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Editorial

Introducing the November issue 2018

Dear Readers,

we would like to introduce the open **English issue of the Sociální pedagogika | Social Education** journal. We wanted to give you the opportunity to publish papers that cover a wide range of topics in the field of social pedagogy both in the Czech and international environments. We intended not only to spread abroad some information from the Czech environment, but also to share the ideas and experiences of social pedagogical practices from abroad. We are taking the next step towards opening the journal to a wider foreign community. The November issue includes three articles which are presented in the empirical study section together with one interview, a review, and two informative texts in the section outside of a double blind peer-reviewed content of the journal.

Although we received a great deal of theoretical and empirical studies (or abstracts), in this issue we have published less than a third of the paper received. We are pleased to see that there is a steady number of studies that are thematically interesting and inspiring. This is a proof for us that our journal gets into the hands of a number of readers and generates new authors.

On the other hand, we want to maintain a high level of quality for all the published papers, which is reflected in the complexity of the review process. This fact is mainly due to higher demands on the quality of submitted papers from the authors themselves, but also to the greater workload of the editorial staff and the reviewers. We are primarily committed to maintaining the high quality and originality of published studies. We believe that despite the fact that for the authors the process of reviewing is demanding, it enriches and brings valuable feedback.

We present the following papers as part of this English issue. An initial study entitled **Perspectives regarding the self-efficacy of social activation workers in the Czech system of caring for at-risk children** deals with the perceptions of field workers with respect to the self-efficacy in the care system for vulnerable children. In her study, the author Jaroslava Pavlíčková summarizes the results of a qualitative research based on some in-depth interviews with nine workers of social activation services. By using the procedures of the grounded theory, the professional profile of a worker is represented in three levels: personality, professionalism and stress. Moreover, in the structured model of the profession in the care system for vulnerable children, she highlights the importance of those resources that influence professional efficiency (e.g., experience, transferred experience, encouragement and emotional states). A deeper interest in the professional fitness in this field is indispensable for the performance of the profession and it can contribute to the quality of the service provided.

The topic concerning the impact of a different cultural environment on the home preparation of children for schooling is dealt with in the study entitled **Home preparation of anglophone children for school: The influence of a different culture**. The author Lenka Venterová presents the results of a qualitative analysis aimed at identifying the most frequent difficulties with home preparation experienced by children whose parents come from different cultures and have also different mother tongues. These children must cope not only with the different culture of their parents, but also with a different teaching language than their native one.

Another study entitled **Educational practices and strategies that promote inclusion: Examples from the U.S.** gives an inspirational insight into the possibilities of addressing inclusion in education for the Czech educational context. The authors, Renáta Tichá, Brian Abery, and Laurie Kincade, from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, USA, present both processes and strategies that are implemented in the inclusive education in the US at school, in classrooms, small groups, and at the individual levels.

The text is conceived as an example of good practice, focusing on the description of some selected strategies that promote instructional, social, and psychological inclusion.

Through the **review**, Helena Skarupska presents *Sapiens*, a book written by Yuval Noah Harari, and translated by Anna Pilate from the original *Sapiens A brief history of Humankind*. In the following few issues we want to bring the readers closer to the history and present of the social pedagogy in Slovakia, so we are opening a new section **Social pedagogy in Slovakia**. In this issue we publish the text from Professor Jolana Hroncová, which summarizes the development of social pedagogy in this country after 1989, in the context of the **Banská Bystrica School of Social Pedagogy**.

The issue concludes the **informative** text by Jakub Hladík. This is a brief summary of the activities and objectives of some European social pedagogical associations.

We will be glad if the readers find in this issue the inspiration to think about the outlined questions arising from the presented studies, interviews, reviews or informative texts. Finally, we would like to thank all editorial board members, authors and reviewers for their collaboration in creating this issue. We believe that our journal will retain the support of existing readers and expand its public also abroad.


Editorial team

Perspectives regarding the self-efficacy of social activation workers in the Czech system of caring for at-risk children

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Abstract: This paper deals with perspectives on the self-efficacy of social activation employees in the system of caring for at-risk children. This contribution concerns a specific group of assisting employees focused on social and educational effects in families, a subject of great interest of the field of social pedagogy. The study reveals the results of qualitative research over the months of September and October 2017 which applies the technique of deep interviews with social activation service employees. The obtained data was analysed by applying procedures anchored in theory. Emerging from the results of the research was the need for a deeper interest on three levels: personality-based, profession-based and stress-based concerns. These findings will aid in constructing a methodically sound and reliable research tool for the given profession.

Keywords: family support, field work, self-efficacy, grounded theory

Vnímání profesní zdatnosti u terénních sociálně aktivizačních pracovníků s rodinou

Abstrakt: Příspěvek se zabývá pohledem terénních pracovníků s rodinami na profesní zdatnost /self-efficacy/ v systému péče o ohrožené děti. Jedná se o specifickou skupinu pomáhajících pracovníků zaměřujících se na sociálně - výchovné působení v rodinách, které je předmětem zájmu oboru sociální pedagogiky. Studie zahrnuje výsledky kvalitativního výzkumného šetření během měsíců září-říjen 2017 technikou hloubkových rozhovorů s devíti pracovníky sociálně aktivizačních služeb. Získaná data byla analyzována za využití postupů zakotvené teorie. Z výsledků výzkumu vyplynula potřeba hlubšího zájmu o profesní „self-efficacy“ ve společenském kontextu ve třech rovinách: osobnostní, profesní a zátěžové. Toto zjištění bude sloužit ke konstrukci metodologicky vhodného a reliabilního výzkumného nástroje pro příslušnou profesi.

Klíčová slova: podpora rodiny, terén, koncept self-efficacy, zakotvená teorie

Introduction

The following study is focused on the self-efficacy of social workers operating in the current Czech care system for children at risk. This group of social workers has been created in response to the Czech government document Action plan on the implementation of the national strategy for the protection of children's rights 2012-2015, in which the government has committed to create a functioning system by 2018 to ensure the consistent protection of children's rights and the fulfilment of their needs (["Action plan," 2018](#)). In connection to this topic, we consider the partial goal of the national strategy – the development of alternatives regarding the care of children at risk in their home environment – as the most relevant point of our study. This goal includes support for family-type care and family support. The sample selection of the workers is justified by the importance of keeping up-to-date with all the issues involved.

The aim of this article is to outline the perspectives of social workers on self-efficacy in the field of the current care system for children at risk. Another goal is to determine the competencies that are essential for this profession along with the resources that can increase public interest in direct family-type care, especially regarding issues of self-efficacy in the field within the social context. Basic findings are also presented regarding benefits proceeding from increased self-efficacy, as these determine not only the use of cognitive strategies but also the importance of self-regulation within the self-awareness mechanisms ([Majerčíková et al., 2012](#)). It is clear that not enough attention has been devoted to these issues in the Czech Republic.

[Smetáčková, Topková, and Vozková \(2017\)](#), who focus on development and piloting in the field of self-efficacy in the Czech system of education, have begun to deal more specifically with the concept of self-efficacy within Czech pedeutology. In the socio-pedagogical field, [Hrbáčková and Petr Šafránková \(2015\)](#) have concentrated on this issue in practice in their research entitled Perceiving the effectiveness of pedagogical staff in the field of institutional care for children and young people, an article which focuses on staff at centres of educational care (SVP) and children's homes (DD). This study dealt with how self-efficacy influences children's behaviour, school success and the leisure time of children.¹

In general, research in the Czech Republic in the area of professional self-efficacy remains less developed, which contrasts with the situation in Slovakia ([Azar, 2009](#); [Bleicher, 2004](#); [Gavora & Majerčíková, 2012](#); [Gavora, 2009, 2011](#); [Gibson & Dembo, 1984](#); [Perkins, 2007](#); [Šuverová & Ďurkovičová, 2012](#); [Tang, Au, Schwarzer, & Schmitz, 2001](#); [Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001, 2007](#); [Wiegerová & Ficová, 2012](#)). Based on this determination, the home environment opens up a space in the field of the helping professions to explore self-efficacy with respect to the social-educational components of family-type care in its natural environment.

1 The theoretical framework

This section will outline theoretical starting points which should clarify the intention focus of the research.

1.1 Social activation services for families with children

According to statistics from [Franklin, Gerlach, and Chanmugam \(2008\)](#), 12-22% of children over the course of school attendance experience personal or educational issues about which they would like to consult with a professional. Among children from socially disadvantaged families, this number increases up to 50%.

¹ A FHS UTB master's thesis that presents methodologically interesting perspectives on these matters was completed by [Málek \(2017\)](#).

In the current Czech system of care for at-risk children, the employee works as an intermediary between the child, the family, the school and possibly local authorities and professional institutions. The work takes place directly in the field,² and thanks to close contact with children and parents, the social worker maintains good prospects for successful intervention.

In recent decades, the Czech Republic has seen the rather intensive development of social activation services for families with children, i.e., in increase in the number of employees conducting field work and helping families with educational as well as other areas. Outreach programs have been implemented mainly by non-profit organizations and certain municipalities. This form of home care provides support to families with children whose development is endangered as a result of the impact of a long-term crisis situation which the family cannot overcome without outside assistance ([Matoušek & Pazlarová, 2014](#)). One of the functions of these services involves certain pedagogical, educational and activation activities³ within which one may observe in practice the clear interconnection of social work with the family as well as support for the education and upbringing of the children living in a particular family. An ancillary aim is to facilitate a certain preventative effect in families, an outcome which is a primary subject of interest of work in social pedagogy. Support for families in this direction involves access to a family who has indicated a desire to improve its situation in the interest of the child and adults alike, with this aspiration often proceeding only after initial failures to find an alternative solution for the child. It is necessary to strengthen as well as to clearly demonstrate sources of support to families and children for whom this source has not been made available. Here the role of the worker can be absolutely crucial. The purpose of this work is to improve the social status of people who deviate from social standards. As a part of the social activation programme for the family, alternatives arise that eliminate the need of placing a child into institutional care. Working with a family in a non-profit organization is based on the fact that the NGO provides social services to the family as a whole in order to strengthen and protect the safety of their members. The services that are provided are intense and focused on the specific goals and needs of individual family members.

In the mid-20th century, the term “multiple problem families” ([Matoušek & Pazlarová, 2014, p. 13](#)) was applied to one type of these target groups needing support. Other equivalents applied include “families in extreme distress” ([Sharlin & Shamai, 2000, p. 257](#)), “families in perpetual crisis” ([Kagan & Schlosberg, 1989, p. 208](#)) and “underorganized families” ([Aponte, 1976, p. 303](#)).

1.2 Concept of self-efficacy

The concept of self-efficacy was first introduced in 1977 by Bandura within sociocognitive theory, a set of models which seek to explain human activity, related cognitive and personality characteristics as well as the environment in which these features exist. These components interact with each other and are mutually intertwined in what has been termed reciprocal determinism ([Bandura, 1977](#)). A specific example would be when an individual performs some activity, after which he reflects and evaluates the consequences, this process affects his personality in a way that consolidates or changes it. Further, the environment in which the individual operates is also affected. As described, this system has wider overall implications in other intersecting environments. Bandura ([1994, 1997](#)) therefore emphasizes the interconnectedness between the various elements of the system, with the most powerful factor regulating the activity of man being his conviction of himself, of his own potentials and abilities. Self-efficacy is thus defined as “people's beliefs about their abilities needed to achieve certain performances” ([Bandura, 1994, p. 2](#)).

In our case, these beliefs will be examined in the form of attitudes of social workers toward their necessary proficiencies within their profession with regard to performing effective work with families. However, self-efficacy is not a congenital property; on the contrary, it develops over the course of

² i.e., working directly with at-risk families.

³ Legislatively, these working activities are anchored in the CR in the framework of providing social activation services in Act No. 108/2006 Coll., Sec 65(2) as pedagogical, educational and activation activities.

one's life, i.e., as formed by practice. According to Bandura ([1994](#), [1997](#)), four main sources of self-efficacy are considered to be influential, with an experience of mastery regarding successful performance (especially when overcoming obstacles that require some effort) considered to represent a high level of self-efficacy. The second source is so-called vicarious experience. If an individual in his environment has contact with someone with similar characteristics as he possesses and who has achieved success through his abilities and efforts, the individual also has a feeling of conviction that he can handle similar tasks. In our case, vicarious experiences may come through training suited specifically to the profession, other specialized training, or from supervision of some sort that can improve the quality of work. Another source is so-called social persuasion or encouragement, i.e., essentially a kind of support of a significant person from his or her environment and an assurance from this figure that the individual is able to handle the activity. The last source is the manifestation of somatic and emotional states so called physiological arousals, i.e., states and feelings people rely on when evaluating their abilities. The feeling of self-efficacy may increase if the individual judges that he feels calm and unstressed while performing the task, so he has sufficient abilities to master it ([Bandura, 1994, 1997](#)). Employees assessing their own qualities can be an important self-regulatory element in field work with the family, i.e., the worker's assessment of their potentials can to a large extent influence their approach to overall family support, thereby contributing to the quality of the service provided. Regarding this issue, it is almost impossible not to refer to client-friendliness. Depending on the level of self-regulation, the worker activates his or her professional competences and, depending on these, acts accordingly. A positive assessment of one's own self-efficacy allows for the confident realization of specialised knowledge and skills, whereas a negative assessment of capabilities usually hinders their application ([Gavora, 2012](#)).

2 Methodology

In self-efficacy surveys, questionnaire methods are used more often than using qualitative approaches. For example in-depth interview, narration, and participatory observation ([Majerčíková et al., 2012](#)). Owing to the goal of our research project, we have decided to use a qualitative research strategy, which is very often preceded by a pre-research qualitative strategy ([Macek, 2012](#)).

2.1 Research objective

The goal of the research is to determine the view of socially activating workers with the family (SAS) in regard to the self-efficacy required in the care system for children at risk. The main research question was formulated as follows: How do SAS staff view their proficiency in the established care system for vulnerable children? (HVO). This query was subsequently extended by other specific research questions: what is the difference in work? (SVO1); what skills are important to perform high-quality fieldwork? (SVO2); what am I able to do in relation to the client? (SVO3); and what factors can affect fieldwork? (SVO4).

2.2 Research method

Due to the specificity of the profession, we have opted for a qualitative research strategy by using the technique of a deep semi-structured interview with an effort to understand the workers and to perceive each subject's unique qualities within the profession. The individual testimonies of the informants were conceived as communicating a realistic depiction of each subject's specific work and potential competences in the current system. The interview allows the capture of not only facts, but also to facility to delve deeper into the motives and attitudes of the informants. Each respondent's initial reactions allowed the interviewers to gauge how other questions should be directed ([Gavora, 2010](#)). One distinct advantage of the qualitative approach is the potential to closely monitor a very limited number of cases with regard to the research question and thus obtain a better understanding of what is happening in a certain part of social reality ([Macek, 2012](#)). Because the conversation is based

specifically on interpersonal contact, success was dependent on the establishment of a friendly relationship and the maintaining an open atmosphere with the subjects.

2.3 Research sample

The subjects of the survey consisted of social activation service employees who were interviewed in regard to their work with at-risk families with underage children in the natural home environment. The research was realized in the period of September – October 2017. The research sample consisted of nine informants working in the field of social activation services from different regions of the Czech Republic (Zlín, Olomouc, Praha, and Ústecko). The interview was conducted in the offices or other facilities of their particular organization. An intentional qualified selection of employees was selected from facilities providing these registered services, with the choices based on two selection characteristics: 1) the employee has worked in social activation services for at least one year, 2) the employee was willing to participate in the research and has consented to an audio recording of the interview. The participants were guaranteed anonymity, i.e., no specific names of persons or individual facilities appear in the study. Participation in the focus group was voluntary; the volunteers were informed in advance of the intention of the study, thus it is also possible to discuss their potential motivation for taking part in the survey.

3 Analysis and interpretation of the data

The subjects of the research were perceptions of SAS employees regarding the self-efficacy needed for high-quality and efficient field work. To process the outputs of the semi-structured in-depth interviews, an embedded theory was chosen for the data analysis process ([Corbin & Strauss, 1998](#)) to gain an overall view of the work of the system in the social context. Transcripts were made of the recorded interviews, which were then analysed using the three-step coding method, i.e., open, axial and selective codes ([Corbin & Strauss, 1998](#); [Švaříček & Šedová, 2007](#)). The analysed text was then divided into meaningful units of varying size typically made up of words or phrases, with a code assigned to each unit. These codes consisted of appropriate technical terms along with in vivo codes, i.e., expressions used by the informants themselves. During coding, the codes have been merged, distributed, or replaced by more appropriate titles. During this analytical activity, we extracted 114 codes which were then placed into one of eight categories, among which we searched for mutual relationships and contexts (see Table 1).

Table 1

Paradigmatic perceptions of SAS workers model regarding self-efficacy in the current system of care for vulnerable children

Relations	Category
Causal condition	(1) Social prevention
Factors	(2) Self-efficacy (personality-based, profession-based, stress-based)
	(3) Activation
	(5) Educational activities
Context	(4) In the field
	(6) Factors influencing proficiencies, experience, patterns of influence, encouragement, conditions for workers
Intervening conditions	
Strategy of action, interaction	(7) Attitude toward clients
Resulting impact	(8) Quality of field work

The basic aim of the research was not only to describe singular phenomena, but to generate a theory that is embedded in partial data focused on social phenomena that form the professional interactions under study. The use of anchoring theory may initially appear contradictory in relation to the theoretical concept of Bandura; nevertheless, only one part of our perspective has been formed according to Professor Bandura's ideas, and we seek to add to the overall context of the issues involved.

3.1 Social prevention and educational activities

Identified as a causal condition within the paradigm model (see Table 1), the category of SOCIAL PREVENTION (1) was merged into a total of 6 codes: Timeliness and strategy of protection, Volunteering, Improving living standards, Depicting the problem, Providing insights, Impact on the generation of current children. The general category includes codes with statements by informants regarding their view of the current function of the service.

In terms of prevention, one issue I see in these services is the fact that we do not even find families where these problems are; in the future for example, we need offer services whenever an underage or young mother is involved, beforehand before problems arise (I: 12-13).

Numerous phenomena can be acted upon and responded to preemptively. [Fisher and Škoda \(2009\)](#) mentions, for example, problems of family poverty, indebtedness, and other associated long-term stressful situations resulting in psychological disorders of parents that subsequently affect the education of children. This can be illustrated by the following statements by the respondents:

In the service as I envision it, I would introduce measures and work methods that precede the social sphere, i.e., whether the children are going to preschool or elementary school, or if the mother is in a long term situation of paying rent and staying in a flat with her children (II: 22-23).

We work with families, so the procedure is to prevent problems, especially in children, so that there is no transgenerational transmission of negative issues such as that the children are under-educated or are not properly looked after, so the children might grow up in better circumstances than their parents did. With the adults, if a problem is dealt with right at the beginning, deeper issues that could arise later can be avoided (III: 14-17).

Based on this, the social workers' aim is to help people overcome unfavourable social situations and protect them from the occurrence and spread of undesirable phenomena, as indicated by [Nedělníková and Gojová \(2008\)](#). One respondent broadens the view of the preventive activity of the service:

Doing everything to ensure that families are living a way of life so as not to deviate from the social norm, a standard which they often do not recognize or even see. They seem satisfied with their current existence, but if you give them at least a stimulus or put a different angle to the situation, it can lead them to think, so that they can finally overcome the 'bargaining' stage (IV: 29-32).

3.2 Self-efficacy

The central category in our research is SELF-EFFICACY (2) in working with families as a precisely specified research goal. Well-practiced social prevention should be characterized by a demand driven by the professionalisation of the work of family support workers. Their competences and other assumptions are based on their own subjective perceptions based on experience influenced by practice. Because this is a profession in which the close links of knowledge from the humanities and social sciences merge, we have narrowed our focus on operations and educational activities in the profession. Within the central category, 3 basic subcategories of related competences form part of the worker's professional profile and ability to follow up on their own development: 1) Personality-based, 2) Profession-based, and 3) Stress-based. These individual subcategories were further analysed.

3.2.1 Personality-based proficiencies

In the personality-based subcategory, the following 4 most frequent codes were selected: Empathy, Active listening, Openness, and Authenticity. Personality traits come through by way of significant skills and abilities that excel through negotiation and expression in different situations. The attendant empathy expressed in a given profession can help the other person to find their own way. [Barret-Lennard \(2003\)](#), who have written extensively on empathy, indicate that the empathic perception of the other helps to improve one's own self-esteem. It is as if an inner door to the other person is opened, by which this person can see what lies behind it. An essential aspect in this way is listening in face-to face communication. Building on the knowledge of psychology, [Gjuričová and Kubička \(2009\)](#) point out the need for listening in the family. The strength of empathy and active listening in a given profession is exemplified in the following testimony:

The most important component is actively listening, actively sensing what the client needs, how he is currently tuned. As to whether we want to work on something when I feel it is not internally set, it may be very difficult to motivate the person at the moment, so I move on to something else that he does want. I think that empathy is not only an abstract concept but it is our greatest benefit along with the spontaneity of the worker (II: 105-109).

The need for knowing how listen empathetically to communicate and empathically can be seen in this statement: "Those who do not know how sense a situation and how to empathize and communicate accordingly simply cannot do the job" (VIII: 206). The following recorded statement refers to the value of listening, but not specifically to active listening.

