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Editorial: Various (in)stances of educational research

Pedagogická orientace/Journal of the Czech Pedagogical Society is proud to present its second English issue. Throughout the year 2014, five Czech issues were published, introducing both original research from the Czech Republic, and theoretical studies and review papers. This issue is no exception. It comprises one theoretical paper (Hábl), one review paper (Tůma), three empirical papers (Hanušová et al.; Dvořák, Starý and Urbánek; Brady and Bates), and one discussion paper (Menck). Let us now look at the stance they adopt and the area they focus on.

The first article adopts a rather exploratory and descriptive approach. Hanušová and her colleagues focus on expert teachers and set out to better understand what it is that helped them on their journey towards expertise. The paper presents its findings with no intention to challenge the current teacher education, conditions at schools, or the government policy regarding teachers' careers, even though they have the potential to inform all of these areas.

It is this "neutral" stance that distinguishes the first study from the rest of the papers, all of which (in different manifestations) criticize, contest, or more or less explicitly challenge the state of the art in various fields of human existence. Tůma, for example, turns his attention towards his fellow researchers and analyses their efforts to investigate classroom interaction. However, he does not aim to synthesize or integrate the results. After a careful study, he puts not only their findings, but also the theoretical background of their research and their methods under scrutiny. His paper dissects what the studies can tell us about classroom interaction, and discusses the usefulness and comprehensiveness of the findings from the point of view of a different paradigm, namely dialogism. A similar stance is taken by Menck, who confronts the authors of the TIMSS studies. Again, both the methods used and the theoretical assumptions behind the TIMSS research design and interpretation of findings are contested and reframed, using a proposed theory of classroom.

Unlike Tůma's and Menck's papers that target and contest the research itself, the next three papers deal with phenomena in the area of education. Both Brady and Bates, and Dvořák and colleagues use their empirical findings to comment on current issues in education and educational policy. Brady and

Bates study the impact of marketization on the realisation of undergraduate (business) studies in England. They make use of Bernstein's concept of recontextualisation and draw attention to the unintended consequences of the current (neoliberal) discourse. Dvořák, Starý and Urbánek use the data from school case studies to describe the effects of the combination of high autonomy and low accountability of schools that is the current practice in the Czech Republic. They discuss their results also in the light of the pros and cons of high stake testing, which is not implemented in our context, but seems to be often discussed, planned, abandoned, and revisited. Last but not least, Hábl tackles the issue of moral education. In his paper he does not criticize; from a philosophical point of view he analyses the nature of human beings as moral beings, the nature of moral reality, and the specific nature of the postmodern situation. He then goes on to synthesize these analyses into an argument for traditional moral realism and for the need of moral education.

It can be argued that academic journals are not a platform only for original empirical research, but also for papers analysing, synthesizing, dissecting, criticizing, reframing, and rejecting previous studies and their findings. Without these, there would be a danger that research as such would remain fragmentised and that researchers would not be challenged to defend (or abandon) their set ways. However, it remains to be seen whether all these (in)stances of educational research can stand the test of time and scrutiny of the fellow researchers.

Eva Minaříková

Subjective determinants of the development of foreign language teacher expertise [1]

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Abstract: The paper presents partial results of a research project dealing with the nature of expertise of foreign language teachers. Whereas the first two phases of the project focused on expert teacher's performance, knowledge base and insight from a synchronous perspective, the third phase of the research was diachronically oriented and was aimed at identifying both subjective and objective determinants of the development of teacher expertise. In the current paper we present the results concerning subjective determinants of their professional development. The data were collected in narrative interviews with 8 teachers of English or German at Czech lower secondary schools. The following categories were induced through open coding of verbal protocols: the teacher's self-knowledge, their intrinsic motivation, value system, job satisfaction, openness to change and coping with the demands of the profession. The results contribute to understanding of the processes of developing and maintaining expertise and to understanding of the needs of teachers and the development of the supporting processes of their professional development.

Keywords: professional development, foreign language teacher, narrative interview, teacher expertise, subjective determinants

The tradition of exploring outstanding performance in various domains of human activities is reasonably long and it can be stated that in recent decades it has gone through a dynamic development. Research into expertise is now being conducted in teaching, both at the general level and in the context of individual subcultures of the teaching profession. It is based on research

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into expertise in other domains, on the theory of expertise as a phenomenon exlusively linked to professions (Bromme & Tillema, 1995, p. 264), and also on theory and research on teachers and teaching.

The current trends in teacher research and theory include (1) the conception of teaching as reflective practice, (2) the conception of evidence-based teaching and (3) the conception of knowledge-based teaching (for more information see Píšová et al., 2011, p. 43).

In parallel with the above approaches in teacher research, in which expertise is understood rather as a state, in the last few decades research focusing on the development process of expertise in teachers and the factors that influence this process has been carried out. In the area of teacher professional development it is possible to trace two different methodological approaches which Chi (2006, pp. 21–23) refers to as the absolute and the relative approaches, namely: (1) research which depicts individually selected aspects or rather phases of teacher professional development (e.g. Tsui, 2003) and (2) comparative studies deploying a relative approach, i.e. studies aimed at comparing teachers at different stages in their developmental trajectories, mostly novices and expert teachers (e.g. Joyce & Showers, 2002; Kyriakides, Creemers, & Antoniou, 2009), but also (narrative) biographical studies of one's own professional development (e.g. Bullough, 2008). The research presented in this paper was conceived in the spirit of an absolute approach, focusing on the expert stage of the professional development of teachers only.

In the last stage of our long-term research project aimed at the nature of foreign language teacher expertise, we analyzed the determinants of the processes of expertise development and maintenance in teachers of English and German as foreign languages at Czech lower secondary schools. We focused on variables that do not concern only the personality and individual characteristics of teachers, but also on selected variables related to the institutional and socio-cultural context of their work. In this sense, we followed on the study carried out by Fessler and Christensen (1992), Huberman (1993), Kelchtermans and Vandernberghe (1993), and Day et al. (2007). For the purpose of analysis of the determinants of professional development of foreign language teachers and their journeys to reaching and maintaining expertise, we used Pařízek's conceptualization and terminology (1994, pp. 61–67), i.e. the division of the subjective and objective determinants of career development. Whereas objective determinants are external factors which directly influence the teacher, their performance, attitudes to the

profession and their professional career (such as the economic, political and cultural environment, including the broader social community in which the teacher operates, pre-service and continuing teacher education, family/ personal life conditions, or school as an institution), subjective determinants are internal factors directly related the the individuality of the teacher. Although our research dealt with both types of determinants, in this study we will present only the results relating to the subjective ones.

1 Subjective determinants of professional development

The subjective determinants of the development of expertise are considered to be a complex dynamic set of interacting factors that are directly related to a teacher, evolving over time and highly relevant to the professional development of teachers. The importance of these determinants is underlined by the fact that the professional development of teachers cannot be separated from their personal growth. Personal and professional development should be understood as one process that takes place in the continuity of the life of a teacher (Goodwin, 2005, p. 231). The theme of subjective determinants is studied more closely in Píšová et al. (2011).

Currently, complex models of personality, such as the so-called Big Five (emotional stability, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness to experience), are typically employed to analyze subjective determinants of teacher professional development (Barrick & Mount, 1991; similarly, current studies such as Jacob et al., 2009, etc.). A number of empirical studies deal with different aspects of teacher cognition (e.g. cognitive styles, Skehan, 2000; Sadler-Smith et al., 2000, etc.).

Attention is paid to the character and moral qualities of teachers (Sockett, 1993), however, the areas of the emotional, volitional, attitudinal and ethical aspects of the development of expertise have been explored to a lesser extent.

Emotions are closely linked with *self-system*, with the professional "self" of a teacher, which is currently perceived as multifaceted, i.e. as a hierarchical structure of the dynamics of the functioning and the procedural and structural interconnection of "self". Studies in teachers and teaching agree that teachers interpret and construct their experience and conception of the profession based on their knowledge of "self" (Kelchtermans, 1993), and that the way in which they perform their professional activities is closely tied to the events and experiences of their personal lives (Ball & Goodson, 1985).

The components of teacher professional "self", to which great attention is currently paid, include self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as beliefs about one's own ability to perform in specific situations. There are a number of instruments for measuring self-efficacy in teachers. One of the most widely used is the *Teacher Efficacy Scale* (Gibson & Dembo, 1984) that includes two dimensions: personal teaching efficacy (a teacher's expectation that they will be able to facilitate students' learning) and general teaching efficacy (the belief that external factors, especially the current institutional form of education, can positively influence students' learning).

Ross (1994, p. 382) claims that teacher efficacy is a key variable predicting teacher practice and student outcomes. He found out that the inexperienced teachers display a low level of personal self-efficacy and trust the educational system more than themselves. The experienced teachers showed a higher level of personal efficacy but less trust in the educational system. They believed that the success of the educational process is influenced by factors beyond school control.

In teacher research and theory the concept of professional identity is frequently brought up in relation to self-system (Day, 2004, p. 53). This is also examined in the context of professional development towards expertise: see Beijaard et al. (2000), who examined the development of the conception of identity amongst experienced secondary school teachers. They assumed that the teacher's perception of their identity has a significant impact on their self-efficacy and ability to cope with the demands of the profession and implement innovations in their practice. They identified differences between the perception of identity amongst teachers at the beginning of their career and after gaining some experience. Early in their careers, the identity of a large number of teachers was bound to their subject matter, while later most teachers viewed their identity as balanced in all three dimensions, namely in the subject matter expertise, in the didactical dimension (e.g. planning, realization and evaluation of the teaching process) and in pedagogical expertise (e.g. support of students' social, emotional and moral development). Only a minority perceived dominance in the didactical dimension. Identity anchored in expert mastery of their subject and of didactics occurred significantly more frequently than identity rooted in pedagogical expertise (Beijaard et al., 2000, pp. 756–758).

The process of teacher professional development and the shaping of their career paths are influenced by a number of other subjective factors. These include coping strategies (e.g. Sikes et al., 1985; Pollard, 1982; Woods, 1981), reflective potential of individuals (King & Kitchener, 1994), attribution, extent of professional autonomy, and others. Clement and Vandenberghe (2000, p. 87) also considered *job satisfaction* to be an important factor. *A sense of commitment and dedication to the profession* are generally considered to be the crucial core factors (Day, 2004).

2 Research: subjective determinants of the development of expertise among foreign language teachers

2.1 Research context

The presented study was part of a long-term research project *Expert Teacher: the nature of expertise and determinants of professional development (in foreign language teaching perspective*) focused on foreign language teachers' expertise as the highest measure of quality of their teaching performance. The research was designed as a multiple case study.

In the period from 2011 to 2013 we worked with 30 outstanding teachers of English and German, who taught at lower-secondary schools in the Czech Republic and who were initially recruited on the basis of social nominations, length of experience and professional qualifications. In the first and second stages of the research we looked at the expertise of teachers from a *synchronous* perspective: we focused first on directly observable features of expertise and later also on features unavailable to direct observation. Furthermore, we also used the method of stimulated recall to capture the teachers' thinking while teaching and about teaching. In the third and final stage the expertise of foreign language teachers was viewed *diachronically*, i.e. in terms of the development of a particular teacher.

The article presents partial results of the analysis of the data from this last stage, in which the aim was to analyze the factors that determined the processes of expertise development and maintenance.

The main research question for the third phase of our research into foreign language teacher expertise was: *What are the determinants for achieving and maintaining expertise among teachers of a foreign language?*

The search for answers to this research question included an analysis of the subjective and objective variables which affected the professional development of teachers and the achievement and maintenance of expertise. As mentioned above, only the findings related to subjective determinants are presented here.

2.2 Research methods and sample

The research sample consisted of 8 expert teachers of English (n = 6) and German (n = 2) at lower secondary schools in the Czech Republic (n_f = 6, n_m = 2), who were identified on the basis of the results of previous phases of this multiple case study. A choice was made from the initial sample (n = 30) of teachers who in earlier phases of the research project had shown most features of expert performance and thinking. To mark the teachers we used codes beginning with the letter T (= teacher). The numbers in the codes are in the range of 1 to 30, which corresponds to the code established in the first phase of the research even though only eight teachers were interviewed in the third phase (T6, T8, T11, T14, T21, T22, T27, T30).

The research phase was designed as qualitative. The instrument for data collection was in-depth interviews with narrative elements (the length of the interview was 30–45 min), followed by a phase of communicative validation and deepening insight into the life stories of the respondents through dialogic written form (e-mail communication with respondents). The process of data collection was based on the principles of biographical research (Marotzki, 2004; Roberts, 2002); within the analysis of the data a realist approach to biography was applied (Miller, 2000, pp. 96–98). The realist approach stems from grounded theory and involves the discovery and construction of concepts directly from the data. The view of the respondent per se is accepted, that is the assumption that the reality can be recognised through the account of the participant.

Mutual trust between the researcher and the respondent, which had been established during the meetings in the previous phases of the research, served as an advantage as it is one of the conditions necessary for the successful realization of biographical research. Before starting the interview, respondents were asked to think about so-called “chapters of the book of their professional life”:

> Please begin by thinking about your life as if it were a book or a novel. Imagine that the book has a table of contents containing the titles of the main chapters in the story. To begin here, please describe very briefly what the main chapters in the book might be. Please, give each chapter a title, tell me just a little bit about what each chapter is about, and say a word or two about how we get from one chapter to the next. As a storyteller here, what you want to do is to give me an overall plot summary of your story, going chapter by chapter. You may have as many chapters as you want, but I would suggest having between about two and seven of them. (McAdams, 2007, unpaged)

The researchers did not intervene in the narration, they simply encouraged the respondent with standard probes if necessary.

With the consent of the respondents, the interviews were audio recorded, transcribed and then subjected to content analysis. An idea unit represented the unit of analysis for coding.

Regarding subjective determinants of achieving and maintaining expertise, during the pilot phase of the analysis we attempted to analyse against a roughly-grained system of categories derived from theory, however, it proved to be impossible to capture the complex set of interacting subjective determinants in this way. Therefore the idea units related to the subjective determinants of teacher professional development were firstly collected under the "assembly code" (SD) and then analyzed inductively. As regards data processing, after this initial marking and cutting of text all the identified quotes were sorted. As the aim of the analysis was to uncover all the factors that the teachers brought up in relation to their professional trajectories, all the identified idea units were included into the sorting, which then involved arranging the quotes into piles of things that go together. There are many variations on this technique. Lincoln and Guba (1985, pp. 347–351) offered a detailed description of the cutting and sorting technique with the method of constant comparison which is much like the pile-sorting task used extensively in cognitive research. Ryan and Bernard (2003, pp. 95–97) present further variations which mostly aim at increasing the trustworthiness of the results, for example sorting the piles by two independent researchers or by larger teams deploying more sophisticated analytical procedures such as a two-phase coding process (e.g. Barkin, Ryan, & Gelberg, 1999; Jehn & Doucet, 1996). In our case the data processing was carried out in the following steps: (1) cutting and sorting by one researcher; and (2) dialogical validation by two more members of the research team. The resulting subcategories and their grouping into major categories are presented further in this paper.

2.3 Research results

A set of categories and concepts summarized in Table 1 emerged as the result of the content analysis of verbal protocols of narrative interviews. In the subsequent discussion the particular determinants and subcategories are interpreted in detail and illustrated by authentic statements.

Table 1
Subjective determinants of the professional development of an expert teacher

Determinant	**Subcategory**
self-knowledge – (perceived) prerequisites for the profession	(a) giftedness for teaching (b) relationship to children, or interest in people in general (c) relationship to the subject matter, enthusiasm for / interest in foreign languages and culture (d) consistency, perseverance (e) self-evaluation, self-reflection
intrinsic motivation	(a) long-term interest in the profession (b) sense of belonging to the profession
value system	teaching as a vocation
job satisfaction	(a) self-efficacy: feeling of contentment from / awareness of good work, self-fulfilment (b) awareness / appreciation of autonomy (c) job satisfaction
openness to change, active search for ways leading to professional development/improvement of one's own practice	(a) the need for improvement and an active search for ways leading to professional development / to improving one's own practice (b) accepting changes as new challenges and a professional change as a positive step in one's career path
perceived demands of the teaching profession and coping with stress	(a) demands of the teaching profession (especially entry into the profession) (b) coping strategies and mental health

In the field of subjective determinants 107 idea units were identified through the open coding and the statements came from all 8 of the expert teachers involved in the research. The number of codes for each teacher was relatively comparable but the distribution of categories was uneven, which suggests that teachers emphasise different issues and have different needs on their path to expertise. This finding is consistent with the results of other studies – for example Day and Gu (2010, pp. 51–52) who stated that the significance

of the influence of subjective determinants in shaping the professional lives of teachers varies in individuals. Furthermore, we are aware that with subjective determinants the intimate character of the data may play a role.

Category 1: Self-knowledge and perceived prerequisites for the profession

In the first category, five sub-categories are included, namely (a) *giftedness for teaching*; (b) *relationship to children or interest in people in general*; (c) *relationship to the subject matter, enthusiasm for / interest in foreign languages and culture*; (d) *consistency, perseverance*, and (e) *self-evaluation, self-reflection.*

(a) Some teachers relate the quality of their performance in their profession, especially at an early stage of their professional life, to an unspecified "gift" for teaching, an innate endowment / prerequisite for being able to teach. Awareness of "giftedness" is an indicator of the strength of their inner conviction about appropriatness of their choice of profession, which contributes to the strengthening of expert teachers' professional confidence.

> I think I must have had some kind of innate ability because right from the start I didn't really have any problems with it, it went quite well. (T27)

(b) The perceived prerequisites for the teaching performance relate mainly to a love for children and a strong positive relationship to them (sometimes in the form of a more general interest in people). Based on the results of previous research phases in this multiple case study and on other research and theoretical studies (Helus, 2009), it can be deduced that the condition for such relationship is a deep insight into the personality of the child. A strongly articulated awareness of one's own communication skills is essential not only for the relationship between teacher and pupil, but also for the mutual relationships between the various agents in the educational process (colleagues, superiors, parents and possibly institutions).

(c) Based on the relatively high frequency of statements in which teachers expressed their deep relationship to the subject matter they teach and their enthusiasm, in our case a deep interest in foreign languages, which they perceived primarily as a means to explore the world, other cultures and as a key that opens the gate of mutual understanding,

this frequently represented subjective determinant can be identified as a key to professional development. The question is whether this is a domain-specific subcategory or whether having a relationship to one's field is a domain-general phenomenon (cf. Borg, 2006 for teachers of foreign languages).

> And when I started doing a retraining course, I was in my element. I was finally studying something that I had always wanted to study, I was working with children just as I had always wanted to do and I was teaching German, which I love. So the dream I'd had when I was about 15 had come true – that I would teach children and work with foreign languages. (T8)

(d) Consistency, or perseverance, which proved to be one of the key prerequisites for achieving good results, is a typical characteristic of an expert teacher (cf. similar results from research in the USA, Ripley, 2010). Here it appears to be associated with target orientation (i.e. the ability to set specific goals and conditions necessary for attaining these goals, as well as the ability to consciously and persistently strive to achieve them in the long run). Perseverance and consistency can be seen as a willingness to work together, to develop, it can be viewed as a "tool" – a strategy, as a characteristic necessary for overcoming barriers to achieving the goals they have set. Expert teachers perceive goals not only as a conscious direction for their activity, but also in terms of a model to work towards (ideals or vivid mental images of something subjectively perceived positively – for example a model of the "ideal teacher"), i.e. a commitment to quality ("to do it well").

> [At] university I had to look after myself and pay my own way, so it was my own kind of private project which I wanted to finish, I had to prove something to myself and it was something that I really, that I saw as really important to do. Something I would be successful in. And unlike a lot of my classmates, I always knew that I wanted to teach. I didn't know who or what, but I knew that during my life I would teach. (T6)

(e) Statements of a reflective and self-reflective nature appeared very often (cf. study by Dirks & Hansmann, 1999), and in the interviews most of them are "deeper-level" self-reflections reaching at the level of metacognition, and of realistic professional self-evaluation including implications for deciding the course of their professional trajectory (cf. Schön, 1983; Eraut, 1994; Tsui, 2005). It is quite clear that self-reflection is built on

balance, a positive self-image and a well-defined professional identity. The statements show that expert teachers perceive, describe and assess their thinking, emotions, attitudes and behaviour, and try to discover the causes of their actions, to infer the consequences and explore new avenues, set goals, and are able to use self-reflective techniques.

> Well, then one more stage happened, when I just… I just don't have anywhere to go any more, I've hit the limit of where I can get in my field. First, my intellect doesn't allow me to go any further, and my age no longer allows me to progress and I am at this school in a position that is quite a lot of work, so I feel like I am stuck in a rut at the level of where I am, and I try to give back a lot. (T27)

Category 2: Intrinsic motivation

The category contains two sub-categories: (a) *long-term interest in the profession* and (b) *the sense of belonging to the profession*. In this category there were fewer results in terms of both the number of statements and the total number of respondents.

a) Amongst expert teachers the above conditions for the teaching profession, especially giftedness, and also some personal characteristics (persistence, consistency) in conjunction with internal motivation took on the specific form of long-term interest in entering the profession, from the games the respondents used to play as children through to leadership roles in different social groups including in their school classes, to their actual entry into the profession. From a psychological point of view the respondents' expressed interest in the profession corresponds to people's internal driving force to pursue certain activities. Internal motivation belongs to fundamental and very important parts of the personality structure and is closely associated with the need for self-realization – in our case in the teaching profession. Intrinsic motivation is an essential component of commitment (cf. Guskey, 2002, p. 382). The source of motivation can also be an ideal (see above), with which expert teachers identify.

(b) For the expert teachers sense of belonging to the profession seems to be characteristic, even in the period when external/social reasons may not have allowed them to finish their studies at the usual time (after graduation from secondary school) or when in the course of their professional lives they left the profession temporarily. At the risk of sounding somewhat grandiose it may be stated that the teaching

profession becomes a way of life more than simply a professional role. This interpretation is fully consistent with the core structure of teacher professionalism which Korthagen and Vasalos (2005, p. 53) referred to as mission. They understand its reflection as the process of "becoming aware of the meaning of our own existence in the world, and the role we see for ourselves in relation to our fellow man" (cf. also Day, 2004, etc.):

> [on temporary change of employment] I didn't feel I wanted to stay there. I always had the feeling that I would go back to school. I did not know exactly when, I didn't plan that, but I knew that I didn't want to leave permanently. I never thought that. (T11)

Category 3: Value system

In the theory of the teaching profession and according to the results of empirical research the value system is usually considered to be one of the most important issues in teaching. Expert teachers perceive teaching as a mission, paying particular attention to the ethical aspects of the profession. They are in this sense the real representatives of moral professionalism (Sockett, 1993, p. 18), satisfying the requirement of "being professional" and "acting professionally", i.e. not only being first-quality teachers, but also working on the basis of an internal ethical code of the profession (McDonnell & Pascal, 1988, p. 5). It is the moral and ethical mission of teaching which is a source of self-affirmation for them, making their own investment into professional development meaningful. The category of expert teachers' value system was not further structured in their statements.

Reflection on the internal ethical code of the profession shows that expert teachers have an individual professionally oriented value system that is important to them and also motivates them to do activities which they consider valuable within their "teaching mission".

> A lot of people started to turn to jobs, which were easier or brought in more money or something, but when I thought about it, I realized that they just do not give you the satisfaction of someone needing you. And they really need me at the school. (T27)

Category 4: Job satisfaction

Within the category three sub-categories were observed, namely: (a) *self-efficacy: feeling of contentment from/ awareness of good work, self-fulfillment*; (b) *awareness / appreciation of autonomy*; (c) *job satisfaction.*

(a) Expert teachers are aware of their good work and their statements show a high level of self-efficacy. This is associated with high rates of job satisfaction given by a sense of fulfilment, self-realization – of something that has meaning for themselves as well as for others and for society. Self-realization is closely related to self-knowledge, with awareness of one's own individuality, but also the ability to make decisions (see autonomy below).

> I am quite proud of the system [of teaching languages] which we have here. We have done a lot of work on it. It's like my baby – I look after it and I feel great about the fact that when I leave here in 20 years' time I will be able to take something with me, something I was able to influence, that I influenced it in the positive sense of the word. (T27)

(b) While carrying out their profession, teachers are usually in the classroom with the students by themselves behind closed doors. This aspect of a teacher's work is often experienced in terms of isolation (sometimes even painful) or lack of support (Lortie, 1975, p. 133; Huberman, 1993, p. 31; Píšová, 1999, pp. 40–42) but expert teachers actually appreciate this fact and perceive themselves as having a high degree of autonomy and freedom to make professional decisions and to take part in them.

> […] at the end of that year, I realised […] that I didn't want to escape […] I realised that teaching gives you quite a lot of possibilities because when you close the classroom door, you can do whatever you feel is appropriate, in the way that you think is right. (T27)

(c) Teachers sometimes only express job satisfaction emotionally without mentioning any specific sources or aspects of the profession itself.

