

**Mobility Framework and Standard for Teacher Trainees**  
**Publication 2**





## Contents

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| General introduction on MOST   |     |
| <i>Walter Baeten</i> .....   | 5   |
| What competencies do beginning teachers need?  |     |
| <i>Julie De Ganck</i> .....  | 9   |
| I Group level: The teacher as a person, pedagogue, methodologist and organizer in a classroom of pupils  |     |
| <i>Julie De Ganck</i> .....  | 11  |
| Practice abroad, how to adapt a new school system. Evaluating students sensitive and responsive to pupils' different ability level.  |     |
| <i>Kia Kimhag</i> .....  | 15  |
| Designing learning units: A constructivist approach  |     |
| <i>Sara Figueras</i> .....   | 45  |
| What competencies do teachers need to be competent inclusive teachers?   |     |
| <i>Björg Klock and Hermann Skogsholm</i> .....   | 73  |
| Another Two Small Talks: - An example of how to elaborate on a teaching – learning situation within the MOST project - Description and reflections upon two lessons of English in a Swedish school |     |
| <i>Bengt Söderhäll</i> .....   | 91  |
| Classroom Management for the Beginning Teacher   |     |
| <i>Christopher Bezzina</i> .....   | 105 |
| Communication for the beginning teacher: order out of chaos  |     |
| <i>Julie De Ganck</i> .....  | 135 |
| II SCHOOL COMMUNITY LEVEL: The teacher in relation to members of the school community  |     |
| <i>Julie De Ganck</i> .....  | 167 |
| What it means to be a community member?  |     |
| <i>Daiva Penkauskiene and Asta Railiene</i> .....  | 171 |
| School Organisation  |     |
| <i>Christopher Bezzina</i> .....   | 193 |
| III SOCIETY LEVEL: The teacher in relation to the society  |     |
| <i>Julie De Ganck</i> .....  | 219 |
| Practice With a New Curriculum Abroad.   |     |
| <i>Kia Kimhag</i> .....  | 223 |



## **General introduction on MOST**

***Walter Baeten***

MOST is a multilateral Comenius-project with mobility in the initial teacher training. It is a unique experiment of co-operation between six teacher training institutions, spread like the cardinal points of a compass over Europe: from Vilnius to Malta, from Barcelona to Gävle and from Stavanger to Ghent. These different universities, university colleges and a didactics center decide to develop a European standard for the teacher trainee as answer to the ‘problem’ of the academic recognition of the mobility of teacher trainees in Europe. Teacher trainees are trained to teach the national curriculum and are evaluated upon national or regional standards. This is an obstacle for European mobility and therefore this ‘problem’ is an excellent issue for an European project.

The acronym MOST - Mobility framework and Standard for Teacher Trainees - shows the two components of the project: mobility and standard development. Each partner of the project has the opportunity to send three times three teacher trainee for five weeks to each other partner with a grant from the European Commission. Those 15 incoming students can be mixed with local students as I@H (Internationalization at Home). The structure of each five weeks programme is similar: two weeks of intensive preparation, two weeks of practice in schools and one week of reflection and evaluation. The fact that this period abroad must be evaluated opens the way to develop a joint strategy and so to come to

a standard. The second component of MOST is based on action research, which compares perfect to learning by doing or classroom-based research already before it was recommended by the European Commission<sup>1</sup>. Within the MOST structure the teacher trainee is involved as 'evaluator' and will be assessed so that he is able to continue processes of self-reflection and self-evaluation to grow as a good teacher and that the same time he is partner in the action research. The evaluation of the training period is the driving force in this action research. The connection between practice and research is typical for teacher training and guarantees the best correlation between standard and reality. Inside the MOST project there have been three rounds of mobility which offers the teacher educators to compare of their methods of assessment and evaluation and to build up a common standard. They use also the self-reflective work and/or portfolios from the 154 teacher trainees who have participated in the project. The combination of this input from reality with a comparative analysis of final goals and methods of assessment of the six home institutions leads to well proved result from practice.

During the MOST project (2004-2007), there were a lot of initiatives in the domain of 'standards for teachers', e.g. ATEE (Association of Teacher Education in Europe) organized a congress with the theme 'Standards for Development' (Amsterdam, 2005) and the Tuning-network (Tuning educational structures in Europe) published their subject-specific competences in teacher sciences. But the MOST project never has the intention to do fundamental, pedagogical research. For the

project the mobility of the teacher trainees themselves was the key element with as result 154 participants even as to enhance the quality inside internationalization in teacher training. Therefore the European standard is a workable tool for the evaluation of mobility. Finally, all partners of the project agree that to their common European standard there can always be added local elements not only in order to respect local regulations or legislation, but also in order to prove full respect for local customs regarding the teaching profession. The appreciation of the difference between the six teacher training institutions in combination with the deep respect for each others professionalism and the willingness to build a European standard declares the success of MOST.





**What competencies do beginning teachers need?**  
*Julie De Ganck*



Illustration by Ivan Boeckmans

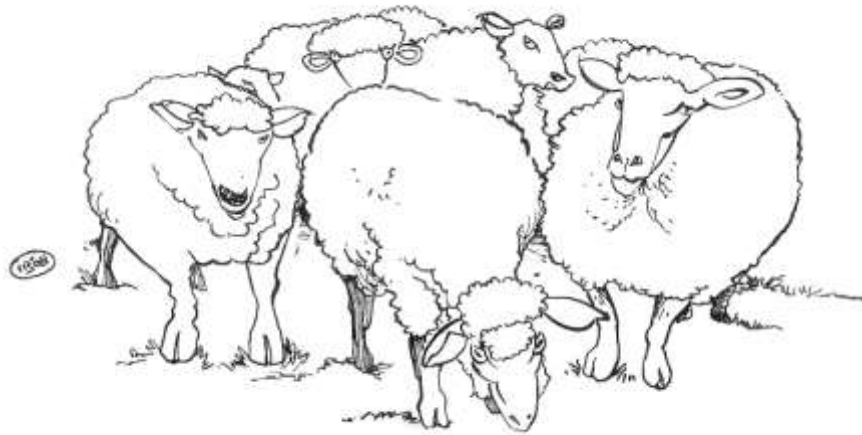
One of the final acts of the MOST project was the development of the molecular model of a European standard for the beginning teacher as presented in the first publication. This standard defines all the competencies a beginning teacher should possess. These competencies in our European standard are situated on 3 equal domains: (a) the group level, (b) the school community level and (c) the society level.

