DOES THE NINE-YEAR PRIMARY SCHOOL FAVOUR LEARNING OVER TEACHING?

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this article is to find out to what extent the Slovene nine-year primary schools implemented new learning, thinking and teaching styles in an attempt to improve the quality of teaching. We have used the following research instruments: observations of classes of the three eight-year and three nine-year primary schools, questionnaires for the teachers and interviews conducted with the pupils, teachers and headmasters. The main hypothesis is that by using all four teaching styles (of a waiter, constructor, alpine guide, and gardener) teachers find it easier to consider the interests of pupils for learning and thinking than by using only the first style of a waiter.

The curricula of the nine-year primary school are more process- and goal-oriented than the curricula of the eight-year school, that are subject-oriented; teachers of the nine-year primary school have to perform new tasks and consult other colleagues at their own school and in other schools with regard to their experience in achieving new objectives. The burden on pupils is balanced in the last three years of primary school by teaching at three levels. Such teaching is flexible enough to allow pupils to move from one level group to another on the basis of their abilities demonstrated in a level group. At the highest level it is easiest for the teachers to teach transformationally and for the pupils to develop flexible thinking involving empirical, rational and intuitive thinking as well as experiential learning in transformational, auto-reflexive and creative terms. In general, nine-year primary schools do not yet favour learning over teaching with the exception of the most talented pupils - since the culture of learning has only now started to develop.

Key words: teaching styles, learning styles, thinking styles, eight-year primary school, nine-year primary school, pupil, transmissive school paradigm, transformational school paradigm.

[1] Like the Maribor study (Scmidt, 2002), this evaluation study was financed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of Slovenia (2000 - 2002). Its final report can be obtained from the Institute of Education.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL NOTEBOOKS 10 (1): 57–71.
ISSN 1408-032X

1. Premise of the concepts, hypotheses, objectives and application of the research instruments

This article focuses on an interpretation of the results of the evaluation study *The importance of implementing new learning, thinking and teaching styles to ease the mind of pupils in the nine-year primary school*[1], on the results of Maribor evaluation study by Schmidt, M. (2002) *Reform in educational process: evalvation study, integrated report* and on the criticism of the current analyses of school reform.

The observations of evaluation study (Novak et al. 2002) were made in classes of social sciences (history or geography), science (mathematics or physics) and language (the Slovene or the English language) in the 6th and 7th grade of the three eight-year and in the 7th and 8th grade of the three nine-year primary schools. We also used questionnaires for the teachers and interviews conducted with the teachers and headmasters. The shift of school paradigm from the transmissive to a transformational, process-based concept of education is regarded by the critics of the recent curricular reform after 1999 (the result of which is the nine-year primary school) as a basic problem, whereas its founding fathers do not see it as a basic objective of school development. It is well known that a shift of school paradigm from transmissive to transformational is not possible if priority is not given to learning over teaching. Giving priority does not, however, mean replacing teaching by learning. It simply means organising teaching in such a way that pupils can use their own learning and thinking styles. This is an interaction of three educational processes.[2]

The sample used in the survey was small: we did not have a larger sample because of the lack of finances and staff and because eight-year primary schools were prevalent at the time the survey was conducted. In the school year 2000/01 there were approximately 30% of all primary schools nine-year schools, in 2002/03 approximately 50%. In the school year 2003/04 all primary schools have introduced the nine-year school system from the first class onwards.

This evaluation study looked into didactic improvements of the advanced primary-school classes. In planning the evaluation study on didactic improvements of the advanced classes in primary school, the following hypotheses were set:

- by using all four teaching styles (of a waiter, constructor, alpine guide, gardener), teachers find it easier to consider the interests of pupils for learning and thinking than by using only the first style;

- the more teachers think independently, critically and creatively in teaching their subject, the more they encourage pupils to do the same;

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[2] For the fundamental differences between the two models/paradigms, see the paper of Marentič Požarnik et al. (1998), and Novak (2000b) and Ivanuš Grmek M. (2001).