> I really enjoy it. If I didn't enjoy it, and I often say that to the pupils, if I didn't enjoy it, you wouldn't see me here tomorrow. Of course there are moments when, I don't want to exaggerate too much, when I'd like to give it all up and go and do something more useful. But I still really enjoy it. (T14)

In some cases, expert teachers link the feeling of job satisfaction to a specific context, especially to a school which they perceive as different in some way, or they may be emotionally bound to it because they attended it as pupils themselves. They report an intense sense of belonging, of "safety", which they subjectively perceive very strongly. This intense feeling of being a recognized/accepted member of the community reinforces self-confidence, self-esteem

and a sense of shared benefit. This sub-category is very closely linked to the objective determinants of career development (see also Píšová et al., 2011, chapters 2 and 4).

Category 5: Openness to change, active search for ways leading to professional development / to improving one's own practice

The category appeared in the analysis as relatively "strong" especially with regard to the number of statements referring to it. The individual subcategories induced included: (a) *the need for improvement and an active search for ways to improve* and (b) *accepting changes as new challenges and a professional change as a positive step in one's career path*. Openness to change may be associated with the high degree of reflectivity of expert teachers (see the category of self-knowledge above).

(a) The view of expertise as a dynamic concept (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1993) is echoed in the high frequency of statements which thematise the active search for ways to improve, innovations (competent teacher as a "multiplier of innovations" – Gruber & Leutner, 2003) leading to professional development, fear of stagnation and the need for continuous improvement and the willingness of expert teachers to invest in activities that promise to support their professional development.

(b) The attitude of teachers towards educational change is currently a burning issue in teacher theory and research. Educational change as a *de facto* permanently present aspect of teachers' lives (Hargreaves, 1998) is not only accepted by expert teachers, but its manifestations are perceived as new challenges, and changes are seen as positive steps in their careers. This fact is also related to consistency and perseverance as well as to intrinsic motivation. Expert teachers' positive perception of the need for change greatly outweighs the often negative perception of change on the part of colleagues, parents and society.

> I really didn't want to do it [to be deputy head and teach English] because I was very happy teaching small children. But then I realized that it might actually be quite nice to try something else. Anyway, I agreed to do it [...] when I look back, even at home, when we talk about it, I always say that it was a wonderfully positive and amazingly good step. (T11)

Category 6: Perceived demands of the teaching profession and coping with stress

The last category identified is divided thematically into two sub-categories: (a) *demands of the teaching profession (especially entry into the profession)* and (b) *coping strategies and mental health.*

(a) The demands of the teaching profession are often mentioned by respondents in connection with entry to the profession. This finding is consistent with the results of a number of empirical studies which clearly indicate professional initiation as the critical period in which the professional identity of teachers is shaped (Cherubini, 2009). The difficulty is confirmed by the high percentage of young/novice teachers who leave the profession; some of the commonly reported causes are also thematised by respondents in this research (Píšová, 2013). Expert teachers reflect sensitively on their entry into the profession which they often describe as the most demanding phase of their professional lives, but they also understand it as a natural stage as evidenced by the abovementioned determinants (perseverance, relationship to the profession, demands they placed on themselves, etc.).

> It was quite a sink or swim start and unfortunately I feel I didn't manage it that well, there was so much to do but I really enjoyed it, and to be honest I liked being at that school. So I stayed there and I'm happy. (T14)

(b) It is generally recognized that teaching, as a helping profession, is an occupation with a heavy burden of stress (Hennig & Keller, 1996 etc.). For expert teachers their commitment to the profession and heavy workload are so time-consuming that as a result there is often a clash with personal/family life and its demands (Rothland, 2013). A number of the statements refer to finding a balance between professional and personal life. Expert teachers are able in retrospect to identify particular "breaking points" or "critical events" that caused them to change and to actively seek ways of coping with being stressed and overloaded (cf. Švaříček & Šeďová et al., 2007, pp. 335–352):

> Actually, because I spent an awful lot of time on my work, I didn't give my family my full attention, I gave it to my work and so a lot of things just passed me by and I had to make up for it later. At some time, it was, I think, in about 2006, I suddenly realized that I had too much work. Really too much, and I began to look for a way to organize it, to manage everything. (T14)

Stress management strategies are an important theme in the teaching profession. Expert teachers are aware of the threat of burnout syndrome, at certain stages of their professional life some of them were directly at risk of experiencing it themselves. However, the statements suggest that these teachers are able to implement stress prevention strategies, are able to identify the danger signs and in the case of increased workload they can activate their self-defence mechanisms and actively search for the optimal solution to the situation. These skills affect the quality of their performance positively, increase their satisfaction and strengthen their teacher identity (Alsup, 2005; Zembylas, 2003).

3 Conclusion

During the investigation focused on the development and maintenance of expertise in foreign language teachers we were able to identify subjective determinants of the process through inductive analysis of narrative interviews.

The view of subjective determinants as a complex and dynamic set of interconnected factors with a direct effect on the individual teacher proved to be well-applicable. The breakdown of these determinants into the six categories at which we arrived can thus serve mainly for the purpose of analysis and description of the determinants although in reality these cannot be separated. Within the set of subjective determinants the teacher's self-awareness, their grounding in self-reflection, their ability to express their conviction about their own aptitude for the profession, their interest in working with children and their interest in the subject matter, and at the same time their consistency and perseverance in achieving the objectives they have set, play an important role. Expert teachers also showed intrinsic motivation, which manifests itself through passion for the profession.

Ethical values play a significant role in the teaching profession and expert teachers intentionally aim towards the materialisation and implementation of them; they are distinctly perceived as part of the mission of a teacher. The job satisfaction of expert teachers draws primarily on their self-efficacy, but also stems from their positive feelings towards the nature of their work as well as from their satisfaction with specific institutions and a sense of belonging to them. Expert teachers are also characterized by their openness to change and their constant desire to perfect their own performance and

to search for new approaches. Regarding the undisputed demands of the profession, teachers certainly perceive them but are nonetheless able to find effective coping strategies.

We believe that these results are useful for both understanding the processes of developing and maintaining expertise and for understanding the needs of teachers and the development of the supporting processes of their professional development in general. We are aware of the limitations of the methodology and the scope, such as the limited generalizability of the research results and the character of realist biography which looks at reality solely through the participants. The approach to data analysis also presents certain limits. These are mainly related to the aims of the research and possible limitations of the data obtained, which due to their nature could be specified later as is normal in biographical research. We consider this an important impetus for further research in the domain of professional development for teachers on their journey to expertise.

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Subjektivní determinanty expertnosti učitelů cizího jazyka

Abstrakt: Článek přináší parciální výsledky výzkumného projektu, který se zabýval charakterem expertnosti učitelů cizího jazyka. Zatímco první dvě fáze projektu se zaměřovaly na expertní výkon učitele, poznatkovou bázi a vhled ze synchronní perspektivy, třetí fáze výzkumu byla orientovaná diachronně a jejím cílem byla identifikace subjektivních i objektivních determinant rozvoje expertnosti učitele. V textu představujeme výsledky vztahující se k subjektivním determinantám profesního rozvoje.

Data jsme získali prostřednictvím narativních rozhovorů s osmi učiteli anglického a německého jazyka na nižším sekundárním stupni škol v České republice. Procesem otevřeného kódování jsme indukovali následující kategorie: učitelovo sebepoznání, vnitřní motivaci, hodnotový systém, pracovní spokojenost, otevřenost ke změně a zvládání náročnosti profese. Výsledky přispívají k porozumění procesu rozvoje a udržování expertnosti a též k porozumění potřebám učitelů a rozvoji podpůrných procesů jejich profesního rozvoje.

Klíčová slova: profesní rozvoj, učitel cizího jazyka, narativní interview, expertnost učitele, subjektivní determinanty

Dialogism and classroom interaction in English language teaching: A review of Czech research [1]

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Abstract: The aim of the present study is to review Czech research on classroom interaction in English language teaching. We understand classroom interaction as mutual influencing among a teacher and learners while teaching and learning. We view classroom interaction from the perspective of dialogism, which we use as a theoretical and epistemological framework assuming interaction as a unit of analysis. This review analyzes 9 empirical studies published as journal articles, books, book chapters or Ph.D. dissertations in the years 2006–2014. These studies were critically analyzed in the light of dialogism. Important findings include the fact that a number of studies dealt with teacher talk, mainly teacher questions and the use of the target language and the mother tongue. We compare the areas with the situation abroad as reflected in selected reviews of international research, and outline gaps in Czech research. As regards research methodology (and also theoretical background), a number of studies did not take context into consideration when analyzing classroom. Furthermore, it seems that the activity of individuals (teachers, learners) was the unit of analysis in the majority of studies rather than the interaction itself. These findings seem to suggest that dialogism was not employed in the empirical research to a greater extent.

Keywords: classroom interaction, dialogism, English language teaching, review of research

1 Classroom interaction

The shared activity and mutual influencing among teachers and learners constitute a fundamental part of the teaching and learning processes in the classroom. It is therefore vital that educational research describe and understand the nature of classroom interaction. In this article we introduce theoretical background for researching classroom interaction and then we

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critically[2] review empirical studies of classroom interaction in English language teaching conducted in the Czech Republic, focusing mainly on the extent to which dialogism was employed in the studies.

Due to the grounding of this review in dialogism we prefer the term classroom interaction to other terms such as classroom communication or classroom discourse, which seem to imply other theoretical and epistemological positions. We understand the term interaction in line with its etymology, i.e. comprising the prefix *inter* (between, among) and noun action borrowed from the Latin noun *actio* (performing, doing). This is compatible with the concept of dialogue, i.e. "any dyadic or polyadic interaction between individuals who are mutually co-present to each other and who interact through language (or some other symbolic means)" (Linell, 1998, p. 9).[3] Classroom interaction therefore denotes the participants' mutual influencing and reacting realized primarily by means of spoken language. Although the concept of classroom can be extended to virtual classrooms (e.g. Nunan, 2005, pp. 237–238), in this study we consider the classroom to be a physical place in institutional settings where teachers and learners meet face-to-face in order for the learners to learn (see also Ellis, 2008, p. 776).

As far as the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL)[4] in the classroom is concerned, classroom interaction tends to be different from classroom interaction in other subjects taught in the teacher's and students' mother

[2] This review is a critical analysis, i.e. it "identifies issues that were dominant in the previous research and the issues on which the following research should concentrate. The review critically assesses the shortcomings and dead ends of the previous research" (Mareš, 2013, p. 432). Relatedly, a "critical-polemical" presentation and interpretation is adopted here, which makes it possible to be selective. Thus the author "selects arguments in support of his favored approach and may ignore some positive aspects of other approaches" (Mareš, 2013, p. 433).

[3] It should be pointed out that we are not referring to dialogue in the normative sense, i.e. the idea of "true" or "ideal" dialogue aiming at "a high degree of mutual empathy and/or open interaction characterized by symmetry and cooperation" (Linell, 2009, p. 5). In general, dialogism is concerned with an abstract understanding of dialogue, which may refer to "any kind of human sense-making, semiotic practice, action, interaction, thinking or communication, as long as these phenomena are 'dialogically'(or 'dialogistically') understood" (Linell, 2009, pp. 5–6). In this review, however, we concentrate mainly on (classroom) interaction between two or more persons, thus adopting the empirical definition of dialogue as cited above.

[4] For the sake of consistency and with regard to the focus of this review (i.e. Czech research on classroom interaction) and cultural aspects of teaching English in the Czech Republic, we prefer to refer to English as a foreign language (EFL) rather than English as a second language (ESL).

tongue because language in foreign language teaching has two functions: it serves as an interactional tool as well as a goal of teaching and learning. The target language therefore represents both the medium of instruction and at the same time the content (for a more detailed discussion, see Larsen-Freeman & Freeman, 2008). It follows that classroom interaction in foreign language teaching, in our case in English language teaching, deserves special attention.

2 Background for the review

In this review we adopt dialogism as a theoretical and epistemological framework within which sociocultural theory casts light on the nature of mediated action, language and learning. Therefore the following overview of relevant concepts presents a background for the analysis of the studies.

2.1 Interaction and dialogism[5]

Although the terms dialogism and dialogue had been used by other authors (e.g. Bakhtin), it was Linell (1998) who clearly distinguished *dialogism* as an epistemological and theoretical framework from *dialogue* as the actual interaction. Linell (1998, 2009) introduces dialogism along with monologism, in whose opposition dialogism can be understood. Relatedly, Marková (1982) speaks of the Cartesian and Hegelian paradigms and Rommetveit (1988) of representational-computational and hermeneutic-dialogical approaches. Dialogism builds on a number of theories (Linell, 1998, pp. 40–54) including sociocultural theory, which we find relevant for this review as it casts light on the nature of language learning (see section 2.1). Since the area of our interest is that of classroom interaction, in the following paragraphs we characterize the presuppositions related primarily to the nature of interaction and language in dialogism, and briefly contrast them with the monologist presuppositions. A more detailed discussion can be found elsewhere (e.g. Linell, 1998, 2009; Marková, 1982).

Whereas in monologism the individual is viewed as an analytical unit, dialogism regards interactions, activities and situations as primary (Linell, 2009, p. 15). In monologism, cognitive functioning is often viewed through the computational metaphor, which implies one-way understanding of communication. The speaker (sender) produces an utterance to be decoded by the listener (receiver), which presupposes the passive role of the listener

[5] This section builds on our previous work published in Czech (Tůma, 2014, pp. 178–180).

(Marková, 1982, pp. 60–79; Rommetveit, 1988). In response to this view, Bakthin holds that the idea of passive listener is fiction (1986, p. 68). Interaction in dialogism presupposes intersubjectivity, which implies an active role of participants who co-construct meaning together (Marková, 1982, pp. 140–183). It follows that each utterance presupposes a partner to whom it is addressed (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 72; Vološinov, 1973, p. 85). Relatedly, we can refer to the nature of mind. Whereas monologism views mind individualistically, in dialogism the mind is social (Linell, 1998, pp. 3–8; Luckmann, 1990; Marková, 1982, 2007).

It follows that in monologism, interaction is viewed as information transfer from the sender to the receiver. Thus interaction becomes "largely an epiphenomenon, reduceable to sequences of individual actions" (Linell, 1998, pp. 23–24). On the other hand, dialogism views interaction as a collective process in which the participants influence each other and in which any utterance "makes response to something and is calculated to be responded to in turn" (Vološinov, 1973, p. 72). Therefore unity is presupposed between interaction and context, cognition and communication, structure and process, individual and society, initiation and response etc., which are viewed as dichotomies in monologism (Linell, 1998, pp. 36–37; Marková, 1982).

From the above positions it follows that the context of interaction is viewed in different ways in the two frameworks. Whereas in monologism one can decontextualize utterances (Rommetveit, 1988), in dialogism context plays a crucial role (Luckmann, 1990, pp. 52–55; Vološinov, 1973, pp. 85–93). Context in dialogism can comprise the concrete situations, the surrounding utterances (co-texts) and background knowledge, including participants' knowledge of the referents and about each other (Linell, 2009, pp. 16–18). It should also be stressed that context in dialogism is viewed dynamically: on the one hand, the aspects of context are pre-structured, on the other hand, they are renewed and re-constructed during interaction (Linell, 1998, pp. 127–158). To summarize, in dialogism we understand interaction as a dynamic and situated process and we regard the participants as social beings.

Mediated (inter)action, learning and language

In dialogism it is generally presupposed that interaction is mediated by symbolic means. This can be specified within the framework of sociocultural theory (SCT), which also casts light on the nature of learning. Building on

the works of Vygotsky and his co-workers, SCT explains human mental processes, taking into account their cultural, historical and institutional settings (Wertsch, 1991, p. 6).

In SCT, the unit of analysis is a mediated action, which also involves the participants and mediating tools, of which language is seen as central (Vygotsky, 1978, pp. 24–26, 52–57; Wertsch, 1991, pp. 8–13, 28–43). Mediated (inter)action is related to the functioning and development of higher mental functions, of which speech is of our interest. According to the general genetic law of cultural development, every function appears on two planes: first on the social (or interpsychological) plane, and then it is reconstructed onto the intrapsychological plane (Vygotsky, 1978, pp. 56–57, 1981). This reconstruction can be called internalization and is only possible if the function lies within the zone of proximal development of the individual (Vygotsky, 1978, pp. 55–57, 84–91, 1981; Wertsch, 1991, pp. 19–28) presupposing intersubjectivity between the learner and the more knowledgeable other. The concepts of mediation, zone of proximal development and internalization have been used in sociocultural second language acquisition (SLA) theory (e.g. Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). This way language learning is conceptualized in relation to interaction.

As far as the nature of language is concerned, dialogism generally views language as a form of social action (for other views of language, see Cook, 2010), which can be referred to as a functional view of language (Schiffrin, 1994).

2.2 Research on classroom interaction

In general, the phenomenon of classroom interaction has been studied from a number of perspectives (not only dialogist ones), including quantitative observation methods, ethnographic research, linguistic approaches, socio-cultural theory and ethnomethodological conversation analysis (Mercer, 2010; Mitchell, 2009; Rampton et al., 2002). The development of these approaches has been addressed elsewhere (e.g. Ellis, 2008, pp. 781–783; Mitchell, 2009, pp. 676–678). In the following part of this section we outline some reviews of research on classroom interaction, on which the present study is based.

As far as research on classroom interaction conducted outside the Czech Republic is concerned, there exist a number of reviews of research from various fields of education, e.g. mathematics (Walshaw & Anthony, 2008)

or reading comprehension (Nystrand, 2006). More specifically, in the field of foreign language teaching, there are a number of reviews (e.g. Chaudron, 1988; Ellis, 2008, pp. 775–835; Hall & Walsh, 2002; Nunan, 1991, 2005; Thoms, 2012), in all of which theoretical and methodological plurality of research is reflected.

As far as the situation in the Czech Republic is concerned, Mareš (1990) analyzed the research on classroom interaction conducted in Czechoslovakia before 1989 and pointed out some shortcomings. In addition, Mareš (2009) reviewed the studies conducted between 1990 and 2009. There are also reviews of relevant research as parts of monographs (e.g. Janíková, 2011, pp. 36–40). In this study we also build on our previous work (Tůma, 2014), in which we reviewed research articles on classroom interaction published in four Czech educational journals between the years 1990 and 2012. In the present study we adopt the same theoretical position (dialogism) and conduct a critical analysis in the light of dialogism. It should be pointed out that in the previous study (Tůma, 2014) we found no studies on classroom interaction in foreign language classrooms, therefore there is no overlap with the present study regarding the publications reviewed. It follows that in this study we narrow down the scope of the former review by focusing solely on English language teaching and, at the same time, we extend the scope to publications of other types (books, book chapters and Ph.D. dissertations). Furthermore, studies published in 2013 and in approximately the first half of 2014 are included in the present study.

In addition, we build on our previous study (Tůma & Píšová, 2013), in which we analysed the foci of Ph.D. dissertations defended in the field of foreign language didactics in the Czech Republic (2006–2012) and compared the results with reviews of Ph.D. dissertations from selected countries. For the purposes of the present study, relevant works were analyzed in more detail.

3 Methodology

The aim of this study is to present a critical review of research on classroom interaction in English language teaching conducted in the Czech Republic. We answer the following research questions: What empirical studies were conducted? What were their research questions and methodological characteristics? To what extent is dialogism reflected in the studies?

Before presenting the methodology of this review, we briefly introduce some specific aspects related to Czech publishing platforms. It should be pointed out that there are journals which are included in international databases such as EBSCO or Scopus, however, not all of their issues have been indexed in the databases, which considerably limits the effectiveness of database search[6]. On the other hand, there exists the Information Register of Research and Development Results (henceforth RIV)[7], which is run by the Research, Development and Innovation Council. However, in contrast to international research databases, the search options of the register are considerably limited. Furthermore, RIV seems to be designed and used for economic rather than research purposes[8] and the legislation related to including records in the register seems to undergo changes on an annual basis. For the purposes of this review, we complemented the search in RIV by a number of other specialized databases and indices, including the Educational Library of J. A. Comenius[9], a database of Czech authors publishing (mainly) in the field of English philology[10] and a database of Czech Ph.D. dissertations defended in the field of foreign language didactics (titles and abstracts) created for the purposes of a thematic analysis (Tůma & Píšová, 2013)[11]. In addition, we cross-checked the lists of references from the above-mentioned reviews and relevant publications which we found during the search process in order to minimize the risk of not including a pertinent study. Last but not least, we scanned the issues of four Czech educational journals published since 2013 manually in order to include the most recent works and update our previous review (Tůma, 2014, p. 201).

As regards the scope of the review, we incorporated platforms for academic research, including journal articles, Ph.D. dissertations, books and book chapters. Conference proceedings were not included in this review, since they tend to present working papers (Mareš, 2013, p. 449) and since some

6 For example, *Pedagogická orientace* has been indexed in *EBSCO Educational source* since 2013.

7 In Czech *Rejstřík informací o výsledcích*, http://www.vyzkum.cz/FrontClanek.aspx?idsekce=1028

8 Jansová and Vavříková (2011) point out that the perception of RIV has changed; initially it was not understood as a basis for the funding of research organizations.

9 http://npmk.cz

10 http://www.mluvniceanglictiny.cz/citace

11 We updated the database by including the data from the year 2013 and the first half of 2014. The full texts of relevant Ph.D. dissertations were retrieved from the online archives of the respective universities.

conference proceedings are not peer-reviewed, which may influence the quality of the papers (Píšová, Janíková, & Hanušová, 2011, p. 21).

As far as the time period is concerned, we included works published or defended from 2006 to 2013, i.e. a period of eight years. The choice of the beginning of this period was influenced by the scope of the database of Ph.D. dissertations (Tůma & Píšová, 2013)[12] and also by the fact that empirical research on classroom interaction in the four major Czech educational journals was basically divided between the periods of 1990–1994 and 2005–2012 (Tůma, 2014, pp. 183–184)[13]. In addition, we included studies from 2014, however, this review does not cover the year in its entirety since after the time of submitting this text for review a number of relevant studies dated 2014 may be published.

As far as keywords are concerned, the terms *communication* and *interaction* (and their Czech equivalents)[14] were searched for in the titles of the publications, abstracts and/or in the keywords depending on the search possibilities of the search engines. From the total of 2,203 items obtained, the items whose titles were clearly irrelevant to classroom interaction were excluded. Next, the abstracts or annotations were processed in order to exclude the studies related to other school subjects than English. Full texts of 33 items were then retrieved and processed, which included the scanning of their bibliographies for other relevant studies.

In addition, only studies dealing with the processes of actual classroom interaction during teaching were kept in the corpus. This means that studies dealing with (rather static) characteristics of the participants (e.g. interaction styles) or contexts for interaction (e.g. classroom climate) were excluded. In some cases, the decision on inclusion or exclusion was made on the basis of the annotation, provided that the annotation included enough information. In other cases, the decision was made on the grounds of scanning the full text of the study. In the end, there were 25 studies which were analysed in more detail.

[12] At some universities, older Ph.D. dissertations are not available online.

[13] This absence of (empirical) studies before 2005 can be explained by the fact that two major grant projects addressing classroom research and classroom communication started in the years 2006 (LC06046) and 2009 (GA406/09/0752).

[14] Although we suggested using the Czech term *interakce ve třídě* (Tůma, 2014, p. 176), other terms such as *výuková interakce* or *pedagogická interakce* are widely used. Therefore, for the purpose of database search, we used a more general term *interakce*. The same applies to the Czech translation of *classroom communication*. As regards the English keywords, the terms *classroom talk* and *teacher talk* were also used.

3.1 The analysis of the studies

The analysis of the 25 studies was conducted in two stages. The aim of the first stage was to distinguish empirical research studies from reviews, theoretical papers and articles presenting their authors' opinions or introducing developmental projects or teaching methods. The criteria for empirical research studies were: referring to literature, providing information on the research sample, data source and method of analysis, and presenting results. On the basis of applying these criteria, 10 studies were excluded.

For the remaining 15 studies, the bibliographical data were recorded and methodological aspects were extracted, including research questions[15] related to the actual classroom interaction in the processes of English language teaching. The studies were analyzed in the light of dialogism.

Dialogism reflected in the studies

As we pointed out in section 2, dialogism presents an epistemological and theoretical position for our understanding of interaction. Linell (1998, p. 9) supposes that "there can be a monologistic theory of dialogue, and a dialogistic theory of monologue". It follows that the phenomenon which we call classroom interaction can be approached from the perspective of monologism or dialogism. It should be pointed out that an explicit grounding of the studies in dialogism was not required for their inclusion in this review. However, in the analysis and subsequent discussion we employ the perspective of dialogism. We will return to this point in the discussion of findings.