I definitely listen, I'm a big listener like a willow, and sometimes that's enough. Sometimes it's really enough – it's that only thing they need and they do not have to go any further. I just sit and listen for half an hour (VII: 196-197).

There is a disparity in this testimony, and the important question arises as to whether mere indefatigable lengthy listening is in fact truly effective for the client. According to [Šiffelová \(2010\)](#), clients need more than just listening and an accepting presence; they need to know if they are being understood as they speak. Openness involves the willingness of the worker to accept the client's ideas, which may reflect unconventional values. This kind of mindset is a feature that also applies to cognitive intelligence ([Schultz & Roberts, 2007](#)).

Openness also predetermines a certain form of mutual relationship between the client and the worker: "I think openness is important in this work - the ability to be open, honest, quick to orientate oneself and respond to the client" (V: 179-180). "Such a healthy openness in relation to the client is always in place, shaping our patience" (VII: 158-159). With patience, the worker can be seen as progressing at the pace of the client. Openness can further predetermine a certain level of positivity in the worker's personal attitude, as well as his spontaneous reactions. "The worker should behave naturally to the client, then the work proceeds by itself unforced; they see when I'm not there, and maybe they take that personally ..." (IV: 158-159).

[Rogers \(1995\)](#) believes that natural interaction in this relationship is the most important element. The person who is capable of being open to himself as he is has the greatest effect. A clear example of the worker interacting authentically work comes: "If a satisfied worker is able to pass on this quality to himself and to his client ..." (VI: 221-222). Self-disclosure to a certain extent also relates to physical contact, which can provide the client with a sense of security, relief, care and support. "I also have some personal contact; perhaps I put my hand on the client's shoulder or pat on her back to let her know she is not alone at that moment" (VII: 257-258). Of course the client is the one who decides whether a certain type of physical contact is acceptable.

As a programmer uses a computer in his work, the field worker uses his personality, which can have a strong influence on the outcomes of his work. Nevertheless, it depends on the worker how much he uses his own disposition. "The resource I use the most in my work is my own personality" (II: 67-68).

3.2.2 Profession-based proficiencies

[Maceček \(2008\)](#) indicate how numerous activities can help to provide information and services to the target group in the field. Competencies are in this way quite varied. Our intention was, however, to combine competences that are related to social educational activities during activation and to compile them within the category of self-efficacy. Here for clarity we determined 6 codes to be inserted into the spreadsheet (see Table 2). In most areas, the testimonies of the informants coincided with and confirmed their hidden educational and educational activities.

We teach clients to do things in the future for themselves or at least part of them. Activities that require practical training seem to manage themselves; when they get to know the process a bit better, they get right to it (V: 138-139).

Table 2

Areas of socially educational activity in activation with the family

Areas of educational activation	Examples of statements
Activations toward the educational activities to strengthen parental competencies	<p>"Educational counselling is something I think we do sometimes unintentionally at almost at every meeting, because it's part of our work ..." (II. 55- 56).</p> <p>"I'm trying to show this mother that it is different with this child [regarding] rules in upbringing" (V. 76, 114).</p> <p>"How to act towards children ... how to play with children, so many mothers don't get this at all ..." (VI. 113, 128).</p> <p>"For example, when I go to the school I deal with the mother in terms of what is needed for the baby, how can the baby develop, materials, then we sit down at the table and start some motor exercises, drawing, relaxation techniques, learning colours, shapes ..." (IV. 62).</p> <p>"... most often I help with preparing the kids for school. I show the mom how to teach a child ... I'm trying to bring them a lot of textual material; I set them out for the family and show how them to work with it. Then they will show me what they have done at our next meeting" (IX. 84-86).</p>
Activations of leisure time activities	<p>"So in terms of leisure time activities we discuss the possibilities of the family, what can be done for children during summer, even if they don't have money in the summer ... of course for free time we also ensure that provide the kids information, clubs to be a part of, etc. We often motivate parents toward leisure activities; we are looking for support so that the children are not just sitting at home in front of the TV or inappropriately wasting their free time another way ..." (III. 47-50).</p>
Activations toward resolving economic issues of the family	<p>"... in the management of finances, of course the rent and food must be paid for, the children must have school supplies, and finally, there are incidental expenses for things they do not necessarily need but which can help to get the family situated ..." (III. 27).</p> <p>"... to make the mother realize that she needs to pay her debts. The family has no savings, so for a few months the mother has been scrupulously writing down what she spends, and in this way she is able to set priorities in time, spending money only for what is needed ..." (VII. 88-89).</p>
Activations toward the management of day to day activities	<p>"... for the establishment of a regular day to day routine we must carefully guide these people ..." (I. 207).</p> <p>"... how to properly set up the home regime ..." (VI. 111).</p>

	<p>"So in the beginning we must set up a series of rules in a family where there had been no good habits to begin with" (VIII. 94-95).</p>
Activations of training in social competencies	<p>"... for those parents it is, then, training, for example handling oneself on the telephone, dealing with officials from various institutions, and so on ..." (IV. 66).</p> <p>"We practice simple conversations, which some of them just can't seem to get the knack of ..." (V. 122).</p> <p>"Training for basic situations that he could expect, what would be expected of him, so that he is prepared" (VIII. 76).</p>
Providing support and burden management	<p>"... definitely to support the family, to state what the possibilities are and to draw attention to risks" (I. 72).</p> <p>"... I will place before the client several variants of a solution, basically guiding him to the best decision, evaluating the negatives, give him self-confidence and psychological support, to give everyone the courage to be committed to a resolution ..." (IV. 47).</p> <p>"... when they have us behind them, they feel more confident ..." (VIII. 156).</p>

Social workers are professionally engaged in educational activities within the realm of moral values, in the emotional sphere, in the acquisition and strengthening of parents' social competences as well as related to the clients' overall personal development. Workers take into account the specifics of the environment and deal with the prevention of risks primarily related to education, but also with compensation for the concrete effects of the individual client's behaviour on their own personality or on the social environment ([Sekera, 2012](#)).

3.2.3 Coping with stress

Resilience represents the quality of adaptive abilities that help adequately handle dynamic environmental conditions, i.e., to cope with potentially stressful interactions without significantly impairing the functioning of the personality ([Paulík, 2017](#)). "In this field, we often deal with situations in which we need to address a current crisis situation here and now ..." (II: 69). Psychological resistance is one of the most important factors that determine work performance and supports the overall quality of work results:

I had to learn how to deal with crisis situations, I had to teach these people to calm down. When I come to the family and there is a crisis, I think I can get people to the level of having fun. I'm a good listener, so I listen to what people say and make them feel like I understand them (I: 145-147).

Coping with stressful situations in families is an essential skill needed by personnel to know how to work with clients' crises. A crisis is any situation subjectively perceived as unmanageable with the available means ([Cimrmannová et al., 2013](#)). This can be evidenced by one testimony that corroborates the importance of the worker taking the situation into his own hands and providing insights for the client.

The client's brain already has problems in his life and is struggling, and in a crisis these coping mechanisms cease to work and you first need to calm him down. You have to find out what matters most to him in the given situation, about his most pressing need; then you assure him, support him, show him some potential solutions and direct him to an expert if necessary (IV: 124-129).

The work is a lot about contact and interaction, thus responses should be regulated emotionally. For example, trying to control unpleasant experiences requires a certain amount of energy. Controlling emotional energy means that it can be put to more efficient use. "Surely not to keep those emotions inside or to discount a client's disappointment, but to describe the situation as it really is" (II: 203-204). When a client becomes angry, the worker can direct the interactions more persuasively. "The client feels that I'm taking charge of the situation, but I always behave with respect" (III: 107). The client

accepting this directiveness is related to the belief of one's own ability to control and manage events within the range of control – the admission of helplessness. This acceptance by the client may be framed within working limits: “I felt bad in the role when I was trying to help but was unsuccessful” (VI: 71-72). Feelings of stress may occasionally appear in the environments in which the workers move: “... I was quite worried about my work, even afraid that something may happen to me personally when I go to location and it is a bit of a mess, but then these feelings all went away” (VIII: 146-147). Or difficulties in emergency situations:

Certain circumstances arise that you simply have no control over, so you have to somehow reconcile yourself to this. There were two suicides, so in such a unnatural situation of course a person becomes much more concerned, thinking about what he did wrong, what he could have done otherwise, questions like these come up (IV: 165-169).

In dealing with the stress, some resilience is definitely needed in the profession. Resilience is not a simple phenomenon, but is a consequence of a context of various phenomena and circumstances ([Bartelt, 1994](#)). “Working with people evokes emotions in a person which cannot be resolved by simply closing the door and ending your working hours” (VII: 91-92).

3.3 Activation as family support

The category of ACTIVATION (3), which represents the main activity within the overall context, includes 9 codes: Locating resources together, Motivation to change, Practical training, Playfulness, Management of activities, Demonstration of possible solutions, Encouraging the family to resolve its own issues, in vivo stimulus, kick. Activation can be described as a process that leads people toward a certain activity. The concept of activation demonstrates and explains how social prevention is actually practiced. How is the process perceived by the workers themselves?

It most likely means that the family is looking for resources among themselves, and I'm activating those resources ... when someone begins looking into how their system is functioning, for them it's 'a clear motivator to change' ... (I: 28-29, 101).

Specific activities include: “practicing conversation” (V: 122), “engaging parents in preparing their children for school” (IX: 76), and “the need to pay debts” (III: 37). One interesting comment referred to:

The feeling one gets when one is able to convince another person who has no faith in himself at all that despite all odds he must find a way to improve his condition, to resolve his own situation, and he does not have to rely on anyone else but himself (III: 29-30).

The goal of activation in these services is therefore to support processes that result in a higher degree of independence. Activation can also be understood as a process in which the central question becomes: What motivates the client to become energetic and active or what could motivate him / her? Activation is not only a blind offering of a wide range of activities, but also a process of seeking individual client motivation ([Vojířová, 2012](#)). These individual areas of activation have been delineated as educational activities (see Table 2). On the other hand, this process is not a panacea and depends on the wishes, the willingness as well as the capacities of clients. “Every client is different; each has their own possibilities and their own limits as to what he can achieve” (II: 31).

3.4 Working in the field as a natural social environment

Social pedagogy as a discipline focuses on the role of the environment (especially social space) in the educational process ([Kraus, 2014](#)). The quality of the social environment plays an important role in preventing and eventually deepening the consequences associated with specific deficits in the

behaviour of children and adolescents ([Vávrová, Hrbáčková, & Hladík, 2015](#)). This focus also justifies our interest in the place of the socialization process, as the family takes part in this. From this point we can move to field work, which helps to promote the socialization process as direct involvement in the family.

The category FIELD WORK (4) represents an alternative environment in which emerging forms of support services for disadvantaged children and families are being provided in response to the Czech government's national strategy on the protection of children's rights ("[Action plan](#)," 2018). In what ways do social workers view this alternative as specific and more advantageous than institutional forms? Our survey responses were collected under these codes: Individual work, Detecting hidden meanings, Understanding causal connections, Naturality and reality, Risk. "It is such individual work; the family is waiting for me, and we have an understood goal" (VIII: 145). These considerations lead to greater complexity.

We are able to perceive even the little nuances within in the family; I can see a lot of things, what the relationships are in the family, who is the most involved and does not participate in child rearing, the relationship with the parents and among the siblings. I notice the small things that other in most cases are unable to see (IV: 56-57).

On the basis of these observations, it is possible that the workers can reveal other contexts: "I can see and explain what is happening, why the child is late for school when she was dropped off right in front; why her mother says that the child was sent to school and in fact was not" (I: 115-119). Working in the natural social environment brings further advantages to the workers. "We meet him where he feels comfortable and where he feels safe" (II: 79-80). [Matoušek and Pazlarová \(2014\)](#) describe these benefits of this kind of contact. On the other hand, workers have been mentioned negatives related to their own stress and the risk from working in the environment: "... I was quite worried about my work, even afraid that something may happen to me personally when I go to location and it is a bit of a mess, but then these feelings all went away" (VIII: 146-147). "For about a year I would go home unhappy because everything on me was stinking. My coat, sweater, underwear, bra, I had to wash everything. Eventually I was able to deal with it" (IX: 126-127).

3.5 Sources influencing self-efficacy

Intervening conditions in the paradigmatic model act upon a worker's proficiency and these point to a blending with social cognitive theory. In the interviews these were denoted as SOURCES INFLUENCING SELF-EFFICACY (5), consisting of 4 subcategories: Experience, Transferred experience, Encouragement, Emotional states.

3.5.1 Experience

The following statements by the respondents correspond with Bandura ([1994](#), [1997](#)), i.e., they demonstrate the power of experience in developing proficiency:

I think that the experiences I have acquired since I started to do field service are very important; there have been so many life and work experiences and it's still vital to constantly learn, and practice is greatly enhanced by education (I: 80-81).

"I think it still surprises me that the work has not become stereotypical, that it cannot be predicted to go along the beaten track; experience plays a huge role and new situations always come up again and again ..." (III: 135-136). "I know my limitations, but when one has a general overview, knows where to turn to and how to function well, then he is always gathering new experiences, so that's quite important" (IV: 159-160).

3.5.1 Transferred experience

According to Bandura ([1994](#), [1997](#)), the second source for proficiency is learning through significant others or transferred experience. In the statements we coded this aspect from 2 particular points of view, one of them being the transfer of experience towards the client:

[...] sometimes when working with a client and I see that she has similar concerns as I do, I use this opportunity and tell her that I have recently experienced the same thing, so I know how they feel and what helped me in the situation, and I try to draw on that to help clients because they experience similar concerns as we do (VI: 270-271).

The second view is of the transfer of experience towards fellow workers, however this was notable in the responses by the indication of a lack of such experiences:

The need for more long-term training, I think I would benefit from it even on a personal level, I think I would feel more prepared. I know a training course does not prepare one for some absolutely essential things, but at least I would have the feeling that I have done something to push myself, as they say. I would certainly welcome this (V: 20-24).

What is indicated in these statements is a certain lack of training in soft skills: "I still have something to learn, I am not working at 100%, but I try; I would rather have some examples, I cannot imagine it like this ..." (IX: 235-236). At the same time, we encountered opinions that transferred experience is strengthened by more long-term training: "... the more hours you have worked, the more you are able to function with assurance; it is very important to develop both professionally as well as psychologically ..." (I: 231).

3.5.2 Encouragement

As the third source of self-efficacy, encouragement is categorized into 3 important codes: colleague support: "In talking about problems with clients, chatting with colleagues that one can trust, resolving issues, that is very important and encouraging" (VI: 268-269). "The team helps me a great deal" (VIII: 225). Another very important means for worker support is supervision, i.e., practical training of professional ethics, awareness of the processes that take place between the employee and the client, the search for alternatives ([Kopřiva, 2013](#)):

[...] because you go there, you try something, you are there twice, three times a week, you go there to help the person ... it was quite demanding, then we had the supervision, so we resolved the issues then and there, and that was that (IX: 54- 59).

Nevertheless, whether to include this code as a transfer of experience or encouragement and feedback could be disputed. One important source of empowerment is the feedback provided to the worker. This feedback is primarily based on the client's response to the worker, which can be judged as a criterion of the quality of work. In which ways professional competencies are best reflected in statements like:

[...] it is something that reflects us in that trust, in establishing the relationship between the client and the worker; this work takes a long time ... if we can, we'll get specific feedback from the client; even if he does not tell us himself, his concrete actions can show us (II: 121-123).

Creating a good relationship between a worker and other family members can compensate for a possible deficit in the area of the primary relationship, but it can also accelerate the curiosity of the client, his willingness to recognize issues and to learn. If a worker performs these tasks in a adeptly, it increases the chances that clients will trust in these abilities and will consider the work helpful

([Dryden, 2008](#)). "I think that if the client is able to deal with the problems himself, this is on the basis of trust ..." (III: 120-121).

3.5.3 Emotional states

The fourth source consists of the emotional and physiological states of the workers. The influence of this factor on self-efficacy is self-evident, since the momentary as well as long-term state of a person has a connection to the overall personality. With a view toward the ambivalence of human experience, we have identified 2 codes: Well-being and Disharmony.

Mental well-being is very important when working with people; as soon as I get angry at work, or if I come and project my negative feelings on to the client, the relationship dies immediately. I won't be able to do anything with her or move her in any way. So much depends on the worker's well-being or on the ability to turn off the effects of any personal problems the worker may be experiencing (IV: 237-238).

Physiological aspects play an important role in activities requiring physical activity. "Sometimes it's just to make adjustments, to decide what's important to do right now and what isn't, what I can put off till later, and then I consider whether I can manage today or not" (VII: 265-266). A crucial role is played by how the individual deals with health issues. Adverse physical conditions such as headache or a blood pressure problem can affect performance psychosomatically on an unconscious level or by physical impairments, both of which may be reflected in lower willpower, determination, or by a negative perception of themselves in a given situation: "It gets exhausting when a person when is not feeling well - he just wants others around him" (VI: 162). "Yeah, of course, when I'm in pain or I'm having health problems sometimes I cut the meeting short" (V: 283-284). In addition, mental disharmony makes it easier for an individual to remember or dwell upon past failures or setbacks, resulting logically in increased anxiety regarding failure in line with his lower expectations ([Bandura, 1997](#)).

3.6 Attitudes toward clients

In the performance of work duties, the category ATTITUDES TOWARD CLIENTS (6) is revealed in the strategies and practices applied in contact with and in advice to the client. In this classification, 9 codes have been defined in the research that are linked to the central phenomenon of self-efficacy. Many different models for guidance and advice to clients have been proposed. [Kraus and Poláčeková \(2001\)](#) draw attention to personal decision making and the proportion of human and professional factors of workers as influencing what style of work they choose. For the present work we have chosen the properties that appeared most often in our research sample: Establishing a relationship, Trust, Communication, Empathic listening, Understanding, Openness, Naturalness, Intuition, Inducing a personal level of contact. These codes were repeated in our research and they also coincide with the competencies workers indicated as important to their work (see subchapter 3.2).

It is important to mention the form of communication in relation to clients. Communication in this case indicates not only a process of transferring information, but forms the basic component of interaction between the worker and the client. "Communication at work is very important, the ability to establish a relationship, to be able to speak freely with clients" (VI: 153). "It is mostly about communication, even non-verbal aspects; when a worker can read a client well, it gives him more information than a half an hour of talk" (IV: 95).

[Jandourek \(2012\)](#) points out that at present the emphasis is on personal growth, autonomy, racial, class and gender equality, as well as equality between the worker and the client. Since these alternative considerations in regard to working with the family have emerged, noticeably different solutions to problems have developed. This work begins with an individual approach to the client based mainly on a partnership approach along with communication techniques that help to establish and maintain the motivation of children and parents, creating a relationship of trust between workers and

family members ([Bechyňová & Konvičková, 2011](#)). What is important in communication that manifests itself in relation to the client? "Avoiding mistakes in communication that can be made by the workers like moralizing, trivialization [of clients' ideas or feelings], projection; one has to pay attention" (IV: 112-114). Naturalness was evaluated as an important component, the core of which is to simply be oneself ([Rogers, 1995](#)).

And maybe if she had known from the beginning that we were in the same position, I mean personally, that I wasn't playing games with her, then she would have taken my advice differently. She looked at me like I was a different person than I really am, she got me all wrong (VI: 170-173).

The professional is then a real person, i.e., he does not develop a professional mask and he also expresses to what extent he is open to experience; he knows his strengths and weaknesses, accepts responsibility for his actions and is able to maintain a sincere, empathic understanding and unconditional acceptance of the client ([Šiffelová, 2010](#)). This relationship is based on an attitude characterized by attention and respect for the client as he communicates. The focus is on interpersonal contact, an exchange of experiences and an understanding of yourself and others. It follows that fostering this type of rapport is hardly possible in situations where manipulation or authoritarian management and over-organization prevail. [Motching and Nykl \(2011\)](#) have indicated how people can develop optimally in a climate characterized by what have been called Rogers' variables. [Rogers \(1995\)](#) has described how the problems of an individual can be solved in a close, long-term relationship if those involved are able to create an atmosphere of true warmth and understanding. The basic hypothesis is that individuals have in themselves the potential for self-understanding and the transformation of their own self-image, basic attitudes and behaviours in an atmosphere of facilitating psychological attitudes. This means that from the point of view of the communication process or the communication relationship within the profession it is the social worker who is to a certain level able to perceive and foster these basic human attitudes. These conditions can be applied to any situation directed toward personality development.

The first assumption, according to Rogers, is that the first prerequisite in creating the atmosphere of change, is the acceptance, interest, and confidence that [Rogers \(1995, p. 121\)](#) calls *unconditional positive acceptance*. The second facilitating aspect is empathic understanding, indicating that a worker is aware of the feelings and personal beliefs the client holds and experiences. These can take the form of meanings that the client is fully aware of, but also those that are below his or her level of consciousness. Such sensitive and active listening is, however, very rare. The third assumption is the authenticity in which the worker is openly experiencing the feelings and attitudes that are emerging from the client. The worker is able to realize what the client is experiencing. "I have no problem simply telling the client outright what bothers me about the situation as I see it, because only frankness and honesty can construct a meaningful relationship" (IX: 203).

