative population), values higher than 63*T* represent an "above average result" (10% of the normative population) and values lower than 37*T* indicate a "below average result" (10% of the normative population).

The questionnaire has a sufficiently high internal reliability (α's coefficients ranging from 0.69 to 0.89; La Freniere et al., 2001), as well as internal reliability of composite scales (α's coefficients ranging from 0.85 to 0.95) and test-retest reliability (coefficients ranging from 0.74 to 0.89) (Zupančič & Kavčič, 2007). In the present study, the coefficients of internal reliability for the EG and the CG at both times of measurements ranged from 0.85 to 0.93 for basic scales, and from 0.71 to 0.95 for composite scales.

Data analysis

In order to determine the similarity between the EG and the CG before the implementation of comprehensive induction, *t-tests for independent samples* were used, while *t-tests for dependent samples* were used to compare social behaviour scores in the CG group before and after the implementation of comprehensive induction. In both cases, t-tests (for dependent and independent samples) were used after checking for normality of distribution and homogeneity of variances (Levene's tests were greater than 0.05). The *interaction between the social behaviour scores of the EG and the CG and time* (before and after implementing the CIEA) was also checked. After confirming the normality of distribution, the homogeneity of variances of the groups (Levene's tests were greater than 0.05) and the homogeneity of intercorrelations, mixed between subject ANOVA design, was verified.

Results

The study was conducted in order to determine the effect of the implementation of the CIEA on children's social behaviour in kindergarten. The results were analysed both on the level of basic and composite scales of social

behaviour. The average values and standard deviations of social behaviour for the EG and the CG before and after the CIEA can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. *Descriptive statistics of SV-O scores (T-values) for the experimental and control groups before and after the implementation of comprehensive induction*

	EG_1 (n = 52)		CG_1 (n = 48)		EG_2 (n = 52)		CG_2 (n = 48)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Basic scales:								
Joyful – Depressed	54.10	8.89	50.94	8.65	55.00	10.13	48.10	7.14
Secure – Anxious	54.40	8.19	50.78	9.29	54.96	9.26	48.42	8.03
Tolerant – Angry	49.02	9.90	51.49	10.25	52.54	11.20	50.36	7.55
Integrated – Isolated	52.75	8.11	50.67	9.55	55.46	9.70	50.88	9.53
Calm – Aggressive	47.50	8.47	49.59	9.04	51.17	9.61	46.82	7.39
Prosocial – Egotistical	50.88	8.63	53.18	10.77	52.63	10.47	51.53	7.49
Cooperative – Oppositional	47.98	8.45	48.98	9.46	51.29	10.37	46.86	8.62
Autonomous – Dependent	50.88	7.64	50.02	10.57	54.54	9.80	46.27	7.97
Composite scales:								
Social Competence	50.71	8.01	49.24	11.23	54.81	10.79	46.76	8.69
Internalising Problems	53.71	7.74	52.35	8.59	57.13	10.66	49.88	7.79
Externalising Problems	49.46	11.08	53.41	10.26	50.67	10.85	51.65	9.09
General Adaptation	51.90	8.33	51.80	10.34	57.69	11.20	51.14	8.73

Note: CG_1 = control group at the time of first measurement, EG_1 = experimental group at the time of first measurement, CG_2 = control group at the time of second measurement, EG_2 = experimental group at the time of second measurement.

A comparison of the social behaviour scores of the EG and the CG before the implementation of comprehensive induction

The results reveal that the differences between the pre-test mean score of the EG and the CG were not significant at the beginning of the study on seven of the eight basic scales, on all four composite scales, and on the overall result (General Adaptation scale). A significant difference between the groups was identified only for the Anxious-Secure basic scale (t (2,48) = 2.07, p = 0.04), where the EG achieved higher average scores than the CG (see Table 1).

A comparison of social behaviour scores within the CG

The results of the two measurements of the CG were similar regarding the mean scores on the level of the majority of basic and composite scales; significant differences between the mean scores were found only on two of the

eight basic scales of social behaviour: Calm-Aggressive (t (2,48) = 2.15, p = 0.04) and Autonomous-Dependent (t (2,48) = 2.39, p = 0.02). It is interesting that the mean scores of these two scales were lower at the second time of measurement compared to first time (see Table 1).

Interaction between the social behaviour scores of the EG and the CG and time

The results of the mixed between-subject analysis of variances indicated statistically significant interactions between the social behaviour scores of the EG and the CG and time on five of the eight *basic subscales* of social behaviour, i.e., Joyful-Depressed (Wilks' Lambda = .97, F = (1,99) = 3.93, p < .05, partial η^2 = .04), Tolerant-Angry (Wilks' Lambda = .95, F = (1,99) = 5.51, p < .05, partial η^2 = .05), Calm-Aggressive (Wilks' Lambda = .92, F = (1,99) = 14.17, p < .01, partial η^2 = .13), Cooperative-Oppositional (Wilks' Lambda = .88, F = (1,99) = 8.92, p < .01, partial η^2 = .08), and Autonomous-Dependent (Wilks' Lambda = .89, F = (1,99) = 13.78, p < .01, partial η^2 = .12). The children from the EG achieved higher scores on the aforementioned basic scales than the children from the CG after the implementation of comprehensive induction in the EG (see Table 1).

The results of the mixed between-subject analysis of variances (interactions between social behaviour scores in groups and time) and the mean scores for the EG and the CG in both times (Table 1) also show that the EG achieved significantly higher scores than the CG on two of the three *composite scales* of social behaviour, i.e., Social Competence (Wilks' Lambda = .89, F = (1,99) = 12.67, p < .01, partial η^2 = .11) and Internalising Problems (Wilks' Lambda = .92, F = (1,99) = 8.37, p < .01, partial η^2 = .08). A significant difference between the two groups in time was also identified for General Adaptation, which represents the general score of the questionnaire (Wilks' Lambda = .93, F = (1,99) = 7.31, p < .01, partial η^2 = .07).

After the implementation of comprehensive induction in the EG, the children from the EG achieved higher scores on the aforementioned composite scales than the children from the CG (see Table 1). According to Cohen (1988),[3] partial eta squared indicates a small to medium effect size in change in the social behaviour scores (for basic and composite scales) for the EG and the CG and time.

3 Cohen (1988) suggested that values between η^2 = .01–.05 indicate a small effect, between η^2 = .06–.13 indicate a medium effect, and $\eta^2 \geq$ .14 indicate a large effect.

Discussion

The results of our study testify to the effectiveness of comprehensive induction regarding various aspects of kindergarten children's social behaviour. The results of social behaviour at the pretreatment stage were almost equivalent for the EG and the CG, and were average results compared to the norms. The only difference between the groups was found for the Anxious-Secure basic scale, where the EG achieved higher average scores than the CG. Furthermore, comparison of the CG results within a five-month interval showed almost no differences, except for an elevated level of aggressive behaviour in the group and more dependent behaviour towards the kindergarten teacher. In the CG, it may be possible that some unknown moderator variables were responsible for exerting influence on the children's more aggressive and dependent behaviour at the second time of measurement. Given that the CG achieved significantly lower scores on the Calm-Aggressive and Autonomous-Dependent scales at the second time of measurement compared to the first time, this may contribute in part to the differences between the EG and the CG on the Anxious-Secure scale.

As can be seen from the descriptive statistics for the EG and the CG in Table 1, *T* values on the basic and composite scales before and after the implementation of comprehensive induction range between 46*T* and 58*T*. According to the norms listed in the manual (LaFreniere et al., 2001), this represents an "average result" (a range encompassing 80% of children's SV-O results). The evaluation of children's general adaptation (overall score), however, was found to be significantly higher after the implementation of comprehensive induction (58*T*), the result being relatively close to 63*T*, a marker for a level of social adaptation that is well above average (only 10% of the normative population have a result higher than 63*T*). It can therefore be assumed that the implementation of the CIEA contributed to the relatively high social adaptation of the children.

Following the five-month implementation of the CIEA, the children in the EG (in comparison to the CG) achieved higher results on five of the eight basic scales of social behaviour. The study demonstrated that the CIEA had a moderate effect on aggressive behaviour *towards peers*, which became less frequent. The effect of the CIEA was also significant (moderately high) regarding the children's cooperative and autonomous behaviour in interactions *with the kindergarten teachers*, which became more frequent after five months of the project. However, the effect of the CIEA was minimal regarding the general mood and coping with situations *within a group*, with children becoming more joyful and tolerant.

On the level of the composite scales, the results similarly showed some improvement in social behaviour in the EG after five months of implementation of the CIEA. A medium effect of the introduction of the CIEA was observed regarding children's *social competence* (in general, children expressed more joy, security, tolerance, integration with others, calmness, prosocial behaviour, cooperativeness, and autonomy towards kindergarten teachers). The results also indicated a medium effect on the occurrence of *internalising problems* as a response to frustration (in general, less depression, anxiety, isolation and dependent behaviour in interactions with the kindergarten teacher), and an overall higher result of the questionnaire (General Adaptation scale) after five months.

How can these results be explained? With regular use of the CIEA, we can encourage children to become more cognitively and socially sensitive, with more (pro)social emotions towards others and with greater awareness of how to take responsibility for their actions, which may encourage children's social behaviour. This may account for why, after the implementation of the CIEA, the children in our research became more socially competent (i.e., more tolerant within a group and displaying less aggressive behaviour towards peers), with fewer of them internalising problems as a response to frustration (i.e., more responsible and autonomous in interactions with kindergarten teachers), and why they expressed more joy, contributing overall to a relatively high general social adaptation.

In view of earlier findings regarding the use of the inductive educational approach in the family context (Krevans & Gibbs, 1996), in the present research it was specifically expected that the CIEA would promote children's prosocial behaviour. However, the study did not confirm significant differences on the Prosocial-Egotistical basic scale between the EG and the CG in time. This result could be explained by the fact that the questionnaire is used to assess prosocial behaviour in the broader sense of the word. In addition to helping and caring about other people's well-being, which generally define prosocial behaviour (e.g., Eisenberg et al., 2005), items in the questionnaire also include statements such as engaging in group activities, expressing a certain degree of competitiveness, and (dis)satisfaction when the kindergarten teacher attends to other children.

There is, however, another important difference between the results of the present study and the research by Krevans and Gibbs on parents' use of inductive discipline. Relative to previous findings (Krevans & Gibbs, 1996), the results of our research indicate that the CIEA has less effect on internalising children's problems as a response to frustration. Given that both the inductive discipline approach and the CIEA are connected with fostering children's feeling of guilt, which can have a negative effect in terms of increasing the internalisation of

problems, this finding indirectly confirms the successful solution to theoretical and practical problems stressed in the study by Krevans and Gibbs, i.e., to better describe the difference between emphatic and psychoanalytic guilt.

Since the effects of the CIEA on some areas of social behaviour in the kindergarten group were low to medium, it is important to emphasise that the effect of the CIEA was only measured over a five-month period, which may be too short for major changes in social behaviour to occur.

In the research, children's social behaviour was evaluated by kindergarten teachers. Relevant data on children's social behaviour can be obtained by reports by others who know the children well and who interact with them daily in specific contexts; therefore, kindergarten teachers are certainly in a position to assess the social behaviour of children, as they know them relatively well. However, the evaluations of others are always subjectively biased (Smrtnik Vitulić & Zupančič, 2009), as different teachers may have different criteria when assessing a child's social behaviour. In the present study, this subjectivity may be even more marked, as the kindergarten teachers were simultaneously implementing the CIEA and monitoring its results. As such, teachers might be more motivated to demonstrate the positive results of the CIEA approach than other assessors not participating in the project.

Conclusions

The results suggest that by implementing the CIEA children were encouraged to express their positive feelings in a constructive manner and to improve some aspects of relations with their peers and with their kindergarten teachers. After the five-month implementation of the comprehensive induction educational approach, the children became more socially competent, with less internalisation of problems as a response to frustration, and with increased general social adaptability.

The main strength of the present study lies in the systematic measurement of the effects of the CIEA in the kindergarten context over a relatively long time interval of five months. On the other hand, among the weaknesses of the research we have already mentioned that the CIEA was implemented in a single kindergarten, and that the children's social behaviour was evaluated by kindergarten teachers who simultaneously implemented the approach. In future studies, the information about children's social development could be gathered not only through teachers' assessment, but also through interviews with the children themselves. Furthermore, children describing photos or situations with social content could be used to determine their social development.

Future research could examine the effects of this educational approach in the family context, where children's social behaviour could be evaluated by their parents. Other factors that may influence social development could also be included in the study, such as the teacher's relationship with the children. Besides the short-term effects of the comprehensive induction approach, further research could also ascertain whether this approach may have any long-term effects on the kindergarten teacher's activities, thus promoting further positive effects both on the (pro)social and the moral development of preschool children.

Since the elaboration of the CIEA as an effective comprehensive model of fostering prosocial and moral development is based on some complex theoretical ideas (the relational model of the development of responsibility, the distinction between emphatic and psychoanalytical guilt, the distinction between an assertive, permissive and inductive style of moral education, etc.), further evaluation of its value should be based on different methodological tools. The SV-O questionnaire used in the present study enabled us to demonstrate the basic positive effects of the CIEA on children's social behaviour, but it is insufficient for providing exact evidence of the different developmental processes fostered by this new educational approach. According to the results of the present study, however, we can conclude that this educational approach can be used for the promotion of social behaviour in kindergartens.

References

Bingham, C., & Sidorkin, A. M. (Eds.) (2004). *No education without relation: Counterpoints studies in the postmodern theory of education* (Vol. 259). New York, Bern, Berlin, Brussels, Frankfurt am Main, Oxford, Vienna: Peter Lang.

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dahlberg, G., & Moss, P. (2005). *Ethics and Politics in Early Childhood Education.* London: Routledge.

Diamond, L. M., & Aspinwall, L. G. (2003). Emotion regulation across the life span: An integrative perspective emphasizing self-regulation, positive affect, and dyadic process. *Motivation and Emotion*, *27*(2), 125–156.

Durkin, K. (1995). *Development social psychology from infancy to old age.* Cambridge, Massachusetts, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc.

Eisenberg, N., & Mussen, P. H. (1997). *The roots of prosocial behaviour in children.* United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Eisenberg, N., Cumberland, A., Guthrie, I. K., Murphy, B. C., & Shepard, S. A. (2005). Age changes in prosocial responding and moral reasoning in adolescence and early adulthood. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, *15*(3), 235–260.

Eisenberg, N., Cumberland, A., Spinrad, T. L., Fabes, R. A., Shepard, S. A., Reiser, M., et al. (2001). The relations of regulation and emotionality to children's externalizing and internalizing problem behavior. *Child Development*, *72*(4), 1112–1134.

Eisenberg, N., Losoja, S., & Guthrie, I. K. (1997) Social cognition and prosocial development. In S. Hala (Ed.), *The development of social cognition* (pp. 329–354). United Kingdom: Psychology Press.

Hoffman, M. L. (2000). *Empathy and moral development: implications for caring and justice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Horvat, M., & Zupančič, M. (2010). Osebnostne poteze kot napovedniki socialnega vedenja pri prvošolcih [Personality traits as predictors of children's social adjustment to school entry]. *Psihološka obzorja [Horizons of Psychology]*, *19*(4), 111–132.

Hossain, A., Tarmizi, R. A., Aziz, Z., & Nordin, N. (2013). Group learning effect and gender differences in mathematical performance. *Croatian Journal of Education*, *15*(2), 41–67.

Krevans, J., & Gibbs, J. C. (1996). Parents' use of inductive discipline: Relation to children's empathy and prosocial behavior. *Child Development*, *67*(6), 3263–3277.

Kristjànsson, K. (2004). Empathy, sympathy, justice and the child. *Journal of Moral Education*, *33*(3), 291–305.

Kroflič, R. (Ed.) (2010). *Kulturno žlahtenje najmlajših: razvoj identitete otrok v prostoru in času preko raznovrstnih umetniških dejavnosti [Cultural enrichment of the youngest children].* Ljubljana: Vrtec Vodmat.

Kroflič, R. (2007). Vzgoja za odgovornost onkraj razsvetljenske paradigme: od razvoja odgovora-zmožnosti k spoštljivemu odnosu in razvoju etične zavesti [Education for responsibility beyond the enlightenment paradigm: From the development of response-ability to a respectful attitude and development of ethical awareness]. *Sodobna pedagogika [Journal of Contemporary Educational Studies], 56*(3), 56–71.

Kroflič, R. (2010). Etična in politična dimenzija projekta Reggio Emilia [The ethical and political dimension of the Reggio Emilia project]. In T. Devjak, M. Batistič-Zorec, J. Vogrinc, D. Skubic, & S. Berčnik (Eds.), *Pedagoški koncept Reggio Emilia in kurikulum za vrtce: podobnosti v različnosti [The educational concept of Reggio Emilia and the kindergarten curriculum: Similarity in diversity]* (pp. 11–66). Ljubljana: Faculty of Education.

Kroflič, R. (2011). The role of artistic experiences in the comprehensive inductive educational approach. *Pastoral Care in Education: An International Journal of Personal, Social and Emotional Development, 30*(3), 263–280.

LaFreniere, P. J., Dumas, J. E., Zupančič, M., Gril, A., & Kavčič, T. (2001). *Vprašalnik o socialnem vedenju otrok, SV-O priročnik [A questionnaire about children's social behaviour, SV-O manual].* Ljubljana: Center za psihodiagnostična sredstva.

Levinas, E. (2006). *Entre nous.* London, New York: Continuum.

Marjanovič Umek, L., & Fekonja Peklaj, U. (2008). *Sodoben vrtec: možnosti za otrokov razvoj in zgodnje učenje [The modern kindergarten: Opportunities for child development and early learning].* Ljubljana: ZIFF.

Moss, P. (2008). Toward a new public education: Making globalization work for us all. *Child development perspectives, 2*(2), 114–119.

Moss, P., Dillon, J., & Statham, J. (2010). 'The child in need' and 'the rich child': discourses, constructions and practice. *Critical Social Policy, 20*(2), 233–254.

Rinaldi, C. (2006). *In dialogue with Reggio Emilia: Listening, researching and learning.* London & New York: Routledge.

Smrtnik Vitulić, H., & Zupančič, M. (2009). Ujemanje med različnimi skupinami ocenjevalcev mladostnikove osebnosti [Agreement between different groups of informants reporting on adolescents' personality]. *Didactica Slovenica*, *24*(3-4), 87–103.

Zupančič, M., & Kavčič, T. (2007). *Otroci od vrtca do šole: razvoj osebnosti in socialnega vedenja ter učna uspešnost prvošolcev [Children from kindergarten to school: The development of personality and social behaviour and the academic achievement of first-graders]*. Ljubljana: ZIFF.

Biographical note

Robi Kroflič, PhD, is a full time professor of theory of education and general pedagogy at the Department for pedagogy and andragogy, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. He is a lecturer of Theory of Education, Pedagogical Approaches to Education of Students with Special Needs, Theories of Emotional and Behavioral Difficulties and Planning of Moral and Character Education in Public Schools on the under-graduate and post-graduate level. Until now, he also had invited lectures at the universities in Gröningen (The Netherlands) and Klagenfurt (Austria). His basic fields of investigation are: theory of authority and pedagogical eros, moral education, aesthetic education and identity development, postmodern concepts of education, contemporary approaches on pre-school education.
Personal web-side: http://www2.arnes.si/~rkrofl1/bibliografija_eng.html

Helena Smrtnik Vitulić, PhD, is an Assistant Professor of developmental psychology in the Department of Education Studies at the Faculty of Education in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Her current research interests include emotions, personality and academic achievement in childhood, adolescence and in pedagogic students - future human-relations professionals who will work with various groups of people in the educational context. She has presented her work in international conferences and has published in several scientific journals.
E-mail address: helena.smrtnik-vitulic@guest.arnes.si

Mental Lexicon, Working Memory and L2 (English) Vocabulary in Polish Students with and without Dyslexia

Marta Łockiewicz*[1] and Martyna Jaskulska[2]

The aim of our study was to examine the relationship between access to the mental lexicon, working memory and knowledge of English (L2) vocabulary. Analyses were undertaken amongst monolingual speakers of Polish (26 with dyslexia, 24 without) who studied English as a second language as part of their compulsory educational programme at school. We assumed that students with dyslexia would manifest deficits in access to the mental lexicon and verbal working memory, and would have a limited L2 vocabulary. We also assumed that better access to the mental lexicon facilitates knowledge of English (L2) vocabulary, and that this relationship is present in both the criterion and the control group. All of the students participated in both parts of the assessment, the group part (i.e., questionnaire, IQ test, two vocabulary tasks) and the individual part (i.e., psychological measures: verbal working memory, RAN, verbal fluency, and single word reading in L1 task). We found that students with dyslexia exhibited deficits in the speed of access to data from the mental lexicon. The predictive function of memory for vocabulary was more conspicuous in the control group; in the criterion group, the result might constitute a risk factor for L2 vocabulary acquisition in dyslexia, which may manifest with increased proficiency in word knowledge. Poor vocabulary knowledge renders the L2 learning experience difficult, as it impairs students' reading comprehension, writing and conversational skills.

Keywords: dyslexia, English as L2, vocabulary, mental lexicon, working memory

1 *Corresponding Author. University of Gdansk, Social Sciences Department, Gdańsk, Poland; psymlo@univ.gda.pl
2 University of Gdansk, Gdańsk, Poland

Mentalni leksikon, delovni spomin in besedišče v tujem jeziku (J 2) (angleščina) poljskih učencev z disleksijo oz. brez nje

Marta Łockiewicz* in Martyna Jaskulska

Namen raziskave je bil preveriti povezave med dostopom do mentalnega leksikona, delovnega spomina in poznavanjem angleškega (J 2) besedišča. V raziskavo so bili vključeni enojezični govorci poljščine (26 z disleksijo in 24 brez disleksije), ki so se učili angleščino kot drugi jezik kot del obveznega izobraževalnega programa v šoli. Avtorji so predvidevali, da se bo pri učencih z disleksijo pojavil primanjkljaj pri dostopanju do mentalnega leksikona in besednega delovnega spomina ter da bodo imeli omejeno besedišče J 2. Prav tako so predvidevali, da boljše dostopanje do mentalnega leksikona omogoča lažjo uporabo znanja besedišča J 2 (angleščine) in da je ta povezanost prisotna pri učenci z disleksijo in tistih brez nje.

Vsi učenci so sodelovali v obeh delih ocenjevanja; v skupinskem delu (npr. vprašalnik, IQ-test, dve nalogi s področja besedišča) in individualnem delu (npr. psihološke meritve: besedni delovni spomin, RAN, besedna tekočnost in naloga branja posameznih besed v domačem jeziku (J 1)). Raziskava je pokazala, da se pri učencih z disleksijo kažejo primanjkljaji pri hitrosti dostopanja do podatkov v mentalnem leksikonu. Napovedna funkcija pomena spomina za besedišče je bila očitnejša v skupini učencev brez disleksije; rezultati skupine učencev z disleksijo bi lahko kazali na to, da disleksija predstavlja dejavnik tveganja pri pridobivanju besedišča v J 2, kar se lahko manifestira z višjo usposobljenostjo na področju poznavanja besed. Slabo poznavanje besedišča oteži učenje J 2, ker poslabša učenčevo bralno razumevanje ter pisne in konverzacijske spretnosti.

Ključne besede: disleksija, angleščina kot J 2, besedišče, mentalni leksikon, delovni spomin

Introduction

According to the International Dyslexia Association (Lyon Reid, Shaywitz, & Shaywitz, 2003) "dyslexia is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction" (p. 2). These problems are observed in the native language (L1), which has been a topic of extensive research (Beaton, 2004; Nicolson & Fawcett, 2008); however, many deficits characteristic of dyslexia can also affect the learning of foreign languages (Crombie, 1997, 2000; Krasowicz-Kupis, 2008).

Our research is based on a theory proposed by Sparks and Ganschow (1993), which suggests that students who have poor results in learning a foreign language (L2) may have linguistic difficulties in their native language (L1) that interfere with their ability to learn L2. The authors of the theory connect L1 and L2 learning, indicating phonological coding as the main problem.