As we didn't want our standard to generate into an empty checklist of competencies and because of the fact mobility students came from different stages in their training programme, we didn't only define the different competencies required for the beginning teacher but also delineated some guidelines for the exchange students on *how to become* a competent beginning teacher. This handbook is the result of that act.

**I Group level:**

**The teacher as a person, pedagogue, methodologist and organizer in a classroom of pupils**

***Julie De Ganck***



**Illustration by Ivan Boeckmans**

A first selection of articles enters into the different competencies a beginning teacher should possess on the level of the group, focusing on the beginning teacher in relation to his pupils. Within the project we agreed a competent beginning teacher should be sensitive and responsive to students' different ability levels. In the article *Practice abroad, how to adapt a new school system?* Kia Kimhag discusses how we can evaluate this responsiveness of beginning teachers. The author explores how mobility students adapt to a new educating culture and how teacher educators can help them in a better understanding of a new educational context.

The next 2 contributions focus on the cluster of competencies a beginning teacher should possess in the area of *activity planning*. In *Designing Learning Units: a constructivist approach*, Sara Figueras describes the characteristics of a learning unit and analysis its different elements, starting from a constructivist framework. In most of the countries participating in the project teacher educators and other stakeholders are talking about the challenges of inclusive education. In the article *What competencies do teachers need to be competent inclusive teachers?*, the authors Bjørg Klokke and Hermann Skogsholm examine if there is an overall aim towards the universal inclusion of all children and what the idea of inclusive education means when one meets the practice field. Within this contribution different exchange students in the MOST mobility programme report about their different views on inclusive education.

The next 3 articles focus on the cluster of competencies a beginning teacher should possess in the area of lesson *implementation*. In *Two Small Talks<sup>ii</sup>* and *Another Two Small Talks*, Bengt Söderhäll describes the work ‘visiting teachers’ (the author prefers the expression ‘visiting teacher’ instead of the word ‘teacher trainee’) attended during their practice period in a Swedish Compulsory School, focusing on the following criteria for assessment: (a) the lesson is creative and motivating for the pupils, (b) pupils are actively involved in the learning process and (c) manages the learning environment effectively. The author argues that even when the development of a standard of competencies can be contra productive to

the art of learning and teaching, a continuing debate about standards in the different local, national and European educational systems is necessary for generative development in education. Both articles question how the thinking of Paul Ricoeur and his concept of Homo Capax can have a positive impact on teacher education. The writer concludes that the ‘visiting teachers’ accomplished a critical constructive understanding for the complex, contextually bound and historical formed activity in schools through their participation in the project. In his article *Classroom Management for the Beginning Teacher*, Christopher Bezzina focuses on the skills, knowledge and attitudes a beginning teacher needs to lead and effectively manage the learning of individuals and groups.

Within the group level a last cluster of competencies for the beginning teacher is situated in the area of *communication*. Within the context of a classroom the beginning teacher should act as a good communicator. In the article *Communication for the beginning teacher: order out of chaos*, the author offers a structural and interactional view on the communication process. In the article *Communication skills for the beginning teacher<sup>iii</sup>*, these paradigms are translated in concrete guidelines (skills, knowledge, attitudes) to promote effective interaction in the classroom.

## GROUP LEVEL

To be sensitive and responsive to students' different ability levels

### Activity Planning

- o Meets the different competencies of the pupils
- o Takes account of differences in learning strategies in the planning process
- o Uses a range of resources
- o Lesson and activity plans are comprehensive
- o Provides differentiated learning activities for individuals and groups on the basis of pupils' varying abilities

### Implementation

- o The lesson is creative and motivating for the pupils
- o Shows mastery of subject content
- o Manages the learning environment effectively
- o Leads and manages the learning of individuals and groups
- o Demonstrates willingness and ability to use and try out a variety of teaching and organizational methods

### Communication

- o Shows proficiency in the agreed language
- o Communicates and works effectively with children and young people
- o Demonstrates willingness and ability to understand and contribute to a positive interaction among pupils
- o Uses voice effectively
- o Uses verbal communication effectively
- o Uses non-verbal communication adequately

### Assessment and evaluation

- o Involves pupils and others in the assessment and evaluation process
- o Demonstrates willingness and ability to use and try out a variety of assessment methods and techniques
- o Demonstrates the ability to critically reflect on own and others' teaching
- o Develops professional knowledge by reflecting upon subject knowledge and knowledge of teaching with different persons in the practice arena

Developed by Julie De Ganck & Ivan Boeckmans

**Practice abroad, how to adapt a new school system.  
Evaluating students sensitive and responsive to pupils'  
different ability level.**

***Kia Kimhag***

I have as a teacher educator the pleasure to visit several colleagues in different countries. During different visits I had the possibility to see teachers in action both at university level and compulsory school level. To see other teachers in action helps me to widen my mind. In my lessons in Sweden, I quite often mention different examples from my visits. I tell about different episodes that could be interesting for my students about school systems, topics but mostly different behaviour from teachers and pupil reactions. I have felt sometimes that the episodes change my way of thinking. I found out that I sometimes have a problem to adapt behaviour far away (as I see it) from my own culture. I educate teacher student's both Swedish and international exchange students mostly from Europe. The experience I got from them made me see student's from different angles. During this project I have learnt that my colleagues and I both have similarities but also differences of how we look at students. In my article I try to discuss different angles about what happened when students suppose to adapt a new system and at the same time be evaluated at practice. The meaning of the article was from the beginning to look at how we evaluate student sensitive and responsive to pupil different ability level. But during the writing I decided to focus more to adapting. I choose this because the Swedish curricula have an inclusive education where the teachers always have to look at the

different ability levels among pupils. I also try in the article to give a voice from some international exchange students from their reflections during the stay. The article is a discussion from what me and my colleague have seen during the project and own experience.