There is therefore closely interconnected congruence between what is experienced at the level of the body and what is the actual content of consciousness, and thus what is communicated to the client. People who are accepted and appreciated will soon become more interested in themselves as well as others. If they are listened to empathically, their flow of inner thoughts and experiences will come forth much more readily and reliably. Thus, naturalness is a personality characteristic that can be demonstrated in the worker's approach to the client as well as in the credibility the worker projects: states, "if I were in a crisis situation and a worker came to me who is not doing well himself, I would not trust him, why should I?" (III: 94-95). It is clear that all of the above-mentioned elements are interconnected into a complex of certain qualities which are then reflected in the quality of the work.

3.7 Quality of field work

Category (7), labelled QUALITY OF WORK, reflects the effect of the professional interaction of workers as an impact on the effectiveness of activation work with the family. Service work is generally provided on the basis of quality standards of social service authorities in accordance with the legal norms of the

Czech Republic and the European Union in terms of the Ethical Code of Social Workers of the Czech Republic ([Nedělníková & Gojová, 2008](#)). In our case, this measurement consists of the identification of the quality of work by the workers themselves at the relationship level and the educational action towards the client. In this category, 6 codes were included: Long-term involvement, Patience and persistence of a worker, Specific activities of clients, Statements of confidence, Patterns of influence, Conversation.

The individual considerations regarding the reflections of the quality of work from the point of view of workers generally refer to the intensity and the long-term nature of relationships. "Results cannot be seen right away" (VII: 96). "A person must give them time" (III: 173). Since quality reflects working relationships, the role of time is important, i.e., in order to establish trust, a very important condition for further work. "I think it's all about patience with people; I guess a person really has to learn a lot, I know I did. It comes with age – the older I get the more patient I am" (III: 172-173).

In one study, [Kopřiva \(2013\)](#) indicates patience as one feature that emerged in 47% of the surveyed respondents in the helping professions. Patience can be seen in communication when conducting interviews as part of counselling and overall approach to the client: "Conversation is our strongest helper" (II: 170). Through simply speaking with the client, it is possible to focus upon and discuss a number of issues that can help parents gain insights into understanding their children and family relationships, thus they gradually learn to control and correct their own behaviours as best as possible in line with their individual idiosyncrasies.

[Zakouřilová \(2014\)](#) favours the idea that well-guided counselling has in itself a relatively high therapeutic value, especially if it does not lack elements of humanity. These basic elements of empathy can be found in category (6), attitudes toward the client, upon which depends whether or not the workers are able to establish a relationship of trust. Statements of confidence are also reflected in the statements of respondent: "If I am empathetic, this will come through immediately with the client, but after time it is something that will be reflected in the client's trust, in establishing a relationship with him" (II: 117-118). Consistent patterns of behaviour can also have a great influence: "if a client accepts it, a worker can be a model" (IV: 102). The functioning of patterns represents imitation, by which children and adults cognitively process their social experiences along with how the results of that knowledge will further influence their behaviour and development.

According to the theory of simulation learning of Bandura (1977), four components are involved in this process. Firstly, it is through attention that an observer becomes interested in the events that are being modelled, with one example being a client's attention attracted by a worker: "Some are glad that someone is actually doing something with them, they like that interest. They are happy and grateful that someone is paying attention" (VIII: 152-153). The second component, retention, indicates an observed behaviour retained in memory via an image or verbal system: "... they talk a lot among themselves: 'He comes here and he does that for us, and we are so excited!' And then I return to the family and maybe there's someone else waiting for me to help" (VIII: 161-164). Reproduction is an appropriate activity similar to modelling behaviour. "So the family is waiting for me, we have a set goal" (VIII: 142).

The fourth component is reinforcement as the final guidance process of learning by imitation. It therefore includes an incentive variable – valuation, which plays a major role in incentivizing and maintaining the motivation of additional clients. "Raise the level of the client's success to motivate others" (II: 41). Valuation reinforces appropriate training and the development of the social and parental competencies of clients as well as trying to eliminate less appropriate behaviours: "... if we can, we get feedback, which is most valuable to us in this work, for me these are the concrete actions and activities of the family" (IX: 240-241).

4 Final reflections on the research

The subject of this research project was compiling and analysing the perspectives of social workers on their professional ability in field social activation work with families in the current system for the care of children at risk. The socio-pedagogical nature of our research has led us to focus on the social and educational nature of the work, although the profession is not regulated under the Ministry of Education. The created model includes phenomena with intertwining elements and theoretical concepts which are inextricably bound together and interconnected (see Figure 1). The table shows the mutual social interactions in the existing system.

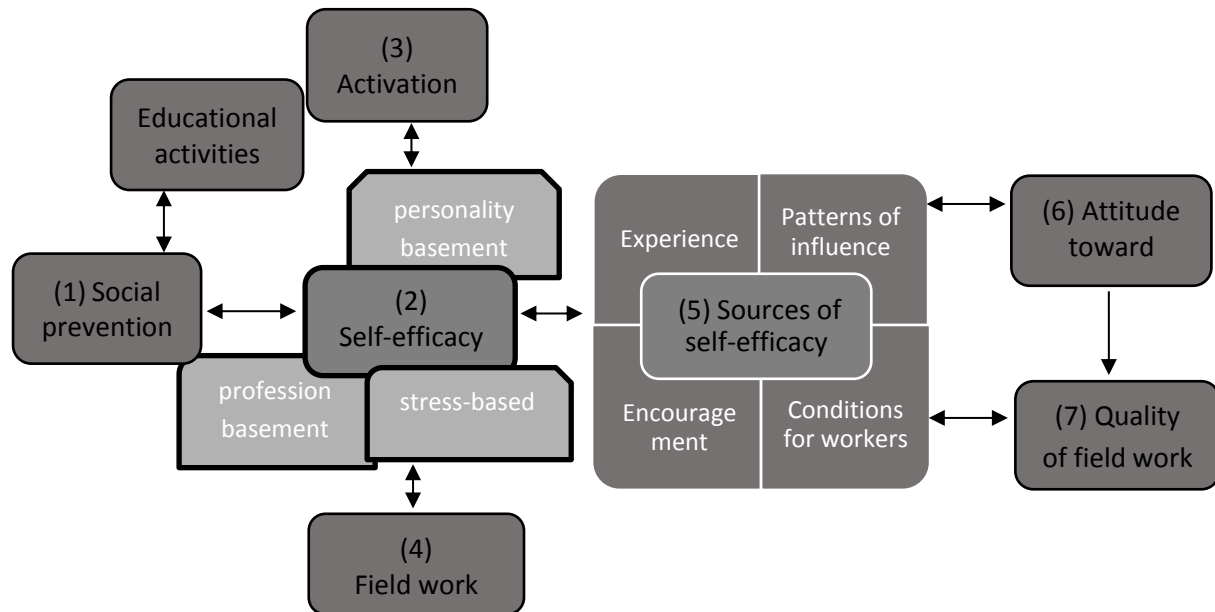


Figure 1. Structural model of SAS in the care system for at-risk children

The Action plan ([“Action plan,” 2018](#)) on the Implementation of the national strategy for the protection of children's rights 2012-2015 has made it necessary to increase societal emphasis on addressing social prevention (1) establishing an approach to workers that to a set extent seeks to educate the target group directly in the natural environment (4) in which they can operate without danger. The nature of the environment will be such that a certain degree of safety and security is guaranteed for everyone, and therefore new alternatives can come forth in terms of emerging services. Therein lies the difference. “We are able to perceive even those tiny nuances that are in the family, to observe a lot of things that we are not normally able to see” (VII: 54-55). Given the diversity of environments, we propose an approach which is more specific and more individualized (6), i.e., an approach based on trust. Given the diversity of work activities involved, creating such relationships requires workers to develop and possess certain qualities and proficiencies (2). The results of the research demonstrated the workers’ interest in quality in three areas: personality-based, profession-based and stress-based concerns. Given that the level of self-efficacy can shape in certain ways the success in the profession, all of these areas must be clearly defined and closely analysed. The question of proficiencies is also related to the professionalism of the employees, their development, the efficiency of the services, as well potential further educational developments in the field. We should determine to a greater degree exactly how these proficiencies as well as other conditions influencing behaviours and social interactions can lead to the altered responses of all actors involved with the goal of contributing to quality work in the field. Accordingly, self-efficacy and other proficiencies are not unchangeable, yet they are factors which can strongly influence the quality of the services provided (7). Findings pertaining to the question of professional proficiency have been consistent in that such attitudes can

positively affect the motivation of a person to achieve the goals and greater performance within a particular profession (Federici & Skaalvik, 2012). From the paradigmatic model outlined here, the central importance of self-efficacy can be delineated, and intervening conditions (5) that can influence the formation of this hidden psychological phenomenon can be designated. The development of professional competencies is a lifelong process that is based on triadic reciprocity between behaviour (self-efficacy), personality (character, temperament), and the external environment (stressfulness) that form the basis of socio-cognitive theory.

Work experience undoubtedly plays a major role in the professional development of social workers. Experience can determine the dynamics of this development, which is particularly evident in younger workers. With experience along with positive feedback, the worker's ability to evaluate her / his own proficiencies and capabilities increases. For example, results by Steyner and Mynhardt (2008) have demonstrated that self-efficacy is influenced by both the subjective view, for example, of the performance itself, as well as on objective information provided by another person about the performance of the individual, i.e., the person can be shown exactly where he was wrong and why. Self-efficacy may also be affected by any situation in which social comparison is involved.

Interesting insights can be gained by examining the current state of the profession, in which great progress is being made at the boundaries between social work and social pedagogy. According to Ondrejko (2009), both social pedagogy and social work can be better established in terms of prevention, i.e., when effective preventive programs are created that will be able to offer systematic, planned and long-term training not only for the conditioning of new outward behaviours, but also for their internalization. Schilling (1999) raises a number of pedagogical aspects in terms of helping to resolving problems in various life situations through activation in educational and training programs (3) geared toward the workers themselves. "The worker in some way educates both the adult and the child; regardless of the client's level of formal schooling or training, education is definitely taking place" (IV: 71-73).

For a well-functioning and professional system of alternative assistance and support for families, the human factor is absolutely essential. This has been confirmed by a study by Vávrová and Krutilová Nováková (2015) in which they identify potential support mechanisms for families within the Czech transformation of the system of care for children at risk instituted in 2009. As a result, more effort and resources are being dedicated to the issues related to competences and proficiencies in the field. This project has greatly influenced the overall quality of social services in the Czech Republic.

How are the current workers in the care system for vulnerable children dealing with their work both personally and professionally? To what degree do they trust their abilities and skills in terms of the educational aspects related to the performance of their job? These kinds of questions point to a great potential for further exploration in these areas. Our goal in the future will be to develop a methodologically sound and reliable research tool with which to explore aspects of workers' professional self-efficacy within their social pedagogical work with families.

The author declares that this is the original study and text in this form has not been submitted for publication nor has it been published otherwise.

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The results of the research demonstrated the workers' interest in quality in three areas: personality-based, profession-based and stress-based concerns.

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Home preparation of anglophone children for school: The influence of a different culture

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Abstract: This qualitative study deals with home preparation for school of children with a different cultural background in the Czech Republic. This specifically concerns the anglophone minority group that reside in the country. According to Kachru's model, the Czech Republic belongs to the Expanding Circle, which means that the English language is only present as a foreign language. In the methodological part of this study, we focus on children with English as their mother tongue who attend Czech primary schools in the Czech Republic. These children need to cope not only with the different culture background of their parents, but also with a different language of education than their mother tongue. The parents in the families under examination try to make the conditions for school preparation easier for the children, but they encounter completely different problems with respect to their monocultural peers. In exceptional cases, they are even forced to change primary school.

Keywords: English, preparation for school, situational analysis, different cultural background, primary school, external tutoring

Domácí příprava anglofonních dětí na vyučování: Vliv odlišného kulturního prostředí

Abstrakt: Tato kvalitativní studie se zabývá přípravou dětí z odlišného kulturního prostředí na školní vyučování v České republice. Konkrétně anglicky hovořící minoritní skupinou. Vzhledem k tomu, že Česká republika patří dle Kachruova modelu do tzv. Expanding Circle, je zde tento jazyk pouze na úrovni prvního cizího vyučovacího jazyka. V metodologické části studie se věnujeme dětem, které mají anglický jazyk jako svůj mateřský jazyk a navštěvují v České republice základní školu. Tyto děti se musí ve školním prostředí a při přípravě na vyučování vyrovnávat nejen z odlišnou kulturou svých rodičů, ale také s odlišným vyučovacím jazykem než je jejich mateřský jazyk. Zkoumané rodiny se snaží svým dětem různými způsoby ulehčit přípravu na vyučování a narážejí přitom na zcela odlišné problémy než jejich monokulturní vrstevníci. Ve výjimečných případech jsou dokonce nuceni přistoupit ke změně základní školy.

Klíčová slova: angličtina, příprava na vyučování, situační analýza, odlišné kulturní prostředí, základní škola, doučování

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The Czech Republic is a country with only one official language, so it can be best described as a monolingual country. A great milestone in the history of the country was the Velvet Revolution of 1989 and the subsequent political, social and economic transformation. Another big step in its history was the division of Czechoslovakia and the establishment of the independent country of Czech Republic on 1 January 1993, as well as the accession to the European Union on 1 May 2004. All of these events increased the volume of international migration. More foreigners have started coming to the Czech Republic and a significant percentage of them retained English as their mother tongue. They also teach it to their children, along with their cultural habits. Inside their family environment they create a third culture where their original culture is mixed with Czech culture. This is a newly created family platform in which they live with their children. The aim of this study is to highlight the difficulty of home preparation for school attendance in a monolingual country where school education is compulsory and where homework is a part of preparation for school on most days.

1 Home preparation for school

The terminology related to school preparation for children in their home environment is mainly focused on concepts of home preparation and homework. The meaning of these concepts is interconnected and used in similar contexts. [Maňák \(1992\)](#) states that home preparation is considered to be a part of school attendance and continuation of school learning in the home environment. [Jursová \(2011\)](#) describes home preparation as an activity that should make a child's work easier at school. The child prepares these activities at home to be ready for education at school. Home preparation is directly related to education, and its content is designed to support learning, knowledge retention and repetition processes. To what extent home preparation provides support and how much time a child should spend on it is a very difficult question as it depends on the child, which makes this a very individual process ([Pope, 2001](#)). Through this training, children have the opportunity to gain habits and experience in independence and responsibility. These tasks can also encourage them and often force them to resolve the frustrations they cause ([Majerčíková & Petrů-Puhrová, 2017](#)). The role of a child in the family is, among other things, undoubtedly fulfilled by home preparation for school. This role can change the attitudes of parents to children and the style of family life. Parental support is expected to strengthen the child's autonomy in order to increase family cohesion and to help the child gain a respected and firm position in the family structure ([Šulová & Škrábová, 2012](#)). Problems can emerge when the parent is not used to home schooling or is unable to communicate fluently in the language of education.

2 English in the Czech Republic

In the perspective of this study's focus, it should be appropriate to clarify the position of English in the Czech Republic. The expansion of English was influenced after 1989 when Russian lost the position of a compulsory foreign language at schools and Russian teachers were often re-trained and started teaching other foreign languages ([Nekvapil, 2007](#)). After 1990, English as a first foreign language was appended to compulsory education, starting from the fifth grade of elementary schooling. The third language (i.e., the second foreign language) became optional in the seventh grade. Starting from 1995, the first foreign language became compulsory from the 3rd to the 9th grade, and the second foreign language from the 7th to the 9th grade. If English is taught from the third year, then German, Spanish, French, or Russian are offered preferentially as second foreign language. Starting from the 6th grade, another language might be taught as an optional subject ([Průcha, 1999](#)). Whereas English is included in the curriculum for the junior primary schooling already, it became the most frequent foreign language in the country. The accession of the Czech Republic in the European Union in 2004 played also a significant role ([Nekvapil, 2007](#)).

In the previous century, this language was subject for research ([Kachru, 1985](#)). In the 1990s, [Kachru \(1996\)](#) visualised how the three Circles were related to each other in a diagram as follows (see Figure 1).

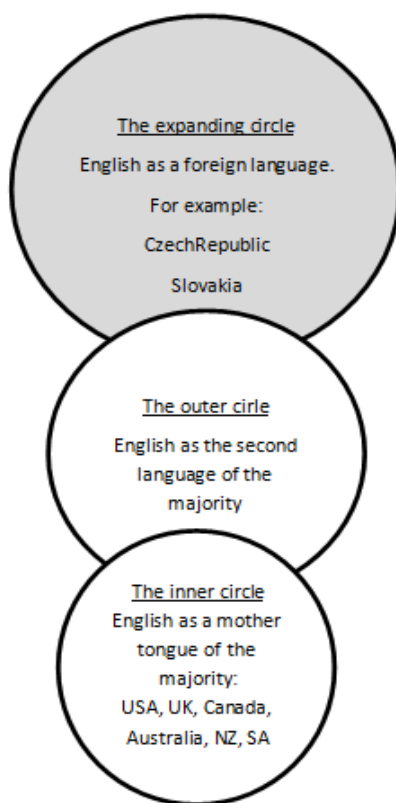


Figure 1. Three concentric circles of Englishes (own source)

- The Inner Circle contains countries with English as the mother tongue of the majority
- The Outer Circle contains countries with English as the second language of the majority
- The last circle is the Expanding Circle, where English is as a foreign language. Here belongs also the Czech Republic.

At about the same time, another diagram visualising the three Circles of English was also introduced in *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* ([Crystal, 1995](#)).

3 Third culture kids

The third-culture concept emerges in families whose parents come from different cultures, often having even different mother tongues. These families gradually build their own platforms with a unique culture in which they live and raise their children ([Frame, 2004](#)). In this model, children acquire a part of the culture from the mother and another part from the father, and this mix influences them in their living environments. Therefore, in this manner they build a new, enriching environment, the so-called third culture model. [Casmir \(1999\)](#) described this framework as an active process, through which varied cultural groups mutually converge. When the children start attending the elementary school, which is at the age of six or seven years old, a new determinant, i.e. the school environment, enters the family and starts influencing it (see Figure 2).

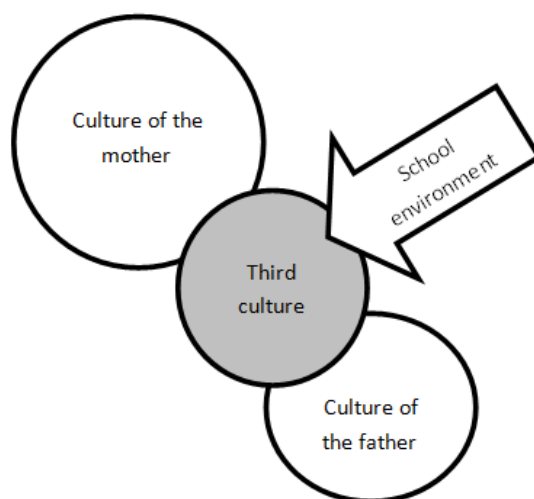


Figure 2. Third culture model, influenced by the school environment (own source)

Not only they cope with two, often highly different, cultures at the same time, but starting from a certain moment they also have to consider school attendance and everyday home preparation for school. The newly-formed third culture becomes a shared platform for all participants, i.e. for all household members. It takes a long time to build this new environment as well as to make it natural and acceptable to all participants. During that time, a creation of new communication patterns may be expected, this finally resulting in forming a homogeneous concept that all members understand and can keep mutually developing. Thanks to this model, individuals coming from different backgrounds may function successfully every day ([Brahic, 2013](#)).

The term third culture kids was first used in the 50s of the 20th century by US anthropologists [Useem and Cotrell \(1993\)](#). They researched the specifics of subcultures formed by foreign workers and their families living in relative isolation at military bases, mission stations, and business complexes in India. During their extensive research among Americans residing for a long time in India, they discovered that these people have a certain specific lifestyle which differs significantly from that of the Americans living in the US.

Pollock and Van Reken define the third culture kid concept as a person who spent a significant part of his/her childhood development outside the cultural backgrounds of one or both parents. The Third Culture Kid develops a relationship to every culture it encounters, this however without being fully integrated in any of them. Even though elements of individual cultures form a part of individual life-experience of those children, they often feel the sense of belonging rather to people whose life-experience is similar ([Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 13](#)).

Their life experience leads third culture kids to acquire certain abilities and practical skills that are beneficial for themselves as well as for their environments. According to [Schreiner \(2009, p. 132\)](#) between positive aspects belong better “readiness for mobility, familiarity with multiple cultures, openness and respect to other people and different cultures, more detailed perception of different cultures, flexibility, communication skills, interest in foreign cultures, and intercultural competences.” These children view the world in a very wide perspective, they are less prejudiced as they are used to a different cultural environment ([Schreiner, 2009](#)). According to Pollock and Van Reken (2009, pp. 77–89) between the negative aspects of third culture kids belong “the widened worldview because they may get in conflict with the sometimes straightforwardly simplistic perspective of people who lack such experience.” Their behaviour may be perceived as a lack of patriotism or haughtiness. The fact that third culture kids may be characterized as cultural chameleons ([Pollock & Van Reken, 2009](#)) has also its negative antipode. They often find it difficult to feel at home in any culture. Though it may

outwardly seem that they are integrated in the surrounding culture, they actually only adapt their external behaviour. They may thus experience disillusionment when they fail to get on with their friends or they have other (specific) problems with school attendance compared to their schoolmates.