The extent to which dialogism was reflected in each empirical study was investigated from three angles: (1) declared theoretical positions, (2) interaction as a unit of analysis and (3) taking context into consideration during the data analysis. We will discuss these three perspectives in more detail below when introducing the results of the analysis.

[15] In some cases, research questions were not explicitly formulated. Then, the aims of the empirical research were extracted instead.

4 Results

Altogether, there were 15 empirical studies (4 books, 5 journal articles, 3 book chapters and 3 Ph.D. dissertations). However, during the analysis it became clear that some studies (re)introduced the results of some previously published studies. For instance, some studies were published as book chapters and subsequently with some elaboration as journal articles, or Ph.D. dissertations were later published as books. Such redundant items were excluded so that the most current and most elaborate studies remained in the corpus. After these considerations, there were 9 studies (4 books, 3 journal articles, 1 book chapter and 1 Ph.D. dissertation) on which this review is based.

We present the empirical studies and their methodological characteristics chronologically in Table 1.[16] It should be pointed out that only the research questions which were relevant to the analysis of the actual classroom interaction in English language teaching were extracted.[17] Relatedly, the information about the data source (audio- or video-recordings) was extracted in relation to the actual classroom interaction.[18] As far as the level of education is concerned, the majority of studies focused on primary or lower-secondary schools.[19] There were no studies centred upon the tertiary level. The information about the sample captures the number of lessons (and the number of different teachers if available). The last column introduces the information about the geographical location of the schools in which the data were collected.

From Table 1 it follows that seven out of the nine studies were based on a large videostudy conducted by the Institute for Research in School Education (IRSE, Faculty of Education, Masaryk University, Brno). Table 1 also shows

[16] Table 1, due to its landscape orientation, can be found at the end of the article.

[17] In addition, in seven cases the research questions were translated into English by the author of this study, since two items were written in English, one in Slovak and six in Czech.

[18] In some studies, for example, questionnaires or interviews were also used. We did not analyze these aspects of research due to the focus of this review on classroom interaction as such.

[19] In the Czech Republic the educational system is divided into five years of the primary level (ISCED 1, learners aged approximately 6–10), four years of the lower-secondary level (ISCED 2, learners aged approximately 11–15) and secondary level (ISCED 3, learners older than 15). More information about the Czech system of education can be found, for example, on the website of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (http://www.msmt.cz/file/21631/download/).

that the majority of studies are focused on compulsory school education, namely its lower-secondary level. There is only one study which focuses on secondary education (Šipošová, 2011). This study is also specific in that it is the only study which was not conducted in the Czech Republic. However, the fact that the study was defended as a Ph.D. dissertation at a Czech university as well as the historical and cultural interconnectedness between the Czech Republic and Slovakia and the similarity of the Czech and Slovak languages supported the decision to include the study in this review.

Table 1 also shows that there were a number of different research questions, according to which we can categorize the studies. One group comprises studies building on IRF exchanges (Betáková, 2010) and more specifically on teacher questions (Šipošová, 2011). One study deals with learner utterances in relation to the nature of classroom activities (Hanušová et al., 2014). Another group is represented by a study dealing with classroom language, i.e. the use of the mother tongue or the target language (Najvar, Janík, & Šebestová, 2013). Furthermore, there are two studies which mainly deal with communication and relatedly (intercultural) communicative competence as the goal of foreign language teaching (Šebestová, 2011; Zerzová, 2012), whose results were synthetized in Zerzová and Šebestová (2014). One study deals with gender issues (Doskočilová, 2012). Another study is related to more general educational issues, such as interaction patterns, lesson phases or the use of teaching aids, and introducing these along with domain-specific aspects of language teaching, such as classroom language (Najvar, Najvarová, Janík, & Šebestová, 2011). Although Najvar et al. (2011) (re)introduce (some of) the results of other studies (Hanušová et al., 2014; Najvar et al., 2013; Šebestová, 2011; Zerzová, 2012), we decided not to exclude any of the studies, since each of them declares different theoretical background, which was one of the aspects that were analyzed in the light of dialogism.

4.1 The empirical studies from the perspective of dialogism

We analyzed the studies in the light of dialogism from three perspectives: (1) declared theoretical positions, (2) interaction as a unit of analysis and (3) taking context into consideration during the data analysis. We should point out that in dialogism these three perspectives are interconnected, yet for analytical purposes we analyze them one by one. We prefer discussing the findings in the form of text to presenting the results in a table, since the

textual form of presenting results makes it possible to refer to the mutual links among the aspects of the analysis. While adopting the perspective of dialogism, we also inevitably refer to monologism, which presents a counter-theory to dialogism.

Theoretical positions

As far as theoretical positions of the studies are concerned, we extracted the declared theoretical background for each study. From the studies focusing on classroom interaction from a more linguistic perspective, Betáková (2010, pp. 11–149) introduces a wide range of concepts and approaches including selected aspects of discourse analysis, classroom discourse and teacher talk, and methodologies for analyzing classroom processes, from which she adopts mainly interactional analysis and related concepts of IRF in her analysis. IRF is also adopted by Šipošová (2011), who focuses solely on teacher questions and introduces related taxonomies. More generally, the IRF exchange has its roots in constitutive ethnography (Mehan, 1979) and in linguistic approaches to classroom interaction (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975). In both of these ways of approaching IRF, the individual moves are linked to higher-level units and, at the same time, to each other and lower-level acts, which is compatible with dialogism as the actual interaction rather than the activity of an individual is analyzed. As Bakhtin (1986, p. 91) puts it, "any concrete utterance is a link in the chain of speech communication" and "utterances are not indifferent to one another, and are not self-sufficient; they are aware of and mutually reflect one another." From the two empirical studies in this review, Betáková (2010) in her analysis seems to approach IRF in a way compatible with dialogism, while for Šipošová (2011) IRF seems to represent an instrument for segmenting the recorded material, making it possible to focus on teacher questions, i.e. on the activity of the teacher, thus being grounded in monologism.

Apart from IRF, the specifics of foreign language teaching and classroom interaction are discussed in a number of studies (the most elaborate accounts can be found in Betáková, 2010; Šipošová, 2011). Next, the issues related to the use of the mother tongue and English in English language teaching are introduced in several studies (Hanušová et al., 2014; Šebestová, 2011) and, more specifically, these issues are referred to as code-switching (Najvar et al., 2013). As far as the specifics of foreign language teaching are concerned, two studies declare the four skills and/or the concept of communicative competence as their theoretical background (Šebestová, 2011; Zerzová & Šebestová,

2014). By the same token, Šipošová (2011) introduces the speaking skill as a part of the Slovak school leaving examination and, in addition, discusses communicative language teaching, which is also taken as a theoretical position by Hanušová et al. (2014). Culture-related issues are also taken into consideration along with intercultural communicative competence (Zerzová, 2012; Zerzová & Šebestová, 2014). All of the positions mentioned in this paragraph seem to reflect the dual function of language in foreign language teaching, yet the related SLA accounts seem to refer to monologist theories, namely Long's Interaction Hypothesis (Šebestová, 2011, p. 40) or Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (Betáková, 2010, p. 57; Hanušová et al., 2014, p. 239; Šebestová, 2011, p. 39). SLA theories compatible with dialogism, e.g. SCT (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006), are not referred to in any of the studies.

Other theoretical perspectives include gender (Doskočilová, 2012) and the quality of teaching (Najvar et al., 2011). One of the most prevalent theoretical positions is the concept of opportunities to learn (Najvar et al., 2011; Šebestová, 2011; Zerzová, 2012; Zerzová & Šebestová, 2014), which appears to imply an analysis of time allocated to different classroom activities during which the learners are expected to learn (e.g. Najvar et al., 2011, p. 91). As Knecht (2014, p. 165) puts it, the concept of opportunities to learn seems to result in creating elaborated systems of categories and scales which subsequently serve for description, and he adds that "the results of these studies are rarely related to theoretical background of the research … [, which] raises the question whether opportunities to learn represent a useful theoretical construct". Furthermore, an analysis of time allocated to different activities seems to imply an atomist approach and thus theoretically making it impossible for two activities to overlap. This view is clearly a monologist one. Interestingly, two of the newest studies building on the IRSE videostudy data do not declare their theoretical grounding in opportunities to learn any more (Hanušová et al., 2014; Najvar et al., 2013).

Interaction as a unit of analysis

As we suggested above, theoretical positions seem to imply the way the recorded material is analyzed. This was another step in our critical analysis. Out of the total of nine studies, seven studies used 10-second intervals as units of analysis, which were subsequently analyzed in the light of one or more systems of categories (Doskočilová, 2012; Hanušová et al., 2014; Najvar et al., 2011, 2013; Šebestová, 2011; Zerzová, 2012; Zerzová & Šebestová, 2014). Two of these studies (Najvar et al., 2011, 2013) also used individual words

(which were counted) as units of analysis and in one study (Doskočilová, 2012) the occurrence of certain phenomena was counted in the video-recordings irrespective of the time intervals. Šipošová (2011) analyzed questions asked by teachers in the light of a category system, regardless of learner responses, thus taking teacher questions as units of analysis. All of these units of analysis (10-second intervals, an occurrence of a phenomenon regardless of the previous/subsequent phenomena) seem to be grounded in monologism, since in dialogism the actual contextualized utterances and their mutual connectedness would be analyzed (e.g. Linell, 2009, pp. 11–33).

In one study (Betáková, 2010), the material is approached in a complex way in which links among individual utterances were sought, thus being more compatible with dialogism. However, one part of the analysis deals with individual segments (mainly the initiation and follow-up turns produced by the teacher) in the light of systems of categories, thus adopting an etic rather than an emic perspective. In this respect the analysis lies in a monologist quantification of the phenomena rather than a dialogist description of the mechanisms underlying interaction.

Najvar et al. (2013, pp. 838–840) present five types of situations in which they observed code switching, which would seem compatible with dialogism. However, they do not introduce a rationale for selecting the situations. They add that the situations should be taken as examples of "how languages can be mixed … rather than a result of a systematic analysis" (Najvar et al., 2013, p. 838). Therefore it does not seem that a methodological reflection of dialogism can be observed in the analysis.

The role of context in the analysis

In this part of our analysis, we paid attention to the way context was dealt with in the individual empirical studies, particularly whether contextual factors such as the topic or content of interaction, characteristics of the participants, the settings or the content of neighbouring utterances were taken into consideration during the analyses.

In a number of cases it was difficult to assess the role of context since the majority of analyses, as pointed out above, seemed to be firmly grounded in monologism, which implies that utterances can be separated from their contexts and subsequently analyzed in (relative) isolation (Linell, 1998, pp. 36–37; Vološinov, 1973, p. 72). It follows that context was not paid much attention to in the description of the analytic procedures. The analyses seem

to range from those approaching their units of analysis in total isolation (Šipošová, 2011) to studies whose detailed coding manuals and category systems implied taking some contextual data into consideration. For example, in her coding manual, Šebestová (2011, pp. 145–158) notes that the actual classroom activity should be coded as a whole and that overlaps of two activities within the 10-second intervals are allowed. Similarly, from the coding manual prepared by Zerzová (2012, pp. 179–200) it follows that some contextual data (e.g. lesson phases) were inferred from larger units than the actual 10-second intervals. In one study, the learners' sex was taken into consideration (Doskočilová, 2012). These findings seem to suggest that although context was somehow dealt with in some of the analyses, the dynamic nature of context (i.e. its re-constructing during the actual interaction) was not appreciated, which seems to support the underlying monologist assumption that "unique or dynamic contexts are not essential […] for the understanding of the specific thoughts, situated behaviors, utterances or texts, let alone of the underlying language system" (Linell, 2009, p. 36). On the other hand, in one analysis attention was paid to the neighbouring utterances and (where appropriate) to intonation (Betáková, 2010), which seems to suggest a more dialogist position.

Although some studies attempted to capture different types of classroom activities (Hanušová et al., 2014; Najvar et al., 2011, pp. 145–149) or the use of teaching aids and media (Najvar et al., 2011, pp. 119–120; Zerzová, 2012, pp. 105–109), the studies do not reveal the nature of the actual interaction in these activities or when using different teaching aids or media. It is therefore impossible to analyze the way they deal with context (e.g. the use of teaching aids) in the analyses. We discuss this in the following section.

5 Discussion of findings

In this section we discuss the above results first in relation to the phenomenon of classroom interaction and second in relation to the results of other reviews of research on classroom interaction (both Czech and international).

Table 1 indicates that there was a wide range of research questions in the studies. In some studies, the scope seemed to be more general than classroom interaction (e.g. Najvar et al., 2011; Šebestová, 2011), thus falling into the realm of research on teaching and learning. On the other hand, the studies in question seem to address some issues that clearly fall into the realm of

classroom interaction, such as the use of the mother tongue and the target language.[20] This was the reason for including these studies in the review.

From the research questions and theoretical positions it seems that a lot of attention is paid to the field of teacher talk, namely teacher questions. Indeed, similar findings can be found in other reviews (Chaudron, 1988, pp. 126–132; Ellis, 2008, pp. 797–801; Nunan, 1991, 2005, p. 228), yet some research reviewed in international studies also takes the elicited learner output into consideration. Furthermore, both of the Czech studies addressing teacher questions (Betáková, 2010; Šipošová, 2011) are etic. This type of research is criticized by McCormick and Donato (2000, as cited by Ellis, 2008, p. 801), for "simply assigning questions to some pre-determined functional category is misleading" and "questions need to be viewed as dynamic discursive tools that serve to build collaboration and to scaffold comprehension and comprehensibility". This clearly illustrates the tension between monologist and dialogist views on questions and answers (and interaction in general).

As far as other aspects of teacher talk are concerned, turn-taking was addressed in one study (Betáková, 2010; for studies conducted abroad, see Ellis, 2008, pp. 790–792) and it seems that the field of error correction has not been addressed in any of the Czech studies, whereas international research pays considerable attention to the phenomena of error treatment and feedback (for reviews, see Chaudron, 1988, pp. 132–152; Ellis, 2008, pp. 803–806; Mitchell, 2009, pp. 681–682; Nunan, 2005, pp. 228–229).

As far as the use of the target language and mother tongue is concerned, it should be pointed out that different SLA theories seem to present different (if not contradictory) views on the role and value of the mother tongue in foreign language teaching.[21] Not surprisingly, the studies both in the Czech Republic and abroad attempt to address the ratio of the mother tongue (L1) to the target language (L2). However, as Chaudron (1988, p. 124) puts it, "the total proportion of L1 or L2 use alone is probably not the critical variable in determining the degree of L1 maintenance or L2 acquisition" and "it is

[20] The borderline position of some studies seems to be evident from the information that the authors themselves provided about the publications. For example, the RIV record of Šebestová (2011) includes keywords such as "mother tongue", "target language" and "teaching and learning", but neither does the book nor the RIV record include "classroom interaction".

[21] For example, in the light of Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis, learners should benefit from the comprehensible input in the target language, whereas in Sociocultural Theory the mother tongue can be seen as helpful in the learning process.

the functional allocation of the TL [target language] relative to the L1 … which would indicate to the learner the priorities of the extended social environment that schools and teachers represent." Although the Czech studies (Betáková, 2010, pp. 197–198; Najvar et al., 2013, 2011, pp. 143–145) reported considerable variation among individual teachers[22], they do not seem to provide answers to the question why the ratio was so varied or how it was functionally distributed (this issue has only been partially addressed by Betáková, 2010; see also Chaudron, 1988, pp. 52–54, 124–125).

The communicative nature of activities is dealt with in Czech research (Hanušová et al., 2014; Najvar et al., 2011, pp. 147–149) as well as international research (Ellis, 2008, pp. 784–786; Nunan, 2005, pp. 232–233). The latter, however, seems to reflect the nature of communicative activities (e.g. information gap, incorporation of preceding utterances, the degree of control over linguistic form) more in-depth and in a way that seems more compatible with dialogism.

As we pointed out in section 4.1, there are studies in which IRF appears to be used as an instrument for segmentation rather than for the characterization of the nature of exchanges (see Ellis, 2008, pp. 786–788; Hall & Walsh, 2002; Thoms, 2012, pp. 511–513; for reviews of more dialogist treatment of IRF). This monologist treatment was observed in a more general review of Czech educational research on classroom interaction (Tůma, 2014, pp. 187–188). It seems that some authors tend to treat the IRF exchange structure in a neobehaviorist (and thus monologist) way as stimulus–reaction–reinforcement (see also Linell, 2009, p. 22).

As far as research on classrooms as social communities is concerned, there seems to be a gap in Czech research (for a review of international research, see Mitchell, 2009, pp. 690–693). None of the Czech studies in this review adopted an ethnographic design or addressed social issues in classroom interaction. One exception is Doskočilová (2012), who investigated gender inequalities, yet she adopted a monologist rather than a dialogist orientation (see section 4.1). This monologist way of dealing with gender has been observed in other Czech studies (Tůma, 2014, p. 188). It seems that Czech educational research on classroom interaction does not take the social construction of gender into account in the actual analyses.[23]

[22] Ellis (2008, p. 802) also refers to considerable variation *within* individual teachers.

[23] On the other hand, sociological research seems to address gender in a more dialogist way (see, for example, Jarkovská, 2009).

Learners' contribution to classroom interaction presents another area which seems to be relatively underresearched. On the one hand, learner participation is addressed in some studies (e.g. from the perspective of gender in Doskočilová, 2012). On the other hand, the areas of learner initiative, learner questions or learner–learner interaction do not seem to be examined by Czech researchers, at least from the field of foreign language teaching (for reviews of international research in these areas, see Chaudron, 1988, pp. 90–109; Ellis, 2008, pp. 807–833; Thoms, 2012, pp. 518–520).

Finally, we can compare the findings to the outcomes of an analysis capturing Czech educational research on classroom interaction more generally. Similarly to studies from the 1990s (as reviewed in Tůma, 2014, p. 183), the studies in the present review tend to deal with utterances in isolation and attempt to quantify certain phenomena, which was, among other things, criticized by Mareš (1990, p. 97) as a drawback of Czechoslovak educational research on classroom interaction conducted before 1989.

As regards the levels of education, the studies in Table 1 address mainly lower-secondary schools, yet the coverage of primary schools seems to be better than in the studies reviewed in Tůma (2014, pp. 183–184). Classroom interaction in tertiary education does not appear to be addressed and secondary education level is also covered rather marginally (see also Tůma, 2014, pp. 183–184).

Methodologically, video-recording seems to be a prevalent method in capturing classroom interaction. While the samples in the present review ranged between 3 and 89 lessons, the studies reviewed in Tůma (2014, pp. 183–184) analyzed between 8 and 60 lessons.[24]

6 Conclusion

In the above discussion we addressed some of the gaps which Czech research on classroom interaction in English language teaching may fill in the future. In this place we will address a more general issue related to the paradigmatic orientation of the studies reviewed.

The studies in Table 1 have outlined some of the quantitative parameters of Czech EFL classroom interaction, such as the numbers of words uttered

[24] Some studies, however, employed direct observation and it was not clear in some studies from the early 1990s whether the lessons were observed directly or indirectly.

by the persons involved, the proportion of Czech and English, the ratios of different types of questions uttered by teachers or the allocation of time in which the learners have the opportunity to develop (intercultural) communicative competence. These proportions have been counted in line with the monologist research tradition and can be seen as useful overall characteristics of EFL classrooms in the Czech Republic. However, the research so far seems to reveal little about the nature of classroom interaction – for example, we do not know when and for what purposes the teachers used the mother tongue, what kinds of responses teacher questions elicited or how the activities related to developing (intercultural) communicative competence were conducted. In this respect we can refer to Fodor, a representative of the monologist tradition, who holds that "what our cognitive science has done so far is mostly to throw some light on how much dark there is" (Fodor 2000, as cited in O'Connell & Kowal, 2003, p. 206). In order to address research questions related to the nature of classroom interaction, it seems that a different paradigmatic orientation should be adopted. In this respect, we suggest that dialogism can serve as a theoretical and epistemological platform.

As we pointed out in section 1, from the nature of foreign language teaching it follows that language plays a dual role in the process of teaching and learning: it serves both as a medium (i.e. a tool) and as a goal in foreign language teaching. In this respect, the background provided by monologism seems inadequate, as from a monologist perspective, tools and goals present distinct categories. This seems to explain the fact that none of the studies in this review addressed classroom interaction empirically in relation to learning. In contrast, dialogism seems to have the potential to cast light on the interconnectedness of tools and goals. The presupposed intersubjectivity in interaction, the reflexive relationship between tools and goals or language and context seem to be in line with the social view on SLA proposed by, for example, Firth and Wagner (2007). Furthermore, it has been suggested that there exists a reflexive relationship between pedagogy and interaction (Seedhouse, 2004).

Monologism, in whose tradition a majority of the reviewed studies have been conducted, does not seem to provide the views which would address the interdependence among interaction, pedagogy and learning. Therefore one may ask the question why more dialogist research is not conducted. It is beyond the scope of this review to discuss this question in detail but two

answers can be outlined. First, it has been criticized that monologism has been a dominant paradigm in psycholinguistics (e.g. O'Connell & Kowal, 2003) and social psychology (e.g. Marková, 2007, p. 11). Relatedly, the historical roots of the disciplines in monologism (as well as the relation to natural sciences) are often referred to. From this perspective, we are in fact addressing the essence of social sciences and how they relate to natural sciences (e.g. Linell, 2009, pp. 28–31; Marková, 2007, p. 120). Second, we can emphasize the fact that the issue of the focus on the individual or interaction seems to be recurrent not only in social psychology or psycholinguistics, but also in education (see, for example, Slavík, 1995). It may follow that the static nature of context (if considered in the actual analysis at all) or the transmissive model of communication (as presupposed in monologism) may appear relatively simpler than the dynamic view of context and interdependencies among interaction, learning, thinking and pedagogy (as assumed in dialogism). Relatedly, we can refer to the view that "the language of dialogue is disorderly compared to the straightforward grammatical sentences of monologue", and conclude that "as one grants this assumption of chaos, one must simply give up on dialogue" (Garrod & Pickering, 1999, as cited in O'Connell & Kowal, 2003, p. 200). This illustrates that the understanding of interaction in its complexity, situatedness and dynamics requires a relatively complex (and completely different) framework, which may seem "disorderly" or "chaotic" for those working in the monologist tradition.

As Marková (1982, p. 3) puts it, "it should be possible to change from one framework to another but this is not usually easy and may even prove to be psychologically impossible". However, she adds that if we are not aware of the paradigm in which we work and of the presuppositions that the paradigm implies, "we are unable to reflect upon them and consequently to consider alternatives to the adopted ways of thinking and researching" (Marková, 1982, p. 3). We can assume that Czech educational research on classroom interaction, both in general and in the field of English language teaching specifically, would benefit from the possibilities which dialogism affords, both theoretically and methodologically.

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Dialogismus a interakce ve výuce anglického jazyka: Přehled českého výzkumu

Abstrakt: Cílem předkládané studie je podat přehled o českém výzkumu interakce ve výuce angličtiny. Interakci chápeme jako vzájemné ovlivňování mezi učitelem a žáky během výuky. Na interakci ve třídě nahlížíme pohledem dialogismu, který chápeme jako teoretický a epistemologický rámec předpokládající interakci jako jednotku analýzy. V přehledové studii analyzujeme 9 empirických studií uveřejněných v letech 2006–2014 jako články v časopise, knihy, kapitoly v knize nebo disertační práce. Tyto studie byly kriticky analyzovány z pohledu dialogismu. Významným zjištěním je například skutečnost, že řada studií se zabývala jazykem učitele (teacher talk), především otázkami učitele a používáním cílového a mateřského jazyka. Tyto a další oblasti výzkumu porovnáváme s odrazem zahraniční situace ve vybraných přehledech výzkumu a poukazujeme na mezery v tuzemském výzkumu. Co se týče metodologie výzkumu (a s ní souvisejících teoretických východisek), řada studií při analýze interakce ve třídě abstrahovala od kontextu. Činnost jednotlivců (učitele, žáků) tvořila v řadě studií analytickou jednotku spíše než samotná interakce. Tato zjištění naznačují, že v empirickém výzkumu nebyl dialogismus příliš uplatněn.