In the project we talked about teaching students competences. We tried to find different standards how to evaluate a teacher student when they do practice abroad. We agreed on that we will in a teaching student find how a student should be sensitive and responsive to pupil different ability levels. In Sweden this is a big issue. In our school system we talk about individual education and inclusive education. In our curricula for the compulsory school Lpo-94 (p.4) it's quite clear of how a teacher should work with the pupil ability level.

Education should be adapted to each pupil's circumstances and needs. Based on the pupil's background, earlier experiences, language, and knowledge (...). Account should also be taken of the varying circumstances and needs of pupils as well as the fact that there are a variety of ways of attaining these goals. Furthermore the school has a special responsibility for those pupils who for different reasons experience difficulties in attaining the goals that have been set for the education. For this reason education can never be the same for all.



International students will meet a new school culture where all pupils more or less are integrated to the compulsory school. In the classroom they will meet a variety of different ability levels among the pupils. The Swedish curricula are clear that you have to be sensitive and response as a teacher to this fact that each pupil has to be met individual in all work at school. When I started to reflect on this I found out that this was a difference for all international students. In many countries around Europe (my experience from the last ten years of international work) pupil with difficulties are sorted out to other schools or special classes. The teacher student has small experience of meeting pupils with difficulties nevertheless when they walk in to the classrooms this is not what they see.

We as teacher educators are sent out to observe the student during their practice to talk with them and educate them. I do hope that we as teacher educators are able to evaluate the students open minded, and that we do understand the complexity of being an exchange student, to do practice in a new curricula, new school culture etc. I also hope that we can reflect and evaluate with open easy. Or are we as teacher educator in a strong frame already? It might be so that we already think we know of what a good teacher student should be? One system inside me, the one that I know about and perhaps think is the only one that counts. When you as a teacher educator meet a student for the first time you haven't got a clue who he or she is. We see them in a classroom and fill them with information of how to become a teacher. But can we see the student's

potential? Do we know what experience they have? You meet them (her/him) as becoming teachers and colleagues. Will the student understand what occupation he/she has chosen? And do the students realize what teaching is about? What kind of school culture experience do they have? We are talking about the competence a teacher needs but not so often about student ability. Do we talk about student background, skills or what do we really talk about? What I mean is that we can in A CV perhaps find a good student but that never shows how a student will be as a becoming teacher. Does the CV say anything about the potential as a becoming teacher? When we send our students to do their practice abroad we have to discuss how my colleagues abroad will assess my student's competence and ability? Will they also at the same time see the student with open ease? Will the teacher educator also take in account the individual experience and include the knowledge? Students who do international exchange are learning to be teachers perhaps with a different behaviour then in the school culture/system that the teacher educator are use to. What did the student know before they arrive? One exchange teacher student reflected after her stay that she thought when she decide to come to a foreign country to teach, she needed to be quit sure about her ability to teach. She meant that to adapt a new system and to teach in a total new culture frame to succeed with her teaching she need to feel quite safe with her ability to teach. She felt first in the practice school that she was thrown in to a totally different system, but meant that she had a background of teaching and "certainly had been

blessed with the ability to teach”. She meant that it was easier to adapt the system because of her teaching ability.

John Biggs (2006) means that when a teacher educator meets international exchange students they have to understand that when they educate them they also have to plan and organise the learning in to different levels. He means that to adapt a new educating culture you also have to know the society culture, school culture etc. The first level as Biggs see it is about to get experience and knowledge. He means that you have to get experience about the new culture as soon as possible. Second level is about how to use the new knowledge. The finally level to think about is teaching as educating. To adjust as an exchange student is not only about to understand the new system you also have for example to learn new teaching methods, school culture and pupil culture in the classroom. He means that the first levels are about deficit approaches to teaching and teaching as educating to a contextual approach. The conclusion is that the problem is not in the student more likely in the teaching, planning, experience and the complexity. He discuss that it might be better that the teacher educator look more to the different similarities between the exchange students experience and cultures then to look at our differences even if they exist. But still if we want our students to adapt the system we have to look deeper to the complexity in the differences. To teach about the Swedish curricula is mostly about leading the students in to our system and thinking. They have to understand that we have a system where all pupils are included and that

the different ability levels can be really big. If a students are taught to be sensitive and responsive to the pupils ability level they perhaps never met pupils with smaller or lager difficulties etc. When the incoming students come to our university we organize a visit to one school over one day. We do that to show how a school is organized, how teachers and pupils work, how pupils behave, etc. They do observations during the day in mixed groups with students from different countries in the same classroom. After the day the student discuss with each other about what they have seen? What was different from their experience of being in a school in their country compared to the Swedish school? What questions started inside the students after their observations? After this day during discussions students point out specific situations and have a lot of questions and reflections.

Student reflections of the visit:

Now I find myself really confused! I never had this kind of lesson. No tables, no notes, just talking and singing. Is this the Swedish way? What about the programme, we were supposed to learn about the educational system and we have to write a paper about it.

In Belgium we are used to have it quiet in the classroom and that everybody learns the same things at the same time. Here, I see that it is possible too to do it more on the 'laissez-faire' style.