The importance of vocabulary (Carroll, 1993; Ouellette, 2006) and memory (Borkowska, 2006; Krasowicz-Kupis, 1999; Mather & Wendling, 2012) in reading comprehension is undeniable. The richer our vocabulary is, the more complex texts we are able to understand. How do we understand what words mean? According to Perfetti (2007), readers are able to determine the meaning of words due to the complex rules of semantics (meaning), phonology (sound), orthography (spelling), morphology (word build) and syntax (sentence build). All of these factors contribute to word meaning comprehension. According to Coltheart's (2006) dual-route theory of reading, readers apply either a lexical strategy (consulting the mental lexicon when dealing with familiar words) or a non-lexical strategy (decoding an unfamiliar letter sequence). This has been confirmed in studies using event-related fMRI (Fiebach, Friederici, Müller, & von Cramon, 2002). Kurcz (2000) defines mental lexicon (or mental dictionary) as an organisation of morphemes that includes intuitive knowledge about semantic, syntactic, phonological and orthographic aspects of words in a given language. Quantitatively, it can be studied using words frequency. Verbal working memory deficits (M. Bogdanowicz, 2004a; Lundberg & Hoien, 2001; Swanson & Sáez, 2003) and long-term memory deficits (M. Bogdanowicz, 2004a; Lundberg & Hoien, 2001) have been reported as characteristic of dyslexia.

Woźnicki and Zawadzka (1981) emphasise the importance of organising the process of teaching a foreign language taking into account the characteristics of both working memory (e.g., presentation of a limited amount of new

material) and long-term memory (e.g., systematic rehearsals, automatisation). Students may choose from various techniques when learning new vocabulary: word lists, mind maps, flashcards, associations (e.g., creating ridiculous sentences), learning through touching (e.g., using word models made from different fabrics), reading (words in context), listening and speaking. Vocabulary teaching, on the other hand, is most effective when combining two strategies: presenting new words in context, e.g., in reading passages (incidental learning) with definitions, or through direct instruction (explicit learning) (Sonbul & Schmitt, 2010; Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986). As far as young learners are concerned, some researchers argue that vocabulary learning through context brings fewer gains than through direct instruction (Jenkins, Matlock, & Slocum, 1989). A similar approach is presented by Kucan (2012), who argues that engaging students in instructional sequences that focus directly on word meaning is most promising in teaching new vocabulary. Teachers should decide which words to teach, and this choice should be based on the particular knowledge of the students, their backgrounds, interests and experiences. Lessons during which vocabulary items are taught should be very carefully planned, consisting of meaningful dictionary explanations, engaging activities that make use of the new vocabulary in various contexts, and assessment of the students' progress. Kucan (2012) also underlines the fact that working with new vocabulary should be done over time. Regular learning can support the students' performance. Linguists have noticed that the more people read, the more opportunities they have to encounter new words in context (Anderson, Wilson, & Fielding, 1988). Regular practice in reading enables people not only to acquire new vocabulary, but also to consolidate their knowledge of vocabulary. This is especially true of skilled readers, who can infer more from the context than poor readers (Swanborn & de Glopper, 2002). A lack of reading practice may therefore constitute an additional risk factor in learning L2 for students with dyslexia, who often have reduced reading experience (M. Bogdanowicz, 2004a; Lyon Reid et al., 2003).

The difficulty of a word for a learner may be assessed using word frequency, which is the number of times a word appears in a text corpus (Johns, Gruenenfelder, Pisoni, & Jones, 2012). In terms of their frequency, words can be divided into three categories: high, mid and low frequency, where high-frequency words are those that we use most often (either in speaking or writing). The higher the frequency, the more exposed the speaker is to the word. According to Laufer (1997), high frequency words are easier to remember due to more frequent exposure to them. However, teachers observe that high-frequency words are hard for young learners to remember because they tend to be abstract

and are difficult to illustrate, e.g., *the* or *with* (Chen). Learning to recognise high-frequency words by sight is critical to developing fluency in reading, as it gives the student a basic context for deciphering other words. However, Polish children aged 6–9 do not go through a logographic phase in reading (Krasowicz-Kupis, 1999; Sochacka, 2004), analogical to the phase observed in English children.

The aim of our study was to examine the relationship between access to the mental lexicon and knowledge of English (L2) vocabulary. Analyses were undertaken within two groups: Polish (L1) students with dyslexia, as compared with Polish students without dyslexia. The participants were monolingual speakers of Polish who studied English as a second language as part of their compulsory educational programme at school. We assumed that students with dyslexia would manifest deficits in access to the mental lexicon and working memory, and would have a limited L2 vocabulary. We also assumed that better access to the mental lexicon facilitates knowledge of English (L2) vocabulary, and that this relationship is present in both the criterion and the control group.

Method

Participants

30 (50%) junior high school students with dyslexia and 30 (50%) without dyslexia, all of whom attended the same schools and were taught by the same English teachers, participated in our study. They were matched by gender, age (M_{age} = 14.5, SD_{age} = 0.67, range: 13.17 to 15.58 yrs), IQ, ADHD (no student had an ADHD report), and years of studying English at school and privately (see Table 1). The participants were native speakers of Polish. All of the students and their parents consented to participate after having been informed about the aims of the study and its procedure. The students in the criterion group all had an independent report issued by state psychological and educational counselling centres, confirming the diagnosis of dyslexia. Moreover, their accuracy and speed of reading single actual words in L1 was poorer than that of the participants without dyslexia, with their speed of reading being more than 1SD below control group performance. Both of the groups had studied English for seven years, which reflects the general rule in Poland of taking a foreign language course (predominantly English) as early as in the 1st year of primary school education (which corresponds to seven years of age in the case of our participants). A foreign language exam is an obligatory part of external written and/or spoken exams taken when graduating from particular academic levels in the Polish educational system (primary, junior high school, high school)

(www.cke.pl). In addition, 62% of the students with dyslexia and 38% of those without dyslexia were taking extracurricular private tutoring ($\chi^2(1) = 0.43$, $p = .570$), either with an individual tutor or at a language school. The students of both groups declared that they did not like to read ($M = 2.69$, $SD = 1.05$ for the criterion group, $M = 2.71$, $SD = 1.23$ for the control group, $t(93) = 0.50$, $p = .965$; self-reported on a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 meant *I definitely do not like reading*, and 7 meant *I definitely like reading*).

Table 1. *Descriptive characteristics of the compared groups*

	students with dyslexia		students without dyslexia		
	female	male	female	male	
gender [b]	12 (20)	18 (30)	18 (30)	12 (20)	$\chi^2(1) = 2.4$, $p = .121$
age [a]	14.42 (0.67)		14.42 (0.58)		$t(58) = 0.10$, $p = .918$
IQ [a]	48.37 (5.01)		48.53 (5.70)		$t(58) = 0.12$, $p = .905$
years of studying English [b]					
at school	7.31 (1.22)	6.86 (1.83)			$t(48) = 1.05$, $p = .299$
private tutoring	4.91 (3.15)	3.75 (2.71)			$t(17) = 0.84$, $p = .413$
single word reading in L1: accuracy [a]					
actual words read correctly	77.67 (9.27)	83.9 (5.74)			$U = 265.5$, $Z = 3.17$, $p = .002$, $r = 0.41$
single word reading in L1: fluency [a]					
time of reading actual words (in sec.)	110.93 (44.42)	73.50 (14.85)			$t(58) = 4.38$, $p \leq .001$, $d = 1.15$

Note: [a] = mean figures given (SD in parenthesis), [b] = actual figures given (% in parenthesis)

Procedure

The study reported in the present article was part of a larger research project investigating L1 and L2 learning difficulties of Polish students with dyslexia. The project was conducted in the Pomeranian region in northern Poland. All of the students participated in both parts of the assessment, the group part (i.e., questionnaire, IQ test, two vocabulary tasks) and the individual part (i.e., psychological measures: working memory, RAN, verbal fluency, and single word reading in L1 task).

Materials

Questionnaire – two short questionnaires developed by the authors for the study, in order to acquire the necessary demographic information about the

students (e.g., age, gender, dyslexia report, ADHD report), and data related to the learning of languages (years of studying English at a state school and during private tutoring, written word exposure). These were completed by the participants and their parents.

Test Matrices. Standard version – (Raven, 1991). A Polish adaptation, in order to match the compared groups in terms of intelligence level.

Single real word reading task in Polish – by Krasowicz-Kupis (Jaworowska, Matczak, & Stańczak, 2010). A list of unrelated, single, real Polish words to be read aloud, in order to assess decoding in L1. This task is commonly used in Poland as one of the measures when diagnosing dyslexia in state psychological and educational counselling centres. The maximum score is 89. The number of words read correctly was recorded, and the time of reading was measured. Syllable blending and self-corrections were treated as mistakes, as per the test instructions. This measure was used to confirm that our criterion group exhibited reading and spelling difficulties.

Vocabulary tasks in English – by Nation (2001; 1990). The tasks assess the receptive knowledge of vocabulary. Two tasks of increasing difficulty were chosen, based on the reducing frequency of the items included: 1000 (maximum score = 39 points) and 2000 (maximum score = 18 points) most common words. This task was chosen because it is constructed as a multiple choice question (in part 1, questions are answered with yes, no, or I don't understand the question; in part 2, words are matched with their definitions), which eliminates the confounding factor of correct spelling skill, especially in the criterion group. A simple proportional transformation was used to compare the level of difficulty of these two tasks with different maximum scores. Each score from the *Vocabulary 1000-frequency* task was multiplied by the proportion 18/37 (maximum score in *Vocabulary 2000-frequency* / maximum score in *Vocabulary 1000-frequency)* in order to scale it down to a scale with a maximum of 18 points.

Wechsler Memory Scale III — (Pąchalska & Lipowska, 2006). A Polish adaptation. One subtest was selected: Digit Span (forward and backward), which assesses verbal working memory.

Rapid Automatised Naming Test – Bogdanowicz, Kalka, Karpińska, Sajewicz-Radtke, and Radtke (2012), task SN2a. This task measures visual-auditory integration, long-term verbal memory, rapid automatised naming and divisibility of attention, and is based on the double-deficit theory advocated by Wolf and Bowers (1999, 2000; Wolf, Bowers, & Biddle, 2000). Participants name six familiar objects, presented as colourful pictures (e.g., a pin, a starfish, a binder). All of the original Polish words consist of 2–4 syllables. We counted the number

of correct responses and measured the time of performance. Each mistake was added to the time score as one second, as per the task instructions. This task is commonly used in Poland as one of the measures when diagnosing dyslexia in state psychological and educational counselling centres.

Semantic verbal fluency task. This task evaluates long-term memory, concentration, attention, knowledge and linguistic functions. Within a time limit of one minute, the participants named as many animals as they could (using their L1 – Polish), which is a task commonly used in such procedures in Poland (Pąchalska, 2007). The total number of words listed by the participants was recorded, excluding neologisms, perseverations and repetitions.

Results

The relationship between working memory, long-term memory and L2 vocabulary in the compared groups

A t-test for independent samples demonstrated that students with dyslexia, as compared with students without dyslexia, scored lower in access to data from the mental lexicon, as measured with the speed of RAN performance (Table 2). However, their verbal working memory, as measured with Digits Span, was comparable to that of their normally reading peers. The two groups scored on a level in verbal fluency (as measured with the number of listed animals) and in both vocabulary tasks, although the students with dyslexia knew consistently fewer words in both tasks.

Table 2. *L2 vocabulary, working memory and long-term memory in the compared groups – descriptive statistics*

	students with dyslexia				students without dyslexia				
	M	SD	Min	Max	M	SD	Min	Max	
vocabulary by frequency									
1000	22.63	6.47	9	34	24.80	6.68	11	37	$t(58) = 1.28$, $p = .207$
2000	5	3.6	0	14	6	5.07	0	17	$t(58) = 0.88$, $p = .382$
working memory									
forward	7.33	1.24	5	10	7.77	1.63	5	12	$t(58) = 1.16$, $p = .252$
backward	4.57	1.19	3	7	4.80	1.94	2	9	$t(58) = 0.56$, $p = .577$
long-term memory									
RAN – speed (in sec.)	42.70	10.97	23	67	34.17	7.17	25	53	$t(58) = 3.53$, $p \leq .001$, $d = 0.93$
verbal fluency	20.30	5.03	10	32	22.1	5.72	13	33	$t(58) = 1.29$, $p = .200$

In the dyslexia group, a t-test with dependent samples determined that the 1000-frequency vocabulary task was easier than the 2000-frequency task: $t(29) = 9.67$, $p \leq 0.001$). Similarly, in the control group, a t-test with dependent samples demonstrated that the vocabulary tasks differed significantly in their difficulty $t(29) = 6.92$, $p \leq 0.001$), with the 1000-frequency task being easier than the 2000-frequency task. No participant scored 100% of the points in any task. Furthermore, in the easiest task, the average scores in both groups were only slightly above half of the maximum possible points, and in the more difficult task they were well below this level.

In order to investigate the relationship between L2 vocabulary, working memory and long-term memory, we calculated Pearson Correlations (Table 3 & Table 4).

In the control group, there were positive correlations between (Table 3):

- 1000-frequency vocabulary, access to the mental lexicon (strong) and verbal working memory (backward) (moderate);
- 2000-frequency vocabulary and verbal working memory (backward) (strong);
- verbal fluency and access to the mental lexicon (strong).
- In the dyslexia group, there was a positive correlation between (Table 4):
- 2000-frequency vocabulary and access to the mental lexicon (moderate).

Table 3. *L2 vocabulary, working memory and long-term memory – correlations in the control group*

	1000-frequency vocabulary	2000-frequency vocabulary	WM - forward	WM - backward	RAN-speed[a]
WM - forward	n.s.	n.s.			
WM - backward	.415*	.531*	.366*		
RAN-speed[a]	-.663**	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	
verbal fluency	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	-.536**

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$
Note: n.s. = not significant
[a] = higher score signifies lower performance

Table 4. *L2 vocabulary, working memory and long-term memory – correlations in the dyslexia group*

	1000-frequency vocabulary	2000-frequency vocabulary	**WM - forward**	**WM - backward**	**RAN-speed[a]**
WM - forward	n.s.	n.s.			
WM - backward	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.		
RAN-speed[a]	n.s.	-.476**	n.s.	n.s.	
verbal fluency	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$
Note: n.s. = not significant
[a] = higher score signifies lower performance

These findings were confirmed by a multiple regression, enter method, which demonstrated specific relationships between knowledge of vocabulary and verbal working memory (as measured with Digit Span Backward) and access to the mental lexicon (as measured with the speed of performance in the RAN task).

In the dyslexia group:

- working memory and access to the mental lexicon (entered as independent variables) predicted:
  - 2000-frequency vocabulary (entered as a dependent variable), $F(2, 27) = 4.38$, $p = .022$, $R^2 = .245$, $R^2_{Adjusted} = .189$, working memory accounted for 2% of variance, $B = .427$, $\beta = .142$, access to the mental lexicon accounted for 19% of variance, $B = -.061$, $\beta = -.441$.

In the control group:

- working memory and access to the mental lexicon (entered as independent variables) predicted:
  - 1000-frequency vocabulary (entered as a dependent variable), $F(2, 27) = 16.79$, $p \leq .001$, $R^2 = .554$, $R^2_{Adjusted} = .521$; working memory accounted for 12% of variance, $B = 1.174$, $\beta = .340$, access to the mental lexicon accounted for 38% of variance, $B = -.412$, $\beta = -.623$, and
- working memory (entered as an independent variable) predicted 2000-frequency vocabulary (entered as a dependent variable), $F(1, 28) = 10.98$, $p = .003$, $R^2 = .282$, $R^2_{Adjusted} = .256$, $B = 1.388$, $\beta = .531$), accounting for 28% of variance.

A multiple regression did not show a predictive function of either working or long-term memory for the 1000-frequency vocabulary task in the dyslexia group.

Discussion

We found that students with dyslexia, as compared with students without dyslexia, exhibited deficits in the speed of the access of verbal data from the mental lexicon (as measured with the RAN task), which is consistent with literature reports (Krasowicz-Kupis, Borkowska, & Pietras, 2009; Martin et al., 2010; Shessel & Reiff, 1999; Szczerbiński, 2007; Wolf et al., 2000).

The two groups performed on a level in verbal working memory (as measured with Digit Span, forward and backward) and verbal fluency (as measured with listing animals within one minute), although the group with dyslexia scored lower in all three tasks as compared to the control group. The lack of differences in verbal fluency is consistent with the literature (Frith, Lander, & Frith, 1995; Nicolson & Fawcett, 1997), as we employed a semantic version of the task. However, a verbal working memory deficit is commonly listed amongst problems associated with dyslexia (Miles, 1993; Moura, Simões, & Pereira, 2014; Szczerbiński, 2007), as this is a symptom characteristic of a phonological deficit, which is thought to be its cause (Beaton, 2004; Hoien, Lundberg, Stanovich, & Bjaalid, 1995; Snowling, 2000). Although we did not find deficits in the group with dyslexia in this ability, we did observe a different pattern of relationship between verbal working memory and the knowledge of L2 vocabulary, which we discuss below. No differences between the groups (students with dyslexia vs. controls) in digits backward was also reported by Alves Ferreira de Carvalho, de Souza Batista Kida, Aparecida Capellini, and Brandão de Avila (2014), who attribute this result to the fact that this task measures a higher degree storage and the simultaneous processing of information rather than phonological skills. Couture and McCauley (2000) propose that recall problems in children with phonological impairment might be due to an interaction between short-term memory and long-term memory phonological representations, rather than deficits in the phonological loop.

In our study, the students with and without dyslexia scored on a level in the L2 receptive language task, which does not confirm our assumptions. Polish studies of junior high school students have indicated a lower level of general linguistic competence, and of L1 receptive and active lexicon in participants with dyslexia, as compared to participants without dyslexia (Długosz & Rejnowska-Wawryn, 2007). However, this research focused on vocabulary size in L1, in which students with dyslexia were fluent; the vocabulary of such students nonetheless proved to be limited in comparison with their normally reading peers. This diminished richness of known L1 words could be attributed to reduced reading experience, and has been indicated as such in definitions

(Lyon Reid et al., 2003) or descriptions (M. Bogdanowicz, 2004a) of dyslexia. However, we do not think that reading experience in L2 could have had a substantial impact on the vocabularies of our participants, as both groups declared a general dislike for reading and exhibited limited L2 word knowledge. Similarly to L1 mental lexicon comparisons, smaller L2 (English) vocabulary size in dyslexia has been observed in Polish research (Jurek, 2004; Łockiewicz & Jaskulska, in preparation); however, these studies have involved older, high school students, who were presumably more proficient in the language, having studied it on average for several years longer than our test group. We believe that the poor vocabulary knowledge of our participants (an apparent floor effect in the 2000-frequency task) contributed to the observed lack of differences between the two groups, differences that would become evident in more advanced L2 students.

Tomaszczyk claims that learning 2000 words is sufficient to communicate successfully in English. Lists of words differ depending on the material being analysed, but a list of English words exists that meets the requirements of language learners. Selected by a group of language experts and experienced teachers, this list contains words that should receive priority in L2 vocabulary acquisition due to their importance and usefulness. On the basis of our study, we can conclude that even the highest frequency words were problematic for our students. No participant, not even in the control group, scored 100% of the points in any vocabulary task. Moreover, in the 1000-frequency vocabulary task, both groups scored on average only slightly above half of the possible points, while in the more difficult 2000-frequency task the average result was approximately one third of the possible points. This suggests that, although the average period of learning English was seven years, the students' knowledge of vocabulary was very poor, as they struggled with even the easiest words, to which they had presumably often been exposed. As such a low score was obtained in a task based on recognition, which is an easier form of retrieval than recall, it is likely that producing words would yield even poorer scores. Moreover, we observed that the 1000-frequency vocabulary task was easier than the 2000-frequency task for both groups. This result is in accordance with the finding that English-as-L2-language learners identify high-frequency English words faster and more accurately than low-frequency words (Wang & Koda, 2007), and that L1 English high-frequency words are read faster by both children and adults (Joseph, Nation, & Liversedge, 2013). Furthermore, learning a foreign language depends on both linguistic and non-linguistic factors, such as affective or cultural factors (Lundberg, 2002).

Our results confirm the role of verbal short-term and long-term

memory in learning L2 vocabulary. In the control group, mental lexicon access and working memory (backward) predicted the knowledge of 1000-frequency vocabulary, while mental lexicon access alone accounted for 38% of variance. This result confirms the important role of memory in L2 vocabulary acquisition: phonological short-term memory (Baddeley, Gathercole, & Papagno, 1998; Cheung, 1996; Gathercole, Service, Hitch, Adams, & Martin, 1999; Masoura & Gathercole, 2005) and long-term memory (Cheung, 1996; Masoura & Gathercole, 2005). Only verbal working memory (backward) predicted 2000-frequency vocabulary, accounting for 28% of variance. Research has shown that digits forward and digits backward are different constructs (Rosenthal, Riccio, Gsanger, & Jarratt, 2006). Masoura and Gathercole (2005) claim that the participation of phonological short-term and long-term memory in L2 acquisition changes with the expansion of mental lexicon. Beginners rely mostly on temporary memory, while in advanced L2 learners word representations in mental lexicon mediate the learning of new words. Even though our students had studied English as L2 for a long time, their vocabulary knowledge could be assessed as that of a beginner, as they had only mastered the easiest set of words. Although they were able to employ their mental lexicon for familiar L2 1000-frequency words, in order to complete a more difficult L2 word task, which clearly included unfamiliar words, the students applied verbal short-term memory. Moreover, the lack of mental lexicon access predictive function in the 2000-frequency task may suggest that in order to perform this more challenging task the students relied on educated guesses more than on real word entries in their long-term memory.

In the dyslexia group, mental lexicon access and working memory predicted 2000- frequency vocabulary, but the former accounted only for 19% of variance, half as much as in the control group. Thomson, Richardson, and Goswami (2005) reported that children with dyslexia have impaired phonological representations of lexical items, which may impair or prevent the use of long-term phonological representations in short-term memory. Similarly, Elbro and Jensen (2005) found that students with dyslexia had less well-specified phonological representations of long, familiar L1 words than younger reading-age matched controls. It may be that the students with dyslexia did not differentiate between familiar and unfamiliar words in the difficult task to the same extent as their peers without dyslexia. It is not clear why we did not observe a predictive function of either working or long-term memory for the 1000-frequency vocabulary task. This lack of relationship might be a result of deficits in verbal short-term and long-term memory in dyslexia. We therefore conclude that mental lexicon deficits might constitute a risk factor for L2 vocabulary

acquisition in dyslexia, which may manifest with increased proficiency in word knowledge.

Moreover, in the control group, verbal fluency was linked to access to the mental lexicon, which confirms that these two tasks tap similar underlying abilities (cf. Pąchalska, 2007).

The students in both groups expressed a lack of interest in reading. However, we asked only a general question concerning reading preferences; it would be advisable to differentiate between reading in L1 and L2, as well as to include L2 exposure through other media, e.g., video games or films. Furthermore, the two groups did not differ in terms of working memory and L2 vocabulary. This lack of expected differences might be due to the small sample size, or to the fact that we did not screen our control group for other learning/achievement problems (e.g., sociocultural disadvantages, underachievement, etc.), except for ADHD. However, all of the students had achieved the same level of education and attended the same schools. Moreover, the control group scored higher in L1 language tasks than the criterion group. General poor results in vocabulary size in both the criterion and the control group calls for a modification of L2 instruction in elementary and junior high schools. Multisensory instruction has been proposed as an effective teaching method for children with dyslexia (K. Bogdanowicz, 2011; M. Bogdanowicz, 2004b), while an individualised approach is also required (K. Bogdanowicz, 2011). Such teaching techniques would also be beneficial for those students who do not have reading and writing difficulties. Furthermore, in our study, we concentrated on the receptive aspect of vocabulary, as we wanted to eliminate the possible confounding factor of spelling deficits in the criterion group. We recommend that future studies also include the productive aspect of vocabulary, as well as a comparison of L1 and L2 mental lexicon skills. It would also be interesting to examine the relationship between other aspects of L2 acquisition, such as accuracy and fluency of reading, spelling and phonological processing in L1 in normal readers and readers with dyslexia.