[3] Here I would like to pay tribute to an unknown reviewer for his/her comments on this paper. (S)he put forward that at least as far as learning and thinking go, this is not a novelty, at least in Western educational systems. Nevertheless, in Slovenia teachers are unaware what teaching styles they could use and how they would thus promote students' learning styles.
We have established that learning is a polysemic concept. Interestingly, the literature on education does not offer the distinction between regular and campaign learning even though it is a popular topic of discussion in schools.

- the more a teacher includes pupils in all class-work activities, the more they help pupils to develop their own learning and thinking styles.

These hypotheses were reached through analysis of the existent educational practise before the curricular reform (1996-1999); however, they are still valid. The educational pluralism has been tested by distribution of learning styles.[3] We differentiate between the experiential learning, i. e. in its narrow, empirical and non-reflected sense as well as in its broader, reflected, holistic, personally-significant and transformational sense (Jarvis 1998, 2001). Experiential learning can be defined according to the notions of the model of learning, whereby learning starts with an experience, and is followed by reflection, debate, analysis and evaluation of the experience. It is very uncommon to learn from an experience that has not been evaluated, assigned our own value in terms of our own objectives, ambitions and expectations. These processes bring about insights, discoveries, understanding and getting a whole picture out of individual parts. The experience is assigned a special value in relation to other experiences.[4] These inter-relations are then conceptualised, synthesised and integrated into an individual system of positions that a pupil takes on the world. Through that system a pupil observes, perceives, categorises, evaluates and gets to know the experiences.

Learning, thinking and teaching form one cluster. A difference between thinking and learning is an abstract one since we cannot differentiate between the two. The reason for that is that we think about the thing we are learning. In the same way, a teacher cannot teach what she/he has not learnt. Since every kind of learning is in a sense experiential learning (in terms of empirical or at least reflective experience), it is associated with our personality either superficially or more profoundly. Learning styles according to Entwistle (1988) are deep, surface and strategic styles. These styles are connected with holistic and serialist styles. Findings of research on the School for commissioned officers show us what kinds of styles students have. The results are compared with other research engaged in higher education. Even though classifications of learning, thinking and teaching may differ significantly, they essentially deal with the difference between what is partial and what is whole. Entwistle's classification is handy since it stresses the difference in motives for learning: pupils studying in order to get good marks do not study in depth, in a personally relevant manner and in the long run. An individual experience is for them like a tree; and they cannot see the forest for the trees. This kind of pupil is in the majority,

[4] Experiential learning has four distinct meanings:
- The first one involves learning from life and work experience; the experience provides a basis for creating new ways of learning in higher education, employment and professional organisations.
- The second one concentrates on experiential learning as a basis for introducing changes to the structures, purposes and curricula of higher and university education.
- The third one emphasises the raising of the collective consciousness, working in a community and its component in the process of social changes.
- The fourth one implies personal growth, self-awareness and collective efficiency. (Susan W. Weil and Ian McGill 1989: 3) Only the last meaning is in compliance with transformative learning.

[5] Note the distinction between various types of thinking (see Novak 2000a). Sternberg (1997), for example, distinguishes between monarchic, hierarchic, oligarchic and anarchic forms as well as legislative, executive and judicial functions of thinking styles.

regardless of the school type or level. This kind of pupil cannot think critically. If teachers do not encourage them to do so, they do not act in accordance with the objectives of the reform, i. e. qualitative knowledge and development of critical thinking.

Cognitive styles, that include thinking styles, are classified by Rancourt (Marentič Požarnik, 1995) as empirical, rational and noetic.[5] The first one is based on logical inference and argumentation, the second on observation and collection of information and the third on the subjective insights. Empirical thinking cannot be regarded as critical as it is not differentiated. Instead it involves, similarly to the basic learning, only memorising; it can become critical at the rational levels, i. e. differentiating and intuitive-associative or synthetic levels.

The following teaching styles can be differentiated:

1. teaching as a process of transmission (transfer) of knowledge in a form adapted to the pupil;
2. teaching as a process of shaping pupils' capabilities and skills;
3. teaching as a journey or guiding a pupil on the way to his/her goals: the teacher offers the pupil a possibility to be independent and helps him/her to stay on the track;
4. teaching as an encouragement of the pupil's development by giving the pupil various sources, experiences and incentives (Fox 1983, quoted in Marenti~ Po`arnik 2000: 256).