Pupils are used to do things by themselves and to learn on their own speed.

The first thing that sprung to my attention was the contact between the teachers and the pupils. The relationship is more open and warm than in my country.

Perhaps the most unusual and most amazing thing I noticed is relationship between people, the principle of the school, teachers, pupils, visiting teachers (us) or other people who work there. All the people I met at that school were very helpful and friendly; they treated us equally, like their colleagues, not as students.

In the Swedish school the culture was different from what I am used in Malta. When I entered the school for the first time I could remember seeing the students but looking different. They do not use any uniforms, and they change their shoes and remain with socks in the school and classrooms. For me it was very strange, because I am not used to this norm. Yes I have to admit that I found it strange and not easy to accept in my class certain type of dress code. But then I had to adapt to the school customs and rules.

We discovered a nice comfortable atmosphere among all the school members. For instance the headmaster having lunch with

a group of pupils, a group of pupils working in the canteen, another group working sitting together in a sofa, another group learning maths sitting on a carpet, teachers always available to help students or to talk with them.

The first impression that I had when I went to the school was that I could not believe the things that happened in front of my eyes. Children were walking without shoes and they were outside of the classrooms. I could not understand these because in my country it is so different.

The comment from the students is more about the culture issue of how everything is organized at the school, rules, pupil behaviour and possibilities etc. Many reflections that just start new questions among the students. When I teach international exchange students I always try to keep in mind that they look at my school system and school environment with totally new eyes. Some students are more or less in a shock when they visit lessons at the practice school. They have never seen such lessons before. The exchange students that I have met in this project always asking many questions of what they have seen;

How can the Swedish pupils be so free?

How can they still work so well without the discipline?

Why isn't the teacher in front of the class?

Was this really a lesson?

Why was the pupil allowed to walk to the room next door?

I saw that all pupils worked on different pages, is that possible?

It's only the last question that connects with learning ability levels. All they have learnt about teaching, suddenly in a blink change. Is it possible to be sensitive and responsive without understanding the difference? Is it possible to get experience so fast so you can integrate to the system? To be able to meet pupils with full respect, to meet them in their ability level and helping and guiding them forward is a difficult task when you don't have the code for the system and the school culture. Biggs (2006) means that we first have to educate students and give them experience about our culture. We also have to prepare them for what they might see about how do pupils and teachers act in a classroom? To really give the students knowledge both formal and informal takes time. Do we have the time and is it really possible? Biggs discuss about that student have a need of experience and knowledge could be right but he doesn't divide that into formal and informal knowledge. When exchange students visit the school or doing their practice they slowly understand what is all about. But still, can they ever integrate and adapt completely in a short time? They need to observe and to discuss with mentors of what they see. Formal we can introduce them to our curriculum and syllabus. How do we introduce them informal? How will they be sensitive and responsive to the pupil different ability levels in a school culture they haven't yet understand? Students get experience and knowledge but how long time does it take to be integrated?

I will give one example. One of my Swedish students in the project went to Spain. After a short time she started her practice in a bilingual school. More or less directly she started to teach in a class. Everything was new and she had no experience except some observations at the school. She organised and planned a lesson among smaller pupils. She decided to try different games and drama that she was used to do in her practice in Sweden. She started the lesson quite well but after a while she asked the pupils to stand in a circle. It did not work at all. Suddenly the pupils started to act and behave badly. They started to run and scream and she did not know what to do! She felt that she lost control completely. She asked them and tried to show them to stand in a circle. It didn't work. In her reflection she found out that the pupils never had the experience to stand in a circle. She also found out that she wasn't prepared that the pupils never had the experience to stand in a circle. She thought that this was something all pupils learn. Her reflection was about how they lost control because they didn't know what to do, the lack of experience to stand in a circle started new ideas of loosen up the discipline during the lesson. She also discussed about if they had felt that there were no rules etc. She decided to go back and try it again so she could teach the pupils how to stand in a circle. She also felt that the mentor didn't help her to understand or show how she could make it work. She wanted it to work and tried to find a way of how to change the lesson and her methods. She had in her experience from Sweden never thought about that, her experience was that all children take responsibility of themselves and their



actions in the classroom. She always had met pupils in her practice that know how to behave in a circle. She had no experience that a small thing (as she thought) could change a lesson so quickly. The experience of discipline and perhaps mostly the experience for example how a teacher suppose to behave in the classroom was new for her and for the pupils as well. Did she really understand what this was about? Could it be about her methods, instructions and behaviour was so new for the pupils that they felt unsecured? Perhaps they didn't know what expectation she had on them? She really tried to make a change and showed in one way sensitivity for the pupil and understood that she had to make a change if it should work. In her reflections she never talked about pupil ability level but more about the lack of experience, her language skills and instructions.

When I as educators try to make the student understand our system I also have to think about what is exactly that are specific formal and informal information that the student need? Think about what had happened to my student grade if she only had this lesson to prove that she where a capably teacher. What did the teacher together with her in the classroom reflect on? If this had happened in Sweden where the pupils know how to behave in a circle and are use to be instructed in that way she did, I guess that as a teacher educator you should respond to the student that she could not or had problems to manage to control the group. But If I know that the pupils have no experience of what the student expect from them, how should I reflect? The student realised during the lesson that it didn't work. She got new experience of a new

situation for her. She realized that she had to change part of the lesson, to change the way of instruction to the pupil but also change her methods. After a few lessons and mistakes she noticed a change in different classes, the behaviour was better and her instruction more clear so the result of each lesson become better and better. So what about the circle? She tried to learn the pupil formal how to do it and change it by letting the pupils to sit on chairs in a circle and finally the pupils did. In some classes with well behaviour but in the class where she started this experience she never manage to change the behaviour to the same level as in the other classes. She found new tools how to do it in the class. The student talked about that the experience was more in a level that you can't be prepared for what will happened when you don't know the system and the school culture.