Conclusions

We found that students with dyslexia, as compared with students without dyslexia, exhibited deficits in the speed of access of data from the mental lexicon. No deficits in the criterion group were observed in verbal working memory (backward) and verbal fluency. However, the relationship between mental lexicon access, working memory (backward) and vocabulary was different in the two groups; the predictive function of memory for vocabulary was

more conspicuous in the control group, especially in the case of knowledge of higher frequency words. This weaker relationship in the criterion group might constitute a risk factor for L2 vocabulary acquisition in dyslexia, which may manifest with an increased proficiency in word knowledge. Moreover, both students with and without dyslexia knew few L2 words, despite their long educational experience, and had failed to develop reading preferences. These findings suggest a need for L2 teachers to incorporate teaching techniques that would trigger students' interest in reading in L2, which might expand their exposure to L2 words. Poor vocabulary knowledge renders the L2 learning experience difficult, as it impairs students' reading comprehension, writing and conversational skills.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the students who participated in our study. Thanks are also due to Dorota Wieczorek and Renata Jażdżewska for their help in data collection, and to Professor Marta Bogdanowicz from the Institute of Psychology (University of Gdańsk) for organisational help and advice.

The authors were awarded a grant for the project from the University of Gdansk, registration number: 538-7416-B128-13, in 2013.

References

Alves Ferreira de Carvalho, C., de Souza Batista Kida, A., Aparecida Capellini, S., & Brandão de Avila, C. R. (2014). Phonological working memory and reading in students with dyslexia. *Frontiers in Psychology, 5*, 1–10. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00746

Anderson, R. C., Wilson, P. T., & Fielding, L. G. (1988). Growth in reading and how children spend their time outside of school. *Reading Research Quarterly, 13*, 285–303.

Baddeley, A., Gathercole, S., & Papagno, C. (1998). The phonological loop as a language learning device. *Psychological Review, 105*(1), 158.

Beaton, A. A. (2004). *Dyslexia, Reading and the Brain. A Sourcebook of Psychological and Biological Research*. Hove: Psychology Press, Taylor & Francis Group.

Bogdanowicz, K. (2011). *Dysleksja a nauczanie języków obcych. Przewodnik dla nauczycieli i rodziców uczniów z dysleksją*. Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Harmonia.

Bogdanowicz, M. (2004a). Co należy wiedzieć o dysleksji rozwojowej? Wprowadzenie teoretyczne. In M. Bogdanowicz & A. Adryjanek (Eds.), *Uczeń z dysleksją w szkole. Poradnik nie tylko dla polonistów* (pp. 7–92). Gdynia: Wydawnictwo OPERON.

Bogdanowicz, M. (2004b). Niespecyficzne i specyficzne trudności w uczeniu się języków obcych. In M. Bogdanowicz & M. Smoleń (Eds.), *Dysleksja w kontekście nauczania języków obcych* (pp. 78–97).

Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo HARMONIA.

Bogdanowicz, M., Kalka, D., Karpińska, E., Sajewicz-Radtke, U., & Radtke, B. M. (2012). *Bateria metod diagnozy przyczyn niepowodzeń szkolnych u uczniów gimnazjów. Bateria GIM*. Gdańsk: Pracownia Testów Psychologicznych i Pedagogicznych SEBG.

Borkowska, A. (2006). Neuropsychologiczne podłoże trudności w czytaniu i pisaniu. In G. Krasowicz-Kupis (Ed.), *Dysleksja rozwojowa. Perspektywa psychologiczna* (pp. 35–51). Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo HARMONIA.

Carroll, J. B. (1993). *Human cognitive abilities: A survey of factor-analytic studies*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Chen, K. Retrieved 29 October 14 from http://www.eduplace.com/rdg/res/freguent.html

Cheung, H. (1996). Nonword span as a unique predictor of second-language vocabulary learning. *Developmental Psychology, 32*(5), 867.

Coltheart, M. (2006). Dual Route and Connectionist Models of Reading: An Overview. *London Review of Education, 4*(1), 5–17.

Couture, A. E., & McCauley, R. J. (2000). Phonological working memory in children with phonological impairment. *Clinical Linguistics & Phonetics, 14*(7), 499–517. doi: 10.1080/026992000750020332

Crombie, M. A. (1997). The Effects of Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia) on the Learning of a Foreign Language in School. *Dyslexia, 3*, 27–47.

Crombie, M. A. (2000). Dyslexia and the learning of a foreign language in school: where are we going? *Dyslexia (Chichester, England), 6*(2), 112–123. doi: 10.1002/(sici)1099-0909(200004/06)6:2<112::aid-dys151>3.3.co;2-4

Długosz, M., & Rejnowska-Wawryn, B. (2007). Zastosowanie Testu Językowego Leksykon w diagnozie uczniów dyslektycznych. In M. Kostka-Szymańska & G. Krasowicz-Kupis (Eds.), *Dysleksja. Problem znany czy nieznany?* (pp. 137–145). Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej.

Elbro, C., & Jensen, M. N. (2005). Quality of phonological representations, verbal learning, and phoneme awareness in dyslexic and normal readers. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology, 46*(4), 375–384.

Fiebach, C. J., Friederici, A. D., Müller, K., & von Cramon, D. Y. (2002). fMRI Evidence for Dual Routes to the Mental Lexicon in Visual Word Recognition. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience, 14*(1), 11–23. doi: 10.1162/089892902317205285

Frith, U., Lander, K., & Frith, C. (1995). Dyslexia and Verbal Fluency: More Evidence for a Phonological Deficit. *Dyslexia (10769242), 1*(1), 2–11.

Gathercole, S. E., Service, E., Hitch, G. J., Adams, A.-M., & Martin, A. J. (1999). Phonological short-term memory and vocabulary development: further evidence on the nature of the relationship. *Applied Cognitive Psychology, 13*(1), 65–77.

Hoien, T., Lundberg, I., Stanovich, K. E., & Bjaalid, I. K. (1995). Components of phonological awareness. *Reading and Writing, 7*(2), 171–188. doi: 10.1007/bf01027184

Jaworowska, A., Matczak, A., & Stańczak, J. (2010). *Diagnoza dysleksji. Aneks do przewodnika diagnostycznego. Normalizacja dla uczniów klasy V szkoły podstawowej*. Warszawa: Pracownia Testów Psychologicznych Polskiego Towarzystwa Psychologicznego.

Jenkins, J. R., Matlock, B., & Slocum, T. A. (1989). Two approaches to vocabulary instruction: The teaching of individual word meanings and practice in deriving word meaning from context. *Reading Research Quarterly, 24*, 215–235.

Johns, B. T., Gruenenfelder, T. M., Pisoni, D. B., & Jones, M. N. (2012). Effects of word frequency, contextual diversity, and semantic distinctiveness on spoken word recognition. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, 132*(2), EL74–EL80. doi: 10.1121/1.4731641

Joseph, H. S. S. L., Nation, K., & Liversedge, S. P. (2013). Using Eye Movements to Investigate Word Frequency Effects in Children's Sentence Reading. *School Psychology Review, 42*(2), 207–222.

Jurek, A. (2004). Trudności w nauce języków obcych uczniów z dysleksją rozwojową. In M. Bogdanowicz & M. Smoleń (Eds.), *Dysleksja w kontekście nauczania języków obcych* (pp. 98–116). Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Harmonia.

Krasowicz-Kupis, G. (1999). *Rozwój metajęzykowy a osiągnięcia w czytaniu u dzieci 6-9 letnich*. Lublin: UMCS.

Krasowicz-Kupis, G. (2008). *Psychologia dysleksji*. Warszawa: Wyd. Nauk. PWN.

Krasowicz-Kupis, G., Borkowska, A. R., & Pietras, I. (2009). Rapid automatized naming, phonology and dyslexia in Polish children. *Medical Science Monitor, 15*(9), CR460–CR469.

Kucan, L. (2012). What Is Most Important to Know About Vocabulary? *Reading Teacher, 65*(6), 360–366. doi: 10.1002/TRTR.01054

Kurcz, I. (2000). *Psychologia języka i komunikacji*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe SCHOLAR.

Laufer, B. (1997). What's in a word that makes it hard or easy? Some intralexical factors that affect the learning of words. In N. Schmitt & M. McCarthy (Eds.), *Vocabulary: Description, Acquisition and Pedagogy* (pp. 140–155). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lundberg, I. (2002). Second Language Learning and Reading with the Additional Load of Dyslexia. *Annals of Dyslexia, 52*, 165–187.

Lundberg, I., & Hoien, T. (2001). Dyslexia and Phonology. In A. Fawcett (Ed.), *Dyslexia. Theory and Good Practice* (pp. 109–123). London: Whurr Publishers.

Lyon Reid, G., Shaywitz, S. E., & Shaywitz, B. A. (2003). A Definition of Dyslexia. Defining Dyslexia, Comorbidity, Teachers' Knowledge of Language and Reading. *Annals of Dyslexia, 53*, 1–14.

Martin, J., Cole, P., Leuwers, C., Casalis, S., Zorman, M., & Sprenger-Charolles, L. (2010). Reading in French-speaking adults with dyslexia. *Annals of Dyslexia, 60*(2), 238–264. doi: 10.1007/s11881-010-0043-8

Masoura, E. V., & Gathercole, S. E. (2005). Contrasting contributions of phonological short-term memory and long-term knowledge to vocabulary learning in a foreign language. *Memory, 13*(3/4), 422–429. doi: 10.1080/09658210344000323

Mather, N., & Wendling, B. J. (2012). *Essentials of Dyslexia Assessment and Intervention*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Miles, T. R. (1993). *Dyslexia - The Pattern of Difficulties*. London: Whurr Publishers.

Moura, O., Simões, M. R., & Pereira, M. (2014). WISC-III cognitive profiles in children with developmental dyslexia: specific cognitive disability and diagnostic utility. *Dyslexia (Chichester, England), 20*(1), 19–37. doi: 10.1002/dys.1468

Nation, P. (2001; 1990). Frequency based tests: Recognition. Retrieved 30 August 2014, from ?

Nicolson, R. I., & Fawcett, A. J. (1997). Development of Objective Procedures for Screening and Assessment of Dyslexic Students in Higher Education. *Journal of Research in Reading, 20*(1), 77.

Nicolson, R. I., & Fawcett, A. J. (2008). *Dyslexia, learning, and the brain*. Cambridge, Mass. ; London: MIT.

Ouellette, G. P. (2006). What' s Meaning Got to Do With It: The Role of Vocabulary in Word Reading and Reading Comprehension. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 98*(3), 554–566. doi: 10.1037/0022-0663.98.3.554

Perfetti, C. (2007). Reading Ability: Lexical Quality to Comprehension. *Scientific Studies of Reading, 11*(4), 357–383. doi: 10.1080/10888430701530730

Pąchalska, M. (2007). Neuropsychologia kliniczna. Urazy mózgu. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.

Pąchalska, M., & Lipowska, M. (2006). *Skala Pamięci Wechslera (WMS-III). Autoryzowana Wersja Polska*. Kraków: Fundacja na Rzecz Osób z Dysfunkcjami Mózgu.

Raven, J. C. (1991). *Test Matryc. Wersja Standard. Seria A, B, C, D, E.* Warszawa: Pracownia Testów Psychologicznych Polskiego Towarzystwa Psychologicznego.

Rosenthal, E. N., Riccio, C. A., Gsanger, K. M., & Jarratt, K. P. (2006). Digit Span components as predictors of attention problems and executive functioning in children. *Archives Of Clinical Neuropsychology: The Official Journal Of The National Academy Of Neuropsychologists, 21*(2), 131–139.

Shessel, I., & Reiff, H. B. (1999). Experiences of Adults with Learning Disabilities: Positive and Negative Impacts and Outcomes. *Learning Disabilities Quarterly, 22*(4), 305–316.

Snowling, M. (2000). *Dyslexia*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Sochacka, K. (2004). Nabywanie umiejętności czytania - różnice w badaniach dzieci polskich i anglojęzycznych. In M. Bogdanowicz & M. Smoleń (Eds.), *Dysleksja w kontekście nauczania języków obcych* (pp. 54–62). Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo HARMONIA.

Sonbul, S., & Schmitt, N. (2010). Direct teaching of vocabulary after reading: is it worth the effort? *ELT Journal: English Language Teachers Journal, 64*(3), 253–260. doi: 10.1093/elt/ccp059

Sparks, R. L., & Ganschow, L. (1993). The impact of native language-learning problems on foreign-language learning - case-study illustrations of the linguistic coding deficit hypothesis. *Modern Language Journal, 77*(1), 58–74. doi: 10.2307/329559

Stahl, S. A., & Fairbanks, M. M. (1986). The effects of vocabulary instruction: A model-based meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research, 56*, 72–110.

Swanborn, M. S. L., & de Glopper, K. (2002). Impact of Reading Purpose on Incidental Word Learning From Context. *Language Learning, 52*(1), 95.

Swanson, H. L., & Sáez, L. (2003). Memory difficulties in children and adults with learning

disabilities. In H. L. Swanson, K. R. Harris, & S. Graham (Eds.), *Handbook of learning disabilities* (pp. 182–198). New York-London: Guilford Press.

Szczerbiński, M. (2007). Dysleksja rozwojowa: próba definicji. In M. Kostka-Szymańska & G. Krasowicz-Kupis (Eds.), *Dysleksja. Problem znany czy nieznany?* (pp. 47–72). Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Thomson, J. M., Richardson, U., & Goswami, U. (2005). Phonological similarity neighborhoods and children's short-term memory: Typical development and dyslexia. *Memory & Cognition, 33*(7), 1210–1219.

Tomaszczyk, J. Słowniki ISEL. Retrieved 29 October 14 from http://www.isel.edu.pl/slowniki/

Wang, M., & Koda, K. (2007). Commonalities and differences in word identification skills among learners of English as a second language. *Language Learning, 57*(Suppl 1), 201–222.

Wolf, M., & Bowers, P. G. (1999). The double-deficit hypothesis for the developmental dyslexias. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 91*(3), 415–438. doi: 10.1037/0022-0663.91.3.415

Wolf, M., & Bowers, P. G. (2000). Naming-speed processes and developmental reading disabilities: An introduction to the special issue on the double-deficit hypothesis. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 33*(4), 322–324. doi: 10.1177/002221940003300404

Wolf, M., Bowers, P. G., & Biddle, K. (2000). Naming-speed processes, timing, and reading: A conceptual review. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 33*(4), 387–407. doi: 10.1177/002221940003300409

Woźnicki, T., & Zawadzka, E. (1981). *Fazy procesu przyswajania języka obcego*. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe.

Electronic source:

www.cke.pl; retrieved 11 September 2014

Biographical note

Marta Łockiewicz – Assistant Professor in the Division of Psychology and Psychopathology of Development, Institute of Psychology, Social Sciences Department, University of Gdansk. Scientific Interests: specific reading and writing difficulties, school failures prevention, psycholinguistics. Currently studies Polish students with dyslexia difficulties in learning English as a foreign language. Member of Polish Dyslexia Association.

Martyna Jaskulska – a doctoral student in the Institute of English and American Studies, Faculty of Languages, University of Gdansk. Scientific interests: dyslexia in English as L2, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics. Works as an English teacher in Derdowski High School in Kartuzy.

Raising Expectations for U.S. Youth with Disabilities: Federal Disability Policy Advances Integrated Employment

Jeanne Novak[1]

While conversations around the inclusion of individuals with disabilities often focus on the educational rights and needs of children with disabilities during their school years, there is a growing recognition that the period of transition from secondary school to adult roles is a critical time in the lives of individuals with disabilities. For young people, gaining meaningful employment in a typical community job is an important step towards realising full community membership. The present article examines how contemporary U.S. federal disability policy has heightened expectations that youth with disabilities – including those with significant disabilities – can and should be prepared to work in integrated workplaces. The article begins with a consideration of how evolving assumptions about the nature of disability and the employment potential of individuals with significant disabilities have influenced the development of federal disability policy in the U.S. This is followed by an overview of key legislative and policy developments in the areas of civil rights and workforce development that have the potential to dramatically impact the employment outlook for young people with disabilities. The article concludes with a discussion of challenges in translating the legislative intent of federal disability policy into noticeable improvements in employment outcomes, along with recommendations for aligning legislation, funding priorities and service delivery systems to achieve policy goals.

Keywords: equal opportunity, integrated employment, presumption of employability, secondary transition, social model of disability

1 Bowling Green State University, Ohio, USA; jnovak@bgsu.edu

Dviganje pričakovanj za mlade iz Združenih držav Amerike s posebnimi potrebami: zvezna politika na področju posebnih potreb napreduje pri integriranem zaposlovanju

Jeanne Novak

Medtem ko se diskusije o inkluziji posameznikov s posebnimi potrebami pogosto osredinjajo na pravice do izobraževanja in potrebe otrok s posebnimi potrebami med šolanjem, se veča tudi prepoznavanje dejstva, da je tudi obdobje prehoda iz srednje šole v odraslost kritično obdobje v življenju posameznikov s posebnimi potrebami. Za mlade ljudi je pridobivanje zaposlitve v skupnosti pomemben korak k temu, da postanejo polnopravni člani skupnosti. V prispevku je predstavljeno, kako je trenutna zvezna politika v Združenih državah Amerike (ZDA) na področju posebnih potreb zvišala pričakovanja glede tega, da mladi s posebnimi potrebami, vključno s tistimi s precejšnjimi primanjkljaji, so in morajo biti pripravljeni za delo na integriranih delovnih mestih. Avtorji na začetku predstavijo, kako so spremembe na področju poznavanja narave posebnih potreb in zaposlitvenega potenciala oseb s precejšnjimi primanjkljaji vplivale na razvoj zvezne politike na področju posebnih potreb v ZDA. Sledi pregled ključnih pravnih in zakonodajnih sprememb na področjih državljanskih pravic in razvoja delovne sile, ki lahko dramatično vplivajo na zaposlovanje mladih s posebnimi potrebami. Na koncu so predstavljeni izzivi, kako zakonodajne namene prenesti v vidne izboljšave rezultatov zaposlovanja, s priporočili za usklajevanje zakonodaje, prioritetami financiranja in s podpornimi sistemi, ki bodo omogočili doseganje ciljev.

Ključne besede: enake možnosti, integrirana zaposlitev, zaposlitvene domneve, sekundarni prehod, socialni model posebnih potreb

Conversations around the inclusion of individuals with disabilities often focus on the educational rights and needs of children with disabilities during their school years (Curcic, 2009; Shogren & Wehmeyer, 2014; Smyth et al., 2014); however, increased policy and research attention in the United States and in other countries is being directed toward the transition of youth with disabilities from school to adult roles in their communities (Ebersold, 2012; Wagner, Newman, Cameto, Levine, & Garza, 2006; Wehman, 2012). The shift from adolescence to adulthood is a significant life transition for all young people, and is often met with some degree of uncertainty about the future. For youth with significant disabilities and their families, the future may be especially uncertain: Will they have opportunities to choose where, with whom, and how they want to live? Will they be able pursue higher education or become gainfully employed? Or, conversely, will they be limited to live, work and recreate within segregated service settings based solely on their disability status? These questions speak to the heart of what it means to be included in one's community.

For young people with intellectual disabilities, mental illness and other significant disabilities, securing employment in the open labour market is an important step towards realising full community membership. In addition to offering benefits in terms of monetary gain, personal meaning and quality of life (Dunn, Wewiorski, & Rogers, 2008; Kober & Eggleton, 2005), integrated employment provides avenues for assuming valued social roles (Lemay, 2006) and for developing a host of relationships at work and in the community (Brown, Shiraga, & Kessler, 2006). Preparing youth with disabilities to enter this competitive labour force has been a dominant theme of secondary education and transition efforts in the U.S. for the past several decades (Wehmeyer & Webb, 2012).

The purpose of the present article is to examine how contemporary U.S. disability policy has heightened expectations for young people with disabilities – including those with significant disabilities – to achieve meaningful employment in their communities. First, I delineate core assumptions and values that underpin current federal legislation and policy regarding the employment of people with disabilities. Next, I review specific statutes that have significantly pushed the integrated employment agenda in the U.S. in recent decades. I conclude by highlighting good practices for aligning service delivery systems to achieve employment outcomes for people with significant disabilities that fulfil the promise of the country's disability policy.

Goals, Assumptions and Principles Guiding U.S. Disability Employment Policy

> Disability is a natural part of human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to live independently; enjoy self-determination; make choices; contribute to society; pursue meaningful careers; and enjoy full inclusion and integration in the economic, political, social, cultural, and educational mainstream of American society. [Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. § 701(a)(3)]

This passage, excerpted from the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, illustrates a fundamental precept that has guided the development of U.S. disability policy for the past four decades. The understanding of disability as a natural and normal part of life that should not limit one's right to participate fully in society is reinforced by four overarching public policy goals with regard to people with disabilities (Silverstein, 2000). These goals, articulated in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, are "to assure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for such individuals" [ADA, 42 U.S.C. § 12101(a)(7)]. The current paradigm of disability policy is a departure from an earlier paradigm that resulted in the exclusion and segregation of people with disabilities and the denial of appropriate and necessary services (Silverstein, 2010). Policymakers' rejection of the old paradigm in favour of the current paradigm reflects a change in underlying assumptions about the nature of disability, the origin of problems faced by those who have disabilities, and their capacity to become meaningfully employed.

Changing Conceptualisations of Disability

Throughout much of history, disability has been understood predominantly in medical terms: as a sickness or disease subject to prevention, cure or amelioration. This *medical model* of disability views physical or mental impairments as medical conditions that limit the functional capacities of individuals with disabilities. The model assumes that the primary problem faced by people with disabilities lies in their incapacity to contribute in the workplace in a meaningful way, or to otherwise participate in society (Scotch, 2000). Because the medical model locates the "problem" within the individual, people with disabilities have historically been separated from society and subjected to medical treatment or intervention focused on "fixing" them.

In the latter part of the 20th century, a fundamental shift occurred in

the conceptualisation of disability in direct response to the pervasive influence of the medical model. This shift began with the emergence of the *social model* of disability in the United Kingdom, which describes disability not in terms of physical or mental impairment, but as a social construct shaped by social, cultural, political and environmental factors (Oliver, 1996). This model regards limitations faced by people with disabilities as resulting from society's failure to adequately ameliorate the attitudinal and institutional barriers that preclude their full participation in society (Scotch, 2000). Subsequent conceptualisations have criticised the adequacy of either model on its own to explain the complex phenomenon of disability, instead asserting that the *interaction* between characteristics of the person and characteristics of the overall context in which the person lives more adequately explains the nature of disability (e.g., World Health Organization, 2001).

Presumption of Employability

There have long been debates about whether people with significant disabilities are capable of working in integrated environments (Black, 1992; Wehman & Moon, 1987). The U.S. has a protracted history of segregating and sheltering workers with disabilities (National Disability Rights Network, 2011). Dating back to the opening of the first sheltered workshop in 1840, through the period of rapid expansion of sheltered workshops in the 1950s and 1960s, the stated purpose of segregated work programmes has been to meet the needs of people incapable of working in the regular workforce due to the severity of their physical, intellectual or mental impairments. Workshops were viewed as protective environments "sheltered" from public ridicule, judgment and shame, where people could develop the job skills necessary to compete for traditional community jobs (Black, 1992).

A principal assumption at the time was that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities needed to move through a continuum of rehabilitation services to prepare to work in a regular job in the community (Bellamy, Rhodes, Mank, & Albin, 1988; Taylor, 1988). Moving through the traditional continuum of rehabilitation services meant that an individual first participated in prevocational education, then a work-activity centre, then sheltered employment, before finally being placed in a community job. A flaw in the implementation of this *readiness model* was that few people were ever determined ready for community employment and the vast majority remained confined to segregated settings in perpetuity.

The rehabilitation trajectory for people with serious mental illness likewise fell short of employment in the community. Guided by the prevailing

medical model of the day, rehabilitation efforts prioritised "curing" their disease or "fixing" their disorder. Only after achieving and maintaining mental well-being were they considered ready for work (Ford, 1995). It soon became apparent that adhering to a readiness model of employment resulted in little more than endlessly preparing people for jobs that never materialised.