Metaphors serve as a mind jogger and the teacher's four teaching styles could therefore be described as: (1) a waiter or a delivery van (2) a constructor or a sculptor (3) an alpine guide and (4) a gardener. The teachers were not informed about these teaching styles, but the researcher can recognise them in several indirect ways:

- how frequently teachers use various didactic methods and forms,
- their orientation toward pupil or toward a subject,
- the other opposite characteristics of transmissive and transformational school models.

In various subjects in the nine-year primary school we observed that pupils look for information on their own in order to find answers to the questions posed or to solve problems. Teachers choose their teaching styles considering how quickly and in what way pupils can grasp the ideas. In addition, teachers help their pupils by repeating the rules, by drawing their attention to some methods of problem solving. Teachers can give difficult exercises to more advanced pupils who are at a higher level and who can solve the problems more quickly.

Because the first teaching style (waiter) prevails at a school, this indicates the transmissive school paradigm. The latter three styles i. e. sculptor, alpine guide and gardener – take into account the pupil's interests and indicate the transformational paradigm. It is clear that the last three styles are more difficult to put into practice in primary schools because some conditions have to be fulfilled – e. g. competent teachers who are not just experts but also educators, appropriate teaching material (more textbooks, workbooks, modern teaching technology), level teaching, adaptation to various learning, thinking and teaching styles, expectations of parents and of school management. The teacher usually favours only one style, which on its own does not represent a transformational paradigm.

With regard to the various teacher's roles, both teaching styles are cognitive: the transmissive style is cognitive because of the transfer of knowledge; the transformational styles are cognitive because of the host of other reasons (such as cooperation with the

Table 1: The relationships between transmissive and transformative learning

Inhibiting factors	Promoting factors
Teacher's one-way communication with pupils	Two-way interactive communication between the teacher and pupils
Pupils are only externally motivated for learning and they do not cooperate among themselves	Pupils have inner motivation for learning and they cooperate among themselves
Pupils' family background is not stimulating	Pupils' family background is stimulating
Teachers do not teach their pupils how to learn	Teachers do teach their pupils how to learn
Teacher mainly uses one didactic method and form of teaching	Teacher uses various didactic methods and forms of teaching
Teacher uses mainly first style (waiter) of teaching	Teacher uses all four teaching styles
Teacher has no knowledge of how to motivate pupils	Teacher uses various kinds of knowledge with a view to motivating pupils
Transmissive school model	Transformative school, teaching and learning

pupil, encouraging and guiding the pupil, research). The transmissive teaching style does not aim at developing critical thinking and quality learning (creative, quantum, interactive, transformational, personally important, holistic, reflexive, experiential and lifelong). Through transmissive non-reflective learning, primary schools maintain declarative, factual, repetition knowledge. Only through transformational learning, can constructive and procedural learning emerge, which is a way to strategic and conditional knowledge.[6]

Senge (2000) puts forward a transformational definition of learning as changing oneself and the environment. Only transformational learning is personally significant and experiential in the larger sense of meaning, therefore, pupils have to know what they are learning for. Teachers as reflective practitioners explore the learning and teaching possibilities with a view to discovering new methods in order to make learning individuals pursue changes on their own. This should be a tendency of all those involved in education.

2. Interdependence between teaching, learning and thinking

The transmissive model of mass school is gradually becoming obsolete as many styles of carrying out school tasks are gaining grounds. Nevertheless, today teachers in

[6] The more complex teachers's knowledge is, the more complex is the knowledge expected from their pupils. Teachers' professional knowledge can be of various types. These are: content, expert and subject knowledge, general educational knowledge (being familiar with theories, empirical findings, visions and standpoints on classwork, upbringing, school, evaluation from the point of education, didactics and other disciplines), psychological knowledge (being familiar with developmental particularities and differences between individuals and with the process of learning), knowledge in special didactics (i. e. content educational knowledge), curricular knowledge (being familiar with legislation, curricula, school system), practical (action, experience and situation) knowledge (know-how, being familiar with the scope of skills and capabilities) (Marentič-Požarnik 2000: 6-7).

classes of up to 20 pupils do not have the time nor perhaps the capacity to determine the abilities of individual pupils. All pupils have to do the same exercises at the same time. The transformation shift raises the question of how to turn learning into teaching or vice versa effectively and in a qualitative manner. The answer can be provided by putting into practice interactive communication between a teacher and pupils, especially when a teacher allows pupils to know more than (s)he does (Sotto 1994); although, teachers can rarely learn from pupils.