But is it only a culture matter? The student tried to adapt the culture in the Spanish school? Did the five weeks change her behaviour and actions with the pupils? How sensitive was she and did she looked at the pupil ability? I could say that in one way she had no sensitive at all but she believed in the pupil ability and believed that it was possible to change and do better. What I mean is that she tried more to make the pupils adapt to her then she did to them. It is first when I read her reflections that I really see a student that try to change for example her methods and behaviour to each new lesson. In her reflections she remarks that it might be that she also overloaded the pupils with too many games, too much information or even wrong information. She decided to change the

games because there were too many rules to learn. She also understood that the words she was using in English were too difficult for them. She also changed and put the children instead on chairs in a circle. Everything was working better when she tried the lesson in other classes and she felt that the classes paid her attention and that she after each lesson had it better organized than before. Then she got back to the class where she had the first lesson and now she tried the new planned lesson. Everything worked much better but still it became a chaos in the classroom, pupils were shouting and they didn't want to sit down on their chairs. She noticed that the pupils got tired and some even felt asleep during the lessons in the afternoon. She saw that some looked bored so again she tried to change her lessons. She meant that this fact could be one of the reasons why it didn't work so well for all classes. During these weeks she learned that she had to be more prepared and also using more material because of the language skills. To have the attention from the pupil she realized that she had to keep a closer eye on them. If she kept their interest and busy during the lesson it was easier for her to keep control over the class to continue her lessons without interruption or bad behaviour. She noticed that in bigger groups she had to pay better attention to involve each pupil in the activity so everyone could feel that they participate. The language skills made some problems and mistakes so she spoke more slowly, clear and in short sentences that she repeated.

In her reflection she was writing about changes she had to do. When I read her text I can see in her reflections that she was developing and

adapting the new environment in the different classes. But mostly in her reflection I can still see the character of a Swedish student's way of thinking. During her education in Sweden she have learnt how to feel free a freedom as a becoming teacher with many thoughts and reflections. Still connected to the curricula and deeper her discussion and develop her own ideas. Kenneth Strike and Jonas Soltis (1985) discuss about intellectual freedom. They say if a student should growth personal that requires freedom. If a student shows a lack of sensitivity to pupils it can be connected that they don't have personal intellectual freedom. If they don't have the opportunity to make decisions by their own it shows at the same time a lack of opportunity to develop own capacities to make own decisions. This might be a problem if we as teacher educator watch a student for one or two lessons without reading their reflections, talking with them about the lesson and finally understand the culture barrier in different levels. Strikes and Soltis means we have to understand that in the classroom there are different consequences for pupils and for teachers. Freedom or liberty can be interpreted or understood differently and says that pupils not always can take the responsibility of their own actions. Perhaps this discussion could be connected to our international exchange students? If they don't have the knowledge of the informal rules and some or no knowledge of the culture how can they take responsibility for each action? How will I as a teacher educator take responsibility to how I remark and reflect on the student lessons, actions and behaviour? Most students in this project reacted about this intellectual freedom that Strikes and Soltis are talking about. In one way

students had a difficulty to adapt pupils freely behaviour but at the other side they felt happy about there own freedom. They compare with their school culture and how they are remarked at practice at home. They reflect over the situation and discuss quite often that they like the attitude and connection with the teacher educator as they feel more friendly and free with. Student's also reflected on their lessons that they had at the university and what happens during those lessons.

Student reflections:

Here I am living my teaching experience; at home my last teaching experience was horrible. I was always afraid of when the tutor will appear in my class. But why? I always had good remarks and comments. But I do not like the fact that I have follow everything of what the tutors say and want, there is no room for self creativity sometimes. Here I am finding it different.

I say that in Sweden lectures were more interesting and useful because it was not only writing a theory but also thinking, analyzing, discussing. It was more than I expected. Moreover, I could feel more at ease and were not afraid to speak. I felt equal to everybody.

Jean-Paul Bronckart (1995) says that we have to look at people and their behaviour in different levels. Behaviour is a part of a discipline.

Behaviour is also dynamic. But behaviour is also an activity that you have to interpret (explain or understand a form of activity). So when we as teacher educators, mentors or tutors watch students or students watching pupils and their behaviour in the classroom we have to see the different levels Bronckart talks about. The dynamic is a part of the interaction we can see between people. When we enter the classroom we also enter an environment where people interact between each other. If we are going to understand the behaviour we also have to understand all these levels of the behaviour. To come for a short time to a new environment and at the same time also to a totally new culture we also walk in to a new culture of behaviour. The behaviour can at first sight be more or less the same as we are used to but after a while we perhaps will see actions of behaviour that you interpret and/or understand about the behaviour that is new for you as a person. But also after a while perhaps recognize behaviour from the pupils that are related to your own behaviour. To visit a school is still to look into an institution where the culture perhaps quite often follows a structure that can be recognized in schools. But if you look under the surface you might see like in my example that it's really a big difference to educate. It is when you have to adapt in to the system and using your tools as a teacher you realize the differences? Biggs (2006) means that we as teacher educator should look more to the similarities in a culture. When we learn our international students about our culture we should start with the similarities but also how we learn a new culture. But also teach about the similarities we do have in our school culture-systems. Bronckart (1995) means that we should learn to understand the

behaviour to learn our culture behaviour? And what are exactly a school culture and how much are that culture integrated to the culture in the society? What is culture behaviour in schools and in the classroom? And what are we looking for? How can we explain the school culture and how much of the behaviour is it possible to understand formal or informal? What is a good behaviour in a classroom? Do teachers mostly ask for a quiet environment? Or? How should pupils be active and behave? Questions like this are central to understand why we set up specific standards for pupil behaviour, for student actions as a becoming teacher etc. How can we be sensitive without thinking about all these questions? To discuss with incoming students and interpret there reflections is for me as a teacher educator really interesting. It helps me to find my tools how to teach about my culture, school culture and try to explain why we behave in the way we do. They are open my eyes to my own system that I see every day and perhaps even never reflect on.