By the early 1980s, the axiom "special people need special places" was being challenged by reports of individuals with significant disabilities living and working successfully in the community (Mank, 1994). The notion that people with significant disabilities needed to work in separate facilities apart from workers without disabilities, where their unique needs could be met by specially trained professionals, continued to erode as advances in supported employment opened the door to community employment for many people once considered unemployable. During the past three decades, a growing body of empirical evidence from the fields of psychiatric rehabilitation and developmental disabilities has demonstrated the effectiveness of supported employment in assisting individuals achieve employment in the open labour market, while day treatment, prevocational training and sheltered employment have been shown to be relatively ineffective in preparing individuals for competitive employment (e.g., Bond, 2004; Cimera, Wehman, West, & Burgess, 2012; Marshall et al., 2014). Supported employment involves systematic job development based on an individual's unique strengths, interests and needs, followed by ongoing support to ensure the individual's long-term success on the job. Support may include activities such as providing on-the-job training, implementing workplace accommodations, and consulting with on-site supervisors and coworkers to encourage their training and support of the individual.

Research evidence discrediting the vocational readiness model, along with success stories of individuals even with the most significant disabilities working in their communities, has led advocates to call for an end to sheltered employment and a presumption of employability for all. In a 2011 report entitled "Segregated and exploited: The failure of the disability service system to provide quality work", the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) sought, in part, to dispel myths about the capabilities of people with disabilities to be fully employed, integral members of the U.S. workforce. The report asserts that "Workers with disabilities can be employed and be paid equally with the appropriate job development, training, work support, and assistive technology" (p. 34). It calls for an end not only to sheltered employment but also to an antiquated labour law exception that allows workshops and other employers to pay less than minimum wages to workers with disabilities whose productive capacity is impaired by a physical or mental disability. A separate group of 25 national

disability rights organisations, including state directors of developmental disabilities and mental health agencies, issued a statement of key principles for community integration that made a similar declaration of the vocational potential of individuals with disabilities:

> Individuals with disabilities should have the opportunity to be employed in non-segregated, regular workplaces. Virtually all individuals with disabilities can be employed and earn the same wages as people without disabilities. When needed for such employment, they should have access to supported or customized employment. They should be afforded options other than sheltered work, day treatment, clubhouses, and other segregated programs. (U.S. Senate, 2013, p. 14)

These statements by disability rights organisations underscore the presumption that individuals with significant disabilities are employable, and they are reflected in the common refrain of self-advocates: Give us real jobs, for real money, in real businesses in the community!

Taken together, evolving assumptions about the nature of disability and the employment potential of people with significant disabilities have had a significant impact on the development of federal disability policy in the U.S. in recent years. This impact is evident in current civil rights statutes mandating equal opportunity in employment, as well as in other federal legislation and regulations advancing integrated employment as the optimal employment outcome for all persons with disabilities.

Key Federal Legislative and Policy Developments Advancing Integrated Employment

Equal Employment Opportunity is the Law

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 is considered a landmark civil rights statute in the U.S. The ADA prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity for persons with disabilities in employment, state and local government services, public accommodations, commercial facilities and transportation. Both the ADA and its predecessor, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, contain strong anti-discrimination language related to employment. While the Rehabilitation Act prohibits employment discrimination in federally funded programmes and activities, the ADA extends protections against employment discrimination to the private sector. Specifically, Title I of the ADA requires employers with 15 or more employees to provide qualified individuals

with disabilities the opportunity to benefit from the full range of employment-related opportunities available to others. The law prohibits discrimination in all employment practices, including recruitment, hiring, termination, promotion, compensation, job training and other privileges of employment. Moreover, it prohibits employers from asking an applicant disability-related questions prior to making a conditional job offer.

Title I of the ADA requires employers to make *reasonable accommodations* for qualified job applicants and employees with disabilities. Under the law, reasonable accommodations are any modifications or adjustments that enable the individual to participate in the application process, perform the essential job functions, or enjoy equal access to benefits available to individuals without disabilities in the workplace. *Essential functions* of a job are the fundamental duties required of the position. Accommodations may range from making a work area physically accessible and providing training materials in an accessible format to modifying work schedules or granting time off for an employee to receive treatment for a disability. An employer is only required to accommodate a qualified individual with a disability. A *qualified individual* is one who can perform the essential functions of a job with or without a reasonable accommodation. Employers are not required to lower quality or quantity standards as an accommodation. In addition, an employer is not required to provide any accommodation that would impose an *undue hardship* (i.e., significant difficulty or expense) on the operation of the employer's business.

Although Title I of the ADA prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of disability, it is not an affirmative action statute and it does not establish a quota system. Private businesses in the U.S. do not have a duty to hire people with disabilities, and people with disabilities are not entitled to employment. Rather, employers are free to make all employment decisions, including selecting the most qualified applicant for a job and terminating an individual's employment, as long as these decisions are based on reasons unrelated to a disability and as long as the results of the employer's actions do not systematically disadvantage individuals with disabilities as a protected group (Reskin, 2001).

Passage of the ADA in 1990 has been described as "a watershed moment for disability advocates attempting to frame disability not as purely a medical condition, but rather as a civil rights issue to be considered under the umbrella of antidiscrimination rights" (Schlesinger, 2014, p. 2120). It represented a significant shift in federal public policy, reflecting a rejection of the medical model of disability in favour of a new paradigm that views disability as resulting from the interaction between a person's impairment and the environmental and attitudinal barriers that restrict his or her participation in society (Scotch, 2000).

This shift is consistent with an international trend in adopting a social model of disability in policy development, exemplified by the introduction of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2006 and its subsequent ratification by 151 nations as of December 2014 (United Nations Enable, 2012).

The ADA Integration Mandate

The Americans with Disabilities Act has been interpreted as more than an anti-discrimination statute; it has been heralded as a federal policy commitment to the social inclusion of people with disabilities (Scotch, 2000). In passing the ADA, the U.S. Legislature described discrimination against people with disabilities through isolation and segregation as a serious and pervasive national problem. Title II of the ADA prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in the services provided by state and local governments. Furthermore, the 1991 regulations implementing Title II require public entities to "administer services, programs, and activities in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of qualified individuals with disabilities" [28 C.F.R. § 35.130(d)]. The *most integrated setting* means a setting that "enables individuals with disabilities to interact with non-disabled persons to the fullest extent possible" [28 C.F.R. Pt. 35 App. A]. The regulatory requirement that public services be provided in the most integrated setting appropriate to each person's needs is known as the law's integration mandate.

The U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.* (1999) significantly shaped interpretation of the ADA's integration mandate (Hoffman, 2013). The *Olmstead* case involved two women with mental illness and intellectual disabilities who lived in a state-run institution. Despite determination by their treatment teams that the women could be appropriately served in the community, they remained in the institution for several years. The women sued, claiming that being confined in the institution was a violation of their rights under Title II of the ADA. In 1999, the Supreme Court upheld the right of the women to move from the institution into the community, citing that such segregation "perpetuates unwarranted assumptions that persons so isolated are incapable or unworthy of participating in community life" (527 U.S. 600). The *Olmstead* decision made explicit the responsibility of states to provide services for people with disabilities in the most integrated environment appropriate.

In 2009, the federal government launched a Community Living Initiative to promote federal partnerships that advance the directive of the Olmstead decision (U.S. Senate, 2013). The initiative is supported by recent changes to

Medicaid, the nation's largest funding source for long-term support services for people with disabilities. Changes to federal Medicaid rules in 2014 have created new financial incentives for states to rebalance their long-term support service systems away from reliance on institutional facilities and towards home and community-based settings (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014). In addition, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has stepped up its enforcement of the ADA's integration mandate as articulated in *Olmstead* in a wide variety of residential and non-residential settings (DOJ, 2011). Sheltered workshops and facility-based day programmes in several states and communities have been found to unnecessarily segregate people with disabilities in violation of the ADA (e.g., Rinaldi, 2014). Placement in such settings has been deemed to be a form of institutionalisation that prevents people with disabilities from becoming fully included in their communities. Subsequently, in 2014, the United States entered into the nation's first state-wide settlement affirming the right of people with disabilities to receive employment and day activity services in community settings (DOJ, 2014). A DOJ investigation of Rhode Island's system of service delivery for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities found that thousands of individuals spend the majority of their daytime hours receiving services in segregated settings, even though they are interested in and capable of receiving integrated employment and day services in the community. The State's heavy reliance on sheltered workshops and facility-based day programmes to the exclusion of integrated alternatives was found to violate the intent and purpose of the ADA. In an unprecedented 10-year agreement, Rhode Island has agreed to provide (a) individualised supported employment placements in typical community jobs for approximately 2,000 transition-age youth and adults, and (b) career preparation experiences, such as internships, jobsite visits and career mentoring, for youth, thus preparing them for integrated employment at competitive wages.

The integration mandate of the ADA – along with subsequent laws, regulations and legal decisions – sends an unambiguous message about the rights of individuals with disabilities to live integrated lives and pursue meaningful careers in the community. The next section describes the evolution of federal vocational rehabilitation legislation and employment policy that has led to the recognition of competitive integrated employment as the optimal employment outcome for youth and adults with disabilities.

Competitive Integrated Employment as the Optimal Employment Outcome

The evolution of vocational rehabilitation legislation and policy in the U.S. over the past several decades has been influenced by changing assumptions about the nature of disability and the employment potential of people with significant disabilities. The first civilian vocational rehabilitation (VR) programme in the U.S. was established in 1920 (Rubin & Roessler, 2007). At that time, services were limited to individuals with physical disabilities who could be expected to become gainfully employed after receiving time-limited vocational training services. People with significant physical and mental disabilities would have to wait until the U.S. Legislature enacted the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 before they would become the priority recipients of VR services and could no longer be denied participation in the programme due to the cost or complexity of their service needs (Bellini, 1998). The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986 shared a focus on providing services to job seekers with significant disabilities and established a dedicated supported employment programme to assist people with the most significant disabilities, who require intensive, ongoing support in order to achieve and retain competitive employment. The 1992 Amendments codified the presumption that *all* individuals can benefit from VR services when provided with appropriate services and supports. No longer could individuals with significant disabilities be denied services simply because they were presumed to have limited "rehabilitation potential" (West, 1996). Today, the onus is on state VR agencies to present clear and convincing evidence to rebut the presumption of benefit. In addition, since 2001, VR funds can no longer be used for the long-term placement of people with disabilities in sheltered workshops and other segregated settings [34 C.F.R. § 361.5(b)(16)].

The most recent amendments to the Rehabilitation Act – now part of the broader Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) – can be expected to push to the integrated employment agenda for youth transitioning from school to work. For the first time, *competitive integrated employment* is identified as the optimal employment outcome of VR services (Hoff, 2014). Competitive integrated employment refers to jobs held by people with disabilities in workplaces in which the majority of employees do not have disabilities. In these jobs, employees with disabilities are paid directly by their employers and earn wages consistent with those paid to employees without disabilities performing the same or similar work. It is worth noting that the WIOA was enacted against the backdrop of a proliferation of state Employment First initiatives over the past decade (Kiernan, Hoff, Freeze, & Mank, 2011). Employment

First initiatives reflect a commitment by states to align their policies, funding and service delivery systems to promote typical community employment as the first choice and preferred outcome for youth and adults with significant disabilities (Martinez, 2013). Although the term *Employment First* is not specifically mentioned in the WIOA, the influence of the Employment First movement on its development is evident.

Furthermore, new provisions in the law require VR agencies to assume a greater role in preparing youth with disabilities for competitive integrated employment. The statute includes specific provisions to (a) increase the involvement of VR agencies in providing pre-employment transition coordination and services such as work-based learning experiences; (b) increase supported employment services for young adults; (c) require formal cooperative agreements between state VR, Medicaid and developmental disabilities agencies with respect to the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services; (d) limit the entry of young adults with disabilities into jobs that pay less than the minimum wage; and (e) prohibit schools from contracting with sub-minimum wage providers, such as sheltered workshops, to provide transition services.

In a blog post announcing appointments to the newly-created Department of Labor (DOL) *Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities,* DOL Secretary Tom Perez (2015) succinctly stated why the Act identifies competitive integrated employment as the optimal employment outcome for youth and adults with disabilities:

> Competitive integrated employment works – for individuals, for employers and for society. Models have shown repeatedly that people previously considered "unemployable" **can** work, **can** be productive and **can** achieve independence. As such, investing in this approach is a wise use of public funds (paragraph 5).

The WIOA has the potential to dramatically impact the employment outlook for young people with significant disabilities. Consistent and widespread implementation of models and good practices for assisting young people to prepare for and enter integrated employment will be essential to the realisation of this potential.

Aligning Policy, Funding and Service Delivery to Achieve Integrated Employment Outcomes

More than any generation before them, today's youth with significant disabilities have benefitted from the civil rights protections designed to enable them to lead integrated adult lives. The legislative and policy developments discussed have raised the employment expectations of these youth; yet, for many, the promise of a *real job* for *real money* remains elusive (NDRN, 2011, 2012). Americans with disabilities experience higher unemployment rates, lower earnings and higher poverty rates than Americans without disabilities (Brault, 2014; NCD, 2014). The *2014 Disability Statistics Annual Report* estimates that 33.9% of working-age adults with disabilities are employed, compared with 74.2% of people without disabilities (Stoddard, 2014). Those whose disabilities are significant experience even greater employment and economic disparities. For example, only one in five individuals receiving day supports from state intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) agencies in 2012 participated in integrated employment services (Butterworth et al., 2014). It is clear from these statistics that translating the legislative intent of federal disability policy into noticeable improvements in employment outcomes will require the alignment of legislation, funding priorities and service delivery systems in order to achieve policy goals.

Develop a Consistent National Policy Framework Supporting Integrated Employment

The legislative intent of contemporary disability policy is to ensure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency for people with disabilities. This has not always been the case. Legislation enacted prior to the 1960s was heavily influenced by society's charity approach to meeting the needs of "the disabled", along with a general acceptance of the medical model with its focus on deficits within the person (NCD, 2014). Disability rights advocates have targeted laws enacted during this time period that conflict with current national disability policy promoting the full workplace integration of people with disabilities. One such provision is the labour law exception allowing employers to pay some people with significant disabilities a subminimum wage. When this law was enacted in 1938, it was a viewed as a cutting-edge way to provide Americans with disabilities the opportunity to perform work activity in a protective workshop setting. However, we live in a new time, with new technology innovations and service delivery models, and new expectations. The payment of federally sanctioned subminimum

wages to workers with disabilities is viewed today as an outdated, paternalistic approach that perpetuates the perception that individuals with disabilities are incapable or undeserving of earning commensurate wages; it also limits workers' potential for independence and economic self-sufficiency (NDRN, 2011). For these reasons, the National Council on Disabilities (NCD, 2014) – the independent federal agency charged with advising the U.S. President and Legislature on disability matters – has joined disability rights advocacy organisations in calling for an end to the subminimum wage.

The NCD (2014) also recommends that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) be amended to improve its alignment with the ADA and the WIOA. The IDEA, the federal law that outlines the educational rights of children with disabilities, requires schools to develop an individualised transition plan for students with disabilities aged 16 and older. The plan specifies the student's post-school goal for employment, as well as the transition services that will be provided to assist the student in achieving that goal. Although the IDEA requires systematic planning and services related to students' employment goals, it does not recognise competitive integrated employment as the preferred outcome of the transition process. The NCD recommends that schools be prohibited from identifying placement in a subminimum wage programme as an acceptable post-school transition goal or service on the transition plan.

Redirect State Service Delivery and Funding from Segregated to Integrated Employment Options

The United States, like many countries, is struggling to realise a primary principle of disability policy: the right of people with disabilities to earn a living through employment in inclusive, accessible workplaces in the open labour market (Hoffman, 2013; United Nations, 2006). The U.S. has a federalist legal system with both federal and state constitutions, statutes and common laws that impact the rights of people with disabilities. More than two decades after passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, many states continue to spend less on services provided in integrated settings than services provided in segregated settings (Butterworth et al., 2014; U.S. Senate, 2013). On average, state IDD agencies spend less than $1 on integrated employment services for every $4 utilised for facility-based programmes. However, an increasing number of states have taken concrete steps in recent years to correct this imbalance by redirecting funding from segregated to integrated employment service options.

Much of the work by states to align their policies and funding in support of integrated employment outcomes is being carried out under the aegis

of Employment First. At least 34 of the 50 states have Employment First initiatives targeting employment in typical work settings as the funding priority and primary outcome for individuals with significant disabilities (Butterworth et al., 2014). Common state-level reform efforts aim to (a) increase the access of students with disabilities to inclusive educational settings and community-based work experiences in order to inform their choices regarding post-school service options; (b) adjust rate setting and reimbursement methodologies within the state's employment and day service system to incentivise providers to deliver services in integrated settings; (c) provide training and technical assistance to increase the capacity of service providers and the general community to implement supported employment practices; and (d) provide counselling to individuals and families about the impact of work on the receipt of government benefits, highlighting incentives within the law that enable people to work without risking the loss of these benefits (Butterworth et al., 2014; NCD, 2012; NDRN, 2012). The State of Vermont closed its final sheltered workshop in 2003, and today has an integrated employment rate for people with developmental disabilities that is twice the national average. A Vermont policymaker explained the impetus for change in this way: "We made the decision many years ago to invest our money where our values were and not fund the outcomes we didn't believe in. That has made all the difference" (as cited in NCD, 2012, p. 12).

Implement Additional Equality Measures to Encourage Integrated Employment

Some disability policy scholars have argued that the strong antidiscrimination legislation enacted in the U.S. is, by itself, insufficient to ensure equal opportunity in employment for people with disabilities. Stein and Stein (2007) maintain that "Civil rights are directed at ensuring equal treatment but not equal opportunity. As a result, the ADA and similarly formulated statutes are not adequately empowered to bring about disabled citizens' full social inclusion" (p. 1209). In 2008, the National Council on Disability analysed gaps in current U.S. disability vis-à-vis the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). According to the report,

> Employment-related antidiscrimination prohibitions are only effective when linked with equality measures that alter workplace hierarchies and cultures. These latter type programs are typical of international approaches to disability law and policy, especially within the CRPD, but excluded by the U.S. perspective of civil rights. (p. 24)

Examples of equality measures directed towards people with disabilities or employers include quota systems, affirmative action, vocational training, trial employment, tax subsidies for extra-reasonable accommodations, and preferential contracts (NCD, 2008; Stein & Stein, 2007).

In light of the chronic disproportionately high rate of unemployment among Americans with disabilities, the U.S. Federal Government has launched a number of initiatives to establish itself as a model employer of people of disabilities (NCD, 2014). Among these are a 2010 executive order for the Government to develop strategies to enhance recruitment, employment and retention of people with disabilities, and a hiring authority that enables job seekers with significant disabilities to pursue appointment to federal agencies through a non-competitive hiring process. Changes to regulatory provisions released in 2013 require federal contractors to set a 7% workforce utilisation goal for employment of individuals with disabilities. Finally, a 2014 executive order increased the minimum wage for all employees of federal contractors, including employees with significant disabilities who had previously been paid subminimum wages. These efforts demonstrate a commitment by the Federal Government to promote not only equal treatment, but also equal opportunity for Americans with disabilities. The NCD (2014) identifies additional federal actions needed in the areas of transportation, customised employment and accessible technology to maximise employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Conclusion

While disability history, legislation, terminology and service delivery systems vary greatly from country to country, common questions remain: What will happen to youth with disabilities as they enter adulthood? Will they find employment that is both meaningful and gainful? U.S. federal disability policy has raised the expectation that youth with disabilities, including youth with significant disabilities, will achieve meaningful employment in their communities. The current disability policy framework reflects the belief that work is a highly valued activity in U.S. culture, that youth with significant disabilities can and should be prepared to work in regular businesses, and that public agencies bear a responsibility to empower youth to maximise their opportunities for integrated employment. Future efforts to align service delivery systems and funding priorities with federal policy goals will determine the extent to which reality meets these ideals.

Acknowledgement

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the *5th Days of Social Economy Conference* in Ljubljana, Slovenia, 23 October 2014.

References

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. § 12101 *et seq*. (2009).

Americans with Disabilities Act Title II Regulations, Part 35 Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services, 28 C.F.R. § 35.101 *et seq*. (2010).

Bellini, J. (1998). Equity and the order of selection mandate: Critical issues in implementation and evaluation. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies, 9*(1), 107–125.

Bellamy, G. T., Rhodes, L. E., Mank, D. M., & Albin, J. M. (1988). *Supported employment: A community implementation guide.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Black, B. J. (1992). A kind word for sheltered work. *Psychosocial Rehabilitation Journal, 15*(4), 87–89.

Bond, G. R. (2004). Supported employment: Evidence for an evidence-based practice. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, *27*(4), 345–359.

Brault, M. W. (2012). *Americans with Disabilities: 2010. Household Economic Studies. Current Population Reports*. Retrieved from U.S. Census Bureau website: http://www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/p70-131.pdf

Brown, L., Shiraga, B., & Kessler, K. (2006). The quest for ordinary lives: The integrated post-school vocational functioning of 50 workers with significant disabilities. *Research & Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, *31*(2), 93–121.

Butterworth, J. Smith, F. A., Hall, A. C., Migliore, A., Winsor, J., & Domin, D. (2014). *StateData: The national report on employment services and outcomes,* 2013 edition. Boston, MA: University of Massachusetts, Institute for Community Inclusion. Retrieved from http://book.statedata.info/13/

Cimera, R. E., Wehman, P., West, M., & Burgess, S. (2012). Do sheltered workshops enhance employment outcomes for adults with autism spectrum disorder? *Autism: The International Journal of Research and Practice*, *16*(1), 87–94.

Curcic, S. (2009). Inclusion in PK-12: An international perspective. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 13*(5), 517–538.

Dunn, E. C., Wewiorski, N. J., & Rogers, E. S. (2008). The meaning and importance of employment to people in recovery from serious mental illness: Results of a qualitative study. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal, 32*(1), 59–62.

Ebersold, S. (2012). *Transitions to tertiary education and work for youth with disabilities*. Retrieved from Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) website: http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264177895-en

Ford, L. H. (1995). *Providing employment support for people with long-term mental illness: Choices, resources, and practical strategies.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Hoff, D. (2014). WIA is now WIOA: What the new bill means for people with disabilities. *The Institute*

Brief, 31, 1–4. Retrieved from http://www.communityinclusion.org/pdf/IB31_F.pdf

Hoffman, L. C. (2013). An employment opportunity or a discrimination dilemma? Sheltered workshops and the employment of the disabled. *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Law and Social Change, 16*, 151–179. Retrieved from http://scholarship.law.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1150&context=jlasc

Kiernan, W. E., Hoff, D., Freeze, S., & Mank, D. M. (2011). Employment First: A beginning not an end. *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 49*(4), 300–304. doi:10.1352/1934-9556-49.4.300

Kober, R., & Eggleton, I. R. C. (2005). The effects of different types of employment on quality of life. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research, 49*, 756–760.

Lemay, R. (2006). Social role valorization insights into the social integration conundrum. *Mental Retardation, 44,* 1–12.

Mank, D. (1994). The underachievement of supported employment: A call for reinvestment. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies, 5*(2), 1–24.

Marshall, T., Goldberg, R. W. Braude, L., Dougherty, R. H., Daniels, A. S., Ghose, S. S., & Delphin-Rittmon, M. E. (2014). Supported employment: Assessing the evidence. *Psychiatric Services, 65*(1), 16–23.

Martinez, K. (2013). Integrated employment, Employment First, and U.S. federal policy. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 38,* 165–168.