4 Methodology

The purpose of this research is to determine the most common difficulties with home preparation experienced by children from families consisting of partners who come from different cultures and who have also different mother tongues. The children are exposed to the Czech language from their birth, however, their main mother tongue is English.

Criterion for the research:

1. Children must be from families living in the Czech Republic, where each partner has a different mother tongue and one of these languages is English.
2. Families with children (child) in elementary schools in the Czech Republic (ISCED 1, 2).
3. Primary schools attended by these children must educate in Czech language, according to the Czech educational curriculum and be enrolled in the Register of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

In order to achieve the research goal, the qualitative research strategy using semi-structured interviews was selected. The research sample was deliberate and personal contacts of the researcher were exploited.

Individual participants could choose where they wanted to conduct the interviews. All of them preferred their natural environment. The researcher therefore visited all the families at their places, which provided a unique opportunity to look into their home environment and to observe some of the habits that they introduced from their original culture. In particular, this related to the environment in which children usually prepare for school. This would not have been possible if the interviews were conducted in a neutral environment.

All participants were given the opportunity to choose their preferred language of communication. Participants coming from abroad selected English, which was also their mother tongue. This included also a participant whose command of Czech is on the B2 level (according to the **Common European Framework of Reference: learning, teaching, assessment**). Participants coming from the Czech Republic communicated with the researcher in Czech. It is clearly not the duration of stay in a foreign country or the influence of environment - the mother tongue remains the preferred language when it comes to a free choice. It is interesting that when the participants are in their family environments, they communicate with one another exclusively in English. They stated that this language was easier for them.

There were six participants in the research, specifically three families (see Figure 3). Two out of these three families were personal contacts of the researcher. The researcher only had limited previous contact with last family (JL), but they entered the research through family CV. This made it easier for the family as well as for the researcher, because it allowed them to be open from the beginning to answer any question.

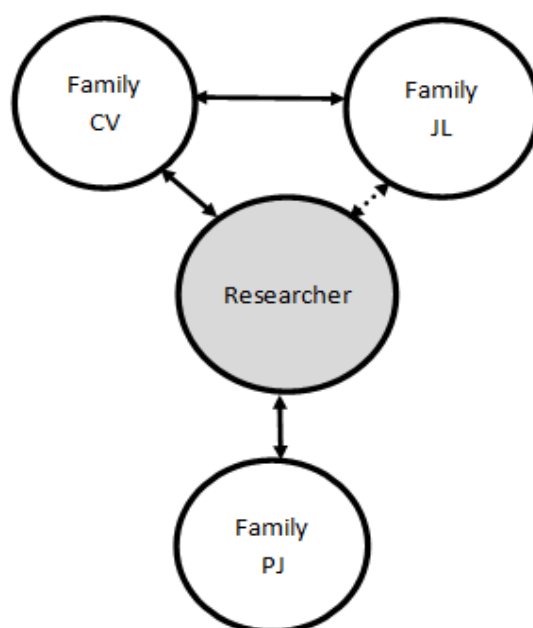


Figure 3. Scheme of gaining a sample of participants for the research (own source)

Interviews were made with six participants (see Table 1 to 3), i.e., parents meeting the above criteria. Authentic statements of informants included in the data interpretation are written in *italics*, accompanied with the participant's name between parentheses.

Table 1

Chosen Participants for Research (Family – JP)

Mother	Father	Children	Home language
Name*: Pavlína	Name*: Jacob	Name*: Karen	English, limited Czech
Mother tongue: Czech	Mother tongue: English	Age: 8 years	

* Due to the anonymization, the real names of the participants were changed

Table 2

Chosen Participants for Research (Family – JL)

Mother	Father	Children	Home language
Name*: Ludmila	Name*: Josh	Name*: Jasmine, Victoria	English, limited Czech
Mother tongue: Czech	Mother tongue: English	Age: 13 years, 10 years	

* Due to the anonymization, the real names of the participants were changed

Table 3

Chosen Participants for Research (Family – CV)

Mother	Father	Children	Home language
Name*: Valerie	Name*: Caden	Name*: Lacey, Daisy	English, limited Czech or Afrikaans
Mother tongue: English	Mother tongue: Afrikaans	Age: 13 years, 10 years	

* Due to the anonymization, the real names of the participants were changed

5 Data analysis

The research material acquired was analysed using situational analysis procedures. From the perspective of the research process, in its initial phase the situational analysis relies on analytical strategies which are highly similar to those of the classic grounded theory. However, the situational

analysis differs from the classic grounded theory due to the creation of varied forms of maps in all research stages, which serve both as aids for further research and as resulting products of analyses (Clarke, Friese, & Washburn, 2015). The reason of this difference can be found in a much more comprehensive view of the research field given by the situational analysis, which leads to a more accurate rendering of reality compared to the traditional grounded theory (Kalenda, 2016).

The study of Venterová (2017) makes it evident that anglophone pupils attribute to education a significantly higher value than the majority of pupils in the Czech Republic. This study focuses on the influence of a different (anglophone) culture on the demands posed on selected participants by home preparation for school.

The acquired data were analysed in the following steps:

1. Transcription of all interviews was made. These were subsequently subject to open coding and complemented with notes. This allowed to identify the key elements of domestic environment and of individual cultural determinants.
2. Afterwards, a messy map was formed, based on the elements identified (see Figure 4).



Figure 4. Connected the topic of home preparation of anglophone children for school

3. In the following step, all 59 elements included in the messy map were classified in ten key categories and the so-called order map was created (see tab. 4).

Table 4

Structure of order map (own source)

Individual actors	Collective actors	Discursive construction of individuals in the collective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individually integrated pupil - Committed class teacher - Non-committed class teacher - Principal - Educational adviser - Psychologist - Researcher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers - New classmates - Previous classmates - Class groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Willing teacher - Inexperienced teacher - Uncompromising parent - Attempting to get better pupil - Lazy pupil - False friendship
School environment	Teacher's effort	Position of the child in school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Original school environment - New school environment - Difficult travelling - Getting up early in the mornings - Quality, free education - Kindergarten 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finding alternative solutions - Unwillingness to search for alternative solutions - Individual study plan - Communication in mother tongue with the teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different person - Standard student - Outsider - Class exclusion - Feeling of personal uncertainty
Culture determinant	Time based codes	Home environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mother tongue - Life style - Leisure time use - Mixing of individual cultures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age of the teacher - Age of the child - Length of lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenging homework - No homework - The need of using dictionary for homework - Independence in home preparation - External tutoring - Family tutoring - Change of residence - Own space for school preparation
Communication		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal communication with the teacher - Teacher as a colleague - Mediated communication with the teacher - Communication about specific needs - Main language of the education - The first foreign educated language - Easier communication - More difficult communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperation with professionals - Cooperation with the parents - Moving abroad - Safety - Residence as a determinant - Poor service accessibility - Finance demanding tutoring 	

- The analytical work that followed consisted in a relational analysis focusing on elements determining home preparation of pupils from intercultural partnerships (see Figure 5). The relational analysis offers multiple data interpretation and analysis (Kalenda, 2016).

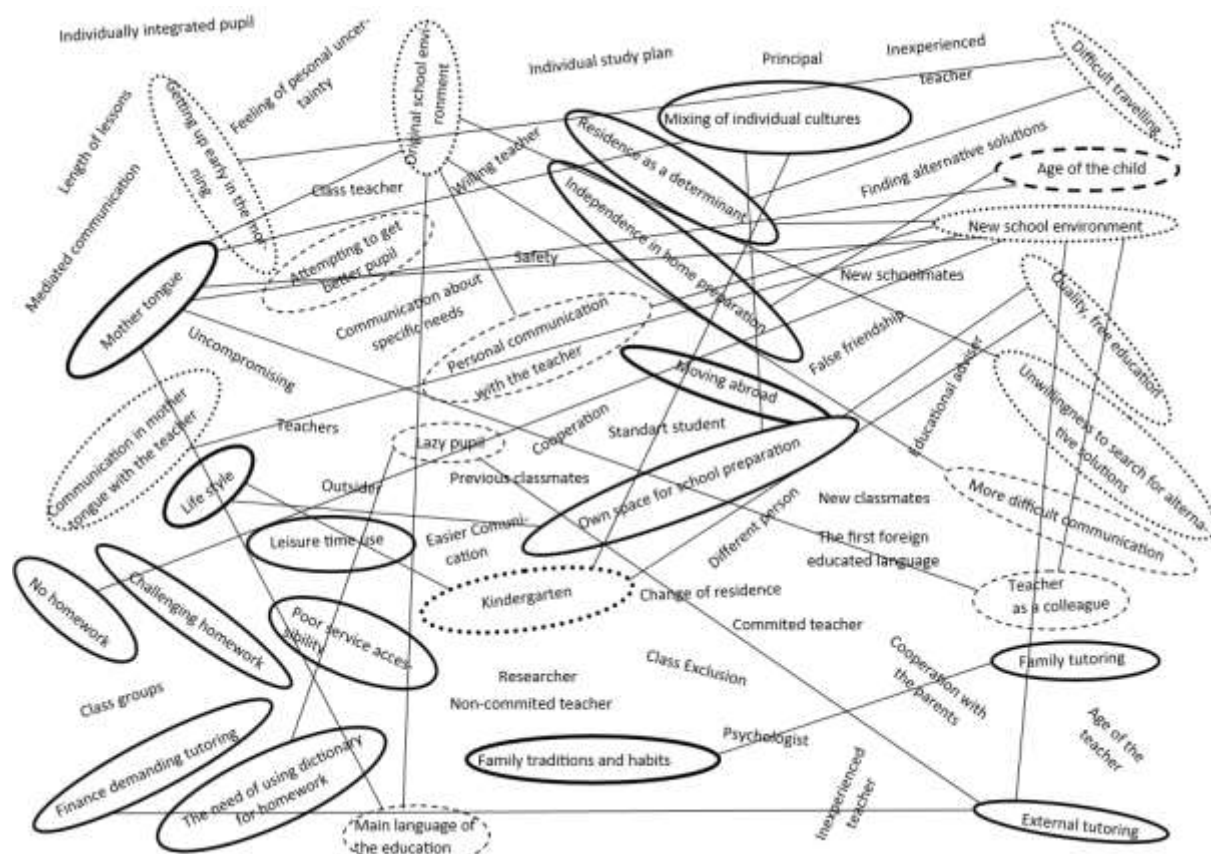


Figure 5. Relative analysis focusing on the home environment and cultural determinants

Labelling of individual elements / folders based on their belonging to the key category:

- School environment, Teacher's efforts, Position of the child in school
- Home environment, Cultural determinant
- Collective actors, Discursive construction of individuals in the collective, Communication, Individual actors, Collective actors

This step allowed us to get a basic picture of the complex situation of the families in relation to home preparation and the influence of cultural determinants. Gradually, relationships were found between the different categories. After re-reading the transcript of the interviews, additional elements were added, which were subsequently categorized with the existing elements.

6 Results

The data analysis shows that each family had a different history background before their children commenced their compulsory schooling.

Our children visited English kindergarten, here in the Czech Republic. We wanted them to speak English as good as possible, before they start with Czech primary school. They visited regular kindergarten only in the preschool year. To meet new friends. (Ludmila)

Daisy started kindergarten at the age of two and Lacey at the age of three. They went to our village kindergarten. [...] Actually wait, back then we left in (name of the town),⁴ and they were in the

⁴ Due to the anonymization, the real name of the town was deleted.

kindergarten over there. Only Daisy and only as a pre-schooler went to kindergarten in (name of the village),⁵ because we moved. [...]. (Valerie)

Karen visited kindergarten only in the last year. Back then, it wasn't compulsory, but I had to go back to work. She had never visited kindergarten before, because we were living in SA and the preschool education is simply too expensive over there. I couldn't find work, to pay for private education and we didn't want her to visit government kindergarten. (Pavĺína)

When asked about the nursery they chose for their children and on what grounds the decision was made - views of different parents varied similarly according to the approach of individual families to preparation for school.

My daughter has Skype tutoring, the travelling was too difficult for us. (Josh) So far, we manage it without external help. Every day we train writing, reading and math. At this moment it's enough, but we are aware, that may need help in the future. (Petra) I had an tutor, but it didn't work out. Daisy did not behave well, she was constantly angry. Than the lady said we shouldn't come anymore. Recently children attend a different school, where they have tutoring immediately after lessons in the school building. [...]. (Valerie)

Children in the CV family changed primary school during compulsory school education. Parents decided to do it because they felt there was a lack of communication and unwillingness to do so in the previous school. Although children had individual study plans, they did not benefit proportionately from their efforts. In the new school, they have an English-speaking psychologist who supports them and the option to do homework at school before they go home. As Useem and Cotrell (1993) state, children of the third culture change school more often than most children if they are unsuccessful at school. "Changing the school helped us a lot, our children have to travel far, but they finally have support at school" (Caden).

All families would be glad if children had the same opportunity in preparation for the next day and write homework directly at school after the end of the lessons. Only one school offers this option to the selected families, facilitating these children in overcoming obstacles in their studies. Moreover, this school offers this service for free, as part of an individual approach to their pupils. Parents are aware that most schools do not offer this option. They are also aware that the school and the teachers often do not have the capacity to teach pupils in the afternoon.

They spend more time at school, but they come home with their homework already finished, which makes life easier for us. They just need to learn at home sometimes. We are delighted that the new school offers this opportunity. (Valerie) We would be glad if the school offered tutoring, even if we must pay for it, but this option is not available. The teacher said she could provide private lessons after lesson, but only for two pupils, no more. She offered the daughter the opportunity to ask if there was something she needed immediately after a lesson, but even this was not enough. She needs support more regularly and more time. (Ludmila) This would be a wonderful option, but I don't know if the school offers something like this. The daughter does not need this now, but this will become unavoidable in future, so we will definitely be interested. (Pavĺína) I again understand schools do not offer tutoring because they do not have capacity available and there are too few teachers. I think that today, a school that helps children with their homework or that provide extra lessons is the exception. (Josh)

It is evident from the interviews that all children need more attention when doing their homework and that individual families solve this issue differently. The decision concerning the way of helping the child was highly influenced by the family's place of residence.

⁵ Due to the anonymization, the real name of the village was deleted.

It was a big problem for us, regularly travelling there and back. One Czech lesson took me three hours of my time. Picking up the children from school, bring them to (town name - due to anonymization, the town name was deleted), wait and back home. When I wasn't working, I was driving. This changed at the moment, when my children changed their school. Now they have tutoring in the school building. [...] (Valerie) [...] We live almost in the centre, so maybe in the future it will not be a problem. So far, we can do it ourselves. Actually me, my husband can 't speaks Czech at all. (Pavčina)

The workload of parents influences home preparation as well.

[...] Tutoring is expensive and time-consuming, but it must be done. I believe that it will return in the future and that this are well-invested money. [...] Just the travelling is annoying. [...] (Caden) [...] My daughter has Skype tutoring so she doesn't have to go anywhere. Now she is old enough and can travel alone, but it wasn't always like that. Even she would prefer an individual tutor, but it's not easy to find someone around here [...] (Ludmila) My kids don't want Skype, they keep saying they can't concentrate and wouldn't like it. (Valerie)

Another significant element is the approach of the teacher not only to the pupil but also to his/her parents, which subsequently determines the relationship between the school and the parents.

[...] Recently, in the new school, the teachers are actually my colleagues. So, they can just pick up phone and call me. (Valerie)⁶ A colleague always calls me, someone who knows me well and can speak English. This didn't exist in the previous school. There was no one willing to talk to us and when they could, they just criticized and only in Czech and my husband or me weren't able to understand. (Valerie)

The volume of homework influences the relationship of the family (not only the child) with the school. *Karen gets homework but she's in the first class, so she's still very careful. I always sit with her and, when she needs it, I help her. (Pavčina)*. Parents of first-graders anticipate that their child will be getting homework and that they will participate in performing it. The involvement of parents in home preparation leads to better results specifically in homework. The role of the parent is needed to provide the child with an optimal environment and to encourage the child in explaining obscurities and expressing his/her opinion when asked to ([Šulová, 2009](#)).

[...] Children don 't enjoy their homework, in the previous school they didn't it late in the evenings, often we didn't understand the task. So, we often had to search on the internet to find out what they want us to do. [...] That's why I'm glad that they hardly have any homework in the new school. (Caden)

Individual parents come from different cultures. Therefore, a question arose, namely why they live specifically in the Czech Republic, as it is often very difficult for their children. All families agreed on the same element, which was: High-quality, free education. This element was very interesting for the researcher. All families were happy about the educational system in the Czech Republic, even though it is often very difficult for them.

[...] In South Africa, if we want to give our child a high-quality education, it'd cost us most of the money we'd earn. And we wouldn't have any money left for school supplies, travelling, living, security and everything else. Although public schools are over there, but in that case, Karen'd be the only white child, and she wouldn't learn much. And we didn't want that. (Pavčina) Education in South

⁶ Mother works at the same school, but at different detached department and knows most of the children's pedagogues in person (researcher's note).

Africa is very expensive. Although I went to school over there, but it was back then during Apartheid when everything was different than today. (Jacob)

6.1 Positioning map

One of the frequently criticised characteristics of the classic grounded theory is an excessive simplification of meanings when deviations in statements of research participants from central meaning categories are not reflected or are obliterated as deviations from the standard (Clarke, 2003, 2005, Thomas & James, 2006).

Later, the positioning map (see Figure 6), based on extracts from the participants' narrations, charts the positions they hold in relation to the following meaning axes – The influence of cultural determinants on the child's home preparation for school education and the intensity of home preparation for school education.

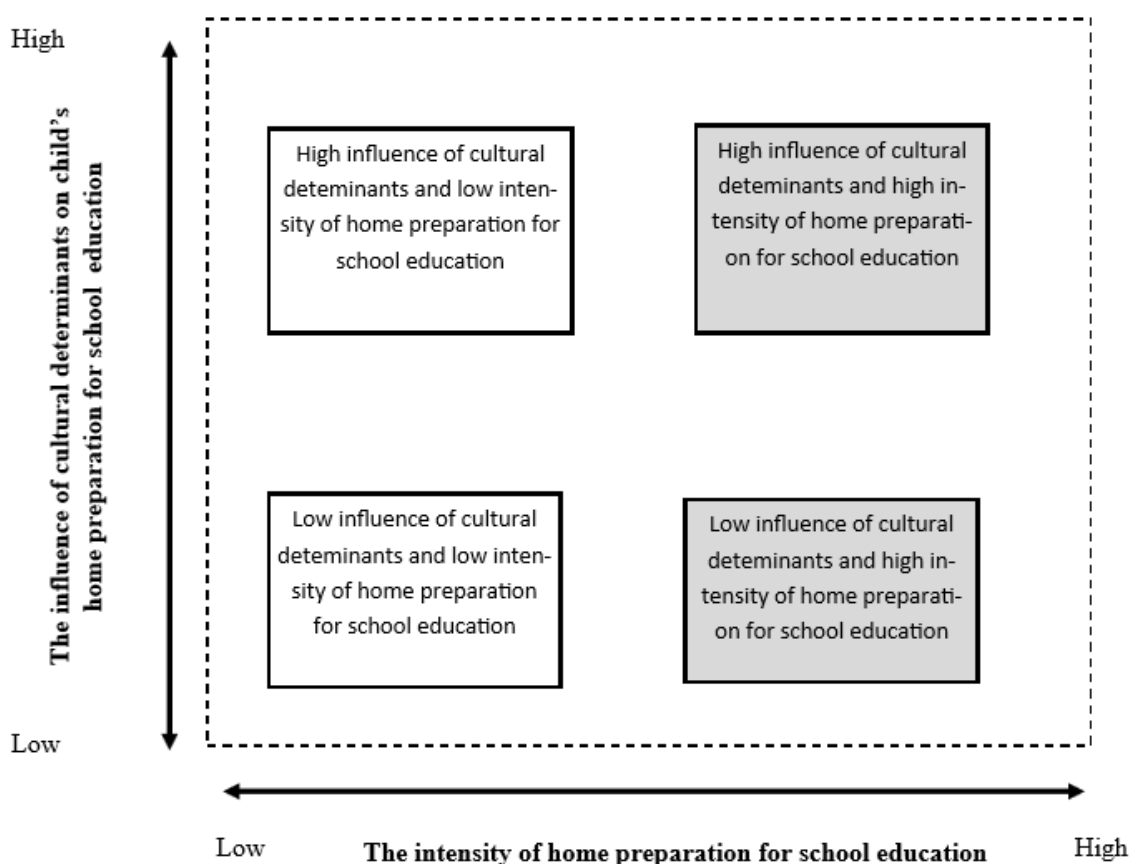


Figure 6. Focusing on the cultural determinants and intensity of home preparation

Concentrating on the level of intensity of home preparation for school education and the impact of cultural determinants, it is clear that cultural determinants have an impact on school preparation, especially with the CV family. This family, however, found a way to relieve the influence of these determinants without having to change their cultural habits, which they have transferred from their original culture. The greatest support is given by a new elementary school that the children attends and where the teachers help the children with homework and they provide additional explanations about the subjects. For the other two families, the impact of cultural determinants is lower, but still the children need to learn more for school education. This is outlined by the increased intensity of preparation for schooling, external tutoring.