Pupils have to solve clearly defined problems by finding the missing datum on the basis of the given data and making use of the rules they have previously learnt. Such procedural thinking is in correlation with convergent learning, which leads to only one correct answer. Experiential learning makes sense when a teacher admits and positively assesses many correct answers. But this is rarely the case even in social sciences and languages.

The public compulsory primary school has not yet been sufficiently oriented toward developing the pupil's personality. Therefore, some teachers do not teach how to learn. As problem-solving was virtually unknown, memorising facts prevailed as a result of non-reflective learning. Thus a pupil does not know nor does he/she select the special learning strategies. On the other hand, the pluralistic teaching, learning and thinking styles[7] are only one of the conditions for the transformational school model and thus for a shift from the school with the objective being knowledge as a result of learning, to the school oriented to the process of learning and communication. The teacher's chosen purpose and the selected didactical means enable relations perceived in the actual process of teaching through the chosen communication strategy. If communication is interactive and dialogical, relations are formed at a high psychological level, otherwise they remain invisible and at a lower level. However, this relation is intrinsic to the very definition of learning: a process of mind which leads to changes at various levels, ranging from intra-personal (in terms of evaluation, norms, views), interpersonal (in terms of relation to others, e. g. co-operation) to a specific educational level of upbringing, knowledge and teaching as a way of getting used to learning.

By making use of different teaching styles, teachers try to approach pupils by being as open in their comprehension as possible so that they can take into account their different thinking and learning styles. The incompatibility in the styles of a teacher and a pupil decreases the possibility for their fruitful communication. It is impossible to find a correlation between every teaching and every learning style since styles are limited by divergent interests and capabilities of pupils and teachers. Pupils with lower results and less interest find the first teaching style better, while those with better results – possibly in a higher level group in the nine-year school – prefer the latter three. In a class where pupils are not differentiated into groups with lower/better results, a teacher can less

[7] The pluralism of educational interests can be understood as a way to holism. Pluralism is often understood just politically but it should be also understood as multicultural, religious, economic (the privatisation process in post-socialist countries) and educational pluralism. Pediček (1990) described education at several levels from the ontological, epistemological, psychological, pedagogical-didactical to the anthropological ones.

readily and only exceptionally decide to use the styles of an alpine guide or of a gardener and thus promote a creative, mainly noetic thinking. On the basis of the research methods used and described here, teaching styles and pupils' thinking and learning have been put into correlation. Therefore, they can now be classified in two groups:

1. The prevailing *ex-cathedra* teaching (a teacher as an authority), waiter teaching style oriented to the expert knowledge and use of lower psychological capabilities by overburdening pupils bring about pupils' convergent learning styles in empirical or rational thinking styles.

2. Teaching styles of sculptor, alpine guide and gardener with group and individual form of learning (which are directed to pupils' interests and use of pupils' higher psychological capabilities) lead to reflexive experiential learning and a flexible thinking style (including empirical rational and intuitive styles).

Pupils themselves with their flexible thinking and teachers with their creative teaching encourage the use of the latter three teaching styles. Therefore, if teachers are not only experts in their own subject matter but are also flexible and complex professionals[8], they can find or create opportunities to use transformational styles in pupils, teaching technology and school atmosphere.