National Council on Disability. (2008). *Finding the gaps: A comparative analysis of disability laws in the United States to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. Retrieved from http://www.ncd.gov/publications/2008/May122008

National Council on Disability. (2012). *NCD Report on subminimum wage and supported employment*. Retrieved from http://www.ncd.gov/publications/2012/August232012/

National Council on Disability. (2014). *National disability policy: A progress report*. Retrieved from http://www.ncd.gov/progress_reports/10312014

National Disability Rights Network. (2011). *Sheltered and exploited: The failure of the disability service delivery system to provide quality work*. Retrieved from http://www.ndrn.org/images/Documents/Resources/Publications/Reports/Segregated-and-Exploited.pdf

National Disability Rights Network. (2012). *Beyond segregated and exploited: Update on the employment of people with disabilities*. Retrieved from http://www.ndrn.org/images/Documents/Resources/Publications/Reports/Beyond_Segregated_and_Exploited.pdf

Oliver, M. (1996). *Understanding disability: From theory to practice*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Olmstead v. LC. ex rel. Zimring, 527 U.S. 581 (1999).

Perez, T. (2015, January 5). Ensuring "opportunity" extends to all. [U.S. Department of Labor Blog post]. Retrieved from http://blog.dol.gov/2015/01/05/ensuring-opportunity-extends-to-all/

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 701 *et seq*.

Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986, Pub. L. PL 99-506, codified as amended at 29 U.S.C. § 701 *et seq*.

Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992, Pub. L. 102-569, codified as amended at 29 U.S.C. § 701 *et seq*.

Reskin, B. F. (2001). Employment discrimination and its remedies. In I. Berg & A. L. Kalleberg (Eds.),

Sourcebook of labor markets: Evolving structures and processes (pp. 567–599). New York, NY: Kluwer/Plenum.

Rinaldi, G. (2014). Gimme shelter: *Lane v. Kitzhaber* and its impact on integrated employment services for people with disabilities. *American University Journal of Gender, Social Policy, and Law, 22*(3), 749–779. Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1643&context=jgspl

Rubin, S. E., & Roessler, R. T. (2007). *Foundations of the vocational rehabilitation process* (6th ed.). Austin, TX: PRO-ED.

Schlesinger, L. (2014). The social model's case for inclusion: "Motivating factor" and "but for" standards of proof under the Americans with Disabilities Act and the impact of the social model of disability on employees with disabilities. *Cardozo Law Review*, *35*(5), 2115–2145. Retrieved from http://www.cardozolawreview.com/content/35-5/SCHLESINGER.35.5.pdf

Scotch, R. K. (2000). Models of disability and the Americans with Disabilities Act. *Berkeley Journal of Employment and Labor Law, 21*(1), 213–222. Retrieved from http://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/bjell/vol21/iss1/7

Shogren, K. A., & Wehmeyer, M. L. (2014). Using the core concepts framework to understand three generations of inclusive practices. *Inclusion, 2*(3), 237–247. doi:10.1352/2326-6988-2.3.237

Silverstein, R. (2000). Emerging disability policy framework: A guidepost for analyzing public policy. *Iowa Law Review, 85*, 1691–1796.

Silverstein, R. (2010). Anatomy of change: The need for effective disability policy change agents. *Archives of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation*, *91*(2), 173–177.

Smyth, F., Shevlin, M., Buchner, T., Biewer, G., Flynn, P., Latimier, C., & Ferreira, M. A. (2014). Inclusive education in progress: Policy evolution in four European countries. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *29*(4), 433–445. doi: 10.1080/08856257.2014.922797

Stein, M. A., & Stein, P. J. S. (2007). Beyond disability civil rights. *Hastings Law Journal, 58*, 1203–1240. Retrieved from http://scholarship.law.wm.edu/facpubs/263/

Stoddard, S. (2014). *2014 Disability Statistics Annual Report.* Durham, NH: University of New Hampshire. Retrieved from http://www.disabilitycompendium.org/docs/default-source/2014-compendium/annual-report.pdf

Taylor, S. J. (1988). Caught in the continuum: A critical analysis of the principle of the least restrictive environment. *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 13*(1), 41–53.

United Nations. (2006). *Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities.* Geneva, Switzerland: Author. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml

United Nations Enable. (2012). *Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities: Latest developments*. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/disabilities/

United States Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. (2014). *Fact sheet: Summary of key provisions of the Home and Community-based Services (HCBS) Settings Final Rule* (CMS 2249-F/2296-F). Retrieved from http://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid-chip-program-information/by-topics/long-term-services-and-supports/home-and-community-based-

services/downloads/hcbs-setting-fact-sheet.pdf

United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division. (2011). *Statement of the Department of Justice on enforcement of the integration mandate of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and* Olmstead v. L.C. Retrieved from http://www.ada.gov/olmstead/q&a_olmstead.htm#_ftn11

United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division. (2014). *Department of Justice reaches landmark Americans with Disabilities Act settlement agreement with Rhode Island* (Justice News 14-350). Retrieved from http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/department-justice-reaches-landmark-americans-disabilities-act-settlement-agreement-rhode

United States Senate, Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. (2013). *Separate and unequal: States fail to fulfill the community living promise of the Americans with Disabilities Act*. Retrieved from http://www.harkin.senate.gov/documents/pdf/OlmsteadReport.pdf

Wagner, M., Newman, L., Cameto, R., Levine, P., & Garza, N. (2006). *An Overview of Findings From Wave 2 of the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2).* Menlo Park, CA: SRI International. Retrieved from www.nlts2.org/reports/2006_08/nlts2_report_2006_08_complete.pdf.

Wehman, P., & Moon, S. (1987). Critical values in employment programs for persons with developmental disabilities: A position paper. *Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling, 18*, 12–16.

Wehman, P. (2012). *Life beyond the classroom: Transition strategies for young people with disabilities* (5th ed.). Baltimore, MD: Paul H Brookes.

Wehmeyer, M. L., & Webb, K. W. (Eds.). (2012). *Handbook of adolescent transition education for youth with disabilities*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.

West, M. (1996). Promoting self-determination for individuals with severe disabilities in employment services. In D. Sands & M. Wehmeyer (Eds.), *Self-determination across the life span: Independence and choice for people with disabilities* (pp. 311–328). Baltimore, MD: Brookes.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, Pub. L. 113-128.

World Health Organization. (2001). *International classification of functioning, disability, and health (ICF)*. Geneva, Switzerland: Author.

Biographical note

Jeanne Novak, Ph.D., is an associate professor of Special Education and coordinator of the graduate teacher preparation program in Secondary Transition at Bowling Green State University, Ohio, USA. Her primary research interests relate to the transition of youth with disabilities from secondary school to integrated employment and postsecondary education. She has authored academic papers and presented internationally in the areas of secondary transition, supported and customized employment for persons with significant disabilities, and personnel preparation in special education and rehabilitation.

How Students of Preschool Education Perceive Their Play Competences – An Analysis of Their Involvement in Children's Play

Sanja Tatalović Vorkapić*[1] and Vesna Katić[2]

Preschool teachers play a very important but highly sensitive role in preschool children's play. It is therefore very important to build their play competences in a quality way. As this is not easily achieved, the main objective of the present study was to analyse the roles of students of preschool education in children's play. The study included 36 students enrolled at the Faculty of Teacher Education in Rijeka, Croatia. Through a qualitative analysis of the students' preparations for their practice, it was determined that the majority of students use didactic play and play with rules with children. Although the students demonstrated the expected role in children's play, which positively influenced the educational work and the overall well-being of the children, some of the students were not decisive. Thus, the question arises as to how to improve the acquisition of play competences in students of preschool education.

Keywords: roles, students of preschool education, play competences

1 *Corresponding Author. Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Rijeka, Rijeka, Croatia; sanjatv@ufri.hr

2 Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Rijeka, Rijeka, Croatia

Kako študentje predšolske vzgoje zaznavajo svoje kompetence za igro – analiza njihove vključenosti v otroško igro

Seyyed Hatam Tamimi Sa'd* in Zohre Qadermazi

Predšolski vzgojitelji imajo pomembno in zelo občutljivo vlogo pri igri predšolskih otrok, zato je pomembno, da si pridobijo kompetence za igro na kakovosten način. Ker to ni lahko doseči, je bil glavni namen predstavljene raziskave analizirati vlogo študentov predšolske vzgoje pri otrokovi igri. V raziskavo je bilo vključenih 36 študentov Pedagoške fakultete na Reki na Hrvaškem. S kvalitativno analizo priprav študentov na prakso je bilo ugotovljeno, da večina študentov pri delu z otroki uporablja didaktične igre in igre s pravili. Čeprav so študentje izkazali pričakovano vlogo v otroški igri, kar je pozitivno vplivalo na vzgojno delo in vsesplošno dobro počutje otrok, nekateri pri tem niso bili prepričljivi. Tako se nam zastavlja vprašanje, kako izboljšati pridobivanje kompetenc za igro pri študentih predšolske vzgoje.

Ključne besede: vloge, študentje predšolske vzgoje, kompetence za igro

Introduction

Play is a complex human activity with a long and detailed history of research dating back to the beginnings of preschool pedagogy and developmental psychology (Bodrova, 2013; Kamenov, 2006; San Chee, 2014; Trawick Smith, 2008; Vasta, Haith, & Miller, 2004). Play is a general term for a large number of activities, and must therefore be understood in a holistic and multidisciplinary way (Bodrova, 2013; Kamenov, 2006; San Chee, 2014; Trawick Smith, 2008). Numerous studies have demonstrated the importance of the culture of play for children's development and learning, as well as the fact that it is impossible to separate children's play, learning and development (NCCA, 2009; Schousboe, 2013). Although there is no universal definition of play, there are a number of theoretical frameworks that describe it with common characteristics.

Play can be described as an enjoyable activity, requiring activity (physical, mental) with materials and people. Play is a freely chosen, voluntary process that is focused on satisfying children's interests and emotional needs (Duran, 2003; Gleave & Cole-Hamilton, 2012). Due to its ability to dominate other activities during early childhood, play has always been at the heart of various approaches to the institutional education of preschool children.

The importance of play is reflected in the fact that children play for pleasure and thereby satisfy their basic needs, contributing to their physical, social, emotional and cognitive well-being (Goldstein, 2012). For the child, play represents an attempt to overcome the discrepancy between personal abilities and behavioural patterns that are important for successful integration into society. The educational value of the most important play lies in its potential to draw children's attention to specific content and to encourage their active involvement (Bodrova, 2013; Kamenov, 2006; San Chee, 2014; Schousboe, 2013; Trawick Smith, 2008).

Preschool children's play

Play is a general term for a large number of children's activities that convey a message to the child about his/her development and serve as an autonomous socio-cultural reality (NCCA, 2009). Although it is often difficult to distinguish between various types of play, there is an unambiguous differentiating criterion according to which we can distinguish four broad categories of play: functional play, symbolic play, construction (building) play, and play with rules/didactic play.

Functional play is play that includes repetitive movements with no immediate purpose or goal. The child experiences great satisfaction in having

mastered the movements (Duran, 2003; Kamenov, 2006).

Symbolic play is play in which the children are transferred to an imaginary situation. Such play takes place on an imaginary plane, often supported by toys that replace real objects, with no rules given in advance. This offers greater freedom in procedures and primacy of the imagination over identifying real situations and actions, in line with the conditions dictated by reality (Duran, 2003; Fiorelli & Russ, 2012; Kamenov, 2006; Šagud, 2002).

Construction or building play involves designing play in which the child forms material to achieve a specific goal as a result of his/her efforts. The creation can be completely without function and meaning (e.g., mosaic), or with meaning (e.g., houses, roads, etc.). The main characteristic of this play is that, with age, the child moves from a metaphorical to a logical way of thinking (Goldstein, 2012; Kamenov, 2006).

Play with rules is play in which rules can be transferred to the child in a variety of ways, showing him/her how to play a particular game or demonstrating how toys function and suggesting certain rules for dealing with them. Such play is often referred to as didactic play. Didactic play is play with rules given in advance, with the function of regulating the content and flow of the play and the behaviour of the child. In addition to establishing rules, didactic play explicitly or implicitly sets a task, whose function is to boost the child's current capacity, to develop latent forces, and to prepare the child for the next stage of development (Vygotsky, 1978). In addition to general properties of play, play with rules includes activities that promote the integral development (sensory, learning, processing and application of knowledge, speech and creativity) of the child (Kamenov, 2006).

Given the main objective in the present study, of even more importance is the fact that each of these various types of play has specific features that define the role of adults in playing with children (NCCA, 2009; Ridgway & Quinones, 2012). The roles of preschool teachers in playing with children should therefore vary according to the type of play in which the child is engaged. This flexibility contributes strongly to the child's well-being.

Preschool teacher competences

Competences represent a dynamic combination of cognitive and metacognitive skills, knowledge and understanding, interpersonal and practical skills, and ethical values (Vizek Vidović, 2008). Sheridan and colleagues (2011) observed three highly intertwined and interdependent dimensions of educators' competences. First, the dimensions of competency knowledge: what and why. The teacher should possess knowledge and have the ability to apply it. In

addition, the teacher must display a desire to learn and gain new knowledge, as well as a capacity to make changes based on the implementation of new knowledge. Another dimension of competence is *to know how*, reflecting the ability to lead, to organise and to apply knowledge. The third dimension of competence is interaction, relation and transaction, which involves communication, social relations, care for others and learning ability. Due to the numerous factors influencing competence, it is very difficult to define, and the criteria for defining competences vary from culture to culture. Although this is clearly evident in the explanations of general competence, very few studies deal with the specific competences required for play.

The contemporary approach to institutional education emerges from the fact that everyone learns and develops through their own activity, and that children's activities are central to the process. Therefore, the activity of adults is focused on providing the conditions for the smooth progress of children's activities, through encouraging, directing and initiating the development of the child. Overall, the main objective of different types of institutional work with children is to positively contribute to their well-being, and children's play is central to this aim.

The modern approach to education starts from the child, his/her individual needs, interests and developmental laws. The role of parents and educators is significant to the development of children, and is determined by their own activities in interaction with the environment, as interpreted by the child as an active and organised whole that is influenced by dynamically changing experience (Bašić, 2011; Bodrova, 2013; Schousboe, 2013; Trawick Smith, 2008). Interaction takes place in the specific socio-cultural context of the interpersonal relations developed through communication. It is a unique and creative process in which the child acts, explores, questions, supposes, etc., through play. The role of adults is to provide the most appropriate conditions for the activities of the children; they can support children's play or provide guidance for play (Bodrova, 2013). This presents an excellent example of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (1978): situations in which children can play independently with a little indirect guidance from an adult.

This leads to the question of the need to develop specific competences of various educators. It is very important to note that the dynamics of changes within academic education follows modern world changes, including changes in the role of preschool teachers (Petrović-Sočo, Slunjski, & Šagud, 2005; Tatalović Vorkapić, Vlah, & Vujičić, 2012; Tatalović Vorkapić & Vujičić, 2013; Vujičić, Tatalović Vorkapić, & Boneta, 2012). Competences acquired by educators can therefore be used in the preschool institutional context in a quality way.

A new undergraduate university course of *Early Childhood and Preschool Education* at the Faculty of Teacher Education in Rijeka, Croatia (http://www.ufri.uniri.hr/en/study-programmes/early-childhood-and-preschool-education.html) presents a response to the much needed and modified role of the preschool teacher within the modern institutional context, such as the kindergarten. The programme should allow the development of both general and specific competences fostering a high level of tolerance towards differences and promoting equal opportunities for all. Amongst basic skills and knowledge, integrated knowledge and its practical application are a significant part of the competences of the preschool teacher. Current knowledge about the development of competences of educators emphasises the necessity of linking the internal and external context in which the initial training takes place. The internal context includes constructs associated with the human personality (Tatalović Vorkapić, 2012), self-esteem, motivation and beliefs, while external factors include the cultural and social circumstances in which the teacher acquires competence. In this area, an empirically well-supported theoretical framework is provided by social constructivism, which assumes that students, learning actively during their initial education and internship, gradually acquire teaching competence and develop a professional identity (Tatalović Vorkapić, Vujičić, & Čepić, 2014) based on the integration of personal experience and knowledge of educational science (Vizek Vidović, 2005, 2008).

In addition to other courses, the course that is most relevant to the present research – *Language and Communication Integrated Curriculum* (Katić, 2012) – is organised in such a way that the child is at the centre of students' work. Therefore, the students' primary task is to become acquainted with the child. Along with other information, they should gather information about children by applying the observation method or by deliberately and systematically observing and recording children's behaviour, their learning styles, interests and strengths. Furthermore, they should note all of the significant environmental factors (physical, social, emotional), as well as the educator's personal and professional working characteristics in the group. The main consideration is the behaviour of the child, especially his/her way of communication (verbal and nonverbal). The collected data are analysed and represent the starting point for planning the necessary conditions (material, social, pedagogical) for educational work with the child. The students' role is focused on work with the child (through acceptance, guidance and monitoring of the child's development using qualitative interpersonal relationship). Taking into account pathways of developing the language competence of children, the students are supposed to plan and act using play as the most natural way of learning the language and

communication skills of children. It is through this specific task that they develop their play competences, along with other competences, because they learn to understand different types of play within the preschool curriculum and their own involvement in supporting child's play.

Play competences – students' involvement in children's play

The relationship of the educator in and during play in the institutional context has been addressed in very few studies (Edwards, 2011; Sandberg et al., 2012; Schousboe, 2013; Šagud, 2002; Trawick Smith, 2008). Regardless of the type of play, it is important that adults do not dominate; instead, children, as the main bearers of activities, should choose the type of play and determine its organisation and execution. Furthermore, children should be given an opportunity to display initiative, independence and creativity in their freely chosen play (Kamenov, 2006; Ridgway & Quinones, 2012; Sandberg et al., 2012). For effective participation in children's play, adults should be oriented towards the child rather than towards the task that lies ahead of them. They should be familiar with the psychology of play and should develop the ability to recognise and understand the needs of children, as well as developing the skills that allow them to build friendly, partnership-based, cooperative relations, where their intervention is limited to proposing, promoting and directing. In other words, even though the present analysis is based on the students' plans for educational work, which assumes their occupation with the task rather than the child, during the semester students have an excellent opportunity to really get to know the children in the kindergarten groups in which they undertake their practice. They are therefore able to focus more on the children than the task itself, which is their main role in their future work. These situations allow the students to influence the children's play in such a way that the children play without interference and assistance, without having their initiatives undermined. The students must demonstrate a great deal of ingenuity, patience and kindness. Various forms of adult behaviour can significantly influence children's play: selecting and arranging the play material (undertaken in collaboration with the children); giving advice to children (when asked by the children, and when the adult judges that it is necessary); expressing empathy in a variety of pleasant and unpleasant situations; encouraging; motivating; providing a role model (when using material, more in the sense of how to use the material rather than what to do with it); assisting in the construction and arrangement of the children's experience; observing and analysing the children's activities, with a focus on the process of playing rather than on the immediate results. In short, adults' involvement in children's play focuses on the different possibilities of

developing and enriching the children's activities, rather than defining the direction in which the activity develops.

In creating play, the quality of adult-child interaction is very important. Research conducted by Wood and colleagues (1980) found that preschool teachers are rarely involved in play with children, as they believe that their primary role is to provide resources for play (incentives), and that their intervention may inhibit creativity and the children's behaviour. The same authors emphasised that there are four possible roles of adults in play: *parallel players* (adults do not engage in direct interaction with the child, instead playing simultaneously with the purpose of indicating the use of offered incentives); *teammates* (adults are equal to the child, thus indirectly suggesting the direction of play with evaluation during play); *mentors* (adults have a dominant role in what they teach and direct the play); *representatives of reality* (adults teach, instruct and indicate a more realistic reconstruction of reality play) (Wood, McMahon, & Craunstoun, 1980). Furthermore, Hodkin (1985) observed the role of the educator in play through universal principles that are independent of the activity type, and consequently distinguished the following roles of the educator: *play role*, where the educator assesses, judges and evaluates the child's activities, and *instructor role*, where the educator instructs the child and introduces a problem situation to him/her.

Table 1. *Categories of students of preschool education according to their involvement in children's play and their definitions (Šagud, 2002)*

Categories of students of preschool education according to their involvement in children's play	Definition of categories of students of preschool education according to their involvement in children's play
Preschool teacher as a teammate	The preschool educator is an actor; he/she is involved in the common scenario of the play and takes one of the roles.
Preschool teacher as the one who elaborates the play	This category includes all responses by preschool teachers that indirectly influence the development or enrichment of the children's play, with the educator's statements providing information regarding the current scenario of the play, in which the structure of prior experience extends a theme reminiscent of the play or a sequence of actions.
Preschool teacher as the one who elaborates on the child's idea	The testimony of the child is the starting point for developing themes, enriching the play with new roles or actions.
Preschool teacher as the one who indicates roles or stakeholders	This category includes all statements with which preschool teachers define a role or nominate children to play a role.

Preschool teacher as the one who provides information	These are verbal statements by preschool teachers that are not directly linked to the current theme of the play, but respond to the children's questions or express the intention of the preschool teachers.
Preschool teacher as the one who asks questions	This category includes all of the statements presented by teachers in the form of questions and their differentiation according to the intentions.
Preschool teacher as the one who demonstrates the procedure and instructions	These are circumstances where the preschool teacher demonstrates in order to instruct the child as to the appropriate representation of a specific action.
Preschool teacher as the one who makes rules	The preschool teacher tries to implement rules and the established norms, and the play arises from real social relations that are represented and modified within it.
Preschool teacher as the one who adjusts inaccurate comprehension	The preschool teacher corrects the child's inaccurate or incomplete knowledge.
Preschool teacher as the one who evaluates the child's activity	The preschool teacher provides the idea and comments on or "scores" the child's play, thus encouraging the child.
Preschool teacher as the one who commends the child	The preschool teacher gives short, typical statements, providing feedback on the child's actions, without a broader explanation.
Preschool teacher as the one who provides new material	During the play, the preschool teacher provides specific material for its enrichment and extension.
Preschool teacher as the one who reorganises the space	The preschool teacher suggests a new organisation of the space in order to play freely.
Preschool teacher as the one who includes the child	The preschool teacher seeks to involve a child watching the play, accepting the wishes of the child and the group.
Preschool teacher as the one who encourages independence	The preschool teacher encourages the child to resolve a problem related to the play (action, role, organisation of the space, resources, etc.), or to resolve a conflict between teammates.
Preschool teacher as the one who repeats the child's expression	The preschool teacher repeats the child's statement in an effort to give the child an opportunity to start or continue to communicate, or as a way of showing interest in the child's activity.
Preschool teacher as the one who determines the theme of the play	The preschool teacher directly and explicitly defines the theme of the play, without joint agreement or feedback regarding the child's (children's) interests and preferences.
Preschool teacher as the one who determines the child's action	The preschool teacher directly imposes a gaming model and pattern within which the play role or action should unfold.
Preschool teacher as the one who performs the task instead of the child	The preschool teacher does not encourage or direct the child to independently find a way to solve a particular problem, but performs the task without any explanation or understanding on the part of the child, such as toy stores, governing the play room and so on.
Preschool teacher as the one who criticises	The preschool teacher negatively assesses the child's behaviour.
Preschool teacher as the one who does not agree with the child's idea	The preschool teacher rejects the child's idea as bad and unacceptable.
Preschool teacher as the one who resolves conflicts	The preschool teacher arbitrates in a conflict between the children, seeking the culprit.
Preschool teacher as the one who demands order and discipline	The preschool teacher demands order and quiet, and his/her request is not derived from the content of the play.

Finally, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA, 2009) emphasises that enriching and extending learning through play can be done by following three major steps: a) planning for play; b) supporting play; and c) reviewing play.

Of all of the required competences that should be highly developed in future preschool teachers, play competences are the most important. The categories of involvement during children's play (Šagud, 2002), as an instrument relating to the categories of educators' behaviour in symbolic play, have been used as a category tool in the present study. The main argument for their application lies in their applicability to other types of play: functional, with rules of play, building and construction play. These involvement categories are presented in detail in Table 1. As can be seen, they present various educators' behaviours that can be observed while children play. Most of these educators' behaviours do not involve the shared play of children and educator, but rather concern solitary children's play or play with peers. The broad nature of these categories facilitates a detailed understanding and analysis of the development of play competences amongst students of preschool education.