Klíčová slova: interakce ve třídě, dialogismus, výuka anglického jazyka, přehledová studie

Table 1
An overview of the empirical studies and their methodological characteristics

Author(s)	Research questions	Level of education	Data source	Sample	Location
Betáková (2010)	To analyze the transcripts in the light of turn-taking (identifying teachers' and students' turns), exchange structure (IRF), to identify the function of individual utterances (teacher initiation, elicitation, follow-up and questions).	lower-secondary	audio	3 lessons, 3 teachers	N/A
Najvar et al. (2011)*	In what interaction patterns does the teaching take place and how much time is allocated to them? In what phases does the teaching take place and how much time is allocated to them? What teaching aids and media are used in teaching and how much time is allocated to them? What opportunities to speak for the teacher and for the learners does the teaching afford? Are there any differences (in selected areas) between the teaching of English in the primary and lower-secondary schools? How many words do the teachers and the pupils utter in Czech and in English? How much time is spent speaking English/Czech? What is the nature of learners' utterances in the English language? How much time was dedicated to controlled practice and communicative practice?	primary, lower-secondary	video	lower-secondary: 79 lessons, 25 teachers; primary: 10 lessons, 5 teachers	the South Moravia, Zlín and Olomouc regions
Šebestová (2011)*	To what extent do the lessons afford opportunities to develop the four skills and to what extent are these activities represented in the sample? To what extent are opportunities to develop language reception and production afforded? To what extent do the lessons include activities integrating the four skills? To what extent are the lessons conducted in English and in the mother tongue?	lower-secondary	video	79 lessons, 25 teachers	the South Moravia, Zlín and Olomouc regions

Doskočilová (2012)*	In what aspects of English language teaching do the teachers approach the learners unequally in the light of gender? Do these areas reflect gender stereotypes? Aspects of teaching under investigation: teachers' attention paid to boys and girls, calling on boys and girls (frequency, order and types of questions asked), discipline.	lower-secondary	video	73 lessons	the South Moravia, Zlín and Olomouc regions
Šipošová (2011)	To analyze the proportion of different types of teachers' questions following the Long and Sato (1983) taxonomy.	secondary (grammar schools)	video	12 lessons, 4 teachers, 54 students	Slovakia, the Žilina Region
Zerzová (2012)*	What is the frequency of opportunities to develop intercultural communicative competence (ICC)? What is the quality of opportunities to develop ICC? In which language is ICC developed? What organization patterns are most frequently used during developing ICC in teaching? What teaching aids and media are used when teaching ICC? In what phases of teaching is ICC developed most frequently?	lower-secondary	video	79 lessons, 25 teachers	the South Moravia, Zlín and Olomouc regions
Najvar, Janík and Šebestová (2013)*	In what proportion were the target language (English) and the mother tongue (Czech) used? To what extent were the activities aimed at reception and production of the target language? What are the typical situations in which the speakers switch from one language to another?	primary (10 lessons), lower-secondary (79 lessons)	video	89 lessons, 30 teachers	the South Moravia, Zlín and Olomouc regions
Hanušová et al. (2014)*	What do the learners' utterances say about the opportunities to communicate in EFL lessons?	lower-secondary	video	79 lessons, 25 teachers	the South Moravia, Zlín and Olomouc regions
Zerzová and Šebestová (2014)*	To what extent and how is the process of developing ICC realized through the developing of the four skills?	lower-secondary	video	79 lessons, 25 teachers	the South Moravia, Zlín and Olomouc regions

Note. The asterisk (*) indicates that the study is based on the data collected in the IRSE videostudy.

The impact of marketisation on undergraduate curriculum in an English university: A Bernsteinian analysis

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Abstract: The context for this paper is the marketisation of higher education in England since the 1990s which has established the core mission of the university as primarily economic. Successive government policies have framed this mission as the generation of 'useful' knowledge and the supply of skilled graduates required by companies to compete in the 'global economic race'. Higher education in the UK is now driven by a dynamic in which universities are required to compete for students in a quasi-market characterised by growing stratification and reduced state funding. This paper examines the impact of these changes in a case study of undergraduate curriculum in a university Business School. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews with academics who taught on undergraduate programmes together with a documentary analysis of texts such as module specifications, programme review documents and Business School strategy. Bernstein's pedagogic theory and in particular his concept of recontextualisation was utilised to interpret the findings. It was found that market imperatives relating to the maximisation of income generation dominate the discourse in the Business School. As a result, pedagogical relations have become recontextualised as a form of product management accompanied by a range of unintended consequences.

Keywords: curriculum, pedagogy, marketisation, discourse, Bernstein

The marketisation and massification of universities are the two grand narratives of higher education in the United Kindgom (UK) in the latter part of the 20th century, which continue to be played out in the 21st century (Naidoo, 2011). Writing nineteen years ago, Scott (1995, p. 5) observed that, during the 'turbulent half decade' between 1987 and 1992, participation in higher education almost doubled, from 14.6 % to 27.8 % and Britain 'acquired a mass system'. Some of the 'turbulence' was caused by the *Further*

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and Higher Education Act 1992, which created 74 'new' universities by granting university status to former polytechnics and colleges of higher education. Added to the already established universities, there were now 166 universities and higher education institutions (HEIs) in the UK (Scott, 1995). The expansion of universities post 1992 was driven by the New Labour government's vision for higher education articulated in the *Dearing Report* (1997) and developed through the policy of 'widening participation'. This policy encouraged 'non-traditional' students from families who had never before sent any other members to university to take up higher education study (ESRC, 2008, p.7).

However, what Scott, from the perspective of 1995, could not fully anticipate was the degree to which the mass system of higher education would be so comprehensively reconfigured by successive government policies into a quasi-market (Ainley, 2004). According to public policy reports (e.g. DBIS, 2010; Leitch, 2006), a 'university-knowledge economy nexus' has evolved in which the universities' core mission is to generate the knowledge and supply the 'highly skilled graduates' required by business to compete in the globalised 'knowledge economy'. The following statement by the former Secretary of State in the Department of Business Innovation and Skills (DBIS, 2010), Peter Mandelson, is typical of government discourse on the economic mission of universities:

> Alongside its social and cultural role, higher education is, and will continue to be, central to this country's economic performance in the twenty first century. It is the key mechanism through which knowledge is generated, preserved and passed on. It equips people for the increasingly complex challenges of the modern workplace […]. (DBIS, 2010, p. 7)

Neoliberal notions of a causal relationship between higher education and the growth of the 'knowledge economy' have now become deeply embedded in government discourse on higher education (Lauder et al., 2012). This discourse has been reified by the 'policy technologies' (Ball, 2003) of university league tables and tuition fees. The league tables signify the relative worth of universities by ranking them according to their 'performance'. For example, the recent *Complete University Guide 2014* ranked UK universities' performance in a weighted average of nine indicators: expenditure per student on all academic services; completion rate of students; average entry standards score for students; expenditure per student on staff and

student facilities; proportion of first and upper second degrees; measure of the employability of graduates; measure of the average quality of research; student satisfaction based on student evaluation of the teaching quality and student to staff ratio (*Daily Telegraph*, 2014). These performance indicators have acquired a new significance as a consequence of the *Browne Report* (2010) which, under the guise of the sustainability of the higher education system, recommended raising tuition fees. The fees were tripled by the current Coalition government who argued that raising tuition fees was necessary to ensure 'that teaching at our HEIs is sustainably financed [and] that the quality of that teaching is world class' (Browne, 2010, p. 2).

This paper contends that the discourse of the knowledge economy, together with the material influences of increased student tuition fees and university league tables have fundamentally altered the dynamics of university life, including teaching and learning. As Nixon (2008, p. 344) puts it:

> The language of inputs and outputs, of clients and products, of delivery and measurement… is not just a different way of talking about the same thing. It radically alters what we are talking about. It constitutes a new way of thinking about teaching and learning. Ultimately, it affects how we teach and how we learn.

A university's reputation is now, to a large extent, contingent on its ranking which in turn is contingent on its 'performance' and which in turn determines its market attractiveness to the 'student consumer' (McArdle-Clinton, 2008). Bernstein's (2000) concept of recontextualisation is helpful in understanding how these dynamics shape discourse and action in educational contexts and it is to an exposition of his theory that we now turn.

1 Bernstein's concept of recontextualisation

Basil Bernstein (1924–2000) is considered in the UK as one of the founding fathers of the sociology of education which focuses on the specialised discourse of education, its construction and impact (Daniels, 2006). His main research project was concerned with analysing how the language of education is constructed (the invisible 'grammar') to encode legitimate knowledge. For Bernstein (2000) the 'grammar' or the pedagogic codes underpinning education discourse were infused with ideological properties which legitimated certain types of knowledge and which reflected power relations such as those contained in hegemonic forms of class relations (Sadovnik, 2001).

Bernstein (2000) labelled this process for regulating education discourse the 'pedagogic device', which consisted of three hierarchical sets of rules: the *distributive rules*, the *recontextualisation rules* and the *evaluative* rules. This paper explores how Bernstein's theories and in particular his concept of recontextualisation might provide explanations for the specific relationship between higher education discourse and the curricular features found in the Business School. The operation of these hierarchical rules can be understood from a detailed analysis of pedagogic discourse within two main domains, the official recontextualising field (ORF) and the pedagogic recontextualising field (PRF). According to the theory of the 'pedagogic device', the Business School represents a 'pedagogic space' or a pedagogic recontextualising field (PRF) for knowledge generation and is conceptualised as a 'site of conflict' between competing discourses for control over the legitimacy of knowledge. The official recontextualising field (ORF) is represented by the state apparatus for regulating pedagogic discourse such as education funding agencies or quality assurance agencies, e.g. the Quality Assurance Agency for England (QAA), or departments of education responsible for designing or implementing education policies such as the *Browne Report* (2010). Bernstein (2000) refers to the official discourse on education as containing the *distributive rules* which set the 'limits', or 'ideological boundaries' of legitimate discourse. These rules define the goals and values of the education system over which the state has official governance. For example, by recommending the raising of tuition fees, the *Browne Report* (2010) reinforces the dynamic of marketisation and limits the discourse on development in higher education within the imperatives of financial sustainability and 'world class' quality. 'World class' quality, in turn, is regulated by the QAA university audit which applies performance indicators that are aligned with government policy. This makes the QAA a government agency rather than an independent quality assurance institution (Salter & Tapper, 2000), further shaping the discourse on quality, performance measures and university league table rankings.

The *recontextualising rules* are derived from the *distributive rules* and regulate the enactment of pedagogic discourse in the pedagogic space (e.g. the Business School). Within the pedagogic space, discourse from the ORF and other PRFs (for example employer organisations and publishers such as Pearson Education Ltd) is continually decoded and recoded (recontextualised) into new pedagogic discourse by academics and university management. The discursive characteristics of the recontextualised curriculum and pedagogy

can be further understood in terms of Bernstein's concepts of classification/ recognition and framing/realisation. Classification refers here to the location of the boundaries between disciplinary knowledge discourses and the nature of the boundaries themselves. Bernstein (2000) distinguished between strongly classified knowledge, such as that found in the traditional, 'pure', disciplines such as physics or history (which he termed 'singulars') and the new vocational subjects such as business studies (which he termed 'regions'), which were weakly classified. In Bernstein's theory, knowledge classification is a function of *power* (+/-C) or the capacity of the discipline to insulate itself from outside influences or competing discourses. Classification contains within it *recognition rules* which provide both the academic and the student with the means to discriminate between 'knowledges' in terms of their relative legitimacy (Singh, 2002). Framing refers to the degree of regulation (+/- F) relating to the selection, sequencing, pacing and evaluation criteria in pedagogic practice. Framing contains *realisation rules* which guide academics in designing pedagogy and enable students to produce and reproduce legitimate texts, for example through the assessment regime. This paper contends that the Business School curriculum promotes narrow forms of technical/procedural knowledge that students are being asked to recognise as legitimate knowledge and to reproduce (realise) in assessment texts likely to lead to surface learning (Entwhistle, 1996). These rules are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1
Recontextualising pedagogic codes

Pedagogic code	*Classification*: relates to the strength of the boundaries between 'knowledges' (permeability) Strongly classified +C Weakly classified -C	*Framing*: relates to the strength of regulation in selection, sequencing, pacing and evaluation of pedagogic practice Strongly framed +F Weakly framed −F
Linked to power or control	*Power* relations: create, legitimise and reproduce boundaries. Operate on relations *between* categories.	*Control*: establishes legitimate communications, provides regulation over forms of communication appropriate *within* categories.
Linked to further codes (the level of the acquirer)	*Recognition rules*: provide the means for discriminating between the relative legitimacy of different 'knowledges'	*Realisation rules*: enable appropriate realisations to be produced/ reproduced by learners

Note. Adapted from Bernstein (2000).

The dynamic relations between the curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation have been summarised by Bernstein (1973, p. 85) as follows:

> Curriculum defines what counts as valid knowledge, pedagogy defines what counts as valid transmission of knowledge, and evaluation defines what counts as a valid realization of the knowledge on the part of the taught.

As pointed out by Sadovnik (2001, p.4), Bernstein's project went beyond 'the description of the production and transmission of knowledge; he was concerned with its consequences for different [social] groups'. The core aim of his project was to develop a theory which

> […] analyzed the way in which changes in the division of labour create different meaning systems and codes, that provided analytic classifications of these systems, and that incorporated a conflict model of unequal power relations into its structural approach. (Sadovnik, 2001, p. 5)

Bernstein's theory, therefore, provides insight into the invisible grammar which underpins curriculum design and pedagogic practice in the Business School and its probable ideological origins. Here the findings reveal that the dominant discourse of marketisation and the knowledge economy has been recontextualised to define particular forms of 'useful knowledge'. Paradoxically, 'useful knowledge' has been coded as 'know-how' which valorises procedural knowledge at the expense of more powerful forms of knowledge which can take the learner beyond their immediate experience (Young, 2012). The negative consequences arising from the recontextualisation of curriculum design and pedagogic practice in the Business School provide the focus for the Key Findings section. Before that, the research methodology is outlined below.

2 Research methodology

A single case study research design was developed for the collection and analysis of empirical data (Yin, 2009). Defined as a research strategy for an empirical investigation of a particular phenomenon in its real life context (Yin, 2009), the case study was deemed suitably aligned with Bernsteinian conceptual framework. Specifically, the permeability of the boundaries between the case and its context (Yin, 2009) resonates with the concept of recontextualisation, both within the case (the Business School) (PRF) and in

the interactions with its environment (ORF). The selection of the Business School and the undergraduate curriculum as the units of analysis arises from the valorisation of curricula linked to employability and other utilitarian aims in the dominant discourse emanating from government. The pedagogic robustness of curricula that purport to lead to positive educational and economic outcomes is, therefore, of current interest to educationalists.

The data were collected through semi-structured interviews (n = 24) with academics who taught on the two focal undergraduate programmes and a documentary review of relevant texts. The two undergraduate programmes: BA *Business Studies* (BS) and BA *Entrepreneurship and Innovation* (E&I), were treated as 'embedded units of analysis' (Yin 2009). Interview questions concerned participants' perceptions of professional practice relating to programme validation, module design and pedagogy. Interview transcripts were coded using NVivo9.2 in order to identify themes and evaluate construct convergence/divergence.

3 Key findings

This research has found that as a consequence of recontextualisation, dominant approaches to curriculum design in the Business School are strongly aligned with the official discourse on the primacy of economic goals in higher education. Further, that this influence undermines pedagogic practice and pedagogical relations.

The Business School

The Business School is located in a 'new' University (post 1992) in the South of England which has a core student population of approximately 28,000, of which 22,000 are undergraduates. From its inception, and not surprisingly given its former polytechnic status, the university's mission and curriculum have been explicitly 'vocational'. The rapid expansion of the Business School from the late 1990s was driven by the New Labour's widening participation agenda. Typical of the 'new' universities, thousands of students were recruited locally, inspired by the government discourse of the knowledge economy and the promise of future careers in well-paid middle class occupations (DfES, 2002). These were frequently 'non-traditional students' (ESRC, 2008) who gained entrance to the Business School by mainly non-academic vocational pathways such as General National Vocational Qualifications

(GNVQs)[1]. This historical context partly explains the ethos of undergraduate programmes that developed in the Business School in the late 1990s and into the 21st century.

Based on the analysis of the BS and E&I handbooks, these programmes are characterised by a common core of curricular features and are explicitly vocational in their aim of preparing students for flexible, non-occupation specific career pathways. This flexibility is predicated on 'transferable' skills such as: communication; application of number; improving own learning; working with others; problem solving. The programme content is narrowly technicist and the pedagogy ostensibly based on 'student centred' learning. Above all, the programmes are assessment-driven and strongly framed (+F) in terms of 'learning outcomes', often expressed as the attainment of skills (QAA, 2007). Of particular note in this regard was the diminution of theoretical knowledge in favour of 'know-how' or 'practical knowledge'. It does not seem implausible that to base expansion at the Business School on the recruitment of 'non-traditional' students, a curriculum needed to be designed which built on the particular educational capabilities of these students derived from their pre-university educational experiences and achievements.

As mentioned above, as a discipline of knowledge, business studies represents one of the 'new regions' (Bernstein, 2000). Unlike 'singulars' such as physics, which are strongly classified (+C), the 'new regions' such as business studies are recontextualisations of 'singulars' such as economics, psychology and mathematics. They are weakly classified (−C) and 'face outwards towards external fields of practice' and their 'contents are likely to be dependent on the requirements of these fields' (Bernstein, 2000, p. 55). This, in turn, makes the 'new regions' more susceptible to further recontextualisation, as curriculum designers are influenced by shifting discourses from 'outside'. This paper contends that, in Bernsteinian terms, the commoditisation of the curriculum in the Business School (PRF) is a direct consequence of its strong ideological alignment with the dominant discourse (ORF) of the knowledge economy and marketisation.

[1] GNVQs were secondary level qualifications, related to business sub-disciplines rather than specific jobs and assessed mainly through coursework (rather than examination). GNVQs were discontinued in 2007. BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council) qualifications now offer similar post- 16 years vocational courses such as Business Studies; Travel and Tourism. The owners of BTEC, Pearson Education Ltd, currently promote BTEC as 'the world's most successful and best-loved applied learning brand' (Pearson, 2014).

The commoditisation of the curriculum

Strategy documents provided the main policy vehicles for curriculum development in the Business School and often framed the curriculum as 'products' for the educational marketplace. The following example typifies the managerial discourse on the curriculum:

> We will also broaden our portfolio of income generating activities to reduce our reliance on income from the traditional full-time home student market […] We will also focus on operational efficiencies and so some programmes that have not demonstrated good recruitment potential will be discontinued. (*Strategic Plan*, 2010–13)

In alignment with government policy, management discourse recontextualised the university as a global business where opportunities for economic growth were given particular priority. For example:

> After rapid expansion the School now aims to consolidate international operations around key strategic partners. This strategy has already started with the discontinuation of two small partners […] New partners with strong financial backing and in locations with high growth potential will also be sought to expand the portfolio. (*Strategic Plan*, 2010–13)

The key point here is that the managerial discourse around curriculum and pedagogy was dominated by the values of income generation, efficiency and market competition. Consequently, undergraduate programmes were designed to maximise market demand for the least cost. This gave rise to the practice of the 'bundling' of undergraduate programmes. The Business School employed 140 academics but was nevertheless able to offer 97 discrete programmes clustered within programme 'suites' such as 'Business with…', e.g. 'Business with Marketing' or 'Business with Supply Chain Management'. This was achieved by constructing programmes within the programme suites to consist of a generic core of modules differentiated by a few modules in Years 2 and 3 and a discrete programme title. For example, if the BA Business Studies (BS) is compared with the BA Entrepreneurship and Innovation (E&I), Year 1 modules are identical, Year 2 modules are also identical with the exception of two modules not available to BS students and one double credit core option not available to E&I students. Year 3 is identical with the exception of two modules that appear as core on E&I but only one of which can be taken on the BS.

The approach to curriculum design based on market competitiveness and growth had important consequences for teaching. For example, modules within the programmes were arranged according to the principles of efficiency rather than pedagogy. Interview participants struggled to explain the relationship between the modules either within or between Years 1–3. One participant described the design of the 'Innovation' modules as 'bizarre' but explained that the lack of a relationship between modules was determined by 'access':

> […] the Entrepreneurship [programme] people should have done the second level module [Innovation 2]. So those people have come across innovation before, innovation in competitive environments. But most of my class, which is nearly two hundred strong, […] are coming from BA Business Studies and the other general programmes. So you have to remember that for the people that I'm teaching, this is basically their first exposure. (Harrison)

In other words, accommodating students successfully on modules on different programmes required that modules had no prerequisites and were, therefore, discrete. Trevor identified a commoditised approach to curriculum design:

> Well these [modules in the programme schema] were designed presumably at a time when student numbers were increasing, it was quite competitive, you tried to make attractive programmes that were good for the outside market. I mean, by and large this university's successful in doing that. (Trevor)

In rationalising curriculum design all but three interview participants cited key skills or employability as the key organising principles. There was little appreciation beyond three of the 24 participants that the principle of progression appeared to be ignored in the design of the programmes. There was no relationship between the modules cited by the participants except that they were 'relevant to business' and promoted key skills. In Bernsteinian terms the curriculum was weakly classified (-C) and strongly framed (+F) to produce incoherent but heavily regulated undergraduate programmes. This paradigm was reinforced by the erosion of pedagogical relations.

Erosion of pedagogical relations

The first point of contact with the Business School by a potential undergraduate student is most likely to be its website. An analysis of textual data[2] available on the website confirms Trevor's evaluation of the curriculum as 'attractive… for the outside market'. The potential student is positioned as a 'customer' and 'offered' a 'teaching portfolio' of programmes as well as 'extras', such as an attractive location. These official website texts are couched in the language of 'success', 'cutting-edge practice', high 'student satisfaction' and a 'wide range of career options'. The teaching 'offered' by the Business School is referred to as 'helping', 'supporting', 'providing', 'giving' and 'equipping' students with the 'practical skills and knowledge employers need'. Student learning, in turn, is referred to as 'taking programmes', 'putting theory into practice', 'solving problems', 'doing' (e.g. 'doing business law'). This discourse objectifies and instrumentalises knowledge as something 'given' to the students (Molesworth et al., 2011). It overlooks the thinking, effort and dissonance or 'disjuncture' that are an inextricable part of the learning process (Jarvis, 2007). Instead, it conveys an overarching promise of 'equipping' students with skills and knowledge which will enable them to succeed in the job market. This, in turn, is symptomatic of an erosion of pedagogical relations, whereby university education becomes a transaction (Brady, 2012) based on student expectation to be given help during their studies and a job upon completion, in return for their investment[3].

The intent underpinning the website discourse appears to be predominantly promotional, as exemplified by a video with 'sound bites' from a sample of Business School tutors and alumni. Their messages convey the 'benefits' of studying at the Business School through the use of hyperbole, for example 'absolutely fabulous' tutors (an alumna) and access to 'high flyer careers' (a tutor). In terms of the aims of specific degrees on offer, an introduction to the E&I programme promotes 'learning to behave entrepreneurially' as one of three key reasons for studying the programme. This framing of learning in terms of superficial behavioural change, in conjunction with the discourse of success, seems to have affirmed student expectations, which often turn out to be a cause of dissonance. Based on the interview data and contrary

[2] In order to ensure anonymity, the analysis of these data does not include longer quotations from the Business School website.

[3] In line with universities of similar ranking, the Business School fees for home students total approximately £25,500 for a three-year undergraduate degree programme.

to the website image of an 'energetic community', low student engagement has been a significant problem in the Business School. Issues around student engagement bemoaned by 19 of 24 participants included: 'shockingly' low attendance, refusal to read theoretically-oriented texts and to complete formative tasks. Low engagement was linked to the possibility that some tutors 'may not be interesting the students enough' because they do not contextualise theory by reference to up to date examples or 'stories' (Diana, Bruce). Trevor bemoaned the quality of case studies used for teaching as either 'out of date', irrelevant or 'uninteresting'. Most academics, however, appeared to link low engagement to students' personal attributes, by referring to students as 'lazy' or 'passive'. Rose saw the lack of student engagement as caused by wider cultural factors, particularly students' inappropriate expectations about learning acquired prior to coming to university:

> The culture, everywhere. Just achieving a small thing and they are told: 'Excellent, you've done very well!' … I question it. What does it mean that you've done very well?

In Bernsteinian terms, low student engagement is a symptom of pedagogy in which the process of learning is weakly framed (-F), whilst learning outcomes (student satisfaction, future career) are strongly framed (+F). This triggers recognition rules which prioritise approaches to teaching as transmission of 'know-how' (often a pseudonym for information) and reconfigures student-teacher relations into those between the customer and service provider. Students as 'customers' pay to achieve success, for example a first class degree, through minimum effort on their part. Tutors, in turn, seek to 'engage' rather than challenge students and pacify those 'not satisfied' with the pedagogic realisation of the study experience 'offered' by the official website discourse. It is also possible to assume that students may learn to recognise and realise knowledge as 'disposable' after the successful completion of modules.

4 Conclusion

One of the main problems permeating the curriculum and pedagogy in the Business School is an overreliance on 'practical', 'transferrable' skills and a neglect of a coherent theoretical underpinning for undergraduate programmes of study. The fragmentation of the curriculum into largely discrete and disconnected modules appears to diminish the possibility of students

engaging with a coherent 'system of meaning' (Wheelahan, 2010). Bernstein (2000, p. 157) refers to this problem as the closure of learner opportunities to engage with 'vertical discourse'. Vertical discourse offers conceptual understanding which transcends 'practical' experience and 'knowing-how'. Consequently, engaging with vertical discourse enables acquisition of the kind of knowledge which has genuine capacity for transferability across contexts or understanding beyond the student's personal experience. It is this kind of knowledge that may also be key to genuine 'employability' in the current context of fast-growing graduate unemployment (Allen & Ainley, 2013).