2.1. What is it that enables and limits the implementation of new teaching, learning and thinking styles in schools?

Both the eight-year and the nine-year primary schools aspire to creativity. But something hinders this. It is well known that the external tranquillity for being internally excited is an essential precondition for pupils' creativity. When they are noisy (shouting one over another), they cannot focus on the learning content. Noise is inevitably noticeable, disturbing and a warning signal in the communication between teachers and pupils, especially when didactic innovations are being put into practice. No thinking style can fully be expressed if pupils are disturbing each other in using their own thinking style. Negative noise distracts pupils' attention from learning content and solving problems. According to Pšunder (2004) a teacher is able to discipline the class only if (s)he has

[8] In comparison between the eight- and nine-year primary school, I make use also of the findings of the project *Anthropological Research of Political Culture and School* (1997-1999), of which I was the principal researcher (member on the project was also J. Kolenc). See also Ivanuš Grmek (2000: 35).

[9] A reviewer of this paper wrote: a reader might get an impression what a noisy school you have in Slovenia. A very commonsensical remark »Noise distracts pupils' attention from learning content and solving problems« and previous sentences do not tell us anything about when, where, how this noise occurs. Moreover, I cannot see how these statements about noise can lead to conclusion that »the pupils' activities in primary school are in general not based on their reflexive experiential learning«. It is also not clear what (and how and why) can be expected at the highest level of the primary school (I suppose reflexive experiential learning).

My response would be the following. Of course it is not only the noise which has negative impact on learning in school since noise could be positive as well. The difficulty is that some teachers seem to be able to get at least some attention for their subject only through repressive methods, personal remarks and threats of giving low marks. This however cannot be concluded by simply observing the classes and analysing the questionnaires but only through interviews with teachers (admitting to it) and headmasters.

brought into line her/his own experience from childhood, patterns (s)he has learnt, experience of her/his colleagues, own current experience and the books on the topic. This is the most advanced level of her/his professionalism.[9] Therefore, it can be concluded that the pupils' activities in primary school are in general not based on their reflexive experiential learning. Nevertheless, that can be expected at the highest level of the primary school, i. e. in the third triad of the nine-year primary school.

Due to new and complex educational expectations, teachers often find themselves in a more stressful situation than they were used to and they complain of being under pressure. Therefore, it goes without saying that demands for innovation are put into practice differently with regard to the subject and school in question. Some schools place more emphasis on quality of education, others, i. e. mainly nine-year primary schools, on how to maintain the achieved level since this could drop with time – what is good today, will no longer be good tomorrow. The participants in education can help themselves by knowing the prevalent styles at the school, some key factors influencing the pupils' prevalent learning style at the school, i. e. curricula, textbooks, teaching technology, pluralism of teaching styles and implicit learning theories of teachers and pupils' parents.

Be it in social sciences, language or science subjects, pupils think critically and learn creatively when they look for the rules and definitions themselves, when they recognise general patterns in special cases either in a group or individually. In teaching with the waiter style, the correct thinking is prevalent whereby a question, usually asked by teacher, can have only one correct answer. This style does not develop variety of teaching and thinking styles and is present to a greater degree in eight-year primary schools.

Not long ago there was some criticism in Slovenia with regard to its school system remaining to be too selective which leads to the hectic competitiveness. The pupils have too much to learn, but they do not know how to do it efficiently. Therefore, they concentrate too much on memorising. As a result the pupils suffer from promotional neurosis too early and do not perform well in the functional literacy in comparison with other European countries. As a reason for the poorer performance, I have put forward the transmissive school model, which is too rigid (Novak 2000). But some reformed curricula in Slovene schools are still overtaxing, which has to reproductive knowledge, thinking and learning. Consequently, the achieved result is the same.

Pluralistic teaching, learning and thinking styles are a condition for the transformational school model and thus for a shift from the school oriented to acquiring knowledge as a result of learning to the school oriented to the process of learning and communication. If teacher-pupil communication is interactive and dialogical, relations are formed at a high psychological level, otherwise they remain at a lower level. The relation is intrinsic to the very definition of learning. As the process of mind leading to intra-personal (in terms of evaluation, norms, views), interpersonal (in terms of relation to others, e. g. Cupertino) and educational changes in knowledge, skills and values.

A new question is how pupils influence teachers' selection of teaching styles even though it is clear that teachers are under such influence (un)willingly. Some teachers find their incentive for transformational teaching styles in the pupils with better results - possibly in a higher level group in the nine year school. In a class where pupils are not

differentiated into groups by ability, a teacher can less readily and only exceptionally decide to use the styles of an alpine guide or of a gardener and thus promote a creative, mainly noetic thinking.