Taking all of these factors into account, it is very important to build quality competences of students of preschool education in creating skilful behaviour that encourages children to play without obstructing their play, thus contributing directly to their well-being. Given that this is not easy to achieve, the aim of the present study was to analyse the involvement categories of students of preschool education in the play of preschool children, as presented in the students' written plans during their study. Within this general aim, two research problems were established. First, the type of play chosen by the students as a tool for educational work with children should be determined and analysed. Second, the students' involvement in children's play should be determined and analysed. Both tasks will be examined through qualitative analysis and descriptive statistics. In view of the age of the children (two- and three-year-olds), it was expected that the students would primarily choose play with rules and didactic play, and that they would display all of the behaviours that encourage children to play without obstructing play.

Method

Subjects

A total of 36 students of preschool education participated in the study (35 females and 1 male), with an average age of 21 years. The subjects were students enrolled in the third year of the undergraduate study programme Early

and Preschool Care and Education at the Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Rijeka. The students were told that the aim of the study was to explore their involvement behaviours during children's play. Their participation in the study was completely voluntary and anonymous, and they were promised to be provided with feedback on the research results.

Instrument and procedure

The students had to write a plan for conducting educational work with children aged 2–3 years, within the framework of the subject course Language-Communications Curriculum in their third academic year. The purpose of their plans was to obtain the following information: after closely observing the children, the students should state: a) what type of play they intend to use in their interaction with the children in shared play; and, b) what kind of involvement they intend to have while the children play (their behaviour should be explained by the children's behaviour and needs). Their written plans therefore provided material for the qualitative analyses. The students worked on their written plans in groups of three (twelve groups in total), during the entire sixth semester (with a duration of three months). Afterwards, their teacher collected all twelve written plans and removed the names of the students, so that the written material could be given to the two independent researchers who would undertake the qualitative analysis. The researchers aimed to accomplish several tasks during the qualitative analysis: to read all of the plans carefully, to collect all of the suggested forms of play, to identify all of the involvement behaviours of the students during their practice in the kindergarten, and to place these behaviours in the correct involvement category. Both of the researchers had the same definitions of behavioural categories describing the students' involvement during the children's play, as described above (Table 1). The researchers also counted the frequency of involvement type for each category. The final version of the categories and the frequency of the answers in each category was the result of their estimation concurrence.

Results and discussion

Using the qualitative methodology, the analysis first identified the type of play primarily used by the students in their educational work with 2- and 3-year-old children. The main type of involvements manifested in their interaction with the children were then determined and analysed. Table 2 shows all of the types of play used by the students in their educational work with the children and the shared play, as well as their frequency of occurrence.

All 12 groups of students chose didactic play as one of the activities

aimed at providing the conditions for the linguistic communication development of the children in the educational group. The findings show that the students applied 40 types of didactic play in total. During their independent work with the children, as many as seven different types of didactic play were applied by the first group of students. Similarly, the fourth and sixth groups of students also used five and six different types of didactic play, respectively. All of the other students groups used four or fewer types of didactic play during their practice in kindergarten. The total of 40 planned and implemented types of play indicates that the students recognised play as the key activity encouraging the development of language-communication skills amongst children (Flynn, 2011; Pavličević-Franić, 2005).

Table 2. *Frequencies (per group and total) of play chosen by the students*

Group frequency	Play	Frequency of roles for each student group (N=12 groups)												Frequency total	Order
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII		
12	Didactic play	7	2	3	5	4	1	6	1	4	2	3	2	40	**1**
8	Play with rules		1	1	3		2	2	1		3	1		14	**2**
3	Symbolic play								1			1	1	3	**3**
1	Functional play								1					1	**4**
1	Constructive play											1		1	**5**
Total		**7**	**3**	**4**	**8**	**4**	**3**	**8**	**4**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**3**	**59**	

Eight groups of students chose play with rules, realising a total of 14 such types of play. This kind of play involves rules as the basis for the development of play. All players are obliged to adhere to the rules, and this is governed by a type of code of play. This is extremely important for the moral aspect of development, as the ability to accept and follow rules that come from the environment is learned through this type of play (Duran, 2003). At the same time, children have an opportunity to experience the process of socialisation and the regulation of social relations within a group. The rules can vary according to the content, the resources for play, and the aspects of development addressed. Moreover, explaining rules to the children and discussing them has a strong impact on the development of the language-communication skills of children (Vasta, Haith, & Miller, 2004).

It is interesting to note that only three student groups used symbolic play in their work with children. Finally, the eighth group of students used only one functional play, while the twelfth group used only one constructive play or

play of building and construction. All of these types of play have their own educational outcome and specific effects on certain aspects of child development.

One possible explanation for the most frequent use of didactic play is the key role of rules in play with rules and didactic play. The function of rules is to regulate the content and flow of the play, and the behaviour of the children. The content of the play can be diverse and varied, as evidenced by the names that the students used. In terms of the children's behaviour, the rules prohibit, permit and prescribe what is done. Besides the rules, in play with rules and didactic play as a special type of play with rules there is an explicit or implicit set task. For the child, it presents a situation in which he/she has to solve a problem in a creative way, according to his/her cognitive level and using his/her previous experience, voluntary effort and ability to communicate with other children and adults, as well as his/her ability of self-control. The effort invested in the child's problem solving is the main lever of the development of perception, thought and speech, as well as the ability to use available knowledge. In this context, play with rules and didactic play have the function of developing the current and potential capabilities and abilities of the child, thus preparing him/her for the next developmental stage, which corresponds to the theory of social constructivism (Kamenov, 2006; Gopnik et al., 2001). Play with rules has a strong educational value, and it should be undertaken every day and connected with other activities. In this type of play – as opposed to other types, mostly arranged by adults – the level of requirements and efforts is determined in order to focus on certain areas of development. Although the educator has a guiding role, it is important that the children have an opportunity to choose the play, establish the way of playing, change the rules, and choose a partner as well as a leader in the play.

Considering the age of the children, this finding is as expected. All of the groups of students used the didactic type of play, and this type of play was the most frequent, as can be seen in Table 2. Amongst didactic types of play, the students mainly used various puzzles appropriate to the age of the children (*"Rabbit Grey", "Magic Forest", "Serpent Sun", "Colourful Basket", "Dog Rony", "Cat Mima", "Horse Black Beauties"*, etc.), or other types of didactic play: *"Find a pair", "Where do I belong?", "Recognise a sign!"*.

As can be also seen in Table 2, 14 types of play with rules were used in eight groups of students. Some of these types of play were: *"Ivan eats vegetables", "Come to a big and small friend", "Find a place for a bug", "Cube swivels", "Mum and baby"*.

Symbolic play was applied on only three occasions, one of them being "*Cooking lunch for guests*". Only one group used functional play (*"Orchard"*)

and one used constructive play (*"Building homes for hedgehogs"*). The names of the play indicate an appreciation of the children's interest in securing the conditions in which to play. Regardless of the type of play chosen in accordance with the objectives, it is important to take into account the ability, needs and desires of the children, and to give preference to topics related to their experiences, as confirmed by the students in their choice of title of the play type (Wilcox-Herzog, 2004).

The categories of student involvement in the children's play and the frequency of the categories by groups and in total are presented in Table 3. Given the described behaviour of the students' interaction with the children, and without considering the number of plays offered, all of the groups of students elaborated the play, demonstrated the procedure and instructions, provided information, made rules, asked questions and acted as teammates. Furthermore, all of the categories, except involvement of the preschool teacher as a teammate, had a higher frequency in all twelve groups. The most frequently executed category was that of the preschool teacher as the one who elaborates the play. This was followed by the one who demonstrates the procedure and instructions, the one who provides information, the one who makes rules, and the one who asks questions. The frequency of responses is in accordance with the type of play chosen, such as play with the rules or didactic play, whose main characteristic is that it is subordinate to a specific training-educational task arising from the introduction of child development.

Table 3. *Frequencies (per group and total) of categories of preschool teachers' involvement in children's play*

Group frequency	Categories of preschool teachers' involvement in children's play: Preschool teacher as the one who...	Frequency of categories for each student group (N=12 groups)												Frequency total	Order
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII		
12	...elaborates the play	4	2	5	5	3	3	3	3	3	3	6	4	**44**	**1**
12	...demonstrates the procedure and instructions	4	3	5	5	3	3	3	2	3	3	5	4	**43**	**2**
12	...provides information	6	1	5	5	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	4	**41**	**4**
12	...makes the rules	2	3	5	5	2	3	3	1	3	2	6	4	**39**	**5**
12	...asks questions	2	1	4	5	3	1	1	3	3	3	6	4	**36**	**6**
12	...is a teammate	3	1	3	3	2	1	3	2	2	3	5	3	**31**	**9**
11	...encourages independence	6	4	4	5	1	3	3	3	3	0	6	4	**42**	**3**

11	...provides new material	3	4	3	4	3	1	3	3	3	3	0	4	**34**	**7**
11	...reorganises the space	1	4	2	1	2	1	3	3	3	3	0	4	**27**	**10**
10	...elaborates on the child's idea	0	0	2	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	6	4	**33**	**8**
10	...indicates the role or stakeholders	1	0	4	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	0	1	**22**	**12**
9	...determines the child's action	2	0	4	4	2	3	0	1	0	2	3	2	**23**	**11**
8	...determines the theme of the play	3	2	0	0	3	3	0	1	0	2	3	2	**19**	**13**
5	...repeats the child's expression	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	3	4	0	**11**	**14**
5	...performs the task instead of the child	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	**6**	**16**
3	...includes the child	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	**9**	**15**
3	...commends the child	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	**3**	**18**
2	...adjusts inaccurate comprehensions	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	**5**	**17**
2	...evaluates the child's activity	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**3**	**19**
2	...demands order and discipline	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	**2**	**20**
0	... criticises	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**	**21**
0	...does not agree with the child's idea	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**	**22**
0	...resolves conflicts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**	**23**
Total		**38**	**26**	**51**	**53**	**33**	**30**	**35**	**31**	**33**	**36**	**63**	**44**	**473**	

In this case, the focus is on the development of the child's language and communication skills. The findings indicate the role of the students in that ten groups encouraged the independence of the children, which is also in line with the above types of play that include the expression of the child's opinion, as speech is, of course, a means of expressing opinion (Stančić & Ljubešić, 1994). Although the role of the preschool teacher as a teammate is mentioned in all twelve groups, it is in ninth place according to frequency in the written plans. This means that the frequency of using these involvement categories is not as high as expected (NCCA, 2009).

Eleven groups encouraged independence, gave new materials and reorganised the space, while ten groups elaborated on the child's idea and indicated the role or stakeholders. Although the type of involvement within which students encouraged the child's independence was mentioned by eleven groups, it was in third place in terms of frequency. This finding implies that this role is important to students and has a strong presence in their interaction with preschoolers. This role was followed by roles in which students provided new materials and reorganised the space in order to enrich the children's play. Although

elaborating on the child's idea was mentioned in two groups of students, its frequency ranking was eight, after asking questions and providing material for the children's play. Ten groups also chose roles in which the students indicated the role or stakeholder, but the frequency of the strategy was ten times less than other types of involvement.

Nine groups determined the child's action, eight groups determined the theme of the play, and five groups repeated the child's expression and performed the task instead of the child. All of these roles demonstrated appropriate frequency within the groups, except for the last one, which was mentioned in five groups only six times (just over one mention per group). Three groups reported types of involvement that included commending the child's behaviour. Roles in which the adult commends the child's behaviour are very important for the child's learning, and it was therefore expected that such roles would be manifested more often; however, the students did not demonstrate this type of behaviour very often in the context of children's play. This particular finding is very important and is worth emphasising, as it suggests that students of preschool education should be encouraged to give more commendations to preschool children. Commending a child has a strong reinforcement effect, and represents a major verbal tool for creating and encouraging desirable and positive behaviours in children (Seligman, 1996; Vasta, Haith, & Miller, 2004), directly contributing to the children's well-being (Goldstein, 2012). These types of reinforcements should therefore be used more often in adult-child interaction.

Two groups adjusted inaccurate comprehensions, evaluated the child's activity and demanded order and discipline. None of the groups criticised the children's behaviour, showed disagreement with the child's idea or resolved conflict. This finding is in line with the expected behaviour of students in children's play.

Conclusion

In the context of preschool education, the importance of play is strongly highlighted (Goldstein, 2012). Although theories of children's learning have changed throughout history, in most theories, play is viewed as an act of learning or as an object of learning (i.e., play is meaningful in itself and is therefore of value for the children's well-being) (Pramling Samuelsson & Asplund-Carlsson, 2003).

The present study reveals that students of preschool education primarily use didactic play with children and demonstrate those types of involvement that are consistent with their future play competences. Although, in children's

play, students show the expected behaviour that is positively related to their educational work, some of the expected behaviours are not present, such as commending the child. This finding provides very important information related to the question of which competences should be given emphasis, not only in the course in question, but in the entire study programme of preschool teachers. In addition, students use symbolic play significantly less than didactic play, which could imply that they feel more competent within clearly structured shared play (applying didactic play based on rules). Symbolic play is very important for the development of children's symbolic thinking and for their cognitive development overall, and should therefore be used very often. On the other hand, the role of adults within symbolic play requires much more flexibility and management in a less structured form, which could be why this kind of play is not used more frequently. The development of these specific play competencies in students of preschool education could be one of the future tasks in study programme modifications.

The acquisition of competence is a multidimensional process that requires broader consideration. A more complete insight into play competences would require an analysis of all of the situations in which students have an opportunity to participate in educational work with children. Therefore, the expert and scientific value of the present research paper can be recognised in the following elements:

- the study compensates in part for the small amount of research on adults' involvement in children's play;
- the initial training of students of preschool education needs to be aligned with the modern theory and practice of preschool education;
- play competencies of students of preschool education should be clearly articulated.

Outcomes of the Faculty of Education include students' readiness for transformation through acquiring theoretical knowledge, as well as an ability to ensure conditions for developing the child's potential that are aligned to the child's needs, abilities and interests. It is therefore important to change the behavioural patterns of students' involvement in children's play, transforming them from listeners and observers to active partners in personal vocational training (Budić et al., 2008; Ridgway & Quinones, 2012), capable of providing an adequate type of support in enhancing children's play, and consequently their well-being (NCCA, 2009).

References

Bašić, S. (2011). Nova slika djeteta u pedagogiji djetinjstva. In D. Maleš (Ed.), *Nove paradigme ranog odgoja*. Zagreb: Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Zavod za pedagogiju.

Bodrova, E. (2013). Play and Self-Regulation. Lessons from Vygotsky. *American Journal of Play, 6*(1), 111–123.

Budić, S., Gajić, O., Segedinac, M., Miljanović, T., & Španović, S. (2008). *Didaktičko – metodički aspekti studentske prakse u partnerskim relacijama fakultetea i* škola. Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet, Odsjek za pedagogiju.

Duran, M. (2003). *Dijete i igra* (4. Izdanje). Jastrebarsko: Naklada Slap.

Edwards, S., & Cutter-Mackenzie, A. (2011). Environmentalising early childhood education curriculum through pedagogies of play. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood, 36,* 51–59.

Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Rijeka. (2010). *Early childhood and preschool education – Course program.* Retrieved 11 September 2013 from http://www.ufri.uniri.hr/en/study-programmes/early-childhood-and-preschool-education.html

Fiorelli, J. A., & Russ, S. W. (2012). Pretend Play, Coping, and Subjective Well-Being in Children. *American Journal of Play, 5*(1), 81–103.

Flynn, K. S. (2011). Developing Children's Oral Language Skills through Dialogic Reading Guidelines for Implementation. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 44*(2), 8–16.

Gleave, J., & Cole Hamilton, I. (2012). *A world without play: A literature review on the effects of a lack of play on children's lives.* London: Play England. Retrieved 1 March 2013 from www.btha.co.uk

Goldstein, J. (2012). *Play in children's development, health and well-being.* Brussels: Toy Industries of Europe (TIE).

Gopnik, A., Meltzoff, A. N., & Kuhl, P. K. (2001). *The Scientist in the Crib: What Early learning Tells Us About the Mind*. New York, NY: Perennial, An Imprint of Harper Collins Publishers.

Hodkin, R. A. (1985). *Playing and exploring: Educational trough the discovery of order*. London, New York: Methuen.

Kamenov, E. (2006). *Dečja igra: vaspitanje i obrazovanje kroz igru*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike.

Katić, V. (2012). *Syllabus of Language-Communications Curriculum.* Rijeka: Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Rijeka.

NCCA. (2009). *AISTEAR: The early childhood curriculum framework – Guidelines for good practice.* Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. Retrieved 1 March 2013 from www.ncca.ie

Pavličević-Franić, D. (2005). *Komunikacijom do gramatike*. Zagreb: Alfa.

Petrović-Sočo, B., Slunjski, E., & Šagud, M. (2005). A new learning paradigm – A new roles of preschool teachers in the educational process. *Zbornik Učiteljske akademije u Zagrebu, 7*(2), 329–340.

Pramling Samuelsson, I., & Asplund-Carlsson, M. (2003). *Detlärandebarnet. Påväg mot en teori [The learning child—Toward a theory]*. Stockholm, Sweden: Liber.

Ridgway, A., & Quinones, G. (2012). How do Early Childhood Students Conceptualize Play-Based Curriculum?. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 37*(12), 45–56.

San Chee, J. (2014). Intentional learning with educational games: A Deweyan reconstruction. *Australian Journal of Education, 58*(1), 59–73.

Sandberg, A., Lillvist, A., Sheridan, S., & Williams, P. (2012). Play competence as a window to preschool teachers' competence. *International Journal of Play, 1*(2), 184–196.

Schousboe, I., & Winter Lindqvist, D. (2013). *Children's Play and development, Cultural – Historical Perspectives*. New York, London: Springer Dordrecht Heidelberg.

Seligman, M. E. P. (1996). *The Optimistic Child: Proven Program to Safeguard Children from Depression & Build Lifelong Resilience.* New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin.

Sheridan, S., Williams, P., Sandberg, A., & Vuorinen, T. (2011). Preschool teaching in Sweden – A profession in change. *Educational Research, 53*(4), 415–437.

Stančić, V., & Ljubešić, M. (1994). *Jezik, govor, spoznaja*. Zagreb: Hrvatska Sveučilišna naklada.

Šagud, M. (2002). *Odgajatelj u dječjoj igri.* Zagreb: Školske novine.

Tatalović Vorkapić, S. (2012). The significance of preschool teacher's personality in early childhood education: Analysis of Eysenck's and Big Five Dimensions of personality. I*nternational Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences, 2*(2), 28–37.

Tatalović Vorkapić, S., & Vujičić, L. (2013). Do we need Positive Psychology in Croatian kindergartens? The implementation possibilities evaluated by preschool teachers. *Early Years: An International Journal of Research and Development, 33*(1), 33–44.

Tatalović Vorkapić, S., Vlah, N., & Vujičić, L. (2012). Osnaživanje uloge budućih odgajatelja u očuvanju mentalnog zdravlja predškolske djece: Promjene studijskog programa. Život i škola, 28(2), 130–144.

Tatalović Vorkapić, S., Vujičić, L., & Čepić, R. (2014). Pre-school Teacher Identity. In P. Breen (Ed.), *Cases on Teacher Identity, Diversity, and Cognition in Higher Education* (pp. 22–60), A volume in the Advances in Higher Education and professional Development (AHEPD) Book Series, IGI Global. doi: 10.4018/978-1-4666-5990-2

Trawick-Smith, J. (2008). Teacher-Child Play Interactions in Preschool: An Empirical test of Vygotsky's Theory. Retrieved 1 March 2014 from http://www.easternct.edu/cece/pdf/Trawick-Smith%20teacher child%20play%20interactions.pdf

Vasta, R., Haith, M. M., & Miller, S. A. (2004). *Child psychology* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Wiley.

Vizek Vidović, V. (2005). *Profesionalni razvoj učitelja tijekom inicijalnog obrazovanja i pripravništva*. Zagreb: Institut za društvena istraživanja. Retrieved 1 March 2013 from http://zprojekti.mzos.hr/public/c2prikaz_det.asp?cid=1&psid=29&offset=20&ID=1172

Vizek Vidović, V. (2008). *Ishodi učenja u obrazovanju učitelja i nastavnika – konceptualni okvir*. Zagreb: Projekt nacionalne zaklade za znanost. Retrieved 1 March 2013 from http://domus.srce.hr/iuoun

Vujičić, L., Tatalović Vorkapić, S., & Boneta, Ž. (2012). Istraživanje odgojno-obrazovne prakse: Dominantna strategija profesionalnog razvoja odgajatelja. In I. Pehlić, E. Vejo, & A. Hasanagić (Eds.), *Suvremeni tokovi u ranom odgoju, Znanstvena monografija* (pp. 345–363). Zenica: Islamski Pedagoški fakultet Sveučilišta u Zenici.

Wilcox-Herzog, A., & Ward, S. L. (2004). Measuring Teachers' Perceived Interactions with Children: A Tool for Assessing Beliefs and Intentions. *Early Childhood Research & Practice, 6*(2). Retrieved 1 March 2013 from http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v6n2/herzog.html

Wood, D., McMahon, L., & Craunstoun, Y. (1980). *Working with under Fives*. Oxford preschool research project. London: Grant McIntyre.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Biographical note

Sanja Tatalović Vorkapić, Ph.D., Assistant Professor and teaches students at Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Rijeka, Croatia in: Developmental psychology, Psychology of early learning and teaching, General psychology, Emotional intelligence, Developmental psychopathology, Methodology of quantitative research, Positive psychology. Her contemporary research interests include biological basis of personality, personality of (pre)school teachers and child personality in education, contemporary issues in developmental psychopathology and methodology of quantitative research, positive psychology and its relationship with other fields, and also study programs development for (pre)school teachers. She has published numerous psychology related articles and has been actively involved within various interdisciplinary research projects.

Vesna Katić, is a Higher Lecturer and teaches students at the Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Rijeka, Croatia in: Orientation Practicum, Language-Communication integrated Curriculum, Reflective practice, Development and collaborative research competencies, Family pedagogy, Preschool, Alternative concepts in preschool education. Her contemporary research interests mostly include the field of Early and Pre-school Education. She is also a trainer of the Open University "Step by step" in Croatia on the application of quality child centred methodology and application of the ISSA Pedagogical Standards. She has published several pedagogy related articles and has been actively involved with several interdisciplinary research projects.

School – Possibility or (new) Risk for Young Females in Correctional Institutions

Ivana Jeđud Borić[1] and Anja Mirosavljević*[2]

Educating a girl child means educating the family
Croatian folk proverb

In this paper, the authors deal with the education of girls in a Croatian correctional institution as a risk factor for social exclusion based on the data obtained via semi-structured interviews with experts and the girls and via the documentation analysis method. In this regard, the paper deals with two perspectives, i.e. the girls' and experts', in the context of risks related to schooling, intertwining these risks through the past, present and future, according to the stories of the research participants.
The authors compare the perspectives given and explore the questions related to possibilities of the education of girls in correctional institutions.

Keywords: girls, correctional institution, schooling, risks, social exclusion

1 University of Zagreb, Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, Department of Behavioural Disorders, Croatia
2 *Corresponding Author. University of Zagreb, Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, Department of Behavioural Disorders, Croatia; anja.miros@gmail.com

Šola – priložnost ali (novo) tveganje za mlada dekleta v prevzgojnih ustanovah

Ivana Jeđud Borić in Anja Mirosavljević*

Vzgoja deklice je vzgoja nove družine.
(Hrvaški ljudski pregovor)

V prispevku avtorici obravnavata izobraževanje deklet v eni izmed hrvaških prevzgojnih ustanov kot faktor novega tveganja za socialno izključenost. Podatke za raziskavo sta pridobili s polstrukturiranimi intervjuji, ki sta jih opravili s strokovnjaki in z dekleti, ter z metodo analize dokumentov. Tako predstavljata doživljanje deklet in ocene strokovnjakov o vzgoji in tveganjih, ki so povezana s šolanjem. Pri tem se prepleta predstavitev tveganj v preteklosti, sedanjosti in v prihodnosti v življenju deklet, vključenih v raziskavo. Avtorici primerjata omenjene vidike in analizirata vprašanja, povezana z možnostmi in dosegom izobraževanja deklet v prevzgojnih ustanovah.

Ključne besede: dekleta, prevzgojne ustanove, šolanje, tveganja, socialna izključenost

Introduction

After the primary form of socialization (family), the educational setting is probably one of the most important "areas and instruments" of socialization of children and youth. It is extremely important, and it greatly influences the development of children. Children and youth spend a significant part of their day at school; it is a place where one can learn and play and is a place of both education and care.