However, as pointed out by Alvesson (2013, p. 90), the consequences of massification and marketisation of higher education are complex and a degree from a high-ranking university does not automatically guarantee access to 'attractive, well paid, and influential jobs'. By extrapolation, employment opportunities for 'non-traditional' graduates with degrees conferred by 'new' universities may be even more problematic. This is because the commoditised curriculum appears to close students' access to vertical discourse compounded by pedagogical relations which position them as 'passive' customers. Through his analysis of the pedagogic codes and their consequences for all involved in working and studying within the 'pedagogic space', Bernstein has thus made a contribution to our understanding of how, paradoxically, education may reproduce what it is tasked with eradicating – educational and social disadvantage. Thus whilst this case study has not sought to generalise to a statistical population, it does offer insight into some of the complexities of an interesting phenomenon which has arisen in the Business School. A Bernsteinian analysis of students' accounts of their experience of the commoditised curriculum in the marketised university in the wider European Higher Education Area would seem to offer a rich vein for future research.

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Vliv marketizace na kurikulum bakalářského studia na anglické univerzitě: Bernsteinovská analýza

Abstrakt: Kontext tohoto příspěvku tvoří marketizace terciárního vzdělávání v Anglii, která probíhá od devadesátých let dvacátého století a podle které je hlavní funkcí univerzity funkce ekonomická. Několik po sobě jdoucích vládních strategií zaštiťovalo tento přístup voláním po vytváření „užitečných" poznatků a po zásobě šikovných absolventů, které potřebují firmy, aby mohly uspět v „globálních ekonomických závodech". Terciární vzdělávání ve Spojeném království je nyní poháněno takovou dynamikou, ve které jsou univerzity nuceny soutěžit o studenty na kvazi-trhu, pro který je charakteristická rostoucí stratifikace a snížené financování státem. Tento příspěvek zkoumá dopad těchto změn v rámci případové studie kurikula bakalářského studia na ekonomické fakultě jedné z univerzit (*a university Business School*). Sběr dat probíhal pomocí polostrukturovaných rozhovorů s vyučujícími v bakalářských

programech. Dále byla uskutečněna analýza dokumentů (např. specifikace studijních modulů, oficiální hodnocení a revize studijních programů, strategie fakulty apod.). K interpretaci výsledků byla využita bernsteinovská pedagogická teorie, především pak koncept rekontextualizace. Analýzy naznačují, že diskurzu na Business School dominují požadavky trhu vztahující se k maximalizaci generovaného příjmu. Výsledkem je rekontextualizace pedagogických vztahů jako formy řízení produktu, kterou doprovází řada nezamýšlených důsledků.

Klíčová slova: kurikulum, pedagogika, marketizace, diskurz, Bernstein

High autonomy and low accountability: Case study of five Czech schools [1]

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Abstract: The paper aims to describe the effects of a unique combination of high autonomy and low outcome accountability of the Czech schools. First, the paper outlines test-based accountability as a key concept of contemporary educational policy. Next, the research design is briefly described and the qualitative data on the effects of school choice and curriculum autonomy / decentralisation are presented. The discussion stresses the problem of time frame in evaluating system wide interventions and also sketches a vision of new emerging school reform discourse. Processes of change in five Czech "combined" primary and lower secondary schools were studied by qualitative longitudinal multiple case study for over 5 years. Surprisingly, the results suggest that many negative effects ascribed to the high-stakes tests (e. g. curriculum narrowing, fabrication of image) could be seen in the studied schools despite the different model of governance in the Czech Republic. The contemporary discussion of risks of (high stake) testing should be complemented by a similar analysis of both costs and negative effects of the absence of outcome accountability.

Keywords: school improvement, educational reform, transition, Czech Republic, multiple case study

Standardised testing and accountability became mainstream policies across many dimensions of school life**,** not only in their traditional strongholds in Western Europe and North America, but also in Central and Eastern Europe (Eurydice, 2009; UNESCO, 2007). Many academics, however, complain about the "totalizing and terroristic dominance" (Chua, 2009, p. 160) of this discourse of performance and enumerate the unintended and/or negative effects of these policies. We discuss a complementary problem here. The primary and lower secondary schools in the Czech Republic were granted

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an extremely high degree of autonomy but no national data about pupil outcomes were collected by state authorities. In this paper, we describe some effects of this unique combination of high autonomy and low outcome accountability on the behaviour of schools.

1 Theoretical and historical contexts

Accountability is a policy promoted by national governments and transnational actors as a strategy for attacking low quality and inequity in education as well as in other public services. Under process (input) accountability teachers or schools are expected to use certain methods and strategies to achieve the goals of education. Outcome accountability (accountability for results) means that schools should generate measureable outcomes (usually test results) without the need to prove how they did it. In reality blended systems are often used (Tetlock et al., 2013). Many authors, however, use the term "school accountability" as an equivalent for the *outcome* accountability systems only.

Outcome accountability systems usually evaluate the school performance on the basis of standardised assessment results (test-based accountability). Bruns, Filmer and Petrinos (2011, pp. 2–3) list three key lines of accountability for results: (1) *information reforms* publicise the data about school results to enable the pupils and their parents to make choices and hold the providers accountable; (2) *reforms of school management* provide the schools with increased autonomy to control key resources (money, people, curriculum etc.); (3) under *incentive policies* teachers or the whole schools are sanctioned for the results. [2] The publicised and/or sanctioned results tend to be based on testing aligned with performance standards.

School accountability reforms often go hand in hand with another reform policy – parental choice of schools creating a (quasi) market in education. An accountability system indicates to parents whether individual schools provide adequate education. The school choice policy gives them the right to choose a school for their child using the information on how well schools are doing (West & Peterson, 2006). As well as in any other sector, for educational market to work reliable information must be available (OECD, 2013c).

[2] Complementary strategies are the involvement of private sector to create more competitive market for education and reforms devolution of powers and resources from central Ministry of Education to regional level of governance (Bruns, Filmer, & Petrinos, 2011, p. 21).

Despite the widespread use of outcome accountability in many developed as well developing countries, this educational policy is denounced by many critics. According to its opponents, the accountability policies based on standardised testing are not effective in achieving the intended goal – "raising the bar and closing the gap". Besides, the high-stakes testing is believed to have many unintended negative effects such as the de-professionalisation of teachers, teaching to the test – narrowing the curriculum and overemphasizing decontextualized skills, cheating and many others (e. g., Bellmann & Weiß, 2009; de Wolf *&* Janssens, 2007).

While the accountability policies (or high-stakes testing) are subject to intense critique, there is broad agreement that "learning outcomes should be monitored" (Unesco, 2007, p. 67). Pupil learning assessments provide the indispensable feedback to policy-makers. The tests based on sample surveys may be used for system monitoring purposes. Despite that, some low-stake assessments test the whole pupil population to provide every child of a certain age (and the parents) with information about his or her strengths and weaknesses and about his or her knowledge and skills across the classroom, school, region or the whole school system.

2.1 Accountability and reforms in the Czech Republic

Historically in Central Europe the traditional and very influential German model of schooling promoted neither the use of standardised assessment nor accountability. The governance of school systems was based on the bureaucratic/professional mechanisms of a high degree of centralised state regulation. The state supervision was focused on a prescription of inputs/processes, not on the measurement of outcomes. According to Humboldtian vision of education expressed in the term *Bildung*,

> what is most important about education – the aesthetic ends, the search for freedom and truth, the ennobling exposure to history and so on – is simply not measurable. And so it was not measured. The national government had no legal authority to measure pupil achievement or progress, the teachers were opposed and the states had no interest in measuring these things. (OECD, 2011a, p. 208)

Despite that, the important countries in Central Europe like Poland and, above all, the Federal Republic of Germany (Klieme et al., 2004; Neumann, Fischer, & Kauertz, 2010) introduced nation-wide compulsory testing in their educational systems. Schools in these countries are now required to demonstrate

measurable learning outcomes. Overall the prevalence of national assessments in Central and Eastern Europe increased from 25% to 65% between the 1990s and the 2000s (Unesco, 2007, p. 69). The Eurydice (2009) study found that the vast majority of EU countries use national tests at primary and lower secondary levels. Only the Czech Republic, Greece, and Liechtenstein did not hold the national tests in 2009.[3] Thus the Czech Republic, with no national assessment (neither high-stakes nor low-stakes) of learning in primary and lower secondary schools, has become quite a unique case.[4]

In the 1990s, after the collapse of Communism, the early system-wide reforms that were performed by the right-wing governments were strongly influenced by the neoliberal ideology. The reforms granted parents considerable choice over which school their child would attend. It was expected that the parents' right to choose the school that best served their child and financing per capita would stimulate the competition among schools, and in long term *would* increase the quality of teaching, learning and educational outcomes. This market mechanism, however, was transplanted into a Central European context that was hostile to the idea of testing for information accountability purposes at that time. So the key assumption of the market – that parents have the necessary information to choose the schools (OECD, 2013c, p. 54) – was not fulfilled. Some leading Czech or Slovak academics' critical voices echo their Western counterparts and continue to denounce not only the policies based on the testing as neo-liberal governmentality, but also problematise the use of (standardised) achievement tests for assessment purposes per se (e. g. Štech, 2011; Kaščák & Pupala, 2011, 2012).

In the first decade of the new century, the responsibility of Czech schools for resource allocation has increased substantially.[5] School directors have great control over budgets and staff now but the other side of the coin is represented by an increase in administrative burden on school directors. Everyday responsibilities of school principals (financial, legal and personal

[3] A small German-speaking community in Belgium and Wales did not use the national tests either but in the latter case this praxis has been disputed as the achievement of Welsh pupils is poor when compared to the rest of the United Kingdom.

[4] Two attempts to introduce compulsory tests in the last grade of both primary and lower secondary schools (grade 5 and grade 9) were discontinued within the past ten years. The schools can use the tests developed and sold by several commercial providers. Since 2014, the national tests for system-level monitoring based of sample surveys shall be run every year.

[5] The transformation to the new legal status giving the school greater responsibility for resource allocation has been optional since 1990s and obligatory for every school since 2003.

management issues) leave virtually no time for the instructional leadership (McKinsey & Co., 2010). Another major educational reform of primary and lower secondary education has been implemented in the Czech Republic since 2007. This time, the policy was devised by left-wing government. The reform deepened and institutionalised the previous trends towards the wide autonomy of schools in the areas of curriculum and pupil assessment. School-based curriculum development was the key element of the reform and such curricula developed obligatorily by the school staff replaced the traditional centralised syllabi. As Figure 1 shows, the degree of autonomy perceived by Czech school directors is very high. (The figure compares OECD countries only but the data for all countries participating in PISA 2012 would provide a similar picture – only Macao, China, would join the group of three countries with the maximal values of both dimensions of autonomy.)[6]

Such wide autonomy (specifically the autonomy in resource allocation) is believed to be an advantage when balanced by adequate accountability measures (OECD, 2011b). This is not the case of Czech schools. This assertion may sound as an unsupported claim because the data from PISA 2012 school questionnaire seem to show an average level of school accountability in the Czech Republic when measured by indicators such as the share of schools, where school performance is compared against regional or national benchmarks or publicly posting the information about pupils' achievement (OECD, 2013c). The responses of Czech directors in the PISA 2012 questionnaire, however, were probably influenced by their experience with the try-outs of large-scale national standardised assessments held in 2012 and 2013, assessments that were abolished after the new government came to power in 2014. While national content standards have been set recently, there are no national benchmarks in a strict sense. The tests provided by commercial publishers are used by schools on a voluntary basis. As there are no rules for posting the test results, there is a wide space for gaming the system (as our research illustrated).

[6] It is noteworthy that despite the high autonomy and absence of performativity policies, neither Czech adolescents nor their teachers seem to be happy in the Czech schools (OECD, 2013b; OECD, 2014).

The question arises what effects might result from this rather unique combination of high school autonomy, low information accountability and considerable school choice in the Czech educational system.

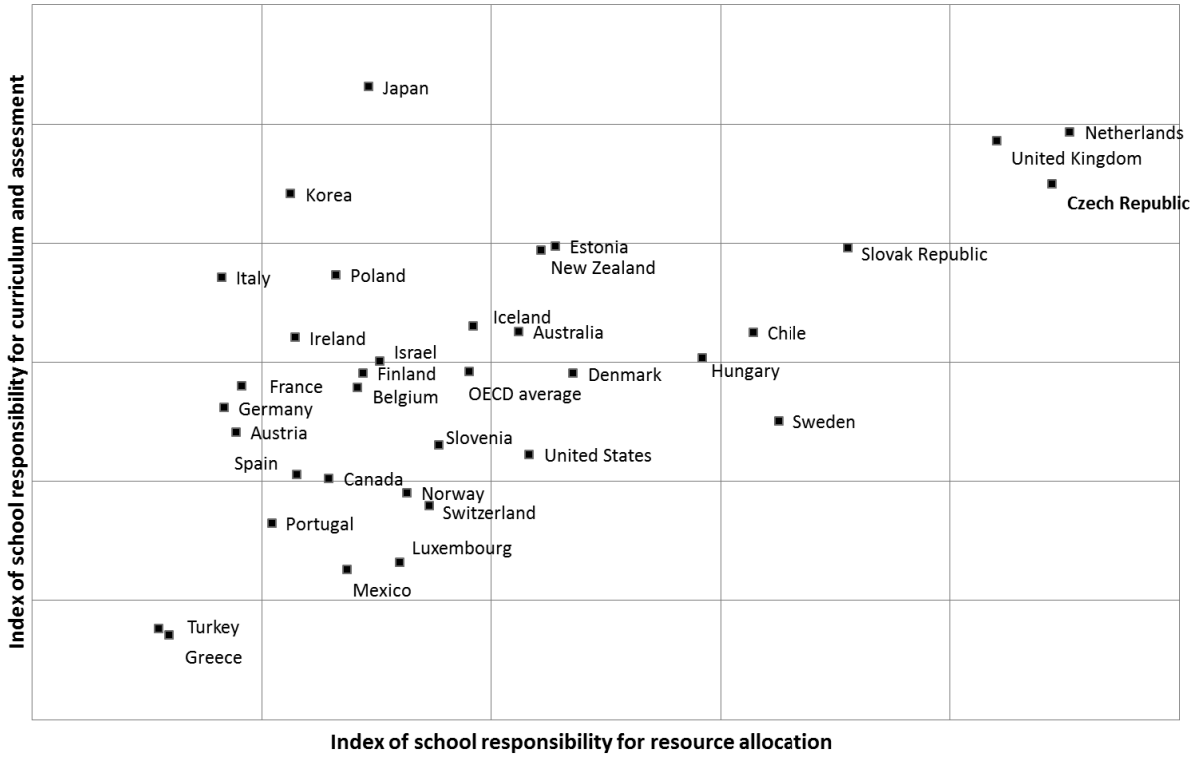

Figure 1. The autonomy of schools in OECD countries as perceived by school directors (Data: OECD, 2013c).

1.2 Research questions

The effects of the recent curricular reform have been systematically monitored on the level of upper secondary general education (Janík et al., 2011; Píšová et al., 2011). On the level of ISCED 1 and ISCED 2, only a limited number of features were studied, most of them being the beliefs and attitudes of teachers or parents (Moree, 2013; Straková, 2010, 2013; Straková et al., 2013; Walterová et al., 2010). Our longitudinal research adds to the existing knowledge on reforms in transition countries. The main emphasis is put on the interaction between the processes of inner school development and the top-down mandated educational reform.

We have two broad goals: (1) The study of the effects of structural properties of the Czech compulsory education system (e. g. organisational unity of primary and lower secondary levels within single school organizations; the early selection of pupils into selective grammar schools and "comprehensive" tracks; the school choice, the absence of national monitoring of outcomes) on learning and teaching in individual schools. (2) The school and classroom level change processes (changes in learning, teaching and school management) in the context of the major national curricular reform.

In this paper, we would like to answer the following two research questions:

1. What mechanisms of change can be identified in the five schools in the past five years?
2. How do the schools cope with the unique situation of high autonomy and low accountability?

2 Methods

In the years 2007–2008 and 2012–2013, we studied the current picture of teaching, learning and instructional leadership in five Czech basic schools (i.e. comprehensive primary and lower secondary schools) using the research design of qualitative multiple case study (Stake, 2005). The multiple case study is particularly suitable for the analysis of the common social norms and constraints behind the everyday work of individual schools, as well as for the description of unique contextual influences. The longitudinal design and time frame of the study enabled us to look at medium to long-term effects of policy changes.

2.1 Sample

A set of five schools from different parts of the Czech Republic was chosen by theoretical sampling, based on the assumptions about the role of context, particularly the degree of competition for pupils among neighbouring schools. Although not a representative sample, the schools represent different types (state/Catholic; urban/suburban/rural; small/medium/large school). All of them, however, are comprehensives and serve children in grades 1–9. Only one school, dubbed here as Selective, used to be a specialised school focused on foreign language teaching but this special profile has been somewhat fading in recent years as many other schools make English their priority and two foreign languages must be taught in every school now.

Table 1
The schools in multiple case study

	Community size (inhabitants)	Unemployment in community (2011, in %)	Established/ governed by	Distance to next school (km)	Recent development
Diverse	3 723	7	Community	2	Genuine efforts for quality of services, and simultaneously complex micro-politics and power games inside the school and within the local community.
Highlands	2 790	8	Community	7	Very stable school in a small highland town. Successful school development projects supported by EU grants: ICT, local history, ELT, may be seen as a learning community.
Selective	over 1 milion	4	Church	0,3	Facing fierce competition of other schools in major city. A charismatic founding school director has retired after 20 years recently.
Small	1 443	3,6	Community	2,4	Near a major city. Almost closed 8 years ago, since then successful turnover. Today attractive and fast growing.
Suburban	9 462	3,8	Community	1	Very fast growth of pupil population due to dynamic development of suburban community. Rather conservative school with the strategy of continuous improvement of some areas in small steps.

At the beginning of the study two of the schools faced serious problems with a lack of pupils due to parents' preference of other schools in the community (the Small school) or due to frequent pupil transitions to selective grammar schools after grade 5 or after grade 7 (the Selective school). On the contrary, two schools (Highlands and Diverse) had very stable pupil populations. One school had been expanding quickly and operating above the full capacity because the new suburbs in the immediate vicinity supplied plenty of children (Suburban).

2.2 Data collection and analysis

The main data collection was performed in the first year of the reform[7] and again five years later. Extensive triangulation of methods and data sources was used to collect data from the schools. Besides interviewing the teachers and school administrators, we observed both classroom instruction and extracurricular activities. The school curricula, inspection reports and other documents were analysed as well. The pupils of grades 6 and 9 were interviewed using the focus group method. These mainly qualitative data were supplemented by staff's social climate measurements (questionnaire OCDQ-RS). In this paper, we use mainly the data from the interviews with school leaders and staff and from school documents.

The data were coded and narrative descriptions were constructed for each case stressing its unique context and the change (or stability) of leadership and teaching practices. Finally, the cross-case analysis using cross-case displays was performed, looking for the key issues that emerged in the single cases and topics. The data collection and analysis is described in detail by Dvořák et al. (2010).

To enhance the quality and credibility of our study, we used the sequential research design. The individual case (school) studies followed one another. In this way all three authors took part in field research in every school and contributed to the case report (investigator triangulation). Despite that, all possible sources of bias have not been avoided: all three researchers are middle-aged white males which might influence our perspective. Our stance is influenced by our autobiography (Ball, 2000). We all spent half of our lives

[7] In school year 2007–2008 all schools had to use new curricula developed by the school staff in the 1st and 6th grades. In the following years the new curricula have been introduced to all grades.

under the Communist rule. The idea of judging and comparing individuals and schools based on measurable outputs (performativity) may be attractive to us because in Communist state the status and incentives depended mainly on one's class origin and manifested Party loyalty instead of abilities or hard work. We felt this possible source of bias should be declared here.

Another technique used to enhance the quality of research was member checking (participant validation): every draft case report was presented to the school management and volunteers from the staff, and the comments obtained were used to improve the report. As a result of the long-term contact with the schools, high level of rapport was built with some respondents. In some cases the information provided to us seemed to be very open and honest.

3 Results

The qualitative data on the effects of school choice, resource and curriculum autonomy are presented.

3.1 The school choice

Five years ago the effects of market mechanisms (school choice) introduced in the 1990s were clearly seen in the schools in urban areas like the Small school and the Selective school. In the Small school the lack of pupils due to parents' preference of other schools in the area contributed to school restructuring: The school director and his deputy were replaced. After the new director had been appointed, half of the old staff left and new teachers were hired. Since then the school's situation has changed significantly. The number of pupils exceeded the school capacity as two thirds of the first graders come out of the catchment area now. In the absence of information accountability, the increase in the quantity of pupils is the main tactical goal and the main indicator of the school improvement. When asked "How would you characterise the situation of your school at the moment?", the school director talked mainly about the steady growth of pupils' intake. The only other point he mentioned was the stability of the staff in the last years. So the pupils' results are not explicitly considered.

Today the school choice is taking ground even in the semi-rural Highland school area. The Highland school is a single school in a small town (2.8 thousand inhabitants). For geographic and social reasons we expected

the least favourable conditions for parent's choice to be here. Five years ago market forces did not press on change. Many people in the community work in blue-collar jobs, some are migrant workers from Slovakia. The educational aspirations of local families are not high. The school is in a hilly region and the next fully organised school (i. e. school with grades 1–9) is approx. 7 km away in a similar small town (dubbed in this research Lipová). Despite that, the school displays a number of favourable features. It has very stable staff and very good staff climate. The school can be regarded as a learning community – all teachers participate in ongoing development of their ICT skills. The effects of this effort are clearly visible in the wide and skilled use of computers and interactive whiteboards in instruction.

Between the Highland community and Lipová lies the village of Lhota (5 km away from the Highland school). Every year some half-dozen children leave the village nursery. Lhota is closer to Lipová (the distance is 3 km) and belongs to Lipová catchment area[8].

> It was a tradition that all children from Lhota went automatically to school in Lipová no matter where the parents commuted to. The parents did not choose. Now the pattern has changed. In recent years half of the children from Lhota enter our first grade and half of them go to Lipová,

reports the Highland school director and admits that she visits the Lhota nursery and "talks to the parents". So not only the affluent urban parents are exercising their right to choose today.

The competition for enrolment also limits the co-operation or networking of the neighbouring schools, mainly to extra-curricular activities (like athletic events such as those in the Suburban school). Schools are very reluctant to share what they regard as the key know-how related to the core educational processes. First signs of the different approach could be found in the Small school, where a genuine effort to help a struggling school in vicinity was observed.

The school choice in the absence of national benchmarks led to the paradoxical situation in the Suburban area. In this rapidly growing community there are two schools not far away from each other, one of them being the Suburban. The Suburban school has plenty of pupils now and had to increase its capacity recently due to its demographic context.

[8] Catchment areas were not abolished but parents are free to choose the school out of the area.

Attracting all pupils from the catchment area seems to be more of a question of prestige than an economic need. Surprisingly, the challenging standards for its pupils the school tries to set and maintain might be an obstacle in this effort.

The school serves very diverse children population from both (upper-) middle class families from newly built suburbs and those from more rural parts of the catchment area. The school faces the problem of very diverse parent expectations. During our 2013 visits to the Suburban school, teachers expressed their worries that some parents would transfer their children to the other school in the area to avoid the (perceived) high demands in Suburban school. Indeed, parents complain about what they perceive as too demanding standards e.g. in secondary history and physical education classes. Since the national curricular framework is very vague and national benchmarks for the subjects are not being set, the school director (P. E. teacher himself) was lacking the foundation to evaluate the history teacher's approach. The science teacher in the same school reports similar problems: "I don't know how to convince [both parents and pupils] that my requirements really are at the very minimum."

In all studied schools, parents exercise their right to choose the school. The Selective school is often attended by children from Christian families living outside the catchment area but the size of the building limits the possibility to increase the school intake. Sometimes, like in the Small one, the increasing intake seems to be regarded as an important or even the main reliable indicator of school success. It is interesting to note that some schools do genuinely improve in the absence of the strong pressure of school choice (Highlands) or even try to maintain the demanding standards at the price of losing some pupils (Suburban). In the latter case the school choice might mean that some parents would choose another school with less demanding academic standards.