3. The characteristics of the Slovene primary school after curriculum reform

The curricular reform has brought about a goal-oriented curriculum, attempts to ease the load of learning contents and underlined the significance of developing independent and critical thinking of pupils. In 1999 the implementation of the nine-year school started with a view to easing the load of automatic learning and memorising facts. The expression »transformational model« has been put forward, in Slovenia, by some experts (Marentič Požarnik 1998, Bečaj 2001, Erčulj 2001 and Novak 2000b) as a criticism of the reform.

The curricular reform has not changed just the learning content but also the aims and methods. The styles of educational practice are differentiated. The most prominent has become teaching for the sake of creative learning with joy. The teacher is more and more a promoter of student's personal development by encouraging development of pupils' eagerness for knowledge and by helping them to choose learning and thinking styles adapted to their personal aptitudes.

Obviously the transmissive model is characterised by the class and bell system (bell marking the end of a class), hierarchy of relations prevailing over their democracy, indoctrination instead of the application of methods for the development of critical thinking, and pseudo-activity of pupils. These do not correspond to the current needs, nevertheless, they are still dominant.

Possibly, the Slovene primary school has programme characteristics (of various degrees) of the transformational school paradigm, such as: implementation of the integrated curriculum; application of interactive communication in concentric circles: pupils and their teacher, teachers among themselves, teachers and the head-teacher, teachers and parents, school and the environment; consistent development of biological, psychosocial and spiritual layers; inter-institutional school ties (local community, enterprises, health centres, other schools); modification of thinking, learning and teaching styles. In transformational school, teaching styles denote learning in the broadest sense. This means the use of such flexible styles of teaching, thinking and learning that entail many layers of existence and not just one, e. g. the rational or the empirical.

Accordingly, the image of good teachers changes, as teachers become multi-skilled professionals. They are both educated and educators (*homo educans and homo educator*) and must learn how to teach pupils. Besides knowledge about the subject they teach, they also need knowledge about learning and teaching. A good teacher[10] teaches the learners how to learn by organising the subject systematically and most effectively. Challenges are also in creating a positive self-image of students and teachers, in develop-

[10] A good teacher is not just the one who can distinguish well (e. g. between autocracy and autonomy, norms and consciousness, teaching oneself and others) but also the one who knows that he/she will be conquered in the battle of gaining new knowledge. As long as the teacher wants to maintain the role of a good teacher, he/she is going to be even more inquisitive than the pupils.

ing independent critical thinking, in increasing the number of roles and tasks of students and teachers, in integrative teaching of children with special educational needs and in quality of teaching.

The centralised school system, great expectations of school authorities and of pupils' parents regarding school, the need to preserve the positive self-image of the teachers, the conflicting interests of the participants in education as well as other characteristics of school were put, for the purposes of this paper, under elements of its lower transformationality – this limits the objectivity of our conclusions gained through analysis of data collected with empirical instruments.

In the interviews teachers of nine-year primary schools gave more answers suggesting the transformational school model than did teachers of eight-year primary schools. They aim to a greater extent at achieving learning objectives and not only at passing on learning contents, as they have the support of the school and colleagues. Therefore, they take into account more the interdisciplinary approach in teaching and assessing and discussions in classroom. All teachers have to consider the pupils' achievements in the subject-matter and in terms of development of their interests.[11] However, nine-year primary school teachers consider to a far greater extent the need of pupils to be familiar with the new learning methods. The interviews with pupils on the selected sample of primary schools indicate that the nine-year primary school pupils have more interest in the problem of teaching and learning than their peers from the eight-year schools; however only a minority of them is familiar with publications on the topic, with the types of learning, and has heard of the techniques and new evaluation of knowledge.[12]

Factors positively influencing teacher's education include flexible organisation of school work (in contrast with the rigid timetable system), help of colleagues, cooperation of a team of teachers teaching at the same level, understanding of the school management, possibility of extended periods of study leave, susceptibility to didactic alternatives and innovations. Nonetheless, self-motivation remains the most important factor. The transmissive model of a closed (i.e. inert) public school with familiar characteristics restrains education and learning to a large extent.