The Croatian Ombudsman's Annual Report (2011) stated that the educational rights of children placed in correctional institutions are being violated, especially in regard to their status and treatment in mainstream elementary and high schools. In addition, it is stated that the most common problems that children living in correctional institutions deal with are stigmatization and exclusion due to the fact that schools are not able to adequately respond to the specific needs of children with behavioural problems.

Documents such as the United Nations' Declaration on Human Rights (1948) and the Croatian Constitution (1990) guarantee everyone the right to education. Education is closely related to (un)employment, which is consequently linked to social exclusion. Social exclusion is a rather multidimensional phenomenon that weakens relations between the individual and the community. This weakening can have different effects (e.g. economic, political, sociocultural, spatial, etc.). The more ways in which this relation is affected, the more the individual is vulnerable (Asenjo et al., 2006). This means that social exclusion is more than a lack of money or material goods, because exclusion includes economic, as well as social, cultural, political and other dimensions. The complexity of the concept of social exclusion is also evident through attempts to determine its dimensions. In that sense, different authors (Burchardt et al., 2002; Böhnke, 2001; Gallie & Paugam, 2004; Poggi, 2003; Kunz, 2003; Kronauer, 1998) talk about different dimensions or fields of social exclusion. In the context of this topic, it is important to observe that education and exclusion from the labour market are significant dimensions of the phenomenon of social exclusion. Social exclusion is usually perceived as a vicious circle consisting of three components: unemployment, poverty and social isolation. Various components of social exclusion affect each other, creating a spiral of uncertainty. Job loss leads to the risk of poverty, and living in poverty creates additional difficulties in searching for a job. Individuals are thus caught in the trap of long-term unemployment. At the same time, unemployment and poverty make it difficult to participate in different social activities. Social connections are reduced and the likelihood of social isolation increases. It is important to mention that

exclusion from the labour market is one of the central dimensions of social exclusion. Therefore, if one's employment is the precondition for inclusion, then education is a key mechanism of social inclusion. The most important determinant of employability is education. The degree of employability is associated with the possession of qualifications and skills. Educated individuals are more mobile and more easily adapt to new circumstances. Therefore, social exclusion and educational failure are causally related. Education contributes not only to the acquisition of knowledge and skills, but affects the socialization, inclusion and empowerment of the individuals. Education (as with work) is also a mean of personal fulfilment (Šućur et al., 2006).

Since the focus of this paper is the risk of social exclusion of the girls with behavioural problems placed in an institution, due to their educational status and with that associated employment opportunities in the future, we shall briefly examine the field of education as a risk factor. Various studies have demonstrated the presence of specific risk factors related to education to be an important risk for behavioural problems. The following are some of the key studies:

- Wong, Slotboom, and Bijleveld (2008) analysed 26 studies conducted in 12 European countries from 1982 to 2008. According to the results of a meta-analysis, the authors extracted risk factors specific for girls: a high level of negative life circumstances, disobedience, suicidal behaviour, no support from mothers, bad relationships between mothers and daughters, permissive parenting, physical abuse, *poor school achievement, weak school attachment and commitment.*
- Zahn et al. (2008) analysed 2300 scientific papers and book chapters in USA dealing with risk and protective factors related to delinquent behaviours of girls aged 11 to 18. The data revealed that gender-specific protective factors important for girls are, among others: *good school success, positive school experiences, and positive relationships in school.*
- Bloom & Convington (2001) made a typical profile of a girl in an intervention system in the USA: she is between 13 and 18 years old, a member of an ethnic minority, has abuse experiences in the past, *manifests school failure*, social pathology is evident in her family, has an addictive type of relationship with older men, has a history of drug abuse, *truancy and drops out of school.*
- Fine and Zane (1989, in Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 2004) determined that girls are *seven times more prone to drop out from school* (mainly for family reasons, i.e. care of their brothers and sisters or their own children).
- Rapuš Pavel (1999) in her study from Slovenia identified two periods of

school failure: 1) transition from lower to higher grades in elementary school. In this period, girls' *school failure was attributed to learning difficulties and inadequate family situation*; 2) transition from elementary to high-school. This period is full of *truancy, disagreements with teachers and lack of interest in school.*

- Žižak, Maurović, and Jeđud (2010) analysing girls in three types of treatment (institutional, day treatment and community treatment) in Croatia concluded that common characteristics of the beneficiaries are *learning difficulties and poor school achievement.*

These studies show that education is undoubtedly a significant risk factor regarding girls with behavioural problems. In addition, schooling and education is an important factor in the aetiology of behavioural problems, but it is also important treatment area which, in the context of social exclusion, can decrease the vulnerability to and risks of social exclusion of girls in their future life.

A young, undereducated woman/girl from a dysfunctional biological family and history of behavioural problems leaving a correctional institution is not on an easy life path. All the aforementioned place her into vulnerable group for social exclusion and increase the risk of falling into the whirlpool of social exclusion.

Methodology

Aims and methods

The research presented in this paper is based on the qualitative approach, and aims to improve the understanding of different perspectives (those of experts and beneficiaries) regarding the specific issue of education of girls with behavioural disorders. Opting for the qualitative research approach is especially important in order to enable the girls' voices to be heard, as well as to have their specific experiences discussed in terms that are significant, well-known and close to them (Gilligan et al., 1988, according to Chesney-Lind & Irwin, 2008).

The general aim of the research is to gain insight into the perspective of the young females, the beneficiaries of the correctional institution, as well as the experts employed in the correctional institution regarding the young females' education. Along with the general aim, the following *research questions* are indicated:

- What are young females' experience and views on their schooling?

- How do young females perceive education in relation to their future?
- What are experts' views on the education of young females with behavioural problems?

Research participants

The research was conducted in the Bedekovčina Correctional Institution (BCI), the only institution of its type in Croatia, which provides boarding and treatment for one third of all girls with behavioural problems from various parts of Croatia. Therefore, it may be expected that beneficiaries and experts from the BCI are relevant participants regarding the set aims of the research, i.e. they can be seen as an "information-rich" sample, as described by Patton (2002).

Twenty-five young females, beneficiaries of the correctional institution, and ten experts participated in the research. Table 1 provides a more detailed account of both groups of participants.

Table 1. *Review of Research Participants' Characteristics*

Young females - beneficiaries of the BCI	Experts employed in the BCI
Altogether, **25 young females** (out of 26 residing in the institution at the time of research) participated in the interview after giving their voluntary consent following the principles of the Ethical Code of Research Involving Children (2003). • **The average age** of the girls at the time of the interview was **16.2 years old**. The age range was from 15 to 19 years old. • The girls had spent **an average of 10 months** in the institution at the time of the interview (ranging from a month to two years).	A total of **10 participants*** (8 females and 2 males) were involved, out of whom: • 2 people spent their entire working life in the BCI (30 or more years of service); • 2 people worked for the BCI, changed their job, but have since returned to work for the BCI; • 2 people with over 10 years of service in the BCI, working in treatment; • 1 person who is not directly employed in treatment, but in professional education work; • 2 male educators who work for the BCI; • The Director of the BCI.

* The care and treatment work involves a total of 16 employees.

With the specific focus of the paper in mind, the following table provides a review of key characteristics of the educational status of girls participating in the research (Table 2).

Table 2. *Key Characteristics of the Educational Status of Girls Participating in the Research*

Educational status of the girls			
Primary school	***Secondary school***	***Vocational education programmes***	***Not in school***
12 Some of the girls attend regular primary schools in the town where the institution is located, while others take exams without attending school.	**2** One girl is attending a vocational programme in sales, while the other one is trained to become a hairdresser. While conducting this research, one of them was expelled from school for having too many failing marks and stealing during internship. The aforementioned girl has subsequently been restricted from residence and treatment in the correctional institution.	**9** Special educational programmes in the institution which provide schooling for auxiliary jobs: junior chef, waiter and tailor.	**2** The reason for not attending school is the "inability to get involved in the education process".* One of the girls was placed in the correctional institution in the second half of the second educational period, and up to then had not started attending school. The other girl was not receiving education because of the inability to continue the commenced education in the pedicure technician programme, given the fact that no schools in the vicinity of the correctional institution offer the aforementioned programme.

* According to data from beneficiaries' personal records.

In this context, it is important to mention the placement process itself, which often takes a few months, and in which the intervention itself slows down the education process (e.g. not attending school while waiting for placement order). Moreover, it has an adverse effect on the possibilities of opting for the desired secondary education. These types of situations may increase the distance from school and obligations, and cause further educational deficits, and prolong the duration of schooling.

Data Collection Method

The data was collected using the semi-structured interview method. The interviews were recorded and afterwards transcribed word for word. The interviews with girls were conducted following the Ethical Code of Research Involving Children (2003).

Data Processing Methods

In data processing, qualitative text analysis was applied, the purpose of which is to summarize, structure, comprehend and interpret the empirical contents obtained in the process of collecting information. Specifically, in the research that is the subject of this paper, the qualitative analysis process was conducted in the following ways: first, reading the interview transcript and selecting those parts of the text (coding units) that refer to schooling; second, ascribing codes to the selected text units; third, connecting codes into more abstract (superior) categories; fourth, interpreting the data regarding the categories.

In the final step of information interpretation, a logical model (matrix) was offered to facilitate understanding the results. The results representation matrix was formed primarily based on the time dimension, which was recognized in interviews with the girls and the experts. For instance, both groups of participants talked about the past (the course of schooling before placement in the correctional institution), the present (schooling in the correctional institution) and the future (plans and hopes regarding schooling).

The information was processed separately for the two groups of participants, in order to obtain specific insight into both perspectives. In the final interpretation of information, the two perspectives were considered and interpreted altogether.

Results

The results will be given separately with regard to individual perspectives, i.e. groups of participants or more specifically in relation to the categories. The research participants' original quotes[3] will be given in order to support the results.

The Young Females' Perspective on Education

WHAT DO THE GIRLS SAY?		
PAST	**PRESENT**	**FUTURE**
School as part of wider problems	Different experiences with education in the correctional institution	Education as part of plans for the future
Problems in school		
Lack of motivation and willingness to go to school	The importance of school for the future	
Rejection and feeling of isolation in school		

Figure 1. The Young Females' Perspective

3 The categories have been marked in **bold letters**, while direct quotes of the research participants have been marked in *italics*.

Within the girls' perspective, seven separate categories have been individuated. These can be seen in relation to the following time dimensions: the past (four categories), the present (two categories) and the future (one category) (Figure 1).

The girls discuss school and schooling in the **past**, i.e. before placement into the correctional institution, using following categories: school as part of the problem, problems in school, lack of motivation and willingness to go to school, rejection and feeling isolated in school.

When discussing their lives before placement into the correctional institution, and problems that led to the placement, the girls mention **school as part of wider problems.** In addition to problems such as running away from home, fights with parents, alcohol abuse, associating with antisocial peers and committing offences, there are always accounts of problems in the school environment (*Then as if the devil had possessed me. I just, I started running away, not going to school at all. I got in with a bad crowd. I would go out and not come home for days*). More specifically, the girls discuss problems in school, such as bad (failing) marks, lack of discipline in class, aggression towards teachers and peers and skipping classes (*I didn't listen to the teacher; instead I would throw rubbers at my colleagues*). Some girls report good academic achievement when they were younger, i.e. mainly in the early stages of primary school. Some girls ascribe problems in school, i.e. the emergence of problems, to the peers that they were socializing with, and their own suggestibility to peers with risky behaviours (*Then there was this girl who liked to cut classes. Being somewhat suggestible as I am, you know, I started cutting classes with her, you know.*). In their reports about how problems in school began, the interesting thing is that fairly often the girls state that along with skipping school there were other risky behaviours, such as disobedience and fights with parents, running away from home, getting in with antisocial peers.

In the context of **problems in school**, descriptions of skipping school are especially individuated (*I went to school for the first two or three days, and then I didn't feel like it, and I always found a reason not to go to school.*), as well as descriptions of longer periods of absence from class (two months, a semester), while one girl mentions that she does not have the habit of going to school (*I'm not used to going to school. I'm used to skipping school.*). These longer periods of absence from school definitely have a negative impact on the education process, as well as the process of gaining knowledge and academic achievements. They also contribute to the lack of interest and motivation for school. Absence from school can finally result in withdrawing from the educational process, which can result in new risks for the girls.

The category entitled **lack of motivation and willingness to go to school** consists of statements of girls who primarily talk about not being willing to study or to be in class. The girls most often describe this using the following expression: *I didn't feel like it.* With the aforementioned problems in school and lack of motivation to study and be in class, the girls mention **rejection and feeling isolated in school**, which is manifested in negative labelling, isolation, feeling different and rejected by the peers (*Well, they knew me as a rebel, as a bully. You know, they thought badly of me; they would say mean things to me, attack me.*).

Two categories have been placed in the present dimension: different experiences of schooling in the correctional institution and the importance of education for the future.

The category that contains reports and experiences of girls about their **schooling in the correctional institution**, presents a continuum of **different experiences**: from very positive ones that report improved current academic achievement, as well as improved relationship with peers (*Great, everyone is really good, I mean when I first told them I lived in a correctional institution, you know, they didn't believe me, I mean no one sees me that way, as being that girl from the institution, but you know, as a normal, you know, as a normal girl. I have two or three best friends, and all the others are all right, I have a good relationship with most of them, but there are some that I don't have a good relationship with.*), to descriptions of dissatisfaction caused mainly by the (in)ability to attend the preferred school. Accordingly, one of the participants expresses dissatisfaction with relatively low requirements for students schooled in the institution (*I would offer more subjects because this is, I don't know, I feel like we're stupid because we're in a correctional institution, we don't have enough subjects. I'm used to... I went to both primary and secondary school...in secondary school I had around 15 or 16 subjects. This is too easy for me. I think I can do more than that.*). Some of the girls demonstrate indifference regarding education, i.e. they are focused on completing a certain level of education fast and without much effort (*I don't go to school on a regular basis, I just take exams. And, for example, it is good for me that I just take these exams now. It's easier. We are given study materials we use to study and then I just take the exam*).

When talking to the girls, **school** is clearly recognized as **important** in regard to their (positive) **future**. The girls are aware of the need to continue and complete education *(I have realized that without school you are nothing; Well, I have to finish my primary and secondary school so that one day I may find a nice normal job, have my own money, my own place, and so on.*). Some of the girls equate finishing school with leaving the correctional institution (*I have to spend*

a year here, I have to finish school. When I finish school, I'm going home.), and recognize the correctional institution as a supportive environment for finishing school (*I know that if I go home now, you know, I won't wake up in time for school, I'll cut classes. And here, I am at least certain that I'll go to school every morning, get up in time, come to my internship in time and not cut classes. And that's better for me.*).

The category **education as part of planning for the future** is a continuation of this category in the present dimension, where finishing school, i.e. completing a vocational programme, is seen as an important precondition for a good (normal) life: *Well, I don't want to be anything special, like famous or anything. I want a normal life. I want to finish school, have my own place, like for instance... I'll probably finish hairdressers' school so that maybe I'll work in a hair salon or something.*

The Experts' Perspective on the Girls' Education

After obtaining the girls' perspectives of the risks related to schooling, we were interested in what the experts say concerning girls' education.

WHAT DO THE EXPERTS SAY?		
PAST	**PRESENT**	**FUTURE**
School as part of wider problems	Treatment and possibilities	Concern for the girls' future
Phenomenology of behavioural problems		Wishes and suggestions for improvement

Figure 2. The Experts' Perspective

Within the experts' perspective, five separate categories have been recognized. These can be seen in relation to the following time dimensions: the past (two categories), the present (one category) and the future (two categories) (Figure 2).

The experts perceive school and schooling before placement into the correctional institution (in the past) as **part of the wider problems** that led to the placement in the institution. In the context of risks, among other risks factors, they regularly talk about schooling as both an important etiological risk factor for developing behavioural problems, as well as a manifested form of their behavioural problems with which they enter the institution.

Therefore, in addition to problems in education, experts also mention family problems and pathology (*Family is a disaster. When one reads their reports, one is amazed that these children behave the way they do. It is a heavy*

pathology.), problematic partnerships (*For them I guess that in that way they are trying to get the love they miss so I guess they probably think that through these relationships with guys they'll get, I don't know, some kind of emotional support or something like that. And actually they are just exploiting them, and after that they* [the girls] *are just frustrated, then they cut themselves, go nuts, run away…);* socialization with antisocial older people (*Very early start contacts with problematic persons which sneak them into the world of alcohol, too early sexual activity, promiscuity, experiments with drugs*). Some experts also mention genetic factors (*For many of them psychiatry intervenes. Heredity and genetics are important here.*)

When discussing girls' prior risk factors and behavioural problems, even the experts say it is difficult to distinguish what is the cause and what is the effect/consequence of the **behavioural problems phenomenon**, but they mostly talk about the family, combined with schooling as important risk factors (*Well, in principle: family…Family situation at home, neglecting and school abandoning, running away from home. But, I think that in the background of all is actually the family… Very few families actually function. Mostly they are divorced parents, single parents who cope with problems with great difficulty*).

In the context of the phenomenology of schooling problems, experts discuss the early recognition of problems, truancy and girls' educational deficits. Some experts mention that problems regarding school are early recognized (*They mainly start to be apparent very early in school*). However, it seems that although such problems are recognized early in school there is no adequate response, apparently because an adequate intervention is found for them relatively (too) late. In addition to the above, in the context of problematic school behaviours, the experts talk about their prior truancy and school drop-outs, and also about girls' large educational deficits (meaning discrepancy of educational and chronological age of girls).

The dimension of the present consists of a category entitled **treatment and possibilities**. The category contains data about girls' problems with and in school, education as a treatment field and inadequate way of schooling.

Experts related to the problems with school mainly talk about girls' lack of motivation for learning and school *(Bit of a problem is the fact they are integrated into regular classes now. So they go wild, don't attend, make a mess; we have a big problem with girls who are…the law says that 'til the age of 15 they must be included in the regular* [education] *system, and we have some* [girls] *who don't want to go to regular school…; We have 5-6 girls who are under 15 and who for the second time, meaning the third time are enrolling the same class. I think that is impossible; they don't like school, don't like learning, they avoid learning; they*

are simply not persistent. They don't have enough strength and energy to go…).

However, despite the above, all experts talk about schooling as an important area of treatment on which they work during the stay in the correctional institution (*And self-esteem I think we can only bring it back through knowledge and learning, which is a big problem for our girls. So, somehow I would say education and giving back the self-esteem, in addition to finishing school. Education should be essential, the first area should be education. Without an education – what can she do? Very few of them leave the correctional institution without some school finished – elementary or high school… So we do a lot regarding schooling because we share an opinion that the future is in schooling*).

Some experts perceive schooling (probably because it is the easiest way to see the girls' progress) as an important criterion for monitoring the treatment progress *(School is the most important criterion to monitor them*).

However, some of the experts are aware of the educational possibilities provided for the girls in institution, so in that sense they talk about inadequate way of schooling, that is education for unpopular and non-marketable professions (*Dressmakers… that is cheap work; it is hard to expect one could earn some money from that… There are Chinese shops on every corner with cheap cloth, so…; here we have that catering, and we have textile direction. That lasts for two years and nowadays that are unpopular professions especially for this type of children, but we cannot offer them anything else*).

Two categories have been placed in the future dimension: concern for the girls' future, and experts' wishes and suggestions for improvement.

The category entitled **concern for the future** is consists of the statements of experts who primarily talk about their worries what will the girl do in the future without education. The experts most often describe it using following statements: *I am worried about today or tomorrow when they leave this institution or another one after us… simply, their future worries me. I always think how they will manage without school, without working habits… Where this child will end up… their future… I think about that often… and that worries me. Where will our so-called unsuccessful cases end up?*

In addition to the above, some experts report girls' generally low-quality life path burdened with many difficulties after leaving the institution (*I think that 80%* [of the girls] *live very bad later. They become pregnant very early, get married, so marriage problems occur because they usually find equally problematic types. There is alcohol, unemployment, especially they don't finish any school. I think there is a lot, a lot problems*).

The category **wishes and suggestions** consists of statements regarding some new needs related to schooling and new types and forms of professions/

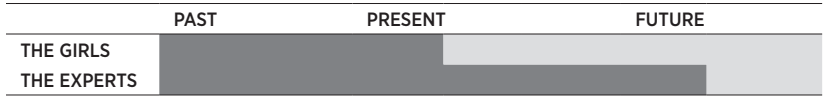
education (residential education/internal school, working cooperatives, fast and short-term trainings; trainings for florist or nurturer).

When talking about new needs related to schooling and education some experts mention internal school mainly because they have no mechanisms to "force" girls to attend regular schools (*Very big problems. We need an internal school. If we had one here, I think it would be different because they would be under control of experts. If needed, one would even sit with them during the class in order to stay calm and so they would be here; This* [going to mainstream school] *gives them an excuse to leave* [the institution] *and run away and make a mess down in the municipality and in the school. I think that internal school should exist so we could have them here together and work with them individually and things like that*).

In addition, when experts talk about new types and forms of professions/education, they mention several things. In that context, one expert talks about working cooperatives so the girls could learn how to work and in order to learn to respect the value of work (*We should have some form of working cooperatives so they could respect work more, in order to do something. Once they had garden and pigs they fed and that kind of stuff… what now? They have a negative attitude toward work: work is shameful. That should be changed… There should be something organized for them to work. Besides schooling and learning… to do something. To get to know the value of work and to respect work.*). When it comes to new forms and types of professions, some experts mention "*Some kind of fast trainings… So they could be educated in a short time… training for nurturer, florist or something like that… so the school does not last for three or four years, but to be fast so they could be quickly trained for some form of independent life*". In this regard one of the experts sums it: "*The institution should be equipped quite differently- from the choice of vocations to the content and staffs' level of education.*"

Discussion and conclusion

The results obtained in this research will finally be considered through the prism of both perspectives: that of the beneficiary and that of the expert, in relation to the time dimension and the risk and strength concept. Discussing results in the aforementioned way offers a possible logical frame of interpreting obtained information (Figure 3).



*__Index__: Dark grey: risks area, Light Grey: strengths area

Figure 3. A Logical Frame for Interpreting Results

Considering the two perspectives regarding the risks and strengths areas, it is evident that the girls are, in their reports, "more positive", or more positively directed than the experts with regard to their education. Among the girls, the risks can be most easily identified when they are talking about education in the past, when they point out numerous problems in school (and broader), lack of interest in school and feeling rejected and isolated. In the present, the girls' perspective on risks can be partially ascribed to dissatisfaction with schooling options in the correctional institution and the indifference in putting effort into education. In girls' experiences, schooling can be perceived as a strength, and even more as an opportunity, primarily in relation to their positive outlook and the awareness of the importance of school for success in life. This strength is even more accentuated in orienting towards the future, where completing (and continuing) education is seen as an important element of good (desirable, in their opinion) life.

In contrast, the experts' perspective is more negative; they are mostly oriented towards risks recognized in the past and the present, as well as in the future. Their ideas about risks in the past is conditioned by the experience of school problems as elements in the aetiology of behavioural problems, educational deficits, as well as skipping and switching schools. The experts state numerous problems in the current education of girls, which may indicate a lack of insight in the girls themselves in relation to their current situation, but also to the lack of recognition of positive trends by the experts. As regards risks in the present dimension, the experts recognize inadequate options for educating the girls according to their preferences, as well as market positions of the occupations offered to them. Educating the girls for occupations that do not provide fast and easy employment (often unstable employment), such as different auxiliary occupations, certainly presents a great social risk. Not even in relation to the future do the experts share the positive outlook of the girls. They express concern for the girls' future, precisely regarding problems in relation to education. Where the girls show vision and ambition, the experts show only concern. It is expected that the experts' concerns are based on their experience so far, not only with these girls, but with many generations before them, and also the fact that they witnessed what happens when girls do not obtain adequate education.

It is vital to emphasize the fact that the experts' perspective is not completely "dark"; on the contrary, when they talk about the future, the experts mention new strengths and opportunities in the form of creating new educational opportunities and programmes, as well as internal schools within the correctional institution, which are considered to be very useful in motivating and supporting the girls in persisting and succeeding in their education.