7 Conclusion

This qualitative study explores the influence of a different culture on the preparation of anglophone children for elementary school. Even though all these children were born in the Czech Republic where they first attended a kindergarten and then they started their elementary schooling, they also preserve a part of the culture of the English-speaking parent. This is partly due to the fact that this culture was mediated to them not only through the parent, but for two of the participants also through a foreign nursery, and for another one through a stay abroad before starting the compulsory schooling in the Czech Republic. For the last family, even though the children attended Czech kindergartens only, the influence of the anglophone culture is really strong in the family and it still influences their schooling. This not only influences preparation for school to a large extent, it also poses obstacles in coping with their schooling in the form of communication with the teacher or understanding the teacher's presentation of the curriculum. This happens despite the fact that all children from the families included in the research were born in the Czech Republic and they were in contact with the Czech language from early childhood.

This contribution with its design may be perceived as pioneering in the context of research performed so far, as it differs from the traditional examination of influence of domestic environment on schooling. We also deem the sample of selected families as innovative as it involves families with partners coming from diverse cultures who have different mother tongues and decided to live in the Czech Republic. They are aware of the fact that the local life is difficult for them in the perspective of linguistic and cultural differences; however, they are determined to overcome such obstacles. The acquired data show that the influence of the language as well as the cultural situation of the family is transferred to their children and from the domestic to the school environment.

Families endeavour to integrate their children in the Czech educational system by providing external tutoring for their children. Education is of high importance in the eyes of the parents. All parents acquired varied university degrees and they wish similar education for their children, although preparation for school is highly demanding for them. This applies not only to their personal help to children but also in terms of time, as they drive their children to external tutoring.

In agreement with [Maňák \(1992\)](#), home preparation is an integral part of school attendance. [Jursová \(2011\)](#) states that this preparation will facilitate the child's work at school. Although it makes the learning in the school easier for the child, it can become too difficult for anglophone children and their families. If these children get homework, the task should have a simple, clear assignment and should not be marked in order for pupils from a different cultural environment to do it. [Majerčíková and Petrů-Puhrová \(2017\)](#) state that home preparation includes more than just homework in the form of individual tasks. It is assumed that parents are involved as an implicit part of family life. In our case, however, it can mean a complicated search for external tutoring and commuting. According to [Straková \(2016\)](#), who has been engaged in educational inequality research in the Czech Republic for a long time, some teachers have very convincing arguments for giving homework and others for not giving reasons. In her opinion, teachers should be left autonomous in assigning homework, but at the same time they should always keep in mind that some parents are not able to provide suitable conditions to do these tasks. As a result, children suffer even if they are innocent. The school should

A different culture does not only influence school preparation to a large extent, it also puts obstacles in place on how to cope with schooling in the form of communication with the teacher or understanding the teacher's presentations. This could be reflected in the success or failure of the child in the school.

be aware of it. A possible solution would be to create a space at school to allow children to work with someone other than their parents. Experience from American schools shows that teachers are not trying to delegate responsibility for education to parents (Straková, 2016).

If the child is unsuccessful at school despite the external tutoring, they are willing to accept a change of school, which is also confirmed by Useem and Cotrell (1993). The family CV took this step and they are convinced it was correct step for their future. Grand'Maison (1976) describes the problem of the educational system that does not adapt to the present. Changing school is a complex process for their children because they have to get used to new environment, new schoolmates and teachers. This happens frequently also at the cost of complex commuting. However, bad relationships are reflected in the child's school results (Rabušicová, 2004). In the new school, they search for teachers having a good grasp of foreign languages with whom they are able to communicate and who would apply an individual approach to help their children succeed in their schooling. The amount of homework is also an important element for them, given the time workload of the parents and the language barrier - for this reason they have a bias in favour of a smaller homework frequency. Communication between the school and the family is an important factor influencing education. High-quality interaction is therefore highly important (Šedřová, 2004). Moreover, it is evident from the acquired data that families created their own platforms at home, which are different from those of typically monocultural families in the Czech Republic.

The family combines two highly different cultures complemented from the third side by the compulsory schooling, to which they are trying to adapt. They keep trying persistently to overcome all obstacles posed on them in their effort to adapt to schooling in the Czech Republic, granting their children education of good quality, while preserving a part of their *original selves*.

The author declares that this is the original study and text in this form has not been submitted for publication nor has it been published otherwise.




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Educational practices and strategies that promote inclusion: Examples from the U.S.

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Abstract: In this article, the authors review promising practices and strategies that have been demonstrated to support and promote inclusive education in the U.S. at school, in classrooms, in small groups, and at individual levels. Selected strategies that promote instructional, social, and psychological inclusion (e.g., response to intervention, inclusive service learning, guided reading, and incremental rehearsal) are discussed in detail. Potential adaptations and adoption of these strategies are suggested in order to assist in promoting inclusion within the Czech education system.

Keywords: strategies for inclusive education; instructional, social and psychological inclusion; Czech Republic

Postupy a strategie inkluzivního vzdělávání: příklady z USA

Abstrakt: V tomto článku autoři uvádí příklady dobré praxe a příklady strategií, které podporují inkluzivní vzdělávání v USA, a to na úrovni škol, tříd, skupin a jednotlivců. Blíže jsou představeny vybrané strategie podporující inkluzi v oblasti výukové, sociální a psychologické (jde např. o response to intervention, inclusive, service learning, guided reading and incremental rehearsal). Jsou zde navrženy možnosti adaptace a použití těchto strategií, a to s ohledem na inkluzivní vzdělávání v České republice.

Klíčová slova: strategie pro inkluzivní vzdělávání; instrukční, sociální a psychologická inkluze; Česká republika

1 Introduction

Across the U.S. and Europe, schools and teachers currently experience a wide variety of diversity in their classrooms, including children with different language skills, disabilities, and social backgrounds as well as some who are gifted and talented. In recent years, educators and policymakers in the Czech Republic (CR) have recognized that new educational strategies are needed for the educational system of the country to be responsive to the democratic principles of a European society that include reducing educational inequality ([“Strategy for education policy,” 2018](#)). Even though the Czech Republic is a relatively homogeneous society, it cannot ignore the needs of its ethnic and cultural minorities, including people of Slovak, Polish, German, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, etc. descent, and the Roma population.

Since the ratification of the U.N. Conference for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Czech society has initiated moving forward on a path for the educational inclusion of its approximately 71,879 children in compulsory education with special educational needs (SEN), which represent 8.6% of the school-age population ([“Education and disability/special needs,” 2018](#)). Among students with SEN, there are also those with disabilities. The most common disabilities in the CR, as noted by [Felcmanová, Klusáček, and Hrstka \(2015\)](#), are specific learning disabilities, mild intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, and behavior disorders. In the country there are also children with SEN because of their socially disadvantaged backgrounds. Approximately 100,000 or 9% of primary-school children in the CR come from financially disadvantaged backgrounds. This includes families who cannot afford to heat their homes where 3-4 persons live together in one room, as well as those receiving governmental living subsidies for other reasons. According to [Felcmanová et al. \(2015\)](#), there are also approximately 11,000 or 1.3% of primary-school children in the country who are traumatized and 2,000 or .3% who are neglected. Another aspect/factor of diversity in the current population is nationality (and therefore one's primary language) with approximately 16,400 or 2% of primary-school children (mainly living in Prague) who are not ethnically Czech and, among them, children from families with refugee status constitute a very small part.

In order to effectively address the varied learning and social needs of students from diverse backgrounds, it is necessary to implement teaching strategies designed to differentiate instruction. Instructional differentiation can have many forms. It typically starts through an examination of instruction and an adjustment of its intensity. Such adjustments include the size of the instructional group (whole group, small group, individualized instruction), as well as the frequency and duration of the intervention. Moreover, it entails decisions about using a direct or a constructivist pedagogical approach, and the frequency with which progress monitoring will be utilized ([Vaugh & Wanzek, 2014](#)). Once decisions are made with respect to these issues, specific instructional strategies can be implemented to address the needs of the whole class, small group, or an individual student who is struggling with the goal of promoting learning within an inclusive rather than segregated setting.

The Czech action plan for inclusive education 2016-18, aligned with Strategy 2020, addresses five critical elements that are necessary for an effective implementation: (1) the proposition that the sooner an inclusive approach is implemented, the better it will be for students, (2) the idea that inclusive educational benefits students both with and without special educational needs, (3) the need for highly qualified specialists, (4) the creation of support systems and mechanisms for financing, and (5) the need for reliable data ([“Akční plán,” 2018](#)). One could argue that a key component is missing from the Czech inclusive education action plan, namely an instructional approach supporting inclusive education. Having highly qualified specialists is an important goal. However, being able to access and implement effective methodologies to create instructionally, socially, and psychologically inclusive environments is of equal importance.

The following sections of this article focus on systems, classroom, small group, and individualized instructional strategies developed and implemented in the U.S. that promote different aspects of inclusion. The reader is advised to review the U.S.-based strategies and to consider how they can be adapted for potential use in the Czech educational context to facilitate inclusion.

2 Promising strategies that promote educational inclusion

Since the passage of the *Education for All Handicapped Children Act* (now referred to as the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* – IDEA) in 1975 ([Lechtenberger, 2010](#)), programs and strategies have been developed and implemented in the U.S. that have been demonstrated to bring academic and/or social benefits to students with and without special educational needs who are educated in inclusive environments. The history of researching evidence for the benefits of inclusive education in the US with potential implications for the Czech Republic and other Central and Eastern European countries is discussed by [Abery, Tichá, and Kincade \(2017\)](#). Programs and strategies developed in this area have

focused on a variety of outcomes associated with inclusive education with the common goal of enhancing the quality of instruction, academic outcomes, and/or social opportunities provided to children with SEN.

Instructional inclusion. Despite the number of years during which children with SEN have been included in general education classrooms in the U.S., many teachers still struggle to create educational environments that meet the needs of all students. Instructional inclusion is a key component of an effective inclusive education implementation framework, along with physical, social, and psychological inclusion. Effective instructional inclusion has been demonstrated to be supported through a variety of strategies including the following: response to intervention (RTI), differentiated instruction, effective utilization of teaching assistants, and integrated learning ([Hattie, 2009, 2015](#); [Lawrence-Brown, 2004](#)).

Social and Psychological Inclusion. The goal of social inclusion is to promote ongoing, positive and social interactions between students with special educational needs and their peers. Psychological inclusion refers to a person feeling valued and accepted as a member of the group at school and in the community. In addition to physical and instructional inclusion, the opportunity to develop and maintain friendships and to experience a sense of belonging are critical aspects of inclusive education ([Giangreco, 2003](#)). In the U.S., numerous strategies have been found to enhance the inclusion of students with SEN ([Bond & Castagnera, 2006](#); [Carter & Kennedy, 2006](#); [Fredrickson & Turner, 2003](#); [Martinez & Carspecken, 2008](#); [McDonnell, Mathot-Buckner, Thorson, & Fister, 2001](#)). These include circles of friends, inclusive service learning, and social networking programs both in and outside of classroom.

3 A systems approach to inclusion

Response to intervention (RTI). RTI is a U.S.-developed multi-tier approach to the early identification, prevention, and support of students who are academically struggling to bridge the achievement gap of children and youth from different backgrounds. RTI is based on a preventative, tiered system of instruction that provides struggling students with supports *before* a referral for special education evaluation and services. It is an instructional problem-solving model based on an early screening and formative assessment, a data-based instructional decision-making, a tiered approach to targeted intervention, and a high-quality instruction at multiple levels ([Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006](#); [Shapiro, Zigmond, Wallace, & Marston, 2011](#); [Grosch & Volpe, 2013](#)). In order to ensure that appropriate supports are present at all school levels, RTI is implemented on a school-wide basis. The purpose of this system-wide approach is to provide educators with the tools to assure that *all* students are learning, to support students falling behind academically with targeted interventions to prevent their identification for special educational services, and to foster collaboration between general and special educators in the development and effective implementation of targeted interventions for students with SEN to ensure that they are making adequate progress. Response to Intervention (RTI) has mostly been implemented in the U.S. at the elementary school level, even though this preventative framework is increasingly being applied for older students in secondary schools ([King, Lemons, & Hill, 2012](#)).

Assuming that the instructional resources of a school are conceptualized as a pyramid, support within the context of RTI can be distributed into four quadrants (see Figure 1). The largest quadrant at the bottom of the pyramid represents the general education (core) curriculum delivered within a general education setting by general education teachers (Tier-1). This instruction should be of high quality, evidenced-based, and effective for the majority of students (approximately 80%). Students who do not respond positively to the core curriculum are provided with Tier-2 supports. These typically include small group, targeted instruction focused on the development of basic academic skills (e.g., explicit phonics or reading comprehension instruction). Studies in the U.S. suggest that students who receive Tier-2 supports show significant gains in their academic performance ([Gersten et al., 2008](#)). When students do not respond positively, more frequent and intensive instruction with fewer students in the

small group is implemented at Tier-3. At this level, not only is the group smaller, but the frequency or intensity of intervention is increased. Those students who, despite taking part in multiple interventions at Tiers-2 and 3, still do not demonstrate adequate learning as evidenced by progress monitoring data are referred for special education evaluation and services (Tier-4).

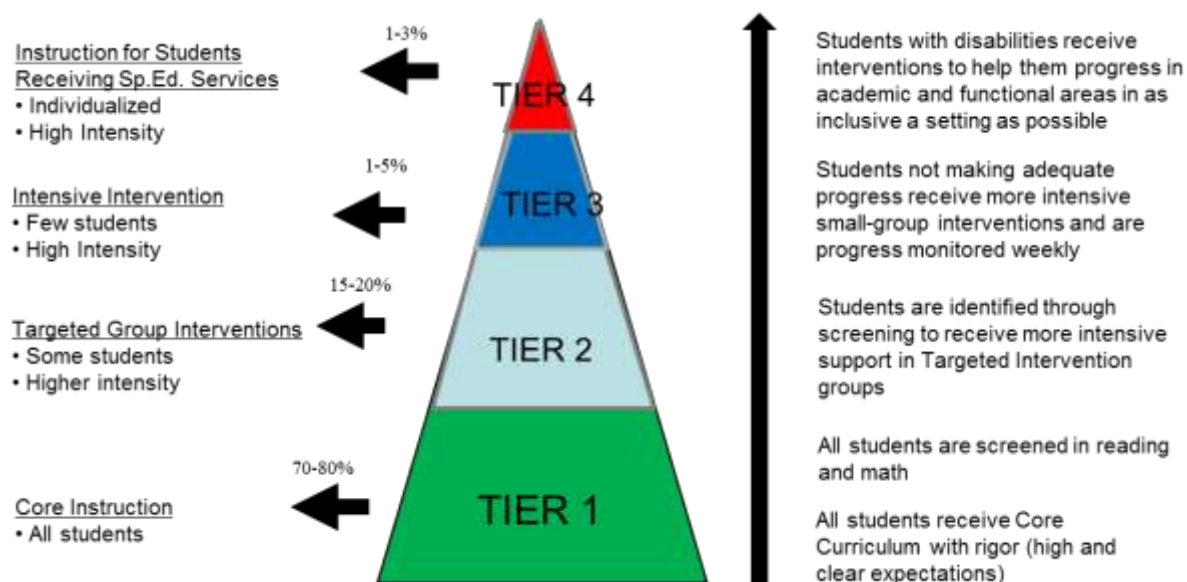


Figure 1. Response to intervention (RTI) framework

The RTI framework differs significantly from the previously used student-deficit models since it focuses on creating an educational environment supportive of all students. Within the framework, screening and progress monitoring assessments are essential. Universal screening ideally occurs three times a year (fall, winter, spring) for all students with the purpose of identifying those who are at risk and of grouping those who are struggling into instructional Tiers. This early prevention strategy ensures that students do not fall through the cracks of the educational system and lag behind their peers. For students who receive supports at Tiers-2 and 3, a variety of short (i.e., 1 to 3 minute) formative, progress monitoring assessments are administered throughout the school year, sometimes on a weekly basis (in Tier 3), to determine if students are profiting from instruction. In most cases, the formative assessments used in RTI are Curriculum-Based Measures (CBM; [Deno, 1992, 2003](#)). Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) utilizes classroom and other instructional materials to directly assess student progress. This ensures that interventions being utilized are effective and provides teachers with the opportunity to individualize instruction to meet the needs of each student. Following the RTI framework, students are then placed into tiered instructional groups based on their screening data. This placement takes into consideration both their academic strengths and challenges. Within the context of these relatively homogeneous skills groups, differentiated instruction is then employed.

A key concept to understand at the time of implementing RTI is that the primary aim of the approach is to *improve instruction*. At Tier-1, this entails ensuring that *all* students in the class receive high quality instruction with a research base to support its effectiveness among the children and youth with whom it is being used. In those urban districts in the U.S. with a diversified population, for example, high quality Tier-1 instruction applied to the reading stage should provide evidence not only to support its use with students whose first language at home is English, but also for English Language Learners. At Tiers-2 and 3 the focus is on finding those approaches to instruction that best fit the needs of specific students. This might entail adapting *how* material is presented, how often students are provided with skill acquisition opportunities, as well as how mastery is assessed. The RTI framework is effectively summarized by [McTaggart \(2018\)](#) who stated, "If they don't learn the way you teach... teach the way they learn" (p. 21).

At some point in their careers, most teachers have implemented some version of differentiated instruction, whether it entailed altering a curriculum, giving some students more time to complete an assignment, or providing supplemental instruction within a small group context. However, there are, more systematic ways of differentiating instruction in order to help ensuring educational success within inclusive classroom settings.

Students who respond well to the general education curriculum continue to receive core instruction. At-risk students who need further support receive differentiated instruction within the general education classroom. Differentiated instruction can be administered by a trained teaching assistant, special educators or a general education teacher. For example, in mathematics, a 6th-grade class might be practicing algebra. The 6th-grade teacher would instruct the majority of the class on algebra, while a small group might be simultaneously attending a class, where a teaching assistant or a special educator is reviewing fundamental, pre-algebraic mathematics skills, answering questions about past instruction, and/or implementing the same lesson, but at a slower pace and with additional supports for students who need to build their basic math skills. This educator may also include pre-teaching (i.e., preparing students for an upcoming lesson) within the small group sessions.

In every school, a relatively small number of students do not progress at an acceptable pace even after receiving multiple types of Tier-2 instruction. These students, often referred to as “non-responders,” are not assumed to have disabilities, but rather they are seen as in need of greater differentiation of instruction. Potentially they could respond well to more intense targeted instruction (i.e., a 1:1 to 1:3 teacher-student ratio) or more frequent target instruction at a Tier-3, or to an alternative curriculum. Special educators typically assume responsibility for the implementation of more intensive instruction with these students, but they do so within the context of the general educational setting (sometimes referred to as the push-in model). It is preferred that teachers with more experience serve students with the highest needs (i.e., special educators or instructional specialists).

RTI was initially developed to support K-5 students. The approach, however, has merit at the secondary level (grades 6-12) as well. [Fuchs, Fuchs, and Compton \(2010\)](#) propose a modified RTI model at the middle and high school level. In their model, the RTI Framework used at the K-5 level is overturned and practitioners are encouraged to place students with severe academic discrepancies immediately in the most intensive level of the RTI framework (Tier-3) even as they continue to participate in general educational classes and receive primary prevention to further acquire content knowledge. In a related way, in terms of accountability for student outcomes, the goal of accountability and intensity within RTI at middle and high school is to ensure that teachers view their mission as reducing and eliminating already existing, sizable academic deficits. Therefore, the focus is on monitoring RTI in order to determine when important academic benchmarks are achieved for the purpose of transitioning students to the lower tiers of the RTI pyramid with less intensive and more standard or normalized levels of the prevention system. Conceptualizing RTI at middle and high school in this way introduces new opportunities to improve outcomes for students in order to overcome sizable academic deficits and restructures existing opportunities.

3.1 Classroom level (Tier 1) approaches to inclusion

A truly inclusive approach to education creates a balance between ensuring that students receive the instruction they need to make progress academically and experiencing a sense of belonging and social acceptance within their schools and classrooms. Therefore the implementation of the RTI framework must address the need to provide students with SENs with the opportunity to develop social networks and build social capital. This can be accomplished at best through assuring that the core curriculum reaches as many students as possible, making learning meaningful to diverse groups of children and youth and ensuring that all members of a class feel socially and psychologically included.

Citing the lack of social and psychological inclusion of secondary students with SEN, [Abery and Simunds \(2006\)](#) developed the *Yes I Can Social Inclusion Program (YIC)* for high school and middle school

students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). In this Tier-1 program, peers are trained to serve as *social inclusion bridge-builders*. The primary goal of a bridge-builder is to connect and support the development of social relationships between the students with SEN with whom they work and their fellow students with similar interests and values. More specifically, the aim is to facilitate students with SENs in developing *social capital*. [Bourdieu \(1986\)](#) and others (e.g., [Bates & Davis, 2004](#); [Dika & Singh, 2002](#); [Trainor, 2008](#)), who used the construct in their study of young people with disabilities, define it as tangible and symbolic resources that are derived from a person's connectedness to society via their social relationships networks. Social capital, along with capital in other forms (e.g., cultural and economic capital, or currency and monetary resources), contributes to a person's symbolic and material wealth, status, and power. The program was successfully implemented in over 100 schools in the U.S. in three different ways: as an after-school activity, a before school social group, or an integral part of academic classes.