Student reflection of school culture:

School culture is the set of norms, values and beliefs, rituals and ceremonies, symbols and stories that make up the ‘character’ of the school. These unwritten prospects build up over time as teachers, administrators, parents, and students work together, solve problems, deal with challenges and, at times, cope with failures. (...) Schools also have rituals and ceremonies--communal events to celebrate success, to provide closure during

collective transitions, and to recognize people's contributions to the school. School cultures also include symbols and stories that communicate core values, reinforce the mission, and build a shared sense of commitment. Symbols are an outward sign of inward values. In positive cultures, these features reinforce learning, commitment, and motivation, and they are consistent with the school's vision

Our teaching practice, as a result, at some point reflects that of which we have been taught. My traditional and/or conservative approach implanted during the years in Lithuanian educational system with teachers satisfied with deep-rooted traditions in class was replaced by proactive one. Allowed to be free, search for new ideas, up- to- date ways, methods of treating a situation gave me an idea of contra- productive educational system in my country where teachers are put in a framework with things ahead to be done.

This reflections show the complexity you as an international exchange student stand in front of when the students try to adapt to the new culture. So if we look back to my example of the Swedish student teacher experience in Spain. What happened in the classroom when pupils had to meet a new idea of behaviour in their education? How should the student react on that? When she noticed the change of the behaviour, what did she do? Did she adapt to the pupils culture or did she 'asked' the pupils



to adapt her culture? Did she discuss with the mentor about pupils ability level? What was the problem? Chris Argyris (1999) talks about that you have to have an attitude and a motivation to both understand and manage culture. Is attitude and motivation a part of our behaviour? Could it be that we as teacher more likely have to know different tools how to teach about our culture. Argyris talk about if learning a culture is basic assumptions, each person interpret the culture individual and at group level as well. So that could mean that if you are a student travel to a country without social contact with students in the country actually you have no closer references about the culture at all. Observations could be both good and bad it depends if you can interpret them in the way the culture expect you to interpret? Angelides, P., Stylianou, T. and Leigh, J. (2007) discuss the importance of involving the student in practice where they should get “involved in inquiry, critical commentary, dialogue and reflections”. This helps the students to understand the intercultural issues and to see culture differences. If they will function as teachers they have to get experience, their own memories from the practice will help them to understand the community and get new knowledge. We need interaction with others before we realize and understand deeper the meaning of the culture behaviour. Could it be that students also need to learn how we interpret, but is that possible? In the practice they will meet teachers that perhaps already have the knowledge of all rules of the school and the behaviour that are custom at this school. The formal rules are perhaps in a document but the informal rules are mostly inside them self. When we educate students we talk about rules on a paper. We could have a

difficulty to teach about rules that are deep into the walls but not written, informal rules. That could be culturally embedded rules and formally explicit rules. There are things in my culture that I never think about. My culture is more or less an existing culture for me but when I meet students and listen to their reflection of the Swedish culture, practice school culture a new processes start in my head as a teacher educator. The behaviour the exchange students mostly reflect on is about connections between teachers and pupils. But quite often the students also reflect on what kind of attitudes that includes. One of the schools (that we have a contract with in this project) one students reflect more about the behaviour and attitude compared to other school experiences. This reflection is about the principle behaviour and attitudes towards pupils.

Student reflection:

The last lessons in the School left me the biggest impact. We had three music lessons with the principle and little children. Perhaps the most beautiful impression made the principle. I think that he is a very nice person and he doesn't look like a principle at all. In Lithuania the word 'principle' is associated with something very strict, rules, even punishment. Because if a child does something wrong he is taken to the principle. Here I saw a completely different view. The principle was doing everything together with the children: he was sitting on the floor, singing, dancing in a circle, etc. I couldn't imagine the same situation in my country.

Of course maybe there are some people who would act similarly but I have never met them. Moreover, the principle of the School knows all the names of the children. The way he communicates with them and treats them let me think that he considers them as his own children. I could see love, patience and devotion in his eyes and I think that it is amazing.

This reflections show that the students had a new experience. The experience was about what a principal suppose to do and act among pupils and colleagues. It is in one way experience from one organization in another country where in this specific student view never happen.

Argyris (1999) points out that learning is about the individual person and not about the organization. But at the same time the organization is made by the individuals inside the organization. Organization and the individuals are close connected with each other. Organization set up the possibilities and the individual inside set up the culture in the organization. Biggs (2006) shows that we need to understand the environment and the culture. The culture it self are an organization and a frame. When we observe the exchange student in the classroom we see a person that is new in the environment and new in the culture. So to be sensitive is perhaps more about how you can adapt from what you learn formal and informal. One thing that I have notice in the project and during my years of working with international students is their connection with teacher both at the university and at practice schools. Students reflect on the different behaviour from the teachers they meet.

It is different because they meet teachers that look at them as colleagues? They get equal respect and feel more open, ask more questions etc. This can take time to realize, international students who stay longer time can perhaps easier adapt. For the student in the project (they only stayed for five weeks) they started to realize but first in the end got used to the fact. To be sensitive to the culture you enter isn't so easy. So many levels (for example cultural, behaviour, organization and experience) to think about and most of them you might learn informally.

Biggs (2006) points out if we have students that are used to a strong teacher-directed school culture and suddenly have to adapt to a self-directed one we have a culture problem. The issue is not that a student move from one teaching culture to another, it's rather a matter of adapting from one context to another one. Perhaps this is one of our problems to realize how you can adapt to a new system and have the sensibility to understand to teach in the new context.