Teachers' further education is a great impetus for the quality of classes. Although the government maintains that teachers are well prepared to teach by the new programmes of the nine-year primary school, the practice shows that this kind of education is lacking. It is probable that the deficit in education of the teachers starting to teach in the first or the last three years of the nine-year primary school in 2003/2004 will become apparent later.

[11] By introducing a new culture of assessment and evaluation, the culture itself is subject to evaluation. The Educational board of the Republic of Slovenia has had a project 'New culture of evaluation and assessment', led by Z. Rutar Ilc since 1999. The project aims at primary and secondary schools. This issue is already well covered. As the basic reading on this topic, see Rutar Ilc, Z. (2000) Izhodišča nove kulture preverjanja znanja. In: *Vzgoja in izobraževanje* 31 (2-3): 78 - 81.

[12] For more of that see Novak, 2002.

Teachers in nine-year primary schools pursue the same form of graduate studies and hence they have the same sort of experience as their colleagues in the eight-year schools. However, they have more enthusiasm, work as a team and get incentives from the school management.

All teachers are included in the lifelong learning process for many reasons: increasing demands for their complex professionalism, the changing school paradigm, i.e. from transmissive to transformational, increasing needs for quality teaching, the changing programmes of teacher education and the fact that school is turning into an educational institution of central importance for information society. Teachers have to teach pupils and themselves how to learn.

Only one curricular reform cannot bring about a thorough transformation. However, Slovenia has not yet introduced a continuous school reform corresponding to the changes that are taking place thanks to the globalisation process.

4. Conclusion

Through I do not intend to go into details of evaluation studies (Gril 2003, Novak et al. 2002, Schmidt 2002), I would nevertheless put forward some of their relevant general conclusions:

- Implementation of a variety of teaching, learning and thinking styles in the Slovene schools leads to a greater activity of pupils and gives them a greater opportunity for experiential learning in a broader sense and leads to transition from the transmissive to the transformational school, greater activity of pupils.

- The transmissive teaching style of (1) a waiter is frequently used in the Slovene schools, unlike the styles of (2) a constructor (3) an alpine guide and (4) a gardener which are rarely used and appear together with the noetic thinking style and experiential learning in a broader sense.

- The educational process in which teachers play different roles (i.e. facilitators of pupils' personal development) by helping pupils to choose learning and thinking styles adapted to their personal aptitudes has already begun and it occurs more frequently at the lower level of primary school.

- Pupils can get information on learning in subjects, such as philosophy for children, ethics and society or in any other subject if their teacher wants his/her pupils to know how to learn to the best effect.

- The waiter style of teaching, empirical style of thinking and accommodative learning still prevail in the classes with pupils at lower levels or in mixed groups. In transformation school, teaching styles denote learning in the broadest sense. This means the use of such flexible styles of teaching, thinking and learning that entail many layers of existence and not just one, e. g. the rational or the empirical.

- Advanced pupils in classes at the highest level in the nine-year school co-operate more, associate the noetic and rational thinking styles as well as creative learning to a greater extent.

- Curricular reform with goal-oriented curriculum both accelerates and limits the development of pupils' independent, creative, critical and holistic thinking and experiential learning in a larger sense.

- Teachers who are still insufficiently educated or trained for optimal achievement of curricular reform objectives do not offer enough opportunity to pupils for problem solving and creative learning.

Our evaluation study has been made on a very small sample (including three eight-year and three nine-year schools); therefore its findings are valid only for the similar cases. Revisions of the curricula for primary schools have indeed given rise to implementation of various teaching, thinking and learning styles. Still, this is just the first stage of their implementation; therefore, the changes observed cannot be permanent. Managing (primary) schools for learning means managing them for critical thinking because learning is actually thinking with a view to acquiring new knowledge and transforming the old. Consequently our conclusion is that the mentioned hypotheses have been partially confirmed.