3.2 Curricular autonomy and goals of education

Many authors worry that the test-based accountability and output evaluations reduce the school curricula to the tested core subjects (typically literacy and numeracy skills). Yet the high curriculum autonomy may lead to another form of reduction as well. When talking about their curricular priorities, all schools more or less focused on quality of English (or broadly foreign) language teaching and learning – three school leaders mentioned it as the top task of their

school development. The foreign languages (and ICT skills) are perceived as the most important outcome of education in the Small school by the deputy director: "We work hard to prepare these kids in the best way. This means these [foreign] languages, these computers." Market mechanism is probably at work here as the English language is a skill highly valued by Czech parents (Walterová et al., 2010). Therefore other subjects or skills might get less attention. Indeed, some data from commercial testing companies suggest that English is the subject where Czech pupils have improved during past years.

Table 2
Some evidence related to curricular narrowing

Diverse school, Director	I feel we improved the [foreign] languages compared to previous years, but we might have a problem in mathematics, we score far better in languages than in mathematics.
Diverse school, Teacher	The kids are overloaded with [foreign] languages. And CLIL is being introduced despite we [the teachers] do not speak English.
Highland (field notes)	The school puts special emphasis on ICT and English for all seven years we follow it. This is probably one of the reasons pupils do not leave for eight-year grammar schools at all.
Selective school, Director	Our first improvement goal is strengthening of the foreign language teaching. We revised the school curriculum and allocated some extra lessons to foreign languages. Next year we would like to provide the opportunities for foreign language talk during afternoon or extracurricular programmes.
Selective school, Primary teacher	This is a renowned school. It is widely known we maintain the standards, we have these languages, and we are open to these kids with learning disorders or behaviour issues or so.
Small school, Deputy director	Simply, our goal has been that the kids learn one foreign language really well. We have some subsidies so we can teach English from grade one.
Suburban, Social studies teacher	What do we want from the kids after all? All subjects except Czech, maths, and, well, a foreign language, are only marginal. The kids say: "Silly geography. Silly history. They cannot let me fail in geography or history."

We have seen, however, that the Suburban school tries to instil the traditional broad curriculum. The management dares risk the conflict with parents over the challenging standards even in non-core subjects of history and P. E. One reason for this might be that the surplus of school-age children due to a demographic boom in the local community gives the management the real curricular autonomy. Thus the management can follow a bit conservative curricular policy (for good and bad).

In the absence of national standardised testing, some schools (such as Selective or Suburban) use their own non-standardised assessment tools developed by the school staff or purchase the tests from commercial providers (Small or Selective). When the school leaders repeatedly use their home-made tests, they can monitor the changes of average achievement from year to year but they cannot compare their school results with other schools or with regional or national performance. This is in agreement with macro-level data on the purposes of pupil assessment in the Czech Republic (OECD, 2013c, p. 149). Subject Olympiads in academic domains (e.g. regional mathematical or science Olympiad) and the results of athletic and artistic competitions are used as a proxy indicator of school quality as well.

Schools that use external commercial testing services sometimes post the results publicly but the director of Small school admits the strategic choice of released test data. The Small school is still coping with the legacy of previous school management. The classes in grades 7–9 are very small (around 10 pupils) and the share of pupils at risk in these grades is above average.[9] The high variance of the test results in such a small groups is obvious. Therefore the director carefully chooses the data that shall be publicised – the less favourable data are used for internal purposes only. This practice is in technical agreement with the law as the school is obliged neither to take the test nor to publish the results.

3.3 Low accountability and the issues of equity

The goals of accountability policies usually include not only the promotion of excellence, but also the increase in *equity*. In the Czech schools studied, the inequality of educational opportunity is perceived (Table 3) but schools have not established systematic policies to overcome it. According to the director of the Selective school, in case of underachievement

> it depends more or less on parents – if they are genuinely interested and want to do something. When the family does not collaborate, [our effort] is just a waste of time. The child cannot make it alone.

When asked about the measures for overcoming socio-economic disadvantages, some teachers or school leaders start talking about possible medical conditions of underachieving pupils (like chronical disease or ADHD). They

[9] There were five times more first-graders than nine-graders in the Small school in the academic year 2012–2013.

add they try to learn more about the special-needs children. So the problem of underachievement is seen as of individual rather than social origin. Most often the school management reports that the form and intensity of support is at the discretion of individual teachers. A typical available opportunity is the second chance to take the test.

Table 3
Cross-case data on attitudes to the disadvantaged children

Diverse, Teacher	The biggest trouble is dealing with the kids from the disadvantaged families. In case of a lower socioeconomic level of the family, the potential of those kids if often higher than the actual support in their family. They could advance but the stimuli from the family are missing. This is a kid that could go on, he or she has some talents but lacks stimulation. And then these kids mix with the children from well-situated families at school and new problems emerge…
	We try to deal with these issues. We attend courses. If there is a short-term course, somebody from our school attends. I believe we try to learn about it. The school does not neglect it. We have a counsellor and a school psychologist. So if we encounter the problem in the classroom, we deal with it.
Highlands, Director	There is quite a large group of disadvantaged pupils here but it is not extremely large. We can deal with it. The support is up to the teachers. They provide some extra help after the classes or maybe before the classes. There is no system organized by the school management. Some kids need help from time to time, so the teacher intervenes. Mrs. K. [the math teacher] is at school one hour before the classes every day, so the kids automatically come and ask her for the help. And me too. I am here every morning too. They can come and try the test again or so. So the terms are negotiated with the individual pupil.
Highlands, Teacher	There are some kids that lack ambitions or motivation. What do you want to do with it? It is all in the families. See, I know those people. I live here, so I know the parents. I taught them too. You can just be sorry. I just say, oh my God. I like these kids and I believe some will change their attitudes when they grow older. But if you know the families – what can be expected from the kids? I have my limits. I am not a social worker. […] This is my defence as well, I am not their mom, surely not.
Selective, Director	We monitor the pupils with poor achievement and the solutions are discussed the at the staff meetings. Sometimes it is caused by the pupil's intellect. In case of learning disorders we routinely use individual educational program. If the achievement problems are caused by illness, the homeroom teacher informs the staff and we postpone the assessment or requirements are lessened.

Table 3
continued

Small, Director	We have many kids with a rather bad social background. It is really difficult then. We know we cannot rely on the support of the family. If the family is dysfunctional, our efforts are desperate. We are grateful when such children learn basic habits at school – be it work habits or hygienic habits or some social relationships are built. It is really a complex challenge in some cases.
	We can provide some individualized care in smaller classes. If the size of the class is over twenty, it's difficult. It depends a lot on the homeroom teacher. The help provided depends a lot on the subject teachers in the lower secondary grades. They might prepare some extra tasks or they might follow a slightly different path in case of some pupils. If they see that the kid does not cope they might assign a bit simplified task.
Suburban, Teacher 1	[The children in need of extra care] come from the socially weaker families. I have a boy [in my class] and his mom is alone with two kids. Well, single parent families. I would say this would be the case. And then the athletes, they train five times every week. They live in their own world, the priorities are set differently. But most of all, single moms. There are many of them and that is where the problems are, indeed.
Suburban, Teacher 2	[In case of some children] the lack of support, the profound lack of support is obvious. But not at first sight. [What kind of support is available for them?] It is very individual as we lack time. Well, it is on the edge. In my case, if they fail the test, they can come every morning at 7.15 AM and try the test again. So they would get a better grade and the average would be better as well. They have this possibility. Some use it and some do not…

This is in agreement with the survey results (Straková, 2010, p. 306) showing that the Czech school leaders and teachers do not care much about the relation between the pupil's socioeconomic background and their achievement. This complements the fact that the Czech Republic remains to be a country with low equity of educational achievement (OECD, 2013b). E. g. the proportion of the variation in mathematics performance explained by the socioeconomic status of the pupil is relatively very high. There are significant regional disparities in both reading and mathematical literacy (also associated with pupil SES).

4 Discussion

Our analysis was focused on three features of the Czech educational policy: (1) the freedom of parents to choose a school, (2) the high autonomy and (3) low accountability of schools and teachers.

The school choice seems to be a mechanism at work in the Czech compulsory schooling. It might take some time before the parents in rural areas (such as in the case of the Highland school) start to use their new right. The change of culture followed the change of law with a delay. The high curricular autonomy granted by the recent reform is not seen as a major change or step forward by many teachers in the schools studied. In some sense the reform just institutionalised and deepened the trends of the past phases of post-socialist transition.

Despite the fact that we wanted to study the effects of recent curricular reform, we might observe mainly the results of the previous market-oriented reforms of the 1990s. Indeed, some authors suggest that the real influence of the school system reforms can only be seen in the long-term perspective of several decades (Tamir, 2004; Viñao, 2001). The implementation and first results of the Czech curricular reform (launched in 2007) have been disappointing on a range of measures (Janík, 2013; Janík et al., 2011; Straková et al., 2013) but this conclusion should be seen in the light of the previous statement about the short- and long-term perspectives.

The perceived failure of the reforms may be the result of a historical stance (Viñao, 2001). Indeed, some key steps of the Czech reform schedule (as the monitoring of school outcomes or the abolition of elite lower secondary grammar schools) that were expected to precede the devolution of responsibilities to schools have not been completed yet. Another and more pessimistic explanation is that the widespread lack of capacity, distrust to traditional institutions (the Ministry of Education being one of them), and the rise of populist parties in the Czech Republic (as in some other countries of Central and Eastern Europe) may hinder the implementation of any complex reform. The Czech school system might remain stuck in the capability trap (Pritchett, 2013; Pritchett, Woolcock, & Andrew, 2010). This is in agreement with the note that the expected end of the post-socialist (or post-Communist) transformation is being postponed repeatedly in relevant literature (Greger, 2011).

The school market in the Czech Republic operates without a key ingredient – transparent and comprehensive information on school outcomes. Moreover, it is not clear whether parents give sufficient priority to their children's high achievement in the core curricular areas when making their choices (OECD, 2013c). Despite these doubts, PISA 2012 data signal that while "system level correlations in PISA do not show a relationship between the degree of competition and pupil performance", at the school level in many countries,

> schools that compete for pupil enrolment with other schools tend to show better performance, before accounting for schools' socio-economic intake. […] Only in the Czech Republic and Estonia do schools that compete with other schools for pupils in the same area tend to perform better, on average, than schools that do not compete, after accounting for the socio-economic status and demographic background of pupils and schools and various other school characteristics. (OECD, 2013c, p. 54)

So it seems that in the Czech Republic some parents might discover a good school without the big data from national assessment while other parents might prefer choosing a less demanding (underperforming) school.

The Czech school system features an unusual mixture of high autonomy and low outcome accountability. Our research shows that in this hybrid system some negative affects ascribed to high-stakes test policies are present as well. The load of administrative work is very high despite the facts that almost no tests are used in the schools (McKinsey & Co., 2010). The curriculum narrowing might happen in a system with no testing in a way similar to the system under the pressure of standardised testing. There are more strategies of fabrication and impression management (Ball, 2000) than the example from the Small school quoted above.

Overcoming socioeconomic disadvantage is usually the key aim of accountability policies (e.g. No Child Left Behind). While no case we studied could be labelled as a school serving severely disadvantaged pupil population, all five schools face the problems of children from disadvantaged or dysfunctional families.[10] But the schools do not tackle the problem of underachievement by establishing a school-wide policy of support system (even though some provide counselling or psychological help).

[10] Least of all probably the Selective school which uses entrance examinations.

The high level of school autonomy, both over resources and curriculum, leads to permanent overload of management. Representative surveys (McKinsey and Co., 2010; OECD, 2014) confirm that the Czech school leaders struggle with administrative tasks and site maintenance issues more than their counterparts in many other countries. They also allocate less time to instructional leadership.[11] That may be one of the reasons why the support of underachieving pupils depends on the good will of individual teachers. Given the low equity of educational achievement in the Czech Republic, any future research shall pay more attention to the issue of equity.

5 Conclusion

The discussion of the risks of (high stake) testing should be complemented by a similar analysis of costs and negative effects of the absence of outcome accountability. The Czech school system has been facing serious problems according to the PISA and TIMSS achievement studies (cf. Mullis et al., 2012; OECD, 2013a). In this light, the narrowing of curricular core and the absence of shared academic standards that we described should be seriously considered.

A more balanced approach beyond false dichotomy of accountability vs. school autonomy and a new grand narrative "at the intersection of the two" duelling narratives is needed (Spillane, 2012; Šíp, 2013) not only in the Czech Republic. Different policies shall be seen as complementary and mutually supportive rather than conflicting (Hopkins, 2010). All the classroom, school, regional and national levels of school system have to be changed (Fullan, 2005). But the reliance on just one improvement mechanism (either school autonomy or external accountability, a curriculum reform or market forces or networking of schools…) is the central fallacy of many school reforms (Hopkins, 2013).

[11] As the schools are relatively small, they cannot afford large administrative staff. The extreme case is the Highland school where there is no administrative staff, the bookkeeping is outsourced and the school caretaker teaches some classes (handicraft and design). Surprisingly, in the Highland school the staff development is at the very good level.

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Vysoká autonomie, malá akontabilita: Případová studie pěti českých škol

Abstrakt: Článek upozorňuje na efekty vysoké úrovně autonomie při současné nízké odpovědnosti za výsledky v případě českých základních škol. Jsou načrtnuty základní principy akontability jako klíčového pojmu současné vzdělávací politiky a stručně je popsán použitý výzkumný plán. Pak jsou představena data ilustrující efekty volby školy, autonomie školy v oblasti alokace zdrojů a kurikulární decentralizace. V diskusi je mj. zmíněn problém časové škály pro hodnocení efektů reformy a otevřena otázka potřeby nového přístupu k autonomii a akontabilitě škol. Po dobu více než pěti let sledujeme za použití převážně kvalitativních longitudinálních postupů vývoj pěti českých plně organizovaných základních škol. Výsledky naznačují, že některé efekty, považované za negativní a připisované plošnému testování a na něj navázaným politikám, lze překvapivě pozorovat ve zkoumaných školách, ačkoli v český vzdělávací systém řadu prvků akontability nezavedl. Současná bohatá literatura o rizicích spojených s plošným testováním by si zasloužila doplnění o studie rizik a negativních efektů projevujících se tam, kde výsledky žáků nejsou systematicky sledovány a využívány.

Klíčová slova: rozvoj školy, vzdělávací reforma, tranzice, Česká republika, vícepřípadová studie

"You shouldn't" Three observations on the necessity of moral education [1]

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Abstract: The goal of this study is to deal with three reasons explaining the importance and necessity of moral education – not just in schools but in general. The research question is: Why do we need moral education? Each subchapter of this study will provide answers or grounds from which the necessity of moral education will be deduced, and which I intend to expose in this study. They apply to three particular areas: 1) the nature of the human being as a moral being, 2) the nature of moral reality itself, and 3) the specific nature of the postmodern situation in which we recognize the need for moral formation. The analysis of the three phenomena provides an argument for traditional moral realism which not only grounds any moral education but also makes it possible. Moral education proves to be not merely necessary but also philosophically legitimate.

Keywords: morality, education, human nature, modernity, post-modernity

1 "Why?" questions in moral education

There is not much room in the educational sciences for the "Why?" questions today. This seems to be a side effect of modern pragmatism which redirected the focus of people's questioning to a methodological "How?" instead. It is an understandable phenomenon in the context of the Enlightenment paradigm of human autonomy in which we busy ourselves: how to make ourselves better, more open-minded, civilized, advanced, etc. The development of new techniques and technologies that make communication, travel, production, medicine – as well as killing – easier has been so hasty that there's been not much time to ask "Why?" Nor has there been a reason to ask whether all the new scientific advances are necessary, whether people want them or need them, or whether the cost is worth it. Why question the meaning, purpose or goals when we have the undisputable "progress" generating and sanctifying means which keep us busy enough and protect us from the annoying and difficult meta-questions? (cf. Wilson, 1991; Toulmin, 1990)

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Modern pedagogy has not been an exception. For the last one hundred years it has been frantically trying to keep up with the times but continues to fall short. Reform after reform, theorists and practitioners of education have been working hard for more and more effective methods, empirical sciences supply pedagogues with technical achievements of every sort, research overflows with "how-to" applications (and they are good applications) – but in spite of all these we continue to fall short of the hoped-for universally harmonious and well-developed humanity. Pavel Floss, for example, states that contemporary schools "are reduced merely to the *functional* aspect of education, producing efficient employees or experts but failing to cultivate the whole humanity of an individual" (2005, p. 26). And the "why" questions still are not in the course. Teachers can't allow themselves such a luxury. They must invest most of their time and energy in maintaining their qualifications: that is, they have to keep their communicative, methodological, organizational, diagnostic and other competencies in shape. And with the arrival of post-modernity, the situation is not much better – in fact, it is quite the opposite. Educators now regularly have to put all of their pedagogical arsenal to the test of hermeneutical doubt, and at the same time adapt to the almost unadaptable conditions of the times. On top of all that they have to make sure their products are appropriately marketable, for the God of Quantifiable Growth demands his due (compare Palouš, 2008; Rýdl, 2002).

I am convinced that the crisis of the modern paradigm, which today's world so intensively experiences, can be used for the good. We thought we knew "how to" but it has become apparent that we do not. We hoped that moral refinement would blossom, flourish or prosper with rational knowledge and science but it hasn't. We believed that the more a person knew the more human they would be but it is clear that it is more complicated than that. The dissolution of our illusions is never pleasant but, however, if its side effect is to bring a certain amount of humility and willingness to once again ask the basic questions about what exactly we are doing and why, then it is not in vain. The pedagogical "why" always precedes and defines the subsequent "how." It would therefore be a mistake to leave it out or ignore it altogether. We intuitively resist senselessness, and it is a human characteristic to want to know the reason – to know why we do what we do. Moral education is no exception to this. Therefore, in this study the reasons for the necessity of morally-educated conduct are dealt with.

The grounds from which the necessity of moral education is deduced and which I intend to expose in the following paragraphs apply to three specific areas: (1) the nature of a human being as a moral being, (2) the nature of moral reality itself, and (3) the specific nature of the postmodern situation in which we recognize the need for moral formation. To prevent misunderstanding concerning the goal(s) of this study, let me define its boundaries in the very beginning. I do neither aspire to present a complete theory of moral education nor any specific instructional strategy of character formation.[2] Such themes go far beyond the possibilities and scope of this essay. All I plan to do is to make preliminary philosophical observations, to clarify the foundations or reasons for our specifically human acting which we call moral education.

2 Neither angels nor demons: The ambivalence of human nature

Humans are rather ambivalent beings. As opposed to every other thing in one's environment, a person's nature or essence is not given ahead of time like, for example, an earthworm is given its earthwormness, wood its woodenness, or a square its squareness. A square can't do anything to change its squareness. It can't degenerate into something less square, nor can it become more square. But a person can. A human being is capable of both humanity and inhumanity (Sokol, 2002). A person can consciously choose and act, and does so every single day. How can that be?

We are capable of overwhelmingly beautiful and noble things, we're able to create, to write poetry or to sing in a way that gives life to another. We can not only desire, think, explore and invent but also keep the power and depth of our thoughts and discoveries completely under control. Furthermore, we can laugh, rejoice, love, reach out to one another, be courageous, selfless, even risk our own life. Moreover, we are able to forgive, be reconciled with one another, help others, deny ourselves, return a lost wallet full of money… unbelievable! Our philosopher forefathers said that it is because humans are spiritual beings. The three basic spiritual qualities that separate us from mere matter are *reason, will and emotions*. That is the ability to appreciate and be touched by *truth, goodness and beauty* (Odehnal, 2001).

[2] There is a number of other authors who developed such theories and strategies. See for example Holmes (1984), Hoge (2002), Vacek (2008), Olivar (1992), Glanzer (2014). For Comenius' unique notion of moral education see my studies *Character formation: A forgotten theme of Comenius's didactics* (2011a) or *Vzdělání mravné a nemravné: vztah poznání a ctnosti v Komenského pedagogice* (2011b).

Extraordinary nobility sharply contrasts with remarkable depravity. People can be evil, and not only as a by-product of failing at something or missing a goal; but truly and completely intentionally they prove to have evil designs, to want evil, to be evil-minded. And not only that, they are capable of meanness, lust, spite, cowardice, infidelity, ruthlessness; they are proud, rude, selfish, they know how to lie very cleverly, how to steal, cheat, wound, rape, invent machines of torture and even take the life of their neighbour. And most astonishingly of all, coming to such evil they demonstrate their willingness to use their depravity to the fullest. As G. K. Chesterton said (1992, p. 12), mankind is the only being that can experience a very special and exquisite pleasure in skinning a cat alive.[3]

The inconsistency of human nature is so mystifying and unsettling that we often resort to various shortcuts or evasive manoeuvres. For example, it would be a lot more bearable if human good and evil could somehow be neatly localized in space or time: good and evil, us/them, east/west, modern/ancient, light/darkness, believer/pagan, angels on the left, demons on the right. Then it would be clear, predictable, black and white.[4] But of course with humankind it matters are more complex. The good and evil dwell together. A person is a "living oxymoron," as Peter Kreeft (1990) put it nicely, "noble depravity, depraved nobility (p. 28)." We are a puzzle to ourselves, added Thomas Morris (1992, p. 129), the greatest mystery is residing in us. How can one and the same creature produce, at the same time, indescribable beauty and unbelievable abomination? How can it be that one species can be responsible for such excellent good and appalling horror? How can there be unprecedented benevolence married to unheard-of cruelty in one being? Blaise Pascal (1995, frag. 131, 34) showed similar amazement in his immortal anthropological meditation: "How strange man is! How original, how monstrous, how chaotic, how paradoxical, how vast! The judge of all things, a lowly worm, a fountain of truth and a murky cesspool of error, glory and the shame of the universe!"

[3] A loose paraphrase.

[4] Yet another popular strategy for comparing the ambivalence of human nature is the method we could call "the blind eye" (Kreeft, 1990). There is not anything easier than to turn a blind eye to one or another side of human nature, to trivialize it, to pretend it is nothing, and so on. Those who elevate the spiritual aspects of mankind at the expense of those lower physically-grounded ones are usually identified as adherents of Platonism, Gnosticism, Pantheism and other forms of humanism. Alternatively, followers of the opposite camp either question the validity of or ignore altogether the spiritual side of life and instead only consider what is tangible. These are the Marxists, Freudians, Behaviourists and Darwinians.

"Corruptio optimi pessima"[5] says the wise old proverb, because there really is not anything worse than the combination of brilliance or genius and evil. The greater the potential, the greater the splendour if it is activated positively – but the greater the horror if otherwise. And the potential of mankind is immeasurable. If it were possible to morally corrupt ants or earthworms there would undoubtedly be a problem, and they could commit all kinds of harm, because even they are endowed with a certain potential. However. it is not possible to take the comparison with humans very far, for a person's intellect, creativity, imagination, resourcefulness, will and many other capacities make him or her at once the greatest and the most abysmal creature under the sun. If practical consequences of the ambivalence of human nature were not so tragic, it would be laughable how they prove the (often nasty) jokes which people invent and that highlight our various human failings. We laugh at our own humanity. Potatoes, earthworms and dogs do not do that because they do not find anything funny about their potato-ness, earthworm-ness or dog-ness. Humans can't help themselves, sometimes they simply have to laugh at themselves – at other times they have to cry. And sometimes they have to do both at the same time.

Neither angels nor demons. Angels are perfectly holy, demons are perfectly corrupt. One does not find such extremes amongst humans. In reality you're more likely to encounter a loving and hard-working father of a family whose potential includes various debasing tendencies, for example, selfishness or a desire for power; it does not have to be a lot of power, just a little is enough, maybe in the office, at work or in the Parliament. Or you meet a clever adolescent, excellent at sports or programming, who, however, diminishes his ability to love with pornography every day. Or you observe your nice, decent neighbour, the greatest expert in solid welding in the whole area, kind and sweet who wouldn't hurt a fly, naturally shy and retiring – allowing his humanity to be crushed by his uncontrollable desire for alcohol, by conceit which prevents him from reconciling a broken relationship with his brother or by his relationship with a television which completely takes over all his free time and which has dulled his mind over the years. By continually giving in to our animal instincts, we gradually become mere animals.

5 "The corruption of the best is the worst of all."

What a strange pot a human is where a mixture of the good and evil, the noble and ignoble, and the positive and negative are found perpetually boiling together. If the good predominates, if it is ever to become one's habitual character, it won't happen automatically or without work (Guroian, 1998). Humanity does not come ready-made, it is not a given; instead it must be recognized as work, a calling or vocation which is requested of people to mature them. That is to fill one's nature with some value or worth, the noble and dignified, and by that to prevent the atrophy which every dimension of humanity necessarily suffers if those qualities are ignored. And precisely that essential incompleteness of human nature is what gives meaning to moral education. If we were perfect – perfectly good like angels or perfectly evil like demons – moral (or any other kind of) education would not be needed. But because we are people whose humanity oscillates throughout our lives between opposing poles and tendencies, moral education has its place. Among all the forces in one's life it can become an important if not the key factor that helps people to fulfil their true nature; that is to become the person they *should* be (cf. Johnson, 2005).

In brief, human beings are special beings. Therefore we need special care: moral education.