Evaluations of program impact ([Abery & Simunds, 2006](#)) suggest positive outcomes for students with SEN as well as peers who serve a bridge-builders. Results indicate that students with IDD who take part in the program make greater numbers of new friends and increase the level of emotional closeness they have with existing friends to a significantly greater extent than young people who are members of comparison groups. In addition, program participants and their families report significant increases in the number of inclusive, community-based recreation and leisure activities in which their sons and daughters with disabilities engage. Over the course of the program, students who serve as bridge-builders have been found to improve their leadership skills considerably than young people in comparison groups and to develop more positive attitudes with respect to people with disabilities.

If full educational inclusion is to be realized, effective strategies are needed to alter both the attitudes of administrators, teachers, and peers toward students with SEN and the overall school culture ([Chamberlain, Kasari, & Rotheram-Fuller, 2007](#); [Cook, Cameron, & Tankersley, 2007](#); [Lohrmann, Boggs, & Bambara, 2006](#)). Students with SEN need to be viewed by members of the community not only as children and youth in need of supports and accommodations, but as individuals who have talents, gifts and abilities as well as the capacity to give something back to their community and make it a better place to live. Inclusive service learning, which is a relatively new approach developed specifically to support social, psychological and instructional inclusion, has the potential to fill that need.

Inclusive service learning (ISL). Service learning is a method of teaching and learning that connects classroom lessons with meaningful service to the community ([CNCS, 1999](#)). It involves students in academic skill development while they serve their communities creating a context that addresses genuine needs. Service learning programs include reflection on both service activities and the skills/knowledge acquired during their length. The *inclusive service learning* intentionally brings together students with and without SEN to take part in this way of learning and prepares them to support each other while developing their own academic problem-solving and leadership skills. Because of the emphasis on active learning in real-life settings, ISL has the potential to reach *all* learners due to its explicit academic focus and to the extent to which the philosophy of inclusion is integrated into the program. Researchers at the University of Minnesota and other partners developed ISL curricula both for elementary ([Vandercook & Montie, 2010](#)), and secondary levels ([Abery, Halpin, Iland, Braun, & Stenhjem, 2011](#)).

High quality ISL features (see Figure 2) are: (a) reflection and integrated learning; (b) problem-based learning focused on significant benefit and genuine need; (c) student voice; (d) collaboration; (e) civic engagement and responsibility; and (f) inclusion ([Kaye, 2004](#)). Each of these characteristics contribute to enhanced academic, behavioral, psychological, and social outcomes while challenging current stereotypes about students with SEN ([Ainscow, 2005](#); [Polat, 2011](#)).

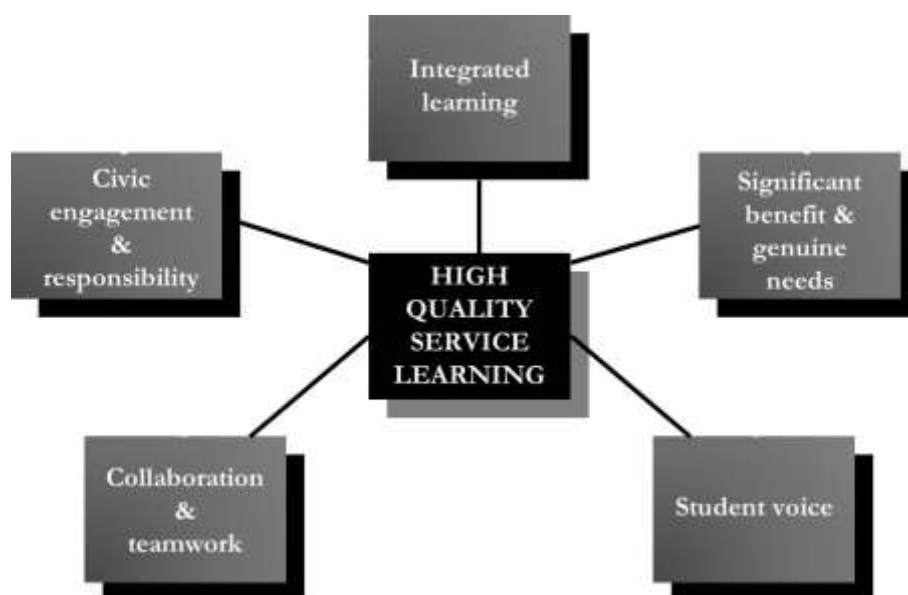


Figure 2. Characteristics of high quality Inclusive Service Learning (ISL)

Integrated learning. A critical component of ISL is that service projects are linked directly to academic learning objectives such that classroom learning contributes to service which, in turn, enhances classroom learning. A key instructional strategy that allows this integrative approach is the reflection process through which students are encouraged to understand their experiences by means of a variety of activities (Eyler, 2002). Reflection can take the form of discussion, journal writing, debate, letter writing, or making informational videos (Scales & Roehlkepartain, 2004). Reflecting on the relationship between problem solving and learning is a critical component of ISL and it supports the construction of knowledge (Salomon, 1983). Applying what is learned in the classroom in order to solve community problems makes learning more concrete for those students who are not fully engaged in school.

Significant benefit and genuine need. A key feature of ISL is its focus on learning while addressing real community problems. This approach, drawn from Problem-Based Learning (PBL), involves students who will be working in teams and who will learn by solving real problems based upon community needs. Students grapple with issues that offer an engaging context for learning. As they define the scope of a problem, the group identifies and organizes relevant ideas and prior knowledge. Instructors act as guides, asking questions, raising issues, and ensuring full participation (Mayo, Donnelly, & Schwartz, 1995).

Student voice. Student voice, which represents an essential element of ISL based on Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory (SDT), is associated with the belief that educational outcomes are optimized when young people exercise self-determination (SD) over components of the learning environment and engage in autonomous, self-regulated learning. SD involves a combination of skills, knowledge, and beliefs that support people in taking desired degrees of control over their lives in important areas (Abery & Stancliffe, 2003). In their systematic review of the impact of SD on academic functioning, Konrad, Fowler, Walker, Test, and Wood (2007) found effect sizes, reported as points of non-overlapping data (PND), of 0-100% with a median of 60%. These findings are supportive of those of Algozzine, Browder, Karvonen, Test, and Wood (2001) who found PNDs ranging from 64-100% with a median of 95% and effect sizes ranged from - 2.23 to 26.48 with a median of .60, indicating a moderate effect.

Cooperative learning. Using cooperative learning (CL) strategies is one of the hallmarks of SL. CL involves more than working together on a project, as it requires teachers to *structure* cooperative

interdependence among students. Elements of CL include positive interdependence, equal participation, individual accountability, and simultaneous interaction ([Kagan, 1994](#)).

Civic engagement and responsibility. Young people today are less likely than their counterparts in recent history to exhibit the characteristics of citizenship ([Flanagan & Levine, 2010](#); [Lopez et al., 2006](#)). Engagement in extracurricular activities in high school and feelings of social connectedness to the community are related to engagement in adulthood ([McFarland & Thomas, 2006](#)). Civic engagement is a critical aspect of ISL and builds needed social capital ([Segura, Pachon, & Woods, 2001](#)). In addition, student involvement in civic affairs is positively related to academic achievement ([Davila & Mora, 2007](#)).

The impact of inclusion: A “value added” aspect of service learning. Inclusive service learning (ISL) emphasizes embracing diversity by structuring the SL process for *all* students, including those with SEN and/or disabilities. The intent is to blend academic learning with the building of social capital. Research has found both socially and academically positive effects of inclusion in ISL programs for students with SEN ([Salend & Duhaney, 1999](#); [Moore, Gilbreath, & Maiuri, 1998](#)). Importantly, such inclusion also demonstrated positive effects on typically developing peers. By working together to address common problems, students with and without SEN learn about each other, discovering the gifts, capacities, and talents each one possesses as well as their commonalities. Discovering that *we are a lot more alike than different* places social relationships between members of the two groups within a decidedly different context and has the potential to lead to greater mutual understanding and support.

The Together We Make a Difference: Inclusive service learning program (ISL; [Abery et al., 2011](#)) closely follows SL Standards for Quality Practice ([K-12, 2018](#)), including meaningful service, links to curriculum and standards, reflection, diversity, duration and intensity. The structure and sequence of the lessons of the program are based on the characteristics of high quality SL ([Kaye, 2004](#)). An additional strength of the program is its alignment with the *Common Core State Standards* adopted by many states in the U.S. Lessons for the program were written using a direct instruction approach with each lesson following a standard format that consists in different aspects such as purpose, instructor preparation, materials, adaptations for participation, activity steps, and learner and instructor reflection.

The program, which is available in both elementary and secondary school editions, has a structured format (see figure 3) and is intended to be infused into the daily curriculum. Participants learn how to connect with their community, conduct research via PBL, confirm their conclusions, and plan, implement, and evaluate SL projects. The program has 3 phases (see Figure 3) including the following: (1) *Building community*, (2) *Building capacity, planning, & implementing*, and (3) *Communicating & celebrating*. Phases are designed to introduce explicitly ISL and prerequisite skills and do not assume that students already possess the ability to undertake effectively ISL ([Neiberger-Miller & Zurcher, 2012](#); [Ragsdale & Saylor, 2012](#)). An additional reason for such structure of the curriculum is to promote implementation with high fidelity such that it can be effectively delivered by any high-quality teacher.

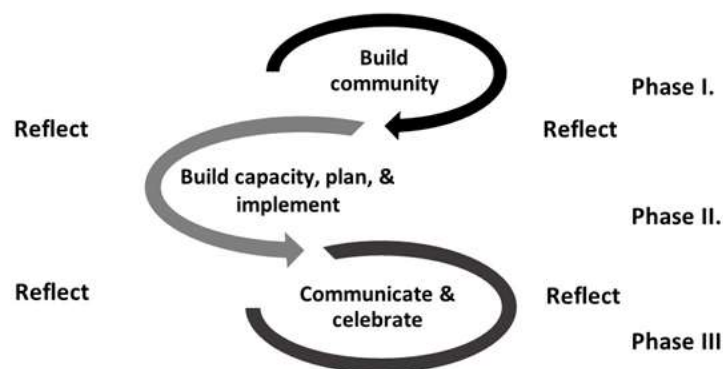


Figure 3. Phases of service learning

Research evidence. Evidence with respect to the effectiveness of the *Together We Make a Difference* program was generated in a quasi-experimental study in 2008-09 with 14 schools in three U.S. States (Minnesota, California, and North Carolina) with over 365 elementary and secondary students taking part in it ([Abery & Halpin, 2009](#)). Results indicated significant pre-, post-test differences between treatment and comparison groups with respect to self-determination, social inclusion, and civic responsibility. In addition, although no significant differences in oral reading fluency were reported, both behavioral observation and teacher reports indicated significantly higher student academic engagement among members of the ISL groups both during ISL lessons as well as other academic subjects.

Additional research on ISL demonstrated that it is an intervention that can potentially engage high-risk students, prevent dropout, and facilitate positive attitudes toward academic achievement, the community, future plans, and school socialization. Participation also demonstrated to enhance academic outcomes as well as lead to enhanced *citizenship, civic engagement, and social responsibility* ([Billig, 2002](#); [Billig, Jesse, & Grimley, 2008](#); [Davila & Mora, 2007](#); [Klute & Billig, 2002](#); [Kraft & Wheeler, 2003](#); [Laird & Black, 2018](#); [Moore & Sandholtz, 1999](#); [Scales & Roehlkepartain, 2004](#); [Zoerink, Magafas, & Pawelko, 1997](#)).

3.2 Small group (Tier-2) approach to inclusion

Small-group supplemental instruction is needed for students who lag behind their peers in the core curriculum in order to enhance their ability to process core instruction more effectively. One approach of this kind which is widely used in U.S. schools is the *guided reading* ([Fountas & Pinnel, 1996](#)). The guided reading is a small-group teaching strategy used within the general education classroom to enhance student reading skills. It is part of a balanced literacy approach endorsed by the [National Reading Panel \(2000\)](#) and the [National Council of Teachers of English \(2002\)](#). This approach is used primarily at the elementary school level when students are developing their reading skills. Guided reading books are, however, available up to grade 12. The approach is based on the belief that all students can become literate by using the principle of differentiated instruction. Students are divided into groups of 4-8 individuals based on their reading performance, they are given reading material that matches their stage of reading development, and they take part in scaffolded reading lessons. Grouping for guided reading should not be homogeneous, but flexible, varied and temporary to allow students to support one another, feel part of a community of readers and to change when needed ([Laquinta, 2006](#)).

Guided reading lessons, including preparation, consist of the following components: (1) Selection of appropriate text, (2) Introduction of the text to students (understanding the problem and plot), (3) Prompting students to interpret illustrations, (4) Reading the text (out loud or silently), (5) Discussion of text, (6) Teaching points - explaining how punctuation conveys meaning, and (7) Word work - providing information about word meaning ([Fountas & Pinnell, 2012](#); [Laquinta, 2006](#)). Walking students through these steps provides them with strategies to use while reading that will support their becoming fluent readers who comprehend as much information as possible from the text.

Good pedagogy is critical during the Guided Reading process. Teachers must create appropriate groupings, select materials at the right level of challenge for readers, and use effective prompting strategies when needed to build both reading fluency and comprehension. The prompts teachers are designed to encourage self-monitoring (e.g., Where you right?), self-correcting (e.g., I like how you corrected yourself.), prediction (e.g., What do you think will happen next?), and confirmation (e.g., Where you right?) while students are reading. Similarly, teachers also cue students to understand sound-symbol correspondence, meaning of words, and sentence structure ([Laquinta, 2006](#)).

The level of reading material is judged according to several criteria: (a) Book and print features (e.g., length, layout, graphic features), (b) Vocabulary, (c) Sentence complexity, (d) Content, (e) Text structure (e.g., fiction/nonfiction), (f) Language and literacy features (e.g., literary/figurative language,

dialogue), and (g) Themes and ideas ([Fountas & Pinnell, 2001](#)). The books can then be numbered for easy identification and selection. Figure 4 (see below) is an example of a lesson plan form and bookmark with teacher prompts used in guided reading instruction.

READING STRATEGIES

Look At The Picture

Skip It

Read It Again

Get Your Mouth Ready

Look for Chunks

Does It Sound Right

Does It Look Right

Does It Make Sense

Book title: _____ Level: _____

Date: _____ Genre: _____

Lesson: _____

Beginning:

Background knowledge:

Vocabulary:

(Picture walk)

Intro. focus of lesson:

Middle:

End:

Running Record:

Assessment/Extension:

Figure 4. Guided reading sample lesson plan (Guided reading, 2018)

Research evidence. Numerous studies have demonstrated significant, positive results for the use of guided reading within a balanced literacy instruction framework ([Kamps et al., 2007](#); [Reutzel, Petscher & Spichtig, 2012](#); [Gaffner, Johnson, Torres-Elias, & Dryden, 2014](#)). [Kamps et al. \(2007\)](#) found that guided reading benefited students who were 1st and 2nd grade English language learners. [Reutzel et al. \(2012\)](#) examined the effectiveness of a guided silent reading program for 3rd graders who were having reading difficulties and demonstrated significant reading gains. [Gaffner et al. \(2014\)](#) found that a guided reading strategy benefited elementary students reading below grade level. Several other studies examined the effectiveness of Guided reading as a strategy to use within inclusive settings and specific target populations and reported promising results. [Lyons and Thompson \(2012\)](#) found that guided reading improved reading of students in an inclusive middle school setting. [Schirmer and Schaffer \(2010\)](#) and [Schaffer and Schirmer \(2010\)](#) reported that the guided reading approach improved the reading results of students who were deaf. [Denton, Fletcher, Taylor, Barth, and Vaughn \(2014\)](#) utilized a randomized experimental design to compare guided reading with explicit instruction and typical school instruction. Results indicated that both guided reading and explicit instruction were more effective than typical school reading pedagogy.

3.3 Individualized intervention (Tier-3) approach to inclusion

In order to succeed academically, students need to be able to process information with speed, accuracy, and without hesitation. This set of skills are referred to as academic fluency. In recent years, most of the research has been devoted to the study of academic fluency in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. In reading, fluency is defined as the ability to read, both silently and aloud, with speed, accuracy, and proper expression. In writing, it refers to the capacity of students to write fluently and smoothly from word to word, phrase to phrase, and sentence to sentence. Math fluency is the ability to recall the answers to basic math facts automatically and without hesitation. In reading, fluency is important because it provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension.

Incremental rehearsal. Incremental rehearsal (IR) is a fluency intervention designed as an individualized intensive intervention that utilizes flash cards to increase rate (i.e., speed) and accuracy (i.e., correctness) of student responses to academic content. Most of the research for IR has been completed for improving fluency for high-frequency sight words in reading (e.g., [Burns, Dean, & Foley, 2004](#); [Joseph, 2006](#); [Nist & Joseph, 2008](#)). There is additional research, however, that also supports this intervention for simple math facts (e.g., [Burns, 2005](#); [Coddington, Archer, & Connell, 2010](#)), letter sounds ([Bunn, Burns, Hoffman, & Newman, 2005](#); [Volpe, Burns, DuBois, & Zaslofsky, 2011](#)), and basic writing ([Garcia, 2012](#)). This strategy is typically used at the elementary level at the time of building basic academic skills.

Incremental rehearsal is best conceptualized as a Tier-3 intervention suited for those students for whom formative assessment data indicate past Tier-2 efforts that have not been successful in supporting increased growth in basic academic skills. By working with a single student, instructors can both monitor and maximize academic engaged time, while differentiating instruction to meet the specific needs of each student in the classroom who requires this approach. Although it is labor intensive because it requires a 1-to-1 student-instructor ratio and a good deal of individualized preparation, one of the strengths of the approach is that IR does not necessarily need to be administered by a teacher. Studies have shown that both teaching assistants and well-trained volunteers can implement the approach successfully if provided with proper training and oversight. This strategy is used primarily at the elementary school level, but it has also been used in later grades as a pre-teaching strategy, e.g. for content specific vocabulary.

The IR Process. IR is best suited to support students' developing fundamental skills in basic academic areas (i.e., reading, writing, and math) with a focus on increasing their fluency or ability to process academic stimuli (e.g., text, a math computation) accurately and quickly. Sessions are typically of short duration (5-10 minutes) to maximize engagement, but take place on a frequent basis (i.e., 3-5 times/week). It uses a well-researched, structured process of introducing academic material that has to be mastered yet, interspersed with material for which a student has demonstrated understanding as context for developing a high degree of fluency.

In order to improve student fluency in reading high-frequency words, for example, a teacher might create a deck of flashcards with high-frequency words typed or written on them. The teacher or a teaching assistant would then administer the flashcards to the student to determine the known and unknown words in the stack. Unknown and known words would subsequently be placed in their own piles. The instructor would then select 1 to 3 cards that contain sight words the student did not know (depending on the student's level of attention and ability to learn new unknown words) and 8 to 9 cards on which are written words the student has mastered. The first unknown sight word (U1) is then presented and taught to the student. The student is then immediately asked to repeat the unknown word. If he or she is successful, the instructor then selects a sight word from the pile of sight words the child already knows (K1) and presents it following the presentation of the first unknown card (U1). After the first known card (K1) is presented, the instructor goes back to the first unknown card (U1) presenting it a second time. Instructors continue by presenting the second known card (K2), a third known card (K3) and then repeat their presentation of the card with the first unknown sight word (U1). The instructor continues presenting the unknown sight word, with additional words the child has demonstrated that he or she knows after the unknown word, until all 9 known words are presented:

Present U1, then K1, then K2, then K3, then K4

Present U1, then K1, then K2, then K3, then K4, then K5

Present U1, then K1, then K2, then K3, then K4, then K5

Present U1, then K1, then K2, then K3, then K4, then K5, then K6

Present U1, then K1, then K2, then K3, then K4, then K5, then K6, then K7

Present U1, then K1, then K2, then K3, then K4, then K5, then K6, then K7, then K8

Present U1, then K1, then K2, then K3, then K4, then K5, then K6, then K7, then K8, then K9

After the first unknown word (U1) is mastered and becomes a known word, one of the other known words is removed and the newly learned sight word now becomes K1. A new unknown sight word is then presented, taught, and placed in the sequence (U2). Students are considered successful at decoding each sight word if they are able to respond within 2 seconds. When a student does not respond successfully to a sight word, the instructor models the correct word and asks the student to repeat it. Intervention continues until there are no errors. For improving simple math facts and letter names or sounds, a similar procedure is followed.

Teacher monitoring and positive reinforcement. Given that IR is implemented on a one-to-one basis, it is critical that instructors monitor and track student's performance as well as provide individualized feedback and reinforcement to students' progress through the intervention. Teachers can support students to chart their own progress with each new set of sight words, letters, or math computations they are attempting to master as well as for appropriate level of engagement and social behavior. Based on the monitoring of student's performance, both length and frequency of the sessions can be adjusted to maximize the progress of the student. As the fluency of students improves, these new skills need to be integrated into other support programs in which a student is taking part.