As I mention in the beginning about international exchange students of whom I met were more or less in a 'shock' when they saw their first lesson. The contrast from their own experience, most of them are used to a school culture with a strong teacher-directed school and nothing of what they observe during the visit in the school was close to their school culture. In the reflections from one student (that I haven't mentioned before) from the first visit to a math lesson with pupils 14-15 years he reflects that he noticed as he saw it some 'strange' things. He had the

impression that the pupils could do whatever they wanted in the classroom. So what did the student see? In the report the student notice that he thought many strange thing where going on during the lesson. He saw pupils that were listening to their mp3-player; others were talking to each other. He noticed some pupils who would just stare out of the window. For him to adapt this in one lesson wasn't possible he was more in a shock that this was possible to see in a classroom. The classroom and the behaviour of the pupils where interesting for him and started many new thoughts. He saw smaller rooms connected to the main classroom with sofas and a centre table. In the smaller rooms he noticed that the pupils were doing their work and at the same time relaxed laid in the sofa and the impression during this time was that there where a very loose atmosphere in the room. On this lesson he also saw a father helping his daughter doing math exercises. During his observations he even saw a pupil sneaking away to make a phone call. To come as an international exchange student and notice this when you are use to a strong teacher-directed school takes a lot from you as a student. What kind of question will start coming up? What is it in this new situation that he connected to the school culture? What experience did he have? Can he adapt this school culture? Will he ever understand what is below the surface? Will he adapt to the pupils behaviour? Will he be able to teach in this environment?

After this lesson he had a discussion with the teacher and other international exchange students. He reflects; "We were surprised to see

that everyone was very calm and that there was order. We expected that a class like that would end up in total chaos by the end of the lesson. But it didn't." To adapt this system compared from the one the student are use to its difficult. They need mentors and colleagues that can explain even small things so that you can adapt to the new system (like in this example a self- directed one). What was really interesting with this reflection? During his stay he slowly start to understand and got a sensibility of the school culture but also understand the freedom and responsibility for the pupils. He noticed that if you will understand why it works to be so free in the classroom you have to understand the Swedish culture. Or perhaps understand how pupils are raised and learnt to behave. Strikes and Soltis (1985) discussion about the intellectual freedom is close connected to student reflection. He reflected that the Swedish culture to have an open-minded attitude have a big influence on the educational system. So if we thinking of what Argyris (1999) talks about organisation and that the individuals are close connected with each other in different organizations. He realized that the pupils behaviour is a part of there culture and that Swedish pupils are in self- directed organisation with a frame of freedom. To be sure about the system and of what he saw in the school the student decided to also visit a more teacher-directed school. He went to a bilingual school structure as an English school and there he observed several lessons. First he felt quite relaxed because he felt more familiar with the discipline, actions from teachers, classroom culture etc. But after a while he also noticed (as he reflected) that this strong discipline was wrong for the pupils. The student meant that he suddenly saw why the

school culture at the first school was more connected to the pupils. He saw at the teacher-directed school that pupils had a school culture that wasn't connected to the pupil's behaviour in the society as he reflected during his stay. Youth behaviour in the society as he have seen was open minded. At this school he saw a school culture that didn't adapt the open minded attitude. He discussed about rules and the school culture with teachers at the school. He understood the organization and ideas of rules close connected to his own experiences, but still he believed that it felt wrong. His new experience was that the culture of teenager was to be free and to have a closer connection with the teachers. He met pupils that he felt was open-minded but at the teacher-directed school the rules decided in what way pupil's could be free or free to speak out freely. This visit and observations helped the student to realize why the school that was more self-directed was more connected to the pupil behaviour in the Swedish culture. He felt that this was better for the pupils but even though he couldn't bring that school culture with the freely attitude, open minded and open atmosphere back to his country. He reflected that even if he knew after the new experience and knowledge about a different school culture and felt more or less familiar to both systems. He realized that pupils in his country have their behaviour and because of that they can't adapt this system. But slowly he felt that he can do some changes but only in his own classroom. "One individual doesn't change a culture".

To understand a new culture involves different kind of levels. To adapt is also close connected what you have with you. For what we have seen during the exchange are students ability do adapt to different systems. To adapt takes a long time and it also happened that some students never understand what we actually do in the schools and why. I guess the time is to short. But what they have done is to reflect on one system and culture. So I reflect on that how I as a teacher educator can understand. Is it's possible to interpret and understand a student sensibility and ability? And how can I ask that the student should understand the pupil behaviour in my culture? What I can do is to continue teaching exchange students and hoping that I and my colleagues have eyes that are open minded when we meet them. I do hope that we can use our experience to be more sensitive when we evaluate students practice. Always have in our mind that this is a new situation, new culture perhaps a new dimension for the students of how we behave, of how we teach. I do hope that each exchange student can adapt and interpret my culture and perhaps bring new ideas in there way of teaching. One student reflected after her stay:

Being a teacher in Sweden changed me because I have a different view on education now. When you are born in a certain system, you only see this system and think that is the only and the correct way to teach. In Sweden I experienced a new kind of education and then you are directly confronted with the less good things in your own.



As a teacher educator and during my travels I have wondering why we have a difficulty to learn and to adapt different systems. Do we educate international students in to the system and culture or do we really want them to adapt? I know from my own experience in my system that we do assess and comments student's differently at practice among colleagues. This is done I believe in every system that we evaluate students differently. I met once a colleague from another country and visit one lesson with her. During the lesson I saw a fantastic student. She had a marvellous connection with each pupil. She really saw them, connected very well, showed them respect and looked at their ability level. Her attitude was in my eyes really god. After the lesson my colleague started to talk to the student and suddenly I realize how big the difference can be when we observe a student. She said to the student that she have failed, had poorly inputs in her methods, that she only followed the book of the subject. She didn't say anything about her connection with the pupils. Yes I agreed that the lesson it self could be more fun and creative. I so a becoming teacher with such potential, I also looked at her as a becoming colleague. We had in that situation remarked and comment the student totally different. I as a teacher educator with a self- directed school culture and she with the strong teaching-directed one. Perhaps we as teacher educator always have to be clear in what we say and expect when we meet a new student for the first time. We can't count that each student has the knowledge of the expectations, behaviour or culture. No matter if they are Swedish or an international exchange student.