3 "You should/not." The problem of moral law

The second reason why we need education is the existence of moral reality, or the moral law as such. It discloses itself to human beings in common everyday situations in a way that calls for educational and self-educational actions. Consider for example the situation of interpersonal strife or disputes. Every one of us has been either a participant of or a witness to some disputes. In such situations we either hear, or ourselves utter, sentences like: "How would you like it if I did that to you?" – "Don't jump the gun!" – "You are not going to leave me?" – "You ought to be ashamed of yourself!" – "Don't lie to me." – "But you promised." And so on.[6]

The interesting thing is that the one who expresses such things does not just want to say that the other person's behaviour is annoying, but is actually referring to a certain standard of behaviour which s/he assumes the other also

[6] The following subchapter is a loose paraphrase of the completely timeless "Radio Discussions" that C. S. Lewis presented in 1943 for the BBC radio to encourage the British public during the trials of World War II. These, together with other speeches, were later compiled in a book *Mere Christianity*.

subscribes to. This assumption is immediately confirmed, either positively or negatively. The offender is either ashamed and tries to rectify the matter, or – more often – tries to explain or justify his/her actions. For example, s/he argues that there was an extenuating circumstance which required or authorized them to behave that way; or that something had happened which prevented them from keeping a promise, etc. In any case it is evident that both parties are subscribing to a particular kind of law or criteria of decency, honesty and morality as if they had agreed on it. Although such an agreement is completely "silent", that is, latent and without sophisticated philosophical verbalization, it is quite real.[7] Without it, no kind of moral discourse would be possible. People could fight with one another like animals but they could never argue in the human sense of the word. To dispute or argue means to try to show another person that s/he's in error, or is guilty in a way. However, that would make no sense if the arguing had no common agreement as to what is right and what is wrong. It is like playing football with no rules, and then claiming someone fouled. To take that further, if there are no rules, there is either no game at all or it is a very dangerous game.[8] That is precisely why it is necessary to have this particular art called moral education which teaches not only the rules but also respect for the rules (cf. Sokol & Pinc, 2003).

Furthermore, there is another reason for moral education which is related to the existence of moral truth/reality. Aside from this common understanding that we should behave in a certain way, there is also the fact that nobody actually does behave that way all the time. Even though we know there is a moral law, which we admit when we say "I should", we fail to observe it.

To avoid misunderstanding, I am not saying that as humans we are incapable of doing any good at all in our actions, motives or intentions. On the contrary, using the words of C. S. Lewis (1993) I want to draw attention to the fact that probably "this year, or this month, or, more likely, this very day, we have failed to practise ourselves the kind of behaviour we expect from other people" (p. 13). In our defence we can usually enumerate a host of "extenuating circumstances" which we tend to "work out" an excuse with or silence that

[7] For a beautiful example of the intuitive experience of moral reality see Karel Čapek's story *Výkřik* (Cry) in his collection called *Boží muka* (Calvary).

[8] The football minded reader can easily imagine what would happen in a game if they suddenly stopped adhering to the offside rule or ignored the borders of the field; or if a player added the help of a baseball bat.

relentless demand "you should(n't) do that." Such self-defence can have many forms: "I know I behaved badly to my wife but I was so tired." "I had to cover up that questionable transaction or I would be fired, and how would I pay off the mortgage then?" "The thing I promised to my neighbour and never did; I would have never promised that if I had known how much work would be piled on me."

It does not matter whether the excuses are legitimate or not. The point of these illustrations is to demonstrate our awareness or consciousness of the moral law which is a human characteristic that is with us, in us, always part of our conscious awareness. If it were not so, we wouldn't need to defend ourselves when we act against someone or vice versa. Nor would we know what it is to have a "clear conscience" when we act in accordance with it.[9]

It is worth noting one more moral-psychological situation with major relational-social implications. The difficulty of the process of admitting moral guilt usually leads to an ethical disproportion: behind my moral failure there can always be someone or something else; my morally good behaviour, on the other hand, is always only my own doing. Moreover, the truer the accusation of guilt is, the more intense is the tendency to transfer blame. Therefore, one of the key components of good moral education is rooting out these undesirable human tendencies (Guroian, 1998).

4 Everything is permissible: A note on the postmodern situation

The third reason we need moral education is the moral situation which the Western world finds itself in. In the last several decades we have observed something we could call renaissance of ethics. Not, however, because of an abundance of morals; quite on the contrary for a lack of them. The ethical "deficit" that is currently felt in Western society is generating a demand

[9] The concept of "clean conscience" is problematic, as we can see, for people have a remarkably wide range of psychological means at their disposal by which they can keep their conscience subjectively "clean" without reference to objective moral reality. But that in itself shows even more clearly the need for moral education which would teach a student to apply that understanding to moral experience by desirable means. Regarding the problem of conscience, see for example Anzenbacher (1994).

on schools to get involved in the education of character.[10] And it does not only concern developing decent socio-psychological habits, communication, cooperation or positive self-image which make human interaction easier and more pleasant. It involves much more: in fact, the discussion is about nothing less than an ethically inhabitable globe. For the first time in history, our planet is being threatened by its own (morally corrupt) inhabitants, or in the words of E. Fromm, the "physical survival of the population" is at stake (citation in Vacek, 2008, p. 6). If things continue as they are, the planet will become uninhabitable. As Lipovetsky (1999, p. 11) has written, "the 21st century will either be ethical or it will not be at all."

What is the cause of this situation? Is it simply that people today are more corrupt, more morally decayed than people in previous generations? I do not think so. Anthropologically speaking, the essence of human nature remains the same; what changes is the climate in which the moral potential of our humanity is realised or developed – whether upwards towards a greater humanity or downwards towards inhumanity. If you convince yourself on a philosophical level that there is no such thing as an objective moral law, it makes it very difficult to behave morally on a practical level. This is what happened to modernity. Our present era of philosophy that we have festooned with critical attributes such as post-modern, hyper-modern or super-modern recognises the crisis of modernity and the specific ways of formulating moral thoughts and behaviours of people (Bauman, 2004).

Paradoxically, when the modern paradigm was born, it looked very promising for ethics. The popular slogan of the Enlightenment philosophers' was: *sapere aude* (dare to know), which then became "Man, trust your own reason!" It was a reaction against the medieval tradition of trust in external authority. The Enlightenment understood itself as the age of the adolescence of humanity: as that great moment in history when humanity finally gathered the courage to liberate itself from the clutches of ignorance. Thus the newly discovered human *ratio* became the instrument of emancipation by which humanity hoped "to uncover, describe and explain the entire natural order of things" (Wright, 2004), and it would come about completely autonomously.

[10] This is evident in the vast amount of literature that has been produced on this subject in recent years. Besides classics such as Piaget or Kohlberg, see for example: Lickona (2003), Schaps, Schaeffer and McDonnell (2001), Berkowitz and Bier (2005), Hoge (2002), Čapek (2008), Lorenzová (2010), Olivar (1992), Vacek (2008), Erikson (1968), Fuchs (2003), Kohák (1993), Lipovetsky (1999), and Perry (1970).

In addition to a belief in the nearly omnipotent power of reason, the scenario of the modern story was also based on a belief in the moral progress of humanity. Stanley Grenz (1997, p. 14) expressed it well:

> The modern scientist considers it as axiomatic, that what knowledge discovers is always good. This assumption of the inherent goodness of knowledge made the enlightened view of the world optimistic. It led to the belief that progress is inevitable, that science, together with the power of education, will finally rid us of both our vulnerability to nature and all social slavery.

Encouraged by the developments in the field of science, modern humanity began to believe in advancement in the field of morality as well. After all, the one who knows "rightly" will also act "rightly," (won't s/he?). The question of the connection between *scientia* and *conscientia* was itself not new but the assumption that science and education will be automatically the humanizing factor in the process of refining humanity got its doctrinal form only in the modern story (compare Menck, 2001). Modern humanity has believed that progress towards better future is certain and that is only a matter of time; thanks to the unstoppable expansion of knowledge we will be able to control the natural world, even to "command the wind and rain"[11] and ultimately achieve the long sought-after heaven on earth.[12]

In the story of the twentieth century, however, modern hope began to slowly disintegrate. It became apparent that even though knowledge does bring unprecedented technical capabilities to humanity, that alone cannot ensure humaneness and moral refinement. It is clearly true that the one who knows has power, as Francis Bacon already noted.[13] Likewise, it is indisputable that it is necessary to be led to knowledge that is to be taught. Historical experience has revealed, however, that knowledge and education can be used for evil as well as for good. When we think about the atrocities of the twentieth century in which science actively participated, the assumption of the modern period, i.e. that science is automatically humanizing, seems ridiculous and even criminally naive. Today, instead of gratefully indulging in the care of scientists, we tend to watch them with increasing suspicion

[11] This was a popular slogan of the protagonists of the communist regime who believed it is just a matter of time when science enables us to control the nature.

[12] I discuss elsewhere the specific pedagogical implications arising from the continuing optimism of the modern paradigm. See Hábl (2011c).

[13] The idea that *scientia potentia est* was repeated by Bacon more than once in his period of revolutionary reflections. See for example Bacon (1974, p. 89, 186).

and apprehension. Who knows what kind of abuse their techno-scientific creations could be used for again (cf. Bauman, 2004)? The extraordinary development of technology and science which offers western society unprecedented power and wealth has also produced a host of problems which have grown to global proportions and can no longer be managed. The culture of abundance and prosperity contrasts sharply with the reality of poverty for millions of starving, destitute, illiterate and marginalized individuals and even whole nations whom the "civilized" world cannot help because it has enough problems of its own. Its advanced technocracy has generated a series of anti-human phenomena like the objectification of mankind, the alienation of individuals and the depersonalization of interpersonal relationships. Instead of the longed-for heaven on earth, sociologists point out the reality of the dramatic decline of moral literacy, declining social capital (no-one trusts anyone anymore), threats of global self-destruction, clashes of civilizations, various forms of extremism, etc. Human being is even considered to be an "endangered species" (Sokol, 2002).

Another problem of the modern meta-narrative that contributed to its own decline was its tendency towards totalitarianism, that is, to act with an exclusive interpretation of reality and the use of power as a tool. M. Foucault (2000) described it well when he noted how the modern scientific discourse has been used as a means of all-pervasive dominance and surveillance. The form of monarchist totalitarianism may change but the essence remains the same. Many a totalitarian atrocity was legitimized under the auspices of the grand narratives – whether by the colonialists in the West[14] or the Communists in the East.[15]

[14] In this context A. Finkielkraut (1993, p. 42) captured the link between the concepts of colonization and civilization nicely when he said that to civilize for the modern Westerner means, "to make one's current conditions the example, to make a universal gift of one's own habits, to make one's own values the absolute criteria for assessment, and to consider the European lord and master of nature as the most interesting being in creation. […] Because Europe typified progress to other human societies, colonization seemed to be the fastest and noblest means for bringing the stragglers onto the track of civilization. The calling of industrialized nations seemed to be: to accelerate the path of non-Europeans towards education and welfare. It was necessary, precisely for the good of primitive nations, to swallow up their differences – that is, their backwardness – in Western universality."

[15] The specific consequences of the totalitarian discourse are intimately known by everyone who lived under the communist regime which also possessed a great story about class struggle and which, as many still remember, should have led to the eschatological promise of heaven on earth.

The result is that all the simple patterns and reference points on which the modern world was solidly constructed and which facilitated the choosing of life strategies have been shattered. The next generation weaned on postmodern milk no longer perceives reality as a cohesive and coherent whole in which it is possible to find systematic meaning and logic, but rather as a confusion of random and changing events. The truth is an empty concept that means whatever anyone wants it to mean. Objective knowledge is irrelevant. Law and justice have been left at the mercy of the demon of interpretation. And where future prospects are concerned, the post-modern generation does not believe that any scientific, business or economic, let alone political, solution exists which would ensure better existence than what their parents had. For a post-modern individual, the progress of mankind has been utterly lost in romantic illusions. Moral principles have been completely relativized. Everything is permissible.[16]

5 Conclusion

We find that we do not enjoy living in such a world. With every further billion stolen from the state budget, with each further promise broken or deceitful advertisement, the moral malaise of the people who have to adapt to it grows.[17] As a result comes the call for ethics and moral education in our schools. It is almost certain that no book, lecture or article on the theme of ethics will make people more moral. At the same time, it is evident that one (optional) hour of moral education a week will not reform the emerging generation.[18] We still have to discuss thoroughly "how to do [this educating] so that people not only know what is good but they want what is good and want to do good," and to do so "even if no one is watching," as one of the first architects of the *mundus moralis*[19] said (Comenius, 1992, p. 570). One thing, however, is sure: we need moral education. And we need it for the three

[16] Compare with Dostoyevsky's famous dramatic statement which he put in the mouth of one of Karamazov's brothers: "If there is no god, everything is permissible." Compare also Holmes (1984).

[17] Compare Bělohradsky's "bondage" (2007).

[18] In 2010 one optional lesson (45 min.) a week has been introduced to Czech schools by the Czech Ministry of Education as a response to the „increasing decline of morality" in the Czech society. For more details see the given ministerial measure at http://www.msmt.cz/ministerstvo/msmt-vydalo-doplnujici-vzdelavaci-obor-eticka-vychova?lang=

[19] *Mundus moralis*, or *The moral world*, is the sixth level in the hierarchy of Jan Amos Comenius' *Pansophy* which is one of the central chapters in his *General consultation on the reform of human affairs*.

reasons outlined in this paper. Firstly, because our humanity is inherently endowed with moral capacity. Secondly, because there is an ethical reality which appeals to human beings. And thirdly, because our experience has shown that without moral boundaries we risk self-destruction.

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„To bys neměl“
Tři poznámky k otázce potřeby etické výchovy

Abstrakt: Cílem této studie je předložit tři fundamentální důvody objasňující důležitost a potřebu etického vychovatelství – nejen ve školách, ale v principu. Studijní otázka zní: Proč člověk potřebuje jakékoli etické vychovávání? Jednotlivé části této studie budou pojednávat jednotlivé odpovědi, resp. důvody k etické edukaci. Ty pokrývají následující tři oblasti: 1) povaha člověka jako morální bytosti, 2) povaha samotné morální reality, 3) specifická povaha doby, ve které potřebu morálního vychovatelství rozpoznáváme. Z analýzy zmíněných jevů vyplývá argument ve prospěch tradičního etického realizmu, který etickou výchovu nejen předpokládá, ale též umožňuje. Z uvedeného vyplývá závěr, že etické vychovatelství je nejen potřebné a nutné, ale též filosoficky legitimní.

Klíčová slova: moralita, edukace, lidská povaha, modernita, postmodernita

One pattern – various realizations: The TIMSS lessons in light of a theory of classroom [1]

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Whenever the results of a new TIMSS-like study are published they cause great concern in one country and the feeling of satisfaction in another. It is not really the outcomes as such that stir the discussion on the respective national educational systems but just the comparison of the overall scores: It is not really the outcomes as such that stir the discussion; it is rather the respective nation's educational system that is questioned. In the first comparative studies the educational system was seen as an independent variable with the average learning outcomes as the dependent one. So the system as a whole was presumed to cause differences between nations. But the system and its formal organization does not explain much as it is embedded in a comprehensive national culture and is composed of a number of components. One of these features, probably the most important one, is the *classroom culture*. From this point of view, the problem of the TIMSS study may be seen as an implicit hypothesis that underlies the first *TIMSS Videotape Classroom Study* from 1995: Different and particularly nation-specific classroom cultures may cause differences in average test scores.

1 The question

What does *classroom culture* mean? One way to get hold of this concept is the classroom itself. Thus a number of video studies have been carried out with piles of classroom recordings as a result. Whenever a more detailed aspect is looked into e. g. classroom as a whole, or classroom management or even the educational system, *classroom recordings* seem to be the method to choose. This is what led James W. Stigler, a psychologist, to conduct his famous study.

> Beginning in 1994, the TIMSS Videotape Classroom Study gathered over 250 videotaped recordings of classroom instruction from national samples of classrooms in Germany, Japan, and the United States. The purpose was to provide a rich source

[1] An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 2001 AERA meeting in Seattle.

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> of information on what goes on inside eighth-grade mathematics classes in these nations [...]. This study provides a wealth pool of classroom-based video data for research efforts aimed at further understanding of the complexities of classroom practices from national and international perspectives (cf. Stigler et al., 1999).

When I developed my argument in 2000, there were no more than six video--tape recordings of lessons available – and those were of rather bad quality (Stigler et al., 1999). But from Stigler's introduction to that collection I presumed that the data of the study as a whole couldn't have been much better than the sample we had at hand. The recordings were restricted to one single lesson per each participating teacher; the audio transcriptions are just a summary of what had happened in the respective classrooms and only poor information is provided.

I just mention in passing that a lot of research on verbal transcriptions of audiotaped lessons was done in the 1960s and 1970s but it looks as if this has been forgotten and in fact done in vain. The small data basis and its deficiencies did not bother me then as it does not now. In the meantime, numerous video studies have been carried out, and tapes of much better quality including even those old ones are sufficient for the argument I'm going to develop, namely the TIMSS question as I may call it. But may recordings as such, even those of better quality, provide appropriate data to test the far reaching TIMSS Video hypothesis? Can we, and if so, how can we infer different test scores from either a handful or even several hundreds of videotaped lessons? Even in case we could, what kind of a theoretical framework would allow us to at least loosely connect classroom patterns on the one hand with learning outcomes on the other? Furthermore, and that is my point here, when we intend nationwide comparisons, we need something like a *third*, a *tertium comparationis*, as formal logic puts it: What kind of reference differences in learning outcomes may be traced back to when comparing classrooms and classroom work?

2 The concept of "classroom"

When speaking of *different* classrooms we obviously have a *concept of classroom* in mind – an average classroom, a classroom as such, a classroom as it should be, or the like. Everybody has their concepts of classrooms we can see when we look at them or into them. But can we be sure that these *everybody's* concepts coincide? So that the result may serve as the *third* we're

looking for? I am afraid we would find out a wide variety of images (rather than concepts in the strict sense) which overlap in some aspects and differ in others. If that was the case – and I am convinced it is – could we look for the smallest commonly shared set of convictions and define that set as the *third* we need for a comparison?

For example, could we observe eighth grade math classrooms in Japan, the US, Germany, or even in all of the 30 countries involved in TIMSS and expect that the result will be something like a universal *concept of classroom*? First of all, this method would be particularly unsuitable for judging differences. Although it would not pose any problem around the features all classrooms have in common, what about those we observe in classroom A or even in country X but *not* in the other ones? The empirical way to find a suitable *third* would be quite a journey with a lot of uncertainties. All these uncertainties in mind, I'm going to suggest a *theoretical* rather than an *empirical* approach in the following. That is to say, I am looking for a *theory of classroom* in the context of which we may discuss the problem of comparisons.

3 The logic of a classroom process

To start with, there are the beginnings of two of lessons from our sample:

> T: … indicates that they will learn a 4th formula… [GG][2]

> T: … our study today will use this as a foundation… [JG]

The teachers bring up what they are going to deal with. That means that the students do *not know yet*, and they are promised that they *will know* at the end of the lesson. – At the end we observe a corresponding statement such as e. g.:

> T: … what we've just done and what we've learned… [GG]

The teacher – or sometimes a student – is *summarizing the results* or *the objectives*, as seen in the subtitles of the videos. The students are or at least should be able to do what the classroom work is aimed at – moreover they

[2] My quotes in the following are from the subtitles in the recordings mentioned above. The first letter refers to the respective countries (G: Germany; J: Japan; U: United States); the second one to the disciplines (G: geometry; A: arithmetic).

know or at least can know that they are able to do. From these observations I derive a *basic assumption*: It is the difference of not yet knowing and knowing which constitutes the process between the beginning and the end of the lesson as a pedagogical or didactical process.

Before exploring the logic of this didactical process I am going to explain my assumption in more detail and to put it in a set of what I call *axioms of a theory of classroom.* By axiom I mean a presupposition which is agreed upon in a certain (scientific) community and needs neither proof nor explication.

- The axiom of culture: In every society there is culture which makes survival and social co-existence possible; this culture is a complement to what nature provides.
- The axiom of tradition: In every society culture is passed on, i.e. culture is transmitted from those who have acquired it to those who have not.
- The axiom of institution: The transmission of culture within a society is institutionalized.
- The axiom of generations: In every society there is an older generation of those who are full members of this society, and a younger generation of those who are not yet full members of the society.
- The axiom of a minimum: The older generation is responsible for the passing on of a cultural minimum.

In short and by the way of a formal definition: *Classroom work is the passing on of a minimum of culture from (and by) the older generation to the younger one.*

No matter whether it is a set of axioms or a classical definition, whenever one of the characteristic features is lacking, we would not speak of *classroom*. On the other hand, these axioms are sufficient to circumscribe what classroom is, or to put it more precisely, classroom as it is seen in the scientific community Stigler and his followers refer to.[3]

Now I am going to reconstruct the *logic of the classroom process*, i. e. the process between the state of not yet knowing on the one hand and knowing on the other.

[3] Although I am convinced that my axioms apply in every human society, I restrict my argument to the discourse community defined by the education issues brought up in the OECD countries.

Knowing serves as an abbreviation here. The term stands for all the abilities the younger generation is to acquire during their school education (according to axiom 2).

1. The students do not yet know the matter they have to learn. Furthermore, at a compulsory school we cannot assume that they are aware of this "not yet". So first of all, the teacher has to organize the *willingness to work* and to work methodically in particular. This is the pedagogical version of what is well-known as the concept of *motivation* in psychology (in education we should speak of *motivating* instead).
2. The awareness of not yet knowing is usually taken as a basis of a *task* or of a *problem to be solved*. The assumption that underlies a task in classroom is this: Students who are able to solve the problem worked on in classroom will have the competence to solve similar problems on their own (which they may demonstrate in tests like the TIMSS tests).
3. *Tools* must be *provided*. What do we know already and what can we make use of? Media have to be at hand and their use must be explained: e. g. books; knowing persons such as the teacher may help during the work.
4. Next is the *work on the problem* in question which comes to its logical end with one or more *solutions*. A crucial trait of the concept of a teacher is derived from this: There must be at least one person who knows at least one way leading to at least one solution. Whoever that may be – it is up to a teacher to ratify the solution(s). By contrast to medieval classrooms, in modern ones the work pattern is customary no matter how it is organized in detail. That is why next step is obligatory:
5. It has to be guaranteed that *every single student* is able to solve the problem – since every student has the right – and is obligated – to acquire the ability in question, since the older generation and the society in general has the right to expect that knowing subjects are graduating from their schools. For centuries this step has been organized as the *application* i. e. the solution of similar problems, be it in a formal testing situation or in assessment centers.

The classroom process as such is – logically speaking – finished when the teacher, and consequently the older generation, can be assured that all students are able to solve the problem in question and can be considered to have the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor abilities or competences which they are supposed to have according to the respective curriculum.

Those five steps establish the pattern of what I call the *classroom process*; in the tradition of Johann Friedrich Herbart we speak of its *articulation*. As a matter of fact it does not need to be five steps. In the German *Didaktik tradition*, more detailed *models* of the process can be found. And as we know from the history of education there has been a tripartite model: introductio – explicatio – applicatio.

My argument is that this pattern, this logic of the classroom process, may serve as our *tertium comparationis*, as *the third of a comparative evaluation of different classrooms* in view of the outcome of classroom work. Apparent differences in the pattern's realization have to be explained by taking culture-specific variables into consideration. By *culture* I mean different inter-national as well as intra-national cultures (e. g. the New Math or reform pedagogy in general vs. traditional mathematics or classroom management).

Moreover, my argument is that there is *one pattern only*. And this argument derives from the fact that in all cases it is *classroom* and *classroom work*. In this I do not at all agree with Stigler who, referring to different national cultures, speaks of different *scripts*. To put my argument in his terms: it is one script, what differs are the realizations in the classroom practice.

4 Comparisons

How could a comparison of our different classrooms work though? We simply have to apply our pattern to the respective lessons. But before doing so we should take into consideration that the process as a whole does not necessarily fit in the unit of time usually dedicated to one lesson, i.e. 45 or 50 minutes. Indeed, step 5 is often organized as homework; and sometimes the problem turns out to be trickier than expected before and cannot be solved in about 20 or 30 minutes. One of the obstacles the interpretation of the videos has to face is that there is virtually no information on the context of the respective classroom. The fact that we have to deal with the document as it is may lead to misinterpretations of the lessons themselves, not to speak of the respective educational systems.

When we look into our classrooms, we see at first glance that the Japanese and the German lessons follow the pattern at large and in detail:

1. The 'videos' subheadings like "Linking yesterday's lesson topic to today's topic" (JG) and "Reviewing (or Revising) previous material" (GA; GG) indicate a phase of recalling *what we know already*. And even "Sharing homework" (passim) serves this very purpose. By juxtaposing those introductions with moves such as "What we are going to do now is…" the teachers at least allude to the gap between "knowing" and "not yet knowing". Sometimes both sides are linked explicitly: "Our study today will use this as a foundation" (JG), or non-verbally by simply writing the task on the blackboard (GA).