Research evidence. A recent meta-analysis ([Burns, Zaslofsky, Kanive, & Parker, 2012](#)) provides a perspective with respect to evidence supporting the use of IR as an intervention strategy. Burns and colleagues found 19 studies of the effectiveness of IR. Based upon an analysis of effective sizes, the conclusion is that IR is an effective fluency intervention for letter sounds, words, math facts, and vocabulary words for students with a variety of disabilities, including students who are English language learners (ELLs; [Matchett & Burns, 2009](#)). Moreover, [Burns et al. \(2012\)](#) noted that IR has been studied as an acceptable fluency intervention for students without disabilities, as well as those with learning disabilities, cognitive impairments, and emotional-behavioral disorders. IR has showed to be effective across a wide age range of students from preschool to high school. Additional studies corroborated these findings through comparing IR with other fluency interventions and finding that gains made through the use of IR typically exceeded those that occurred when other approaches were used ([January, Lovelace, Foster, & Ardoin, 2015](#); [Kupzyk, Daly, & Andersen, 2011](#); [Volpe, Mulé, Briesch, Joseph, & Burns, 2011](#)). Overall, the theoretical underpinnings of IR align with the hierarchy of learning academic content: acquisition, fluency, generalization, adaptation ([Haring, Lovitt, Eaton, & Hansen, 1978](#)). Once students have fundamental skills and become fluent with basic words, letter sounds, or math facts, they spend less time and effort decoding or using their fingers to count, thus increasing fluency and making it easier to access higher order academic content (e.g., comprehension or math word problems).

4 Conclusions

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (now referred to as the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* – IDEA) was first passed by the U.S. Congress in 1975 ([Lechtenberger, 2010](#)). In the course of the 40-years that have elapsed since that time, educators in the U.S. have made significant progress towards the creation of a more inclusive educational system in which *all* children, including those with disabilities, are not just physically integrated into general education classrooms, but experience instructional, social and psychological inclusion. Although many students with SEN in the U.S. still do not experience what most would refer to as full inclusion, the large percentage of them (approximately 81%) do spend the majority (more than 80%) of their school time in general education settings.

Movement of students with SEN in the U.S. from segregated to more inclusive settings as well as efforts to address academic, social, and behavioral issues so that at-risk children are not unnecessarily identified as having disabilities, have been supported by the development and use of various strategies and programs. Among the promising practices there are response to intervention, inclusive service learning, guided reading, and incremental rehearsal. In many cases, implementation of these strategies

is accompanied by the use of formative assessment that enables educators to monitor student progress on regular basis and change instructional approaches when current methods are not demonstrating effectiveness.

The goal of this article was to provide readers with concrete examples of strategies and approaches that have been used successfully in the U.S. to promote inclusion. It would be tempting to simply recommend the instructional practices that have been found to have a high degree of utility in the U.S. and whose efficacy is supported by a significant body of research to be adopted in other countries committed to the implementation of inclusive education. We believe that such an approach, however, would be ill advised. As educators have learned in the U.S., implementing educational programs effectively and with high fidelity, is a complex process. Implementers need to take into consideration a number of factors, the majority of which are heavily influenced by the specific socio-economic and educational environment of the region or country where inclusion is being implemented including available resources, the culture, and characteristics of students and families. Each country, either on its own or with supports, therefore needs to chart its own path toward inclusion based on its societal values, education legislation, and available supports. This article offers possibilities from the U.S. context that should be considered for adaptation and a possible implementation or simply as an inspiration for making *all* children valued members of an inclusive society.

The Czech Republic, located in the heart of Europe, has a different history both politically and educationally than the U.S. Geographically, it is a relatively small country and its population, although diversifying considerably over the past several decades, remains relatively homogeneous. Unlike the U.S., the Czech Republic has an educational system that is less driven by local and state policies than those at the federal level. There is one additional distinction between the countries: unlike the U.S., the Czech Republic has both signed and ratified The United Nations ([“Convention on the rights,” 2018](#)), decidedly placing it on the path for the enhanced educational inclusion of students with SEN.

Regardless of the existing differences between the U.S. and C.R., the basic principles underlying the practices and strategies described in this article have the potential to address academic and social needs of Czech students with SENs. Response to Intervention (RTI) has the potential to serve as a preventative framework for students who show signs of falling behind academically due to a variety of language-based, socio-economic, or disability-related reasons. Moreover, this approach is an important tool for facilitating enhanced collaboration between general and special educators as well as specialists. Inclusive service learning (ISL) provides a necessary connection between academic content taught in the classroom and real life in the community that results in teaching and learning that is both more explicit and applied, thus making it more understandable, meaningful and relevant to students who are unlikely to benefit from abstract instruction. When service learning is undertaken in an inclusive manner, it changes peer attitudes towards people with disabilities highlighting the fact that although students with disabilities may require some additional resources they can be conceptualized as a resource themselves. Guided reading and incremental rehearsal are strategies that are not culturally specific with both approaches designed to build basic academic skills in reading and math of students who require a more individualized approach.

It is our hope that educators, scholars and policymakers in the Czech Republic and other Central and European countries will find the strategies and approaches presented in this article sufficiently promising to seek additional information about them and their suitability for being implemented in the local context. This will require a considerable degree of work since the approaches highlighted in this article and initially designed to be used in the U.S. educational system will need to be adapted not

Successful inclusive education is only possible when teachers and students are provided with effective strategies that address the needs of ALL students, including those who may at some point fall behind.

only for Czech Republic as a country, but for individual schools which may vary with respect to a wide variety of factors ranging from resources to students with SENs. Such an effort might, at first, appear daunting, but general educators should not feel that they are alone in it. University education faculty in the C.R. must assume the responsibility for adequately preparing both general and special education teachers as well as related service staff to implement inclusive practices. This will need to entail the discussion of inclusive education practices in educational coursework as well as the provision of opportunities to practice their implementation in school settings. Teachers in training will need to have opportunities to learn about how to use the principles of universal design for learning, differentiated instruction, and cross-disciplinary collaboration to adapt teaching strategies to meet the needs of differently-abled students. They will need to acquire data literacy skills so that the progress of students with SENs can be monitored and the success of their educational approaches evaluated. Just as importantly, faculty will need not only to speak about inclusion and inclusiveness, but also about model inclusive behavior in their interactions with students, colleagues, and teachers.

Mutual exchanges of ideas, experiences, and expertise are the hallmark of good scholarships and educational practices. If inclusive education is to move forward, such interactions must occur between education faculty both within and outside of the Czech Republic and must include individuals who are motivated to continue moving forward on the path to inclusion. However, similar exchanges must also take place between education faculty and their students, the latter feeling free to challenge the status quo and the ways in which “things have always been done.” Inclusive education in both the U.S. and C.R. requires open inquiry if the field of education is to continue on an evolutionary path that, at some point in the near future, will make it possible for *all* students to receive an equitable education that prepares them for an inclusive life as adults.

The author declares that this is the original study and text in this form has not been submitted for publication nor has it been published otherwise.

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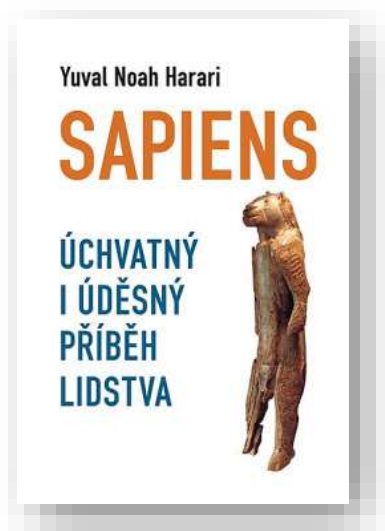
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Recenze

Harari, Y. N. (2014). *Sapiens. Úchvatný i úděsný příběh lidstva*. Voznice: Leda.



Kniha izraelského historika Harariho překračuje hranice oboru historie a dotýká se nejen všech sociálních věd, ale také věd přírodních, z nichž zejména nejvíce evolučních, a to biologie a genetiky.

Harari popisuje vznik a vývoj druhu sapiens. Zamýšlí se nad jeho jedinečností, kterou vidí v tom, že druh homo začal žít ve velkých skupinách, což vedlo k tomu, že se u něj rozvinula specifická inteligence, podle autora jako výsledek první ze tří revolucí, a to revoluce kognitivní. Ta měla podle něj za následek schopnost spolupracovat ve velkých skupinách (nad 150 členů), vedla k rozvoji společenských her, jejichž poznání je pro pochopení lidstva stěžejní. Autor přitom neopomíná biologickou podstatu člověka a říká, že základní parametry chování a schopností jsou touto podstatou dány.

Za druhou revoluci považuje neolitickou, ke které se staví jako k podvodu na člověku, protože od tohoto okamžiku se na člověka začal zvyšovat tlak a jeho životní styl se zhoršil, což dokládá na s. 102. „Lovci a sběrači jedli zdravěji, pracovali méně hodin, jejich dny byly rozmanitější a zajímavější, méně je ohrožoval hlad a nemoci. Pěstitelé sice v potu tváře znásobili objem potravin, které mělo lidstvo k dispozici, ale to neznamená, že jedli zdravěji nebo měli více volného času. Naopak. Vyšší produkce způsobila demografickou explozi a vznik hýčkaných elit. Průměrný zemědělec pracoval déle než průměrný lovec a měl z toho menší užitek. Zemědělská revoluce byla největší podvod v dějinách.“ Výsledkem neolitické revoluce je usazení člověka, zvýšení jeho populací, vznik velkých sídel a tím i nutná složitější organizace společnosti.

Třetí je dle něj revoluce vědecká, která začíná objevem nevědomosti. Autor zdůrazňuje, že přiznání neznalostí je výhodou, protože otevírá prostor pro hledání, objevování a tím pro rozvoj lidské společnosti, jenž nemusí být vždy jen pozitivní, ale nese s sebou nebezpečí zničení, což autor uvádí na s. 303. „Zásadní a opravdu přelomový okamžik posledních pěti set let nastal v 5:29:45 ráno 16. července 1945, když američtí námořníci odpálili první atomovou bombu v Alamogordu v Novém Mexiku. V tom okamžiku lidstvo získalo schopnost chodit dějin nejen měnit, ale i zcela ukončit.“

Za základního hybatele dějin považuje kulturu. Z ní pak zejména jazyk jako specifický komunikační nástroj a fikci (mýty) – sdílenou představivost lidstva. Přitom ale nepopírá přírodní procesy, když tvrdí: „obecně platí, že příčinou významných změn ve společenském chování bývá jen genetická mutace“ (s. 47). Za klíč úspěchu druhu homo sapiens vidí právě schopnost vytvářet mýtus (např. o duchu kmene). To podle něj umožňuje efektivní spolupráci ve velké skupině a rychlé přizpůsobení se náhlým změnám. Zároveň přispívá ke vzniku velkých lidských společenství vyznačujících se organizovanou strukturou a hierarchickým uspořádáním. Pro fungování těchto uspořádání je nezbytný vznik imaginárního řádu, „který není nějaká zlovolná konspirace ani zbytečná iluze, ale jediný způsob, jak zajistit úspěšnou spolupráci velkého množství lidí“ (s. 137). Imaginární řád ovšem nelze udržovat pouze silou, je nutné, aby „v něj značná část obyvatel – především privilegované vrstvy a bezpečnostní síly – opravdu věřila“ (s. 140).

Autor dále podotýká, že se bohužel zdá, „že imaginární hierarchie a diskriminace jsou nutně základem všech komplexních společností“ (s. 168). Samozřejmě neexistuje jeden univerzální model hierarchie

a diskriminace, ale hierarchie nám pomáhá orientovat se ve společnosti, napovídá, jak se k sobě máme chovat, v podstatě stanovuje pravidla a normy jednání pro jednotlivé kategorie lidí. Autor pokračuje v této úvaze a aplikuje ji nejen na společnost, ale také na gender.

Podle autora každá kultura proc hází neustálou proměnou, což ovšem vede k tomu, že dochází k sjednocování lidstva, i když globální kultura není homogenní. Na sjednocování lidstva má největší vliv rozvoj obchodu. Tím se dostává ke vzniku peněz a jejich významu pro chod lidské společnosti, jenž spočívá na dvou obecně platných principech – univerzální směnitelnosti a univerzální důvěře.

Od vzniku obchodu a peněz je jen krůček ke vzniku říší, politického zřízení, které vládne mnoha národům s vlastními kulturními identitami a pohyblivými hranicemi. Autor podotýká, že již od počátku hrály říše rozhodující roli ve stmelování malých kultur. Nutila je k tomu standardizace obchodu a potřeba legitimacy. Neopomíná ani současnou situaci a uvádí, že „globální impérium, které před našimi zraky vzniká, není ovládáno žádným státem ani etnikem. Podobně jako v pozdní říši římské mu vládne mnohonárodní elita a má sdílenou kulturu i společné zájmy. Po celém světě se k němu přidává stále větší počet podnikatelů, inženýrů, odborníků, učenců, právníků a manažerů, kteří se rozhodují, zda odpoví na volání impéria, nebo zůstanou věrni svému národu a státu. A čím dál více lidí volí impérium.“ (s. 255)

Další část své práce autor zasvětil problematice náboženství. Náboženství definuje jako „soubor lidských hodnot a norem, který se zakládá na víře v nadlidský řád“ (s. 280). Automaticky mezi náboženství řadí veškeré ideologie. Ve vztahu k člověku vyzdvihuje polyteismus, který podle něj nepovýšil jen bohy, ale především pozvedl lidstvo a to tím, že zrušili animistické vnímání člověka jako jedné z mnoha bytostí tohoto světa a vyčlenilo ho právě nad tyto bytosti (s. 261).

Vědecká revoluce podle něj začíná před 500 lety tím, kdy si evropský člověk uvědomil svoji neznalost. Do té doby považovali lidé svět za známý. Evropané začali investovat do vědy, což vedlo k tomu, že věda začala odstraňovat jeden problém za druhým. Jedním z nich byl hlad, který se takřka podařilo odstranit, což ale vedlo ke vzniku problému nového – obezity.

Autor se zamýšlí nad tím, proč právě Evropa se stala nositelkou vědecké revoluce v těch posledních 500 letech a dovozuje, že to byla síla vojensko-průmyslovo-vědeckého komplexu a pokročilé techniky, které jsou postaveny na ideologii kapitalismu – na možnosti rozvoje podnikání přes úvěr, na důvěře v budoucnost. I přes tyto výhody upozorňuje na negativa, kde za hlavní považuje neschopnost spravedlivého rozdělení zisků. Neopomíná ani současný věk konzumu nutící člověka k co největší spotřebě. Dále poukazuje na to, že průmyslovou revolucí byly zahájeny převratné společenské změny jako standardizace času, rozpad patriarchy, zánik sedláků, rozvoj měst, práva občanů a demokratizaci, což vedlo k současné imaginární společnosti národů a spotřebitelů.

V posledních kapitolách knihy se věnuje problematice smrtelnosti, míru, štěstí a spokojenosti. Poukazuje na to, že žijeme v nezvyklé době dlouhého míru, pouze s malými lokálními válkami, protože válka se dnes finančně nevyplácí. Přitom většina výzkumů ve vyspělých zemích potvrzuje, že současný člověk není spokojený a šťastný, protože díky konzumerismu chce pořád něco dalšího. Tím se vrací zpět k člověku a jeho zdokonalování formou zásahů do genetické výbavy bez vědomí toho, jaký ten člověk vlastně má být, což může vést ke zničení sama sebe jako druhu.

Závěr knihy je velmi stručný, ale o to více výstižný. Z běžného živočišného druhu jsme se nejdříve vyčlenili z živočišné říše a nyní máme možnost stát se bohy. Autor knihu končí završující větou: „Může být něco nebezpečnějšího než nespokojení a nezodpovědní bohové, kteří nevědí, co chtějí?“ (s. 503)

Autorovi se tak na zhruba pěti stech stránkách povedlo provést čtenáře celým příběhem druhu homo sapiens, tedy anatomii moderního člověka, jak tento druh označují antropologové. V knize odkazuje na práce nejen historické, ale především antropologické, psychologické, biologické, sociologické, ekonomické, filozofické apod. Kniha tak ukazuje, že pokud chceme pochopit problém, je dnes nutný multioborový přístup.

Kniha je psána popularizačním jazykem, což ji předurčuje k tomu, aby se jejími čtenáři stalo co nejširší publikum. Je proto vhodná pro studenty všech oborů, nejen humanitních, ale i přírodovědných a technických. Je také velkým obohacením a vede k urovnání, přehodnocení nebo pochopení poznatků o člověku pro pedagogiky všech stupňů škol, ale i pro laickou veřejnost.

I když v knize není žádná z kapitol konkrétně věnována edukaci, z celého textu vyplývá, že právě schopnost učit se nás lidstvo dovedla tam, kde nyní jsme. Především první třetina knihy, která je věnovaná kognitivní revoluci poukazuje na důležitost edukace, což autor shrnuje ve větě: „Lidstvo má dnes mnohem více informací než naši dávní předkové, ale jednotlivě byli pravěcí lovci a sběrači nejobratnějšími a nejerudovanějšími lidmi v dějinách.“ (s. 65)

Pro sociální pedagogiku je stěžejním tématem prostředí. A právě různým typům prostředí a jejich vlivu na člověka a lidské společenství je celá tato kniha v podstatě věnována. Popisuje, co se musel naučit člověk v lovecko-sběračské společnosti, co musel umět a znát zemědělec a co tvůrce technologií. Právě tato prostředí určovala potřeby edukace. Postmoderní prostředí je pro člověka zatěžující a to z toho důvodu, že „lidé jsou sice schopni ohromných výkonů, ale nejsou si jistí, o čem vlastně snaží, a spokojení nejsou o nic více než dříve“ (s. 503). Zde je velká úloha sociální pedagogiky, najít smysl a cíl toho snažení. Pro někoho to může být fungující rodina, pro jiného profese a pro dalšího život v souladu s přírodou. Jen člověk nesmí ztratit smysl svého života.

Vzhledem k tomu, že studenti přicházející ze středních škol nemají rozsáhlé společenskovední znalosti, měla by se tato kniha stát jejich základní četbou. Pomůže jim pochopit nejen člověka, se kterým většina z nich bude dále nějak pracovat (jako manažeři, učitelé, sociální pracovníci, úředníci apod.), ale také pochopit sebe sama.

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Sociální pedagogika na Slovensku

História a súčasnosť sociálnej pedagogiky v kontexte „Banskobystrickej školy”

Jolana Hroncová

Sociálny pedagóg patrí medzi pomáhajúce profesie, ktoré sa na Slovensku začali rozvíjať až začiatkom 90. rokov 20. storočia. Profesia sociálneho pedagóga sa začala rozvíjať po roku 1993 na viacerých vysokých školách súbežne s rozvojom sociálnej pedagogiky. Ich rozvoj bol pomerne dynamický, ale značne diferencovaný podľa toho na akých katedrách a fakultách sa začali rozvíjať. Pedagogická fakulta Univerzity Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici patrila medzi prvé fakulty, ktoré začali vzdelávať sociálnych pedagógov a aj v súčasnosti patrí *Banskobystrická škola sociálnej pedagogiky*, ktorá rozvíja sociálnu pedagogiku na Katedre pedagogiky, medzi najintenzívnejšie pracoviská v rozvoji sociálnej pedagogiky i prípravy sociálnych pedagógov na Slovensku. V roku 2018 si pripomíname na Katedre pedagogiky Pedagogickej fakulty UMB v Banskej Bystrici 25. výročie začiatku vzdelávania sociálnych pedagógov v magisterskom štúdiu.

Konštituovanie profesie a vzdelávania sociálnych pedagógov na Slovensku, s osobitným zreteľom na Pedagogickú fakultu UMB v Banskej Bystrici

Pred rokom 1989 sa na slovenských vysokých školách sociálna pedagogika nerozvíjala a ani nevyučovala v rámci odboru pedagogika, profesia sociálneho pedagóga tiež neexistovala. Sociálno-patologické javy u detí a mládeže nepredstavovali vážny výchovný a spoločenský problém a za socializmu prakticky neexistovali ani spoločensky nežiaduce javy, ako je nezamestnanosť, bezdomovectvo, žobravosť a pod., resp. boli tabuizované. Po roku 1989, v súvislosti s nárastom sociálno-patologických a spoločensky nežiaducich javov v spoločnosti, vznikla aj spoločenská potreba rozvoja pomáhajúcich profesií a vied, ktoré sa nimi zaoberali, osobitne sociálnej pedagogiky a sociálnej práce. Na potrebu rozvoja pomáhajúcich profesií v postkomunistických krajinách upozornila aj OECD v roku 1994.