Based on the presented results and the comparison of perspectives using the logical model, we are presented with a few possible conclusions, or (better yet) with a few new questions:

- *How does the presented educational process of the girls in the correctional institution contribute to their social inclusion (or exclusion)?*

As we have already said in the introduction, education and exclusion from the labour market are important dimensions of the social exclusion phenomenon. Therefore, one's employment could be seen as the precondition of his/her inclusion. In that regard, education is the key mechanism of social inclusion. This qualitative analysis showed that the area of education is (among other problems) an important risk factor for girls in the correctional institution. Nevertheless, schooling and education are important treatment fields of work, which can be (or must be) used in order to decrease the vulnerability to social exclusion of girls leaving the correctional institution. The reason the risk of social exclusion of these girls is even higher lies in the fact that in this research we have identified that many more different risk factors exist in addition to educational problems. These risk factors are related to the girls' families (growing up in incomplete families with low socio-economic status, low parental educational status, unemployment of parents), social environment (risks in local community, risks related to peers and company), or to the characteristics and behaviours of girls themselves (low educational aspirations, behavioural problems).

- *What are the possibilities of intervention into the educational process for girls with behavioural problems?*

The possibilities of interventions will be dealt with on two levels: general (social) and specific (individual). On the social level, it would be useful to start initiatives for opening new educational opportunities in correctional institutions for girls, primarily by offering a wider selection of vocations that would be more in line with the needs of the job market, as well as the girls' interests. Moreover, it seems important to once again consider opening internal schools within correctional institutions that would provide ways (methods, techniques) and contents of teaching suitable for the girls (their cognitive, behavioural etc. characteristics). Bearing in mind the fact that starting internal schools may to

an extent decrease the inclusion of girls into the regular life of the community and that normalization is a goal of modern treatment, we nonetheless find that internal schooling can have positive outcomes for some of the girls, at least in a certain period when they are adapting to the institution or in the period when their behavioural problems are intensified.

Regarding the girls themselves, especially taking into account what we have heard from them in this research about the importance of school, the treatment programmes should, among other things, focus on: motivation and persistence in attending school, motivation and persistence in learning, help in studies and managing school assignments, strengthening the positive image about the importance of education, i.e. strengthening the direction towards goals which the girls already perceive in a positive way.

- *What has been left unexplored in the girls' perspective, i.e. what should be additionally explored?*

The results obtained in this research, in line with other research thus far, indicate schooling as a risk factor. Findings from the literature have been confirmed through perspectives of both the girls and the experts. The girls' perspective offers viewpoints in which the girls state the importance of school in their lives, and especially in their future lives. Judging by the answers of the girls participating in this research, it is possible to understand what had deterred them from school. However, a major question remains about what are the things that could have kept them in school and what kind of school would have been able to satisfy their needs in those crucial moments in life when they mostly decided to skip classes and (or) to quit school.

References

Asenjo, E. A. et al. (2006) *Neumreženi-lica socijalne isključenosti u Hrvatskoj*. Zagreb: UNDP.

Bloom, B. E., & Covington, S. S. (2001). Effective Gender-Responsive Interventions in Juvenile Justice: Addressing the Lives of Delinquent Girls. Paper presented at the 2001 *Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology Atlanta*, Georgia. November 7-10. Retreived 8 February 2010, from www.centerforgenderandjustice.org/pdf/7.pdf

Böhnke, P. (2001). *Nothing Left to Lose? Poverty and Social Exclusion in Comparison.* Empirical Evidence on Germany. Berlin: Social Science Research Center.

Burchardt, T., Le Grand, J., & Piachaud, D. (2002). Introduction. In T. Burchardt, J. Le Grand, & D. Piachaud (Eds.), *Understanding Social Exclusion.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chesney-Lind, M., & Irwin, K. (2008). *Beyond Bad Girls - Gender, Violence and Hype.* New York, London: Routledge, Taylor&Francis Group.

Chesney-Lind, M., & Shelden, R. G. (2004). *Girls, Delinquency and Juvenile Justice* (third edition).

Wadsworth: Thomson.

Ethical Code of Research Involving Children (2003). Zagreb: Croatian Government Council for children. State Agency for protection of family, motherhood and youth.

Gallie, D., & Paugam, S. (2004). Unemployment, Poverty, and Social isolation: An Assessment of the Current State of Social Exclusion Theory. In D. Gallie (Ed.), *Resisting Marginalization: Unemployment Experience and Social Policy in the European Union*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kronauer, M. (1998). "Social Exclusion" and "Underclass" – New Concepts for the Analysis of Poverty. In H. J. Andress (Ed.), *Empirical Poverty Research in Comparative Perspective*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Kunz, J. (2003). Where Is Platform 9 ¾? Understanding Income Security and Social Exclusion, a presentation at the *CCSD/HRDC conference "Building a Social Inclusion Research Agenda"*, March 28.

Croatian Ombudsman's Annual Report (2012). Izvješće o radu pravobraniteljice za djecu za 2011. Retreived 5 June 2013 from https://www.google.hr/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCoQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.sabor.hr%2Ffgs.axd%3Fid%3D20495&ei=4rJ_UsbYL8el4AT2yoDoAg&usg=AFQjCNETnaDtgxeRpE__R-xkmv5saEJohA&sig2=hlqj75ts1dC53sfXoISH2g&bvm=bv.56146854,d.bGE

Patton, M. Q. (2002). Two Decades of Developments in Qualitative Inquiry: A Personal, Experiential Perspective. *Qualitative Social Work, 1*(3), 261–283.

Poggi, A. (2003). *Does Persistence of Social Exclusion Exist in Spain*. Barcelona: Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona, Department of Applied Economics.

Rapuš-Pavel, J. (1999). *Samoprezentacija mladostnikove življenske lege – pomen aktivne participacije mladostnika v procesu socialnopedagoške diagnoze [Self presentation of juvenile's life position- meaning of the active participation of juveniles in process of social pedagogical diagnosis]*. Master thesis. Ljubljana: University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Pedagogy.

Šućur, Z. (2006). Siromaštvo višedimenzionalna deprivacija i socijalna isključenost u Hrvatskoj. *Revija za sociologiju, 37*(3–4), 131–147.

Šućur, Z., Matković, T., Štulhofer, A., Šverko, B., Bejaković, P., Papa, J., Pastuović, N., & Škegro, M. (2006). *Siromaštvo, nezaposlenost i socijalna isključenost*. Zagreb: UNDP.

UN. (1948). Declaration on Human Rights. Retreived 6 May 2013 from http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/

Ustav Republike Hrvatske (1990). Narodne novine, 56/90, 135/97, 8/98, 113/2000, 124/2000.

Wong, T., Slotboom, A., & Bijleveld, C. (2008). *Risk Factors of Girl Delinquency. How Are They Different from those of Boys?* European Society of Criminology.

Zahn, M. A. Hawkins, S. R., Chiancone, J., & Whitworth, A. (2008). *The Girls Study Group—Charting the Way to Delinquency Prevention for Girls*. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Žižak, A. Maurović, I., & Jeđud, I. (2010). Povezanost procjene rizika s osobnim, obiteljskim i drugim obilježjima maloljetnica, korisnica različitih tretmanskih programa [Relationship between assessed risk areas with individual, family and other characteristics of female minors from different treatment programs]. *Kriminologija i socijalna integracija* (*Criminology and Social Integration Journal*), *18*(2), 29–44.

Biographical note

Ivana Jeđud Borić, Ph.D, Assistant Professor, University of Zagreb, Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences. Main scientific interests are in the field of children and youth in in out-of-home care, participatory child's rights and mentoring. In the last 5 years she participated in four scientific projects: Participation of Children and Youth in Assessment Process, Matching Interventions with Needs of Children at Risks: creating a model, Foster Care from Perspective of Foster Children, Conducting Intensified Care and Supervision in Croatia: Perspectives of Juvenile Offenders and Measure Leaders.

Anja Mirosavljević, Research Assistant, University of Zagreb, Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences; PhD student at Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb (Department for Social work). Dissertation title: Out-of-court settlement: perspective of victims and youth in conflict with the law. Main scientific interests are in the field of restorative justice, assessment of children and youth with behavioural problems, aftercare of youth at risk and looked-after children. In the last 5 years she participated in three scientific projects: Matching Interventions with Needs of Children at Risks: creating a model, Foster Care from Perspective of Foster Children, Conducting Intensified Care and Supervision in Croatia: Perspectives of Juvenile Offenders and Measure Leaders.

Simola, Hannu (2014). The Finnish Education Mystery. London and New York: Routledge, 308 pp. ISBN 978-041-581-258-0.

Reviewed by Slavko Gaber[1]

Hannu Simola, author of *The Finnish Education Mystery* (with the subtitle Historical and Sociological Essays on Schooling) is the best-known Finnish *sociologist of education* of the middle generation[2] and an influential sociologist of education beyond the borders of Europe as well.

His new book[3] brings an inspiring and different approach to the topic of the already extensively thematised (and recently also troubled) success of education in Finland.

In the eyes of educational thinkers and policymakers in Finland, Simola is an "agent provocateur", a kind of "enfant terrible" reflecting on their work. Anyone following the mainstream articles and books discussing Finnish *success in education* will soon realise where these qualifications lead.

The anthology, parts of which we present here, is *about Finnish basic education*, "about the pursuits and coincidences, contradictions and paradoxes that have constructed it as it appears nowadays: a celebrated case in the global education policy space, created by international rankings, primarily the PISA studies" (Simola, 2014, p. xii).

Although numerous delegations of policymakers and experts[4] have visited Finnish authorities, schools and communities to learn about the drivers

1 CEPS, Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

2 "Hannu Simola's research area could be characterised as sociology and the politics of education. His research interest has been moving from the socio-historical construction of schooling and teaching towards education policy and politics, focusing especially on the effects of quality assurance and evaluation (QAE) as a new technology of governance in education. Recently he is becoming more and more fascinated with problems of education policy transfer, i.e. questions such as how the trans-national meets the national and the local in policy and politics of education." (http://www.mv.helsinki.fi/home/hsimola/)

3 Simola is known to readers outside his native Finland in particular through his articles "The Finnish miracle of PISA: historical and sociological remarks on teaching and teacher education", *Comparative Education*, Vol. 41, Issue 4, 2005, pp. 455-470 and "Abdication of the Education State or Just Shifting Responsibilities? The appearance of a new system of reason in constructing educational governance and social exclusion/inclusion in Finland", *Scandinavian Journal of Education*, Vol. 46, Issue 2, pp. 247-264, and also as co-author and editor of books such as *Fabricating Quality in Education: Data and Governance in Europe* edited by Jenny Ozga, Peter Dahler-Larsen, Christina Segerholm and Hannu Simola.

4 In 2006, one such group of experts also came from Slovenia, and after careful examination wrote a book entitled *Zakaj Finci letijo dlje (Why Finns Fly Further?)*.

of excellence in education, and despite the many books discussing the topic, Simola argues that it is still worth studying the "Finnish case". His claim highlights the fact that its explanatory potential is not only related to the *study of a curiosity from the north,* but rather to considering it as an example of a possible approach to education as an agency adding to the opportunities for decent life trajectories in contemporary societies. Although Finland is, in terms of population, a small country, Simola suggests five reasons why it is still worth studying: 1) its size; 2) its cultural mix; 3) the fact that it goes against the flow; 4) it is part of the broader Nordic WS project; and 5) it is possible to study it "as an accelerated, compressed example of the global process of mass schooling (…). Finland is among the European nations that have very recently left behind their agrarian society and lifestyle" (ibid.). In addition, it is very likely that a number of other countries have either travelled or will travel through similar trajectories.

The structure and titles of the four sections of the book and its twelve chapters are telling in themselves, and provide the reader with an enticing invitation to read: I. Education policy-making and governance: struggling between egalitarianism and market liberalism; II. Teachers and their education: paradoxes in a successful professionalization project; III. Schooling practices: a peculiar marriage of the traditional and the progressive; IV. Understanding the Finnish PISA miracle: decent work ethics, reasonable leadership and lucky constellations; followed by the *Aftermath*.

Indeed, I believe that readers will not be disappointed. They are likely to remain with the author for some time, and to return to him often during their own research in education, particularly if their area of research is comparative education and conceptualisations of contemporary shifts in rationalities of education and its agents.

If we continue our selective snapshots of *The Finnish Education Mystery* with the first chapter – *Firmly bolted into the air (wishful rationalism as a discursive basis for educational reforms?)* – we are immediately in the realm of one of the author's thought-provoking theses. Simola is convinced that reforms do not usually bring improvements in education; as he puts it in another chapter of the book: "We do know (…) that we should ask how schools change the reforms rather than the reverse. The reforms change the school, indeed, but rarely in the intended direction" (p. 157). So-called contextualisation (cf. Bernstein, 1975, 2003) is a concept to which the author frequently returns throughout the book; in particular, it is methodologically intertwined with the concept of contingency (Joas) as one of the regulative ideas of the author's research.

However, the first chapter is primarily about "*discursive dynamics*" or the "ways we speak about school reforms" (Simola, 2014, p. 4). Identifying four

discursive changes in official school discourse after the Second World War, Simola presents the paradoxes of educational reforms in general. He relates the first change in school discourse to the shift of school life from groups of pupils to individual learning needs, even to the personalisation of learning. The second change is related to "the knowledge base of teaching", and is a change from content-focused curricula to didactically oriented sciences as the focus of education sciences. In addition to these shifts, the value-rational orientation of discourse has changed to goal rationalisation. In order to establish their credibility, all three of these changes require the fourth change, which the author believes is evident throughout education, from the development of teacher education to the positioning of different subjects within higher education curricula (cf. ibid., 122-127, Chapter 6), namely: the *decontextualisation of education* and *didactic closure*. From these fours characteristics, a common *wishful rationalism* emerges. This is rationalism in which individualisation and disciplinisation "could be seen as forming the utopian part of the discourse, whereas goal rationalization and decontextualization comprise the rational part" (ibid., p. 19). In combination, they present the locus of struggle in the field of education "where reform discourse *per se* has become symbolic capital (…)" (ibid., p. 17).

Chapter 2 reflects on *"Abdication of the education state?"* (ibid., p. 27) and examines changes in education related to its function as a mechanism for inclusion and exclusion in times of *neoliberal reason* as the dominant reason. Simola reflects on education practices in times of the growing influence of the market mechanism in the field of public education as well. According to him, the shift towards *new reason* in Finland took place during the crises of the 1990s, when Finnish education, especially comprehensive schooling and vocational education, decreased by 13 and 20 percent (cf. ibid., p. 29). In combination with cuts in the domains of health and social security, this represented a reconstruction of the welfare state. Just how influential the shift in the prevailing type of rationality actually was is demonstrated by the fact that the interviewees who took part in the research that provided the material for the analyses presented in this chapter "were ready to admit (…) that the reform with its markers: decentralisation, individualization, freedom of choice; personalization, quality assurance, etc., had been carried out with surprisingly extensive political consensus and a feeling that there was no real alternative" (p. 29). In fact, as in many countries around Europe in the 1990s or in the years after 2008, the new rationality (neoliberalism) successfully introduced the new-speak of (Bourdieu, 2001) "the renaissance of individualism, autonomy, freedom of choice etc.". While pointing out that he is not "claiming that the Finnish Government has abdicated responsibility for education in general" (p. 42), Simola explicitly states that "some parts

of education seem to be in danger in a similar way as remote post offices, small schools and unprofitable sleeping cars on Finnish railways"(ibid.). The reason for such danger is simple: parts of education are not "viable when evaluated by simple economic indicators such as effectiveness, efficiency and profitability, and they must go" (ibid.) In this "new kind of rationality", the unconstrained logic of the market "seems reasonable, whereas demands for citizens' rights in education are inconceivable"(ibid., pp. 42-43).

Chapter 3 focuses on a *Finnish rarity* in basic education on the global scene: no inspecting, no testing and no ranking.

These are precisely the kind of rarities of Finnish education to which authors from Finland (cf. Sahlberg, 2011) often direct our attention. In the 1970s, Finland was alone in the world in this respect. Simola is rare among the authors presenting teacher education as a social field and as "a multidimensional space of positions and relationships in which expert discourse, and thereby also the serious and authoritative way of thinking and acting, are produced, reproduced and transformed"(ibid., p. xvi). What is different in Simola's account is thus not the aforementioned fact concerning early inauguration, but rather his analysis of the internal struggles in the newly established university field in Finland. In Bourdieuan fashion, he discusses how this "new science of teacher education tends to isolate itself from its academic neighbours to create a genuine and legitimate scientific base for the teaching profession", examining the extent to which, in positioning themselves in the academic milieu, the didactics of different disciplines prevailed and the degree to which such a hegemony decontextualisation of education grew in parallel with better positioned teacher education institutions. Simola also critically writes that, rooted in the tradition of the place, "(…) educational research in Finland has been positivist in its methodology, but at the same time seems to have been normative in terms of commitment to the values of the official policy. One might say that the research is a product of two different traditions, the old German 'state ethics' that has been influential since the nineteenth century, and the Anglo-American empirical research that came to the fore after the Second World War. The former tradition produced the uncritical loyalty to the state of Finnish intellectuals, and the latter tended not to question it" (ibid., p. 84).

In Chapter 10, which Simola singles out as his "most frequently cited article", he provides the socio-historical background of the success story. "As befits the field of education, the explanations referring especially to the excellent teachers and high-quality teacher education. Without underrating the explanatory power of these statements, this contribution presents some of the social, cultural and historical factors behind the pedagogical success of *Peruskoulu*" (p. xviii).

Aftermath, the concluding chapter of the book, is a kind of *reopening of the reflections and considerations* of education not only in Finland but further afield, providing insights into the present and likely future research of Hannu Simola and his group in Helsinki. There are several topics particularly worthy of mention:

1. The dynamics of policymaking as an important research axis in education research due to the "fluid and mobile nature of the subject" (p. 274).
2. A plea for a "strong and ambitious theory-based framework with the potential to incorporate the socio-historical complexity, relationality and contingency of the research" (ibid., p. 274), in order to be able to "reach the level of political importance" (ibid.) of comparative education, which too often stops at the level of "merely listing the similarities and differences" (ibid.). This plea is of particular significance as it comes from a researcher with broad theoretical insights and the ability to combine them with extensive empirical research, emerging in times of the widespread neglect of the importance of conceptualisations and omission of the potential of the combination of theoretical and empirical approach to education, even when deciding upon education policy studies and reforms.
3. He again returns to the central feature of Finnish education: the relation between equality and equity as an element of dynamics that, in the decades covered by the book, "spiralled between the social-democratic-agrarian tradition of equality and the market-liberal equity that emerged in the late 1980s in Finland" (p. 276). In the interaction of the two, "embedded egalitarianism" buffered "against the travelling policies of market liberalism" (cf. ibid., p. 276), and, in a certain respect, enabled the system to travel against the flow.

Let us conclude our invitation to reading with the words of Hannu Simola: in order to capture the complexity of the "movements, elements and powers, that run the system" (p. 279) we must at least take into account:

- dynamics related to the specific socio-historical context of the country (place) we are considering, and even decide to try to change them for better;
- dynamics initiated by the "more or less conscious activity of institutional actors"(ibid., p. 279), and
- "(…) tensions, paradoxes, contradictions, dispersions, discontinuation, irregularities and accidents that create the very Spielraum for the actors" (ibid., p. 279) in education.

In his book *The Finnish Education Mystery*, Simola comes as close as possible to the standards he himself conceptualises as standards for studies engaged in education policy studies.

Resources

Bernstein, B. (1975). *Class, Codes and Control I*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Bernstein, B. (2003). *Class, Codes and Control IV*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. (2001). NewLiberalSpeak. *Radical Philosophy*, January/February. Retrieved 10 March 2015 from http://loicwacquant.net/assets/Papers/NEOLIBERALNEWSPEAK.pdf

Gaber, S. et al. (2006). *Zakaj Finci letijo dlje?* Nova Gorica: Educa.

Sahlberg, P. (2011). *Finnish lessons*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Simola, H. et al. (2014). *The Finnish Education Mystery.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Simola, H. et al. (2009). Quality assurance and evaluation (QAE) in Finnish compulsory schooling: a national model or just unintended effects of radical decentralisation? *Journal of Education* Policy, *24*(2), 163–178.

Simola, H. (2005). The Finnish miracle of PISA: historical and sociological remarks on teaching and teacher education. *Comparative Education, 41*(4), 455–470. Retrieved 10 March 2015 from http://www.mv.helsinki.fi/home/hsimola/

Instructions for Authors for publishing in CEPS Journal (www.cepsj.si – instructions)

Submissions

Manuscript should be from 5,000 to 7,000 words long, including abstract and reference list. Manuscript should be not more than 20 pages in length, and should be original and unpublished work not currently under review by another journal or publisher.

Review Process

Manuscripts are reviewed initially by the Editors and only those meeting the aims and scope of the journal will be sent for blind review. Each manuscript is reviewed by at least two referees. All manuscripts are reviewed as rapidly as possible, but the review process usually takes at least 3 months. The CEPS Journal has a fully e-mail based review system. All submissions should be made by e-mail to: editors@cepsj.si.

For more information visit our web page www.cepsj.si.

Abstracting and indexation

Scopus | EBSCO - Education Source Publications | Cooperative Online Bibliographic System and Services (COBISS) | Digital Library of Slovenia - dLib | DOAJ - Directory for Open Access Journals | Academic Journals Database | Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek EZB (Electronic Journals Library) | Base-Search | DRJI - The Directory of Research Journal Indexing | GSU - Georgia State University Library | MLibrary - University of Michigan | NewJour | NYU Libraries | OhioLINK | Open Access Journals Search Engine (OAJSE) | peDOCS: open access to educational science literature | ResearchBib | Scirus | Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory; New Providence, USA

Annual Subscription (4 issues). Individuals 45 €; Institutions 90 €. Order by e-mail: **info@cepsj.si**; postal address: CEPS Journal, Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana, Kardeljeva ploščad 16, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Online edition at **www.cepsj.si**.

Navodila za avtorje prispevkov v reviji (www.cepsj.si – navodila)

Prispevek

Prispevek lahko obsega od 5.000 do 7.000 besed, vključno s povzetkom in viri. Ne sme biti daljši od 20 strani, mora biti izvirno, še ne objavljeno delo, ki ni v recenzijskem postopku pri drugi reviji ali založniku.

Recenzijski postopek

Prispevki, ki na podlagi presoje urednikov ustrezajo ciljem in namenu revije, gredo v postopek anonimnega recenziranja. Vsak prispevek recenzirata najmanj dva recenzenta. Recenzije so pridobljene, kolikor hitro je mogoče, a postopek lahko traja do 3 mesece. Revija vodi recenzijski postopek preko elektronske pošte. Prispevek pošljite po elektronski pošti na naslov: editors@cepsj.si.

Več informacij lahko preberete na spletni strani www.cepsj.si.

Povzetki in indeksiranje

Scopus | EBSCO - Education Source Publications | Cooperative Online Bibliographic System and Services (COBISS) | Digital Library of Slovenia - dLib | DOAJ - Directory for Open Access Journals | Academic Journals Database | Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek EZB (Electronic Journals Library) | Base-Search | DRJI - The Directory of Research Journal Indexing | GSU - Georgia State University Library | MLibrary - University of Michigan | NewJour | NYU Libraries | OhioLINK | Open Access Journals Search Engine (OAJSE) | peDOCS: open access to educational science literature | ResearchBib | Scirus | Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory; New Providence, USA

Letna naročnina (4 številke). Posamezniki 45 €; pravne osebe 90 €. Naročila po e-pošti: **info@cepsj.si**; pošti: Revija CEPS, Pedagoška fakulteta, Univerza v Ljubljani, Kardeljeva ploščad 16, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Spletna izdaja na **www.cepsj.si**.

University of Ljubljana
Faculty of Education

CONTENTS

C·E·P·S Journal

Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal

Revija Centra za študij edukacijskih strategij

Vol.5 | No1 | Year 2015

www.cepsj.si

ISSN 1855-9719