The results based on the teaching methods used show that in the nine-year schools, the focus has turned from teaching suited best to teachers and content-oriented curriculum to teaching tailored to pupils' interests, experiences and learning styles and based on the objectives of the subjects' curricula. Classes of the first grades of primary school are organised much more flexibly and holistically than at later stages. In the last three years of the primary school, the highest level of level teaching takes place.

The paper does not make comparisons only in the quality of teaching within one school but also between schools. Students in grammar schools have more motivation for learning than those in vocational training; similarly, students of the Faculty of arts are more motivated for learning than those of the Military Academy (Lavrič 2004).

To develop educational culture of learning, it is important to distinguish between learning in order to get a good mark and learning for life; between informal lifelong learning and formal learning which takes place in a school; between individual and social learning; learning as an intrinsically human function and learning as a cultivated function. These differences influence the selection of a strategy of efficient learning. The school reform has given the necessary impetus for a majority of pupils and students to make a shift from a quality lower level of learning to a quality demanding level. Teachers, though, do not have the necessary knowledge and skills to use alternative didactical methods in order to motivate students to organise their knowledge in a self-determined way and to select a strategy to self-regulate learning.

It is not possible to put in practice the transformational paradigm only within schools. The formal education is only one part of lifelong learning and informal education is the other one. The transformational model entails a process of learning and thinking with flexible styles. Educational anthropology defines a person as a being of learning and teaching in partial and holistic terms. Two types of persons can emerge. The first type is without any vision or mission, not personally engaged and having no intellectual stance, without any intention to change its environment and thus learn something. The second person has all these characteristics and is therefore flexible, cooperative, recognises his/her institution, knows how to think globally and act locally. Today's (primary) school focuses mainly on external assessment of knowledge and not on the new culture of assessment and evaluation. Thus it encourages development of the first type and not enough

of the second. Therefore, any knowledge acquired in this way is quickly fragmented and easy to forget. The same applies for the secondary school, since students there are more externally than internally motivated.

The share of ex cathedra teaching has dropped whereas the percentage of group learning is on the increase. The number of students learning on their own remained unchanged. Noticeably, the work is gradually becoming more individual and students get more actively involved in classes. Teachers see the importance of the nine-year primary schools in its didactic novelties.

Hopefully these conclusions answer at least partially the possible questions of a critical reader expecting more profound changes brought about by the nine-year primary school and a more detailed insight into these changes.

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POVZETEK

Ali je v devetletki učenje pomembnejše kot poučevanje?

Namen tega prispevka je ugotoviti, v koliki meri slovenska devetletka uvaja stile poučevanja, mišljenja in učenja z namenom izboljšati kvaliteto pouka. Uporabili smo naslednje raziskovalne metode: opazovanje pouka, ankete za učence in učitelje, intervjuje za učitelje in ravnatelje. Glavna hipoteza je, da učitelji z vsemi štirimi stili (natakar, oblikovalec, gorski vodnik, vrtnar) bolj spodbujajo interese učencev pri izbiri njim lastnih stilov učenja in mišljenja kot zgolj z uporabo prvega stila natakarja.

Kurikuli devetletke so bolj procesno in ciljno orientirani kot kurikuli osemletke, ki so učnovsebinsko orientirani. Učitelji devetletke morajo izvrševati nove naloge ter sodelovali med seboj zaradi pridobivanja novih izkušenj pri doseganju ciljev. Obremenitve učencev so v zadnji triadi uravnotežene, ker jih učitelji poučujejo na treh nivojih. Takšno poučevanje je fleksibilno, ker učenci lahko prehajajo iz enega nivoja na drugega glede na svoje sposobnosti. Na najvišjem nivoju je najlaže poučevati transformacijsko, tako da učenci lahko razvijajo različne stile učenja, zlasti izkustvenega v najširšem kreativnem pomenu in stile mišljenja. Na splošno lahko rečemo, da učenje v devetletki razen za najbolj nadarjene učence še ni pomembnejše kot poučevanje, ker se je kultura učenja šele začela razvijati.

Ključne besede: poučevalni stili, mišljenjski stili, osemletka, devetletka, učenci, transmisijska paradigma, transformacijska paradigma.