2. In both of the American classes there is a kind of sharing homework, too. But what I do *not* find is any indication of a *new* problem to be solved which up to then could not have been solved. No difference is established which might stimulate *classroom* work; work simply proceeds with tasks "similar to the ones they worked on the previous day" – as a comment on a video tells us. This is not to say that individual students may not have had the experience of not yet knowing. On the contrary, in the US arithmetic class we observe several students asking the teacher to help them as they are not able to solve their problem. But this is not yet *classroom* work in the sense of our definition and according to the logic of the process; it is *just work* within *the walls of a classroom*.

3. Another point to be observed is *posing the problem*, n. b. a *new* problem. The problems posed in the US classrooms are not new ones. The lessons remind me of what I may call a *loop*: When the teacher becomes aware that the application does not work sufficiently, he or she goes back and poses the problem once again. These loops can be observed during the phase of "Sharing Homework" where we see that yesterday's problem has not been solved yet; it is still a "new" problem for some of the students.

4. Regarding the logic of the classroom process, it does not matter at all what kind of problem is to be worked on, this differs from the focus of the TIMSS studies which is on the students' intellectual level. The TIMSS Video studies have classrooms in their focus and not individual students.

5. *Tools* are provided: "What we know already", serves as a tool for further work, and so do the students' "minds" – one of the Japanese teachers puts it explicitly: "I will have everyone use their heads and think a little" (JA).

6. Work is done and at the end the *result* is stated – on the board or on a transparency.
7. The newly acquired ability is applied to similar problems: seatwork or homework in all of the classrooms.

Thus we can identify more or less explicit indications of the logic in the data representing the real processes. We can state whether or not a certain lesson complies with that general pattern – Stigler's script. Perhaps we may speak of "good" lessons or of "bad" ones on that basis. But one ought to be careful: Any comparison or evaluation of our classrooms would not be fair as

- we virtually do not know anything about the respective contexts, even worse:
- the videos do not show the lessons in full length, and even a native speaker can hardly understand the teachers' words in case of the TIMSS recordings. We cannot estimate the reliability of the subtitles and we cannot reconstruct the criteria according to which the videos were edited despite of what Stigler tells us in the introductory interview.

I'm afraid I must disagree strongly with Stigler when he says in his introduction that the lessons are "representative of teaching in the three countries". The same goes for all his followers who simply jump to similar conclusions.

I doubt that it was a good idea to compose videos like those and to distribute them as an argument in political discourse or as an evidence to test far reaching hypotheses in educational research. What could be done at best is an interpretation and criticism of the individual classes' hidden ideologies. By no means can the recordings support a comparison and evaluation of classrooms on an international scale or even within the limits of one nation.

To be fair I must add that Stigler and his team did not go as far as to link his "scripts" with the TIMSS scores directly. They were "[…] seeking to describe the classes from both the perspective of teaching practices and that of the opportunities and experiences provided for students"[4] (Stigler et al., 1999, p. 1).

[4] My emphasis, P. M.

So, what shall we do with such nice data? What may they be good for?

1. The model of a classroom process I developed has a *normative aspect*: Whenever a given classroom process does not match that model, it is reasonable to *question* whether the situation really is a *classroom process* and not, for instance, a mere pattern drill with restricted pedagogical concern at best. For example one could ask colleagues from the United States if the processes seen in both of the videotaped lessons really correspond with a classroom process in the sense of our definition. Isn't what we observe in the arithmetic lesson (UA) just *individual* work of students taking place in one room and supervised by one teacher who addresses all students from time to time? And isn't it just individual solving of tasks during the geometry lesson (UG) with the teacher doing nothing but determining the pace of work? So the data might allow to question single lessons critically whether or not the situation observed is really a *pedagogical* one or other.
2. The data is a treasury of *instructional options* at every point of the process – be it the ways of opening the lesson, of organizing interest in the problem; be it the complexity of the problem itself; be it the measure of the steps in the process: step by step (as in the German lessons) or a long stride (as in the Japanese ones); or be it the ways of testing the outcomes. As we see nowadays there is detailed and sophisticated research into such problems in consequence of the TIMSS video study and its follow-up studies in the US and abroad:
   - studies on proof and argumentation;
   - a multidisciplinary analysis of the negotiation of meaning;
   - the identification and scrutiny of "teachable moments" and their components; and the like.
3. The tapes as well as the findings of that research may be considered a *quarry of didactical tools*. Thus

   > the TIMSS 1999 Video Study of eighth-grade mathematics lessons [that] begins where the 1995 study ended … [was] based on the premise that the more educators and researchers can learn about teaching as it is actually practiced, the more effectively educators can identify factors that might enhance student learning opportunities and, by extension, student achievement. (Gonzalez et al., 2004)

But let us be careful: our videos teach us that the tools and their composition in a real classroom are not culture-free. Can we, for example, really understand the willingness to work or the complexity of the problems worked on in the Japanese classroom without considering the teacher's role and the meaning of "learning" in Japanese society? Or one cannot understand the German lessons without knowing something about the tradition of reform pedagogy and of the Socratic method in the German *Didaktik tradition*. Nevertheless, the way the Japanese teacher makes sure that all of the students understand the problem he posed might provide a source of inspiration of German or US teachers as well.

Conclusion

Generally speaking, we have to interpret the data in its variety *within the framework* of the respective societies – their ruling beliefs, the roles of professionals and the impact of education outside school.

The first point – and I think it is the crucial point – is *teacher education*. What kind and what amount of knowledge of education, curriculum, and classroom is conveyed in what amount of time and in what kind of institutions in the respective countries? Furthermore, the case of Japan teaches us that we have to take not only the pre-service but also the in-service training into account.

The next point is the *role of a teacher* in school and in the society. The German arithmetic teacher would apparently like to be the students' older friend. At the same time he makes use of numerous disciplinary measures in order to ensure the course of the classroom process for which he feels and actually is responsible. On the other hand, the Japanese teacher is able – within a firmly established framework that is symbolized by the welcoming ritual – to play a clearly defined and obviously accepted part as a teacher in the narrowest sense of the word.

The role of the teacher is just one aspect. As is well known, learning outcomes are heavily influenced by the *individual teacher*: something like *a* German teacher does not exist just as well as, for example, *a* Czech teacher as such.

Furthermore, the *status of mathematics* – subject matter in general – has to be taken into account. Is math closely connected to related school subjects or is it isolated? In which way does school organization make allowances for the fact that there are differently gifted students? Is there a sort of *external*

differentiation according to the levels of the students' competences such as we find in Germany, or a commercialized system of private lessons like the Japanese *juku*?

Finally, it is not only school. What is the significance of the *family* for school and teaching? What preconcepts of the value of knowledge for their lives in society do the students have in mind when they start school? Do the views of the family on the one hand and those of the school system on the other concur or compete with each other? Moreover, we know that affiliation with a certain *social class* is a significant determinant of success in school.

My comments are anything but explanations, and the points that I have referred to are anything but variables in the technical sense of the word. What I want to stress is that the data produced in the original *TIMSS videotape classroom study* as well as in its followers do not support the proof of the TIMSS hypothesis, namely: *Different and particularly nation-specific classroom cultures may cause differences in average test scores*.

Apparently the authors of the main study came to the same conclusion. According to Gonzalez et al. (2004), they state on the basis of the studies' findings:

> One of the questions that prompted the 1999 study was whether countries with high achievement on international mathematics assessments such as TIMSS share a common method of teaching. But the results from the 1999 study of eighth-grade mathematics teaching among seven countries revealed that, among the relatively high-achieving countries, a variety of methods were employed rather than a single, shared approach to the teaching of mathematics. (Gonzalez et al., 2004, p. 2)

The *cultures* or national *scripts* may influence test scores – among other "variables" that are not and cannot be controlled by video recordings. So, once more, what might the videos be good for? In short, during their training, teachers and particularly teacher students have to be provided with the *experience* of teaching and classroom management – that is what *videos* of different classrooms may convey. And they have to elaborate a notion of *classroom* that may guide them when it comes to understanding what they can see and experience – that is what *working on* the videos has to aim at. I fully agree with Stigler here who recommends us to study teaching abroad which might help us to see our own teaching more clearly, to understand, discuss, and to begin to be able to talk about teaching, in other words, talking about *what teachers actually do* in the classroom.

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In this section, the editors of Pedagogická orientace want to provide space for promotion of Czech monographs that might be of interest internationally and might otherwise go unnoticed outside the Czech context. The editors selected nine monographs published in 2013 that represent coherent contributions to topical issues in educational research (and have a representative English summary).

Píšová, M., Hanušová, S., Kostková, K., Janíková, V., Najvar, P., & Tůma, F. (2013). *Expert teacher: The nature of expertise and determinants of professional development (in FLT perspective).*

[Učitel expert: jeho charakteristiky a determinanty profesního rozvoje (na pozadí výuky cizích jazyků)]

Brno: Masarykova univerzita.

The topic of the book is teacher expertise. It presents the findings of a three--year research project, which aimed to explore various characteristics of expertise and expert performance of teachers of English and German as foreign languages in the context of basic schools in the Czech Republic.

The methodology of the research project is introduced as well as the findings of the five consecutive studies that were realised within the general framework of a multiple case study. The main outcome of the entire endeavour is a proposed model of teacher expertise, which builds on the empirical findings accumulated through the five individual research studies, which were: 1) *A look on expert performance in the classroom* (using structured classroom observation, characteristics of expert performance were extracted), 2) *A look on expert professional insight* (an interview was realised with each of the 30 participating expert teachers that focused on teacher knowledge and teacher insight), 3) *A look on the form of expert teachers' in-the-classroom thinking* (video-based stimulated-recall interviews were realised in which a subsample of 16 expert teachers were asked to recall specifically "what went through their heads during the lesson"), 4) *A look on the content of expert teachers' in-the-classroom thinking* (an interpretative phenomenological analysis of the stimulated-recall interview transcripts), and 5) *A look on the development of teacher expertise* (extensive biographical interviews were realised with a further subsample of eight expert teachers focusing on the ways and means through which teacher expertise is developed and nourished).

The structure of the book is not intuitive. The first part of the book presents a brief introduction of theoretical and some methodological considerations (Chapter 1) and the synthesis of the findings that leads to the presentation of a model of teacher expertise (all in Chapter 2). The second part of the book is built of the research report; Chapter 3 is the summary of the research methodology (including research design, research sample and the methods and techniques of data collection and analysis). Chapter 4 provides an overview of the issues connected with the problem of selecting expert teachers and Chapters 5 and 6 present the findings of the individual analyses.

Methodologically, the research was guided by Shulman's idea of disciplined eclecticism and used the concept of *multiple case study* as the methodological framework. The model presented in Chapter 2 aims to show the complexity of teacher expertise by taking into account not only expert performance but also expert insight, lived experience, commitment and other concepts that are fundamental for different dimensions of teacher expertise.

Řezníčková, D. et al. (2013). *Pupils' skills in biology, geography and chemistry education.*

[Dovednosti žáků ve výuce biologie, geografie a chemie]

Praha: Nakladatelství P3K.

This monograph outlines and enframes the outcomes of the research project in didactics for the subjects of biology, geography, and chemistry. This project has been supported by the Czech Science Foundation (P407/10/0514). Based on a multi-level analysis of skills on the levels of the intended, realised, and achieved curriculum, an entirely new structure of skills which students should master at the end of primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education has been proposed for the given subjects. The proposed skill system corresponds to the inquiry based learning model. For the relevant student age categories in all three subjects, the required skills have been structured into 4–5 skill sets: questions in natural science, information gathering from various sources, information organization, evaluation of outputs, and formation of conclusions. In the next phase, the proposed overview of skills was subjected to surveys addressed to primary, lower secondary and upper secondary school teachers, as well as to university pedagogues. The analysis

of their responses represents one of the bases for the modification of the first draft of the skill system proposal and allows for an observation of disparities among participants. The third phase of the project consisted in the testing of partial skills from the aforementioned skillsets on students of various age. Simultaneously, we created a survey for teachers and students, in order to successfully put the students' test results into context. The outputs of structured interviews with 27 randomly selected teachers with varying approbations and lengths of experience also formed an important source of information used for an adjustment of our original proposals. The comparison of results across disciplines, conducted during the final stage, allows for a deeper insight into the formation and structuring of subject-relevant skills, as well as into the process of their implementation.

Šeďová, K. (2013). *School humor.*

[Humor ve škole]

Brno: Masarykova univerzita.

The publication is devoted to the phenomenon of humor in school environment. It presents results of original empirical research based on narrative analysis of written narratives provided by pupils and teachers from lower secondary schools. The book describes typical motives and plots of school humor and studies its functions in a detail. Although it is assumed that humor can facilitate the process of learning, the realized research shows that the center of its operation is in the field of social relations. On the one hand, humor has potential to harmonize relationships within the group and to strengthen solidarity, on the other hand it can serve as an offensive weapon in power struggles and negotiations. The publication also discusses the fact that humor is an important instrument that enables pupils to cope with demands the school imposes on them and to deal with some institutional features of the school, especially with boredom and oppressive authority of adults. Against the background of these findings the question is answered whether humor disrupts and challenges the traditional school procedures and mechanisms or conversely contributes to their maintenance. The book contains a number of authentic examples which allow readers to get an idea about the form of humor in contemporary Czech schools.

Pol, M., Hloušková, L., Lazarová, B., Novotný, P., & Sedláček, M. (2013). *When schools learn.*

[Když se školy učí]

Brno: Masarykova univerzita.

The publication explores organisational learning at schools, which is a topic that has not yet been given proper research attention in the Czech environment, although Czech schools find themselves in a situation where much is asked of them. On the one hand they are expected to heed external demands while on the other they are also expected to regulate themselves and develop their work professionally, creatively and autonomously in most essential areas of their work.

It follows that such expectations can only be met once adults communicate and cooperate; in other words, once they learn. The authors are interested in the processes of learning that adults who work in schools undergo, whether these are on the level of individuals, teams or organisations. In accordance with the findings of other researchers, they understand organisational learning in a broad way as a process that can be instigated by a school's own initiative and also by pressures from outside. Further, organisational learning can take place on many different levels at schools, is related to important areas of a school's life, influences the efficiency of an organisation and causes changes of cognitive and behavioural character. The presented research study seeks answers to a number of questions: (1) what and how do adults learn at schools; (2) how systematic is the leadership and management of organisational learning; (3) in what groups do adults learn at schools; (4) which factors support organisational learning at schools.

Even though the topic of organisational learning seems to be rather implicit in Czech schools, they are aware of the need to organise their inner life so that their teachers in particular can improve the quality of the work of the school. Hence there are a number of more or less successful attempts to implement adult learning in schools.

Janík, T. et al. (2013). *Quality in Education: Content focused approach to analysing and improving instruction.*

[Kvalita (ve) vzdělávání: obsahově zaměřený přístup ke zkoumání a zlepšování výuky]

Brno: Masarykova univerzita.

This monograph maps some of the significant phases which a student of a doctoral study programme may encounter. The book's main goal is to identify in specific dissertation projects critical points which most doctoral students encounter regardless of their field of study, and to help PhD candidates to navigate through such situations, analyse them and eventually solve them.

Only the first study stands outside the overall direction of the monograph. It sets the issue of doctoral study programmes (DSP) into a wider context of science development and the transformation of the way science understands itself. This chapter explains the cause of the crisis of DSP while relating this phenomenon to the meaning and the message of this monograph.

The following part of the book "Toward thriller" focuses on ways how doctoral applicants can transform the results of their diploma theses into dissertation research. Here we encounter a project which has shifted from the results of a discourse analysis of a children's book in the original diploma thesis onto the research topic of constructing a media image of disability in the most widely read Czech daily newspaper. Another project explores the possibilities of using garden therapy in working with socially disadvantaged groups. The third example of a dissertation project design is based on the original analysis of legal regulation of professional foster care in three countries which the dissertation research will examine in terms of their historical development. The last chapter of this section deals with designing transnational parenthood research, a topic with which its author became acquainted during her original research of Filipino domestic helpers.

The monograph's main part "Through thriller toward happy end" is concerned with significant types of crises which the student can encounter when working on his or her doctoral project. The first type of crisis is the *subjective type crisis* – the chapter's author describes the causes of such a crisis caused by non-conscious influence of thought stereotypes as well as ways of revealing and neutralizing them. Another type typical for the project's first

phase is the *basic skill crisis*. The author of this chapter identifies the skills which candidates usually lack at the beginning and how to tackle this deficiency. The third type – and as it seems the most complicated one – is the *paradigm crisis.* If a doctoral student faces this crisis, he or she has to take a very difficult path of creatively pondering all the foundations of his or her research in order to arrive at information which will assist in altering his or her fundamental pre-understanding of his or her research. The following chapter addresses the *harmony of theory and research direction crisis.* Many doctoral students must face the fact that while working on the dissertation their research has gradually taken a direction which may differ from the original theory. Noticing the increasing disproportion may not be easy because the change in direction takes place gradually and in small steps. The last type of crisis is the *end of dissertation crisis.* It is not a vital crisis. It is, however, at this phase that doctoral candidates reach a certain "dissertation maturity". It is then that they realise that things do not end with a successful defence of the dissertation because research results only indicate possible topics suitable for further research.

The final chapter is a reflection of a researcher from the perspective of several years on her dissertation thesis which was produced under non-standard conditions – at the time of department establishment. The form, content and methods of the defended thesis thus naturally became the shaping circumstances of the foundation of the department and the whole field. This specificity confirms in its exceptionality the more general fact that the first scientific work becomes the opening of a life horizon which is a significant part of the person's destiny and the scientific community.

Šíp, R. (2013). *Story thesis: This thriller begins and ends with happy end.*

[Příběh první vědecké práce: od thrilleru k happyendu]

Brno: Masarykova univerzita.

This monograph maps some of the significant phases which a student of a doctoral study programme may encounter. The book's main goal is to identify in specific dissertation projects critical points which most doctoral students encounter regardless of their field of study, and to help PhD candidates to na-

vigate through such situations, analyse them and eventually solve them. Only the first study stands outside the overall direction of the monograph. It sets the issue of doctoral study programmes (DSP) into a wider context of science development and the transformation of the way science understands itself.

The following part of the book "Toward thriller" focuses on ways how doctoral applicants can transform the results of their diploma theses into dissertation research. The monograph's main part "Through thriller toward happy end" is concerned with significant types of crisis which the student can encounter when working on his or her doctoral project and with the ways how to deal with the crises. The monograph identifies, depicts, and solves these types: subjectivity crisis, basic skills crisis, paradigm crisis, harmony of theory and research direction crisis, and end of dissertation crisis.

The final chapter is a reflection of a researcher from the perspective of several years on her dissertation thesis which was produced under non-standard conditions – at the time of department establishment. This specificity confirms in its exceptionality the more general fact which is not easily visible under normal circumstances; it is the fact that the first scientific work becomes the opening of a life horizon which is a significant part of the person's destiny and scientific community.

Slavík, J., Chrz, V., & Štech, S. et al. (2013). *Creative work as a means of cognising.*

[Tvorba jako způsob poznávání]

Praha: Karolinum.

The book approaches the topic of creative work and creativity from the perspective of education, which is seen as the principle in sustaining and developing human society and culture. The multidimensional issue of creative work is approached as the search for the intricate balance between *reproduction and innovation* and also between *subjectivity and intersubjectivity*. Creative work is related to reproduction through a specific culture framework with all the associations to its meanings and rules against which an act of creative work is critically explained, and at the same time upon which it must build. At the same time, in order for a process to be called an act of creative work, it

must be original and innovative. The same dialectics applies to the relationship between subjectivity and intersubjectivity.

Generations of human beings continue with the creative works of their predecessors and modify them into new, more complex and varied shapes. The continuity of creative work is the result of reproduction of what has already been created. In other words, in order for someone to create something non traditional they must first be sufficiently educated about the tradition. This inobvious reproductive character of creative work – in a way very paradoxical one – is actually what nurtures its functional dynamics within education. It is because it opens the issue of the culture-specific *content of creative work*, the knowledge of which is the condition to creative continuity, along with wondering to what extent creative work can be *learnt* or *taught*. In this sense, creative work and creativity are one of the topics that connect the fields of *culture* and *education*.

The concept of *creative work* thus becomes more tangible for teachers and it can bring a new dimension to their work: understanding that every action on the part of the student can bear the key feature of creative work that is the tension between innovation (which is open into the future) and reproduction (which builds on the past and must remain within its own cultural context).

Creative work is seen as a means of developing and sharing knowledge between people in the recursive movement between real metaphors and categorical judgements. In this sense, we see creative work as the necessary foundation for teaching and learning, which is realised through *content transformation*. In a general sense, our text represents the search for the theoretical or philosophical perspective on didactically approached *content transformation*, which for some time has been the key concept of modern didactics. It is a concept that focuses attention on the *process* of creative work, i.e. the process of configuring and reconstructing of content.

The outlined approach makes it possible to discuss the issue of creative work and creativity from the perspective of the theory of educational content. It is also an opportunity to grasp traditional didactic issues in a new way. The texts in this book can thus be seen as the presentation of the theory and practice of the process of cultural transformation of content. This process has its *enculturation*, *socialisation* and *personalisation* dimensions; in the interrelation of these dimensions not only education but also all expressions of human culture take place and develop.

Švec, V., Bradová, J. et al. (2013). *A teacher in theory and practice.*

[Učitel v teorii a praxi]

Brno: Masarykova univerzita

This monograph presents two key issues: first, the teacher and his profession and, secondly, the relationship between theory and practice in teacher education. The relationship between theory and practice in teacher education can be regarded as one of the basic conditions for its effectiveness. Possible consequences of contradictions between the world of theory and practice can be far-reaching. The opening chapter outlines the issues addressed in the next six chapters, which can be divided into three thematic areas: a) teacher's subjective approach to teaching, b) teachers professional knowledge, c) other application areas.

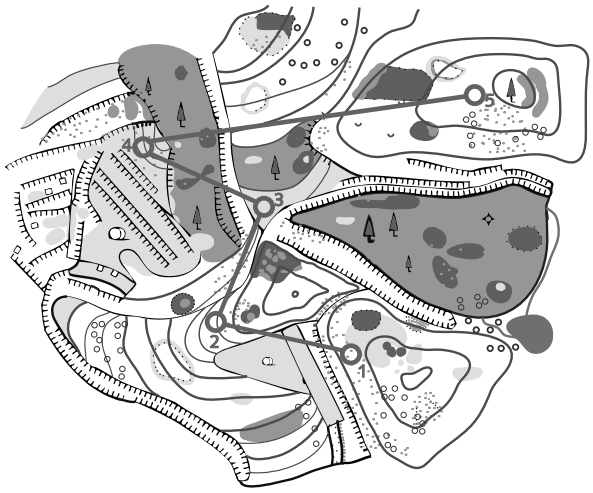
The theme of *teacher's subjective approach to teaching* is opened by the chapter on biophile oriented education, which presents some interesting research findings. The theme of subjective approach is further developed by the chapter focused on professional self-concept shaping of student teachers, explored by qualitative research tools. The theme *of teachers' professional knowledge* consists of the following two chapters, focused on area of language education. The first one is devoted to the process of forming and developing of pedagogical content knowledge for teachers of English for specific purposes at Czech universities during the first three years of practice. The second deals with professional vision – the ability of the teacher to identify the key moments during teaching situations and the ability to reason about them in the context of their knowledge. The theme of *other application areas* is covered by the last two chapters. The paper aimed at e-learning support introduces the concepts of traditional e-learning and its alternatives. The paper dedicated to professional playworkers addresses specific tasks within the work with hospitalized children.

Kopecký, M. (2013). *Adult education between policies, economics, and science.*

[Vzdělávání dospělých mezi politikou, ekonomikou a vědou. Politika vzdělávání a učení se dospělých v éře globálního kapitalismu]

Praha: Univerzita Karlova, Filozofická fakulta.

Adult education has become a global phenomenon and a declared priority of decisive economic and political actors of the contemporary world. From a field that was originally, since the 19th century, dominated by an effort to promote social justice and self-actualization, it evolved, over the past several decades, into a tool of policies promoting economic growth and people's adaptation to global capitalism. The book analyses the processes of education policy Europeanisation and globalisation as driven by the activities of international political and economic organisations (OECD, UNESCO, EU and others). The critical theory approach underlying this publication is applied not only to education policy but also in a broader context, to analyse other policy domains in which adult education and learning plays an important role (e.g. work or citizenship). It is dealt with economization of education and its role in justifying social inequalities. Critical theory provides the main methodological inspiration. The author approaches adult education as a cultural and political phenomenon. He also studies alternative relationships between scientific research and education policy.



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