Pozitívne však možno hodnotiť skutočnosť, že sociálna pedagogika sa pred rokom 1989 rozvíjala na Slovensku aj pred rokom 1989 v Ústave experimentálnej pedagogiky SAV v Bratislave, teda pod strechou najvyššej vedeckej inštitúcie. Jej základy položil koncom 70-tych rokov 20. storočia, prof. Ondrej Baláž, DrSc., pod silným vplyvom poľskej (ale aj nemeckej) sociálnej pedagogiky. Kniha R. Wroczińskiego *Sociálna pedagogika* ([Wrocziński, 1968](#)) a najmä predhovor prof. Ľ. Bakoša v nej, kde zdôrazňoval nutnosť rozvíjania sociálnej pedagogiky na Slovensku, pretože: „Málo pedagogických pracovníkov sa zameriava na sociálnu pedagogiku, dnes veľmi dôležitú pedagogickú disciplínu“ ([in Wrocziński, 1968, s. 7](#)), boli silnou motiváciou pre vzbudenie záujmu O. Baláža pre sociálnu pedagogiku. Uvádza to vo svojom referáte *K problémom sociálnej pedagogiky* na prvej slovenskej konferencii o sociálnej pedagogike, ktorá sa uskutočnila na Pedagogickej fakulte UK v Bratislave v roku 1996 pod názvom *Sociálna pedagogika a jej postavenie v systéme vied* slovami: „Tieto slová, a najmä dielo Ryszarda Wroczińskiego, boli pre mňa výzvou, povzbudením a podnetom do intenzívnejšej vedeckovýskumnej a publikačnej činnosti v oblasti sociálnej pedagogiky. Prispeli k prekonaniu ignorovania tejto hraničnej vednej disciplíny u nás“ ([Baláž, 1996, s. 496](#)). Autorka tohto príspevku mala tú česť byť prvou aspirantkou O. Baláža, so špecializáciou na sociálnu pedagogiku v rokoch 1973–78 a preto mala možnosť participovať na jej rozvoji od jej vzniku, až po súčasnosť. Prínos O. Baláža pre slovenskú sociálnu pedagogiku zhodnotila J. Hroncová, ako pokračovateľka „Balážovej školy sociálnej pedagogiky“ aj s kolektívom Katedry pedagogiky a tiež vysokoškolskými učiteľmi z iných slovenských

fakúlt, ktoré sociálnu pedagogiku rozvíjali, v dvoch publikáciách a síce *Život a dielo prof. Ondreja Baláža* ([Hroncová & Staňová, 2007](#)) a *Sociálna pedagogika na Slovensku* ([Hroncová a kol., 2012](#)). Tieto práce boli venované 85. a 90. výročiu narodenia O. Baláža.

Po zrušení Ústavu experimentálnej pedagogiky SAV v Bratislave v roku 1993 (existoval iba 20 rokov, teda v rokoch 1973–1993) sa našťastie začala sociálna pedagogika rozvíjať postupne na viacerých slovenských vysokých školách najprv v teoretickej rovine, ale neskôr aj v pedagogickej, vedeckovýskumnej a publikačnej oblasti.

Etapy vývoja sociálnej pedagogiky na Slovensku po roku 1989

V historickom kontexte v SR možno vymedziť viaceré štádiá rozvoja pregraduálnej prípravy sociálnych pedagógov ([Gregorová, 2006, s. 39-41](#)), ktoré bezprostredne súviselo aj s rozvojom sociálnej pedagogiky ako pedagogickej disciplíny. V **prvej etape vývoja** sociálna pedagogika existovala iba ako učebný predmet a začala sa vyučovať v roku 1990 na Katedre pedagogiky Filozofickej fakulty Univerzity Komenského v Bratislave. Iniciátorom zavedenia tohto predmetu do štúdia v odbore pedagogika bol P. Kompolt a vyučovať ho začala Z. Bakošová ([Bakošová, 2008, s. 19](#)). **Druhé štádium** začalo v roku 1993, keď sa v rámci učiteľstva všeobecnovzdelávacích predmetov vytvorila v odbore pedagogika od 3. ročníka študijná špecializácia sociálna pedagogika ([Gregorová, 2006, s. 40](#)). Otvorenie študijnej špecializácie navrhol J. Pšenák ([Bakošová, 2008, s. 19](#)). Význam pre pregraduálnu prípravu malo aj vydanie prvých vysokoškolských skript zo sociálnej pedagogiky, ktoré v roku 1994 napísala Z. Bakošová ([Bakošová, 1994](#)) pod názvom *Sociálna pedagogika. Vybrané problémy*.

Na Pedagogickej fakulte Univerzity Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici od školského roka 1993/94 možno hovoriť o **treťom štádiu** vývoja sociálnej pedagogiky, pretože sa na Katedre pedagogiky otvorilo magisterské štúdium pod názvom *Sociálny pedagóg* ako samostatná špecializácia v odbore Pedagogika. Postupne so vzdelávaním sociálnych pedagógov Katedra pedagogiky začala intenzívnejšie rozvíjať aj publikačnú činnosť, ktorá bola v značnej miere zameraná na saturáciu jednotlivých študijných odborov študijnou literatúrou. K prvým významným prácam na vtedajšej Katedre pedagogiky a sociálnej práce (takto sa premenovala sa v školskom roku 1998/99 a v školskom roku 2003/2004 získala pôvodný názov Katedra pedagogiky, pretože sa od nej odčlenila a osamostatnila Katedra sociálnej práce), ktoré boli zamerané na študijný program *Sociálna pedagogika* (Mgr.), ale aj *Sociálna práca* (Bc.) patrila publikácia *Sociálna pedagogika a sociálna práca* ([2000](#)), ktorú vypracoval autorský kolektív Hroncová, Hudecová a Matulayová.

O **štvrtom štádiu** možno hovoriť od roku 2003, od kedy sa na Pedagogickej fakulte UMB v Banskej Bystrici študuje študijný program *Sociálna pedagogika* v odbore 1.1.4 Pedagogika pod garanciou J. Hroncovej. V tomto období sa na Katedre pedagogiky značne zintenzívnila publikačná a tiež vedecko-výskumná činnosť členov katedry nielen v zameraní na sociálnu pedagogiku, ale aj k iným študijným programom, čo je bližšie uvedené ďalej. Od roku 2008 možno hovoriť o **piatom štádiu** rozvoja sociálnej pedagogiky a profesie sociálneho pedagóga, pretože v roku 2008 bola táto funkcia legislatívne ukotvená *Zákonom č. 245/2008 o výchove a vzdelávaní* v § 130 ([„Zákonom č. 245/2008“, 2018](#)), ktorý uvádza „Školské zariadenia výchovného poradenstva a prevencie“ a v rámci nich aj ďalšie zložky tohto systému, kde sa nachádza aj funkcia sociálneho pedagóga, ako profesionála v oblasti prevencie sociálno-patologických javov u detí a mládeže. Okrem školských zariadení výchovného poradenstva a prevencie, teda centier pedagogicko-psychologického poradenstva a prevencie a centra špeciálno-pedagogického poradenstva tento zákon umožňuje pôsobiť sociálnym pedagógom a iným odborným zamestnancom tiež v základných a stredných školách (§27), špeciálnych výchovných zariadeniach (§120) a školských internátoch (§117). Tento zákon teda umožnil pomerne veľkorysú uplatnenie sociálnym pedagógom v školách a školských zariadeniach.

Vysokoškolská príprava sociálnych pedagógov sa na Katedre pedagogiky začala od tohto obdobia orientovať viac na prípravu sociálnych pedagógov v školách a školských zariadeniach, nakoľko to už školská legislatíva umožňovala. Kompetencie sociálnych pedagógov ako odborných zamestnancov

bližšie konkretizoval *Zákon č. 317/2009 o pedagogických zamestnancoch a odborných zamestnancoch* v § 24 pod názvom *Sociálny pedagóg* nasledovne: „Sociálny pedagóg vykonáva odborné činnosti v rámci prevencie, intervencie a poskytovania poradenstva najmä pre deti a žiakov ohrozených sociálno-patologickými javmi, zo sociálne znevýhodneného prostredia, drogovu závislých alebo inak znevýhodnených deťom a žiakom, ich zákonných zástupcov a pedagogických zamestnancov škôl a školských zariadení. Sociálny pedagóg plní úlohy sociálnej výchovy, podpory prosociálneho, etického správania, sociálno-pedagogickej diagnostiky prostredia a vzťahov, sociálno-pedagogického poradenstva, prevencie sociálno-patologických javov a reedukácie správania. Vykonáva expertízu činnosť a osvetovú činnosť“ ([„Zákon č. 317/2009“, 2018](#)).

Možno konštatovať, že kompetencie a činnosť sociálnych pedagógov, ktoré vymedzuje tento zákon v podstate odrážajú základné kompetenčné činnosti (preventívne, poradenské, reedukačné, sociálno-diagnostické,...), na ktoré sociálna pedagogika v historickom kontexte i v súčasnosti kladla dôraz.

Študijný program *Sociálna pedagogika* v odbore Pedagogika bol obsahovo viac zameraný na školskú preventívnu sociálno-výchovnú prácu a schválený aj v rámci predchádzajúcej komplexnej akreditácie uskutočnenej v roku 2008 na obdobie rokov 2009–2014. Katedra pedagogiky Pedagogickej fakulty Univerzity Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici ho v tomto zameraní predložila aj do ostatnej komplexnej akreditácie v roku 2014 a tiež bol úspešne akreditovaný v magisterskom štúdiu v rámci odboru *Pedagogika* pod číslom 7501. V akademickom roku 2018/2019 magisterský študijný program *Sociálna pedagogika* má už 25. výročie svojej existencie na Pedagogickej fakulte UMB v Banskej Bystrici. Od vzniku študijného programu *Sociálny pedagóg* a neskôr pod zmeneným názvom *Sociálna pedagogika* bol o toto štúdium veľký záujem, najmä v externej forme. V ostatných rokoch, podobne ako pri väčšine študijných programov, je už záujem o štúdium v študijnom programe *Sociálna pedagogika*, nižší. Je to spôsobené najmä nedostatočným využívaním legislatívnych možností uplatnenia sociálnych pedagógov v školách a školských zariadeniach, údajne pre nedostatok finančných prostriedkov na túto pracovnú pozíciu, no tiež aj poklesom indexu pôrodnosti od 90. rokov na Slovensku, tak ako v iných krajinách Európy a v dôsledku toho aj nižším počtom záujemcov o štúdium na vysokých školách. K ďalším príčinám možno zaradiť zvýšenie možností vysokoškolského vzdelávania na Slovensku v dôsledku kvantitatívneho nárastu vysokých škôl na Slovensku, aj v zahraničí.

Pedagogická fakulta UMB v Banskej Bystrici bola dlhodobo jedinou fakultou na Slovensku, na ktorej sa magisterský študijný program pod názvom *Sociálna pedagogika* realizoval, na iných fakultách boli iba bakalárske študijné programy, čo v minulosti umožňovalo aj väčší prílev ich absolventov na naše magisterské štúdium. V profile absolventa študijného programu *Sociálna pedagogika*, v zmysle komplexnej akreditácie z roku 2014, sa uvádza, že: „Absolventi dokážu vykonávať a samostatne vedecky pracovať v základnom i aplikovanom výskume, v sociálno-výchovnej oblasti, vo verejnej správe. Ďalej môžu pracovať v zmysle *Zákona NR SR č. 245/2008 o výchove a vzdelávaní* ([„Zákonom č. 245/2008“, 2018](#)) a *Zákona NR SR č. 317/2009 Z. z. o pedagogických zamestnancoch a odborných zamestnancoch* ([„Zákon č. 317/2009“, 2018](#)) ako profesionálni sociálni pedagógovia v materských, základných a stredných školách, v školských zariadeniach výchovného poradenstva a prevencie, v špeciálnych výchovných zariadeniach, v školských internátoch a pod.“ ([„Sociálna pedagogika“, 2018](#)).

Na Katedre pedagogiky Pedagogickej fakulty UMB sa postupne s rozvojom študijného programu *Sociálna pedagogika*, ale aj iných študijných programov, od ktorých v tomto príspevku abstrahujeme, postupne zintenzívňovala aj vedeckovýskumná a publikačná činnosť, z ktorej vyberieme, bez nároku na úplnosť iba niektoré projekty a publikácie, na spracovaní ktorých participovali aj spolupracovníci zo zahraničia. K najvýznamnejším patria: Hroncová, Emmerová, Kraus a kol. *K dejinám sociálnej pedagogiky v Európe* (2008); Hroncová, Kraus a kol. *Sociálna patológia pre sociálnych pracovníkov a pedagógov* (2006, v roku 2007 a 2010 vyšla aj na PF UHK Hradec Králové v ČR pod názvom *Sociální patologie*); Hroncová, Emmerová a kol. *Sociálna pedagogika* (2009); Hroncová, Walancik a kol. *Vybrané problémy slovenskej a poľskej sociálnej pedagogiky* (2009); Hroncová a kol. *Sociálna pedagogika*

na Slovensku (2012); Hroncová, Emmerová a Hronec *Sociálna patológia pre sociálnych pedagógov* (2014); Hroncová, Emmerová a kol. *Sociálny pedagóg v škole v teoretickej reflexii a praxi* (2015). Samostatné monografie a vysokoškolské učebnice pre sociálnych pedagógov spracovali aj Niklová, Kamarášová, Dulovics a ďalší.

Katedra pedagogiky bola organizátorom 5 medzinárodných konferencií SOCIALIA (2007, 2009, 2011, 2014, 2017) a zrealizovala aj 3 odborné semináre pre sociálnych pedagógov v škole (2 pod názvom *Sociálny pedagóg v škole* v roku 2012 a 2015) a ďalšie podujatia. Všetky boli zamerané aj na preventívnu sociálno-výchovnú prácu sociálnych pedagógov v škole, monitoring ich problémov a vzdelávacích potrieb. Na každej konferencii dochádzalo ku komparácii a výmene poznatkov a skúseností s inými vzdelávateľmi sociálnych pedagógov doma i v zahraničí.

Študijný program *Sociálna pedagogika* na ostatných vysokých školách

Vzdelávanie sociálnych pedagógov na Slovensku sa rozvíja aj na ďalších vysokých školách, ktoré uvedieme iba stručne. K týmto univerzitám patria:

Trnavská univerzita v Trnave umožňuje prostredníctvom Pedagogickej fakulty a Katedry pedagogických štúdií absolvovať uchádzačom bakalársky a magisterský študijný program *Sociálna pedagogika a vychovávateľstvo*.

Žilinská univerzita v Žiline ponúkala v minulosti možnosť štúdia sociálnej pedagogiky v bakalárskom študijnom programe *Sociálna pedagogika* na Fakulte humanitných vied – Katedra pedagogických štúdií. V súčasnom období už táto fakulta má novoakreditovaný program nielen v bakalárskom ale i v magisterskom štúdiu pod názvom *Sociálna pedagogika a vychovávateľstvo*, čo možno hodnotiť z hľadiska rozvoja sociálnej pedagogiky pozitívne.

Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave ponúka študijný program *Sociálna pedagogika a vychovávateľstvo* na Pedagogickej fakulte. Zabezpečuje ho Katedra pedagogiky a sociálnej pedagogiky v bakalárskom stupni štúdia.

Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa v Nitre ponúka možnosť štúdia sociálnej pedagogiky ako jediná vo forme učiteľského študijného programu a síce študijný program *Učiteľstvo pedagogiky*, kde má študent možnosť (v kombinácii s druhým aprobačným predmetom) špecializovať sa na sociálnu pedagogiku od prvého ročníka štúdia v magisterskom stupni.

Univerzita sv. Cyrila a Metoda v Trnave na Katedre pedagogiky realizovala v predchádzajúcom akreditačnom období bakalársky študijný program *Sociálna pedagogika*. Do novej akreditácie v roku 2014 však už tento študijný program fakulta nepredložila.

V minulosti existoval krátkodobo aj externý študijný program *Sociálna pedagogika* na **Prešovskej univerzite v Prešove v Ústave pedagogických vied Pedagogickej fakulty Prešovskej univerzity**. V súčasnosti je po viacročnom prerušení na tejto fakulte opäť akreditovaný a realizovaný, tiež iba v externom štúdiu.

V súčasnosti ešte nemožno vyjadriť spokojnosť so vzdelávaním sociálnych pedagógov na slovenských vysokých školách, pretože je stále málo vzdelávateľov sociálnych pedagógov, najmä na magisterskom stupni štúdia. V Českej i Poľskej republike je rozvoj sociálnej pedagogiky i vzdelávanie sociálnych pedagógov inštitucionálne i personálne omnoho lepšie zabezpečené, no na druhej strane legislatívne ukotvenie sociálneho pedagóga v škole stále absentuje, ale na Slovensku už 10 rokov profesia školského sociálneho pedagóga existuje.

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Information

Associations of Social Pedagogy as evidence of development of Social Pedagogy in Europe

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Slovak Association of Social Pedagogues established in June 2018 is probably the newest association within social pedagogy in Europe. Together with *Association of Educators in Social Pedagogy* (established in the Czech Republic in March 2013), the Slovak association represents evidence of social pedagogy development in the Central Europe. The development and promotion of social pedagogy as a practical activity or science is the common aim of majority of national or international associations in Europe. This is their important common attribute.

Slovak Association of Social Pedagogues was founded at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica as the outcome of long-term effort towards development of Slovak social pedagogy by the team of prof. Jolana Hroncová who is the president of the association. The members of this association are mostly social pedagogues practicing at elementary schools, non-profit organizations and academic staff at universities. The main aim of this association is to associate persons that participate on the university education of social pedagogues in the field of theory, methodology and further education; to associate graduate social pedagogues practicing at schools, institutions of educational counselling and risk behaviour prevention. The specific aims of *Slovak Association of Social Pedagogues* are: promotion of social pedagogy study programs development; cooperating on preparation and realisation of research and educational projects with domestic and foreign partners; initiation of legislative activities focused on the increase of social pedagogues' prestige (["Občianske združenie," 2018](#)).

Five years earlier before Slovak association, *Czech Association of Educators in Social Pedagogy* was founded. This organisation associates university teachers participating on education in social pedagogy study programs. Every faculty in the Czech Republic where the social pedagogy study program is realised has a representative in this association. The president of the association is Jakub Hladík from Tomas Bata University in Zlín. The most important aims of *Association of Educators in Social Pedagogy* are: effort for social pedagogy development as a study program and science branch including applications into practice; effort for promotion of social pedagogy as a single profession to the rule of law; to create educational standards of social pedagogy as a study program; to create a platform for cooperation among domestic and foreign educators in social pedagogy (["Asociace vzdelavatelů," 2018](#)).

However, these two associations promote social pedagogy especially in the Central Europe. There are other organizations or associations in Europe within social pedagogy (e. g., in the UK, Denmark, Spain, Portugal, Croatia).

International Association of Social Educators is an organisation of individual social educators, their national organisations, related workplaces and educational institutions that work with developing the profession of social educators and the underlying principles of practice. Benny Andersen is the president. He is the president of *Danish Federation of Social Educators* too. The purpose of this association is: to unite social educators from all countries and promote quality practice that seeks to ensure the best for people served by the profession; to encourage the richness of diversity by promoting co-operation of people of different backgrounds and cultures through the international membership of the association; to contribute to the development of professional education and

⁷ In cooperation with social pedagogy students Anna Rebendová, Aneta Planetová and Martina Lipárová.

training to increase the competence of all social educators; to promote the organization of the social education profession and encourage networking among association members to increase international collaboration; to emphasize professional practice and educational methods based on the United Nation's declarations of human and children's rights ("[Objectives](#)," 2018).

The Social Pedagogy Professional Association is the UK association which supports and endorses social pedagogy qualifications and practice in the work environment. Professor Claire Cameron is the chief executive officer. The overall aim is to improve support of children, young people and adults, many of whom live in disadvantaged circumstances or are vulnerable. The main aims of this association are: to promote the best practice on theory and practice of social pedagogy; to work towards professionalising social pedagogy and to support organisations that are equipping workers with training to provide better care for disadvantaged people across the lifespan; to develop and to provide continuous professional development opportunities for social pedagogues through events, learning days, webinars, online communities, and resources; to enable social pedagogues, social pedagogy practitioners and those with professional interest in social pedagogy to share knowledge and experience, to connect with and support each other through various platforms ("[What we do](#)," 2018).

Consejo General de Colegios oficiales de Educadoras y Educadores Sociales is Spanish association which is among others focused on social pedagogy. The objectives are: to promote the social and professional appreciation of educators, social educators and social education; to promote and cooperate in the development of professional associations in the autonomous, state and international spheres; to define the profession of social educators; to establish the professional competencies and status of the social educators ("[Presentación](#)," 2018).

In Portugal, *Associação dos Profissionais Técnicos Superiores de Educação Social* was founded. The main objective is to promote and deepen the associative spirit among social education professionals, represent their interests and ensure their rights. In addition, it proposes to contribute to the improvement of professionals and to develop information at all levels, thereby promoting national and international cooperation with their counterparts or related entities ("[Quem Somos](#)," 2018).

I will mention the last example of an association which is focused on promoting and developing social pedagogy in Europe. It is *Croatian Association of Social Pedagogues* which has been a member of *International Association of Social Educators* since 2010. The aims of the association are: development and promotion of social pedagogy; improving social pedagogical practices; professional development of social pedagogues; research work in the field of social pedagogy ("[Dokumenti HUSP-a](#)," 2018).

The associations are important part of social pedagogy development on the national and international level. The need of associate practitioners, scholars and students is still topical. It brings obvious advantages like experience sharing, cooperation for issues promotion and open discussions.

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Editor-in-chief: Lenka Gulová, Radim Šíp

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