### Conclusions:

During the project I and my colleague have tried to develop new ideas how to educate about our system and culture. We have found that students develop more quickly when they feel free to speak and feel more equal with teacher mentors and teacher educators. Student reflections shows that they need to get more education of informal art in the beginning of the stay. They also need more information about curricula to realize a deeper meaning of the system but also the organization in the practice school. We have among those years prepared student as we thought in a good way but it was in the third year we found out what we need to do. For us to evaluate a student about their sensitivity and response to pupil different ability level is something we perhaps never will find out. In our system this is a general question we can't exclude any pupil from the education no matter what ability level they have. A teacher should always take this in his/hers consideration when they educate. We also found out that our school system- culture and curricula is more or less impossible to adapt in a short period. We can't expect student to understand (after only two or three weeks) individual work, freedom, closer relations, no teaching in front of the class etc. If the students should stay for a long period they might adapt and get a deeper understanding. So what can we do? A teacher educator has to evaluate and grade the student. Planning and preparation is the keyword as I see it. Curricula studies could be prepared before the student arrives to a new country. In the beginning of the stay let all students go out in groups to one school for observations (But don't forget observation around the

society). After the observations have discussion of what they have seen and what questions they have. Prepare lessons with your own students (Swedish for us) together with the international students. These lessons can be about culture likenesses or differences comparing school system, curricula, syllabi or other questions of importance. The meaning of the lessons is to give international students a possibility to get deeper understanding and also to involve your own students to broaden their view. Finally It's not about evaluate a students capacity of how they for example can be sensitive and responsive to pupils ability level it's more about if they have the potential to adapt and teach in the new system. If a student succeeds with that the road is open for the future.



## **Designing learning units: A constructivist approach**

***Sara Figueras***

*The predominance of fragmented learning divided up into disciplines (...) should be replaced by learning that can grasp subjects within their context, their complex, their totality.*

Edgar Morin

### 1. Constructivism as the epistemological base of this proposal

Before dealing with the theoretical-practical approach to learning unit programming, we consider it appropriate to provide this chapter with quite specific a framework or paradigm in order to better understand the global sense of our proposal.

Guba (1990) argued that a paradigm is a fundamental set of beliefs guiding human action. In this sense, from a paradigm we are able to understand and give meaning to the world around us, and explain it according to the interpretation keys provided by the paradigm itself. Therefore, it is fundamental to delimit the paradigm or base for this chapter, in order to interpret and give sense to the proposal from a specific perspective, which in our case will be constructivism.

The characteristics of constructivism have been explained by many authors (Piaget, 1954; Novak 1988, 1993; Bruner, 1990; and Denzil & Lincoln, 1994). They all share a basic and common epistemological assumption, which entails stating that, whether there is a reality external to the observer or not, the meaning of reality is only accessible through the construction of interpretation dimensions. The idea is, then, that individuals proactively construct meaning attribution models about the world and themselves (Bruner, 1990), which vary and are modified according to experience and social meetings that take place every day. Therefore, the epistemological assumption of constructivism is that ‘reality’ is built actively by individuals according to some meaning attribution models.

The concern of constructivism about ‘meaning’ is quite recent and starts from the so-called second cognitive revolution caused, among others, by Jerome Bruner’s work. The author of *Acts of meaning* claims for a return to origins by recovering those theses that represented the shift from behavioural psychology to the cognitive renewal started in 1956 and 1965.

As can be remembered, cognitive psychology adopted the computational metaphor as the matrix that explained information processing, disregarding, according to Bruner (1990), what was to be the strongest concern of cognitive psychology, that is, the construction of meanings. In this sense, the concern about *information* was eventually given priority over

*meaning*, and the concern about *processing this information* was prioritised over *meaning construction* processes.

Cognitive processes were eventually compared to computer programme executing processes, and the process of mind was put on a par with the computational process; then, shortly after an analogy arose between mechanisms that explain human mind and mechanisms that explain *virtual mind*. The disregard for meaning and its construction and negotiation processes in communities turned the first cognitive revolution into a more sophisticated version of mentalism, as both stimuli and responses of behavioural psychology were simply replaced by *inputs* and *outputs*.

In this sense, Bruner's (1990, 1996) work aims at restoring the issue of meaning in this second cognitive revolution. The main objective of this second moment is to understand and describe the meanings that we create from our meetings in the world in order to determine the underlying meaning construction processes. Culture becomes a key element in this interpretation of meaning attribution processes on the part of subjects. Although these processes are developed individually, the origin of meanings is always cultural, as the meanings that we give to things are not original, but rather have their origin in exchange and negotiation processes in the community framework. *Culturalism* (Bruner, 1996) becomes the linchpin to understand the world through meanings available in social practices.

This revaluation of the role of culture in meaning attribution processes represents a significant change from the initial proposals of cognitive theses. Although Jean Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development is based on the idea of integral interaction, with a relationship of interdependence between the subject and the object (Parrat-Dayán, 1998), it has to be considered that the role given to the object or medium is secondary and not very explanatory of individual compensation and balance mechanisms that allow the subject to adapt his/her mental structures. The proposals in the second cognitive revolution consider the environment not just as a simple 'setting' where the individual develops actions and where he/she *assimilates* elements in order to *adjust* them in an intrapsychic process of structural transformation, but as an element that interacts with the subject in a proactive and transforming manner. So the individual interacts and exchanges shared meanings through cultural tools, and his/her meanings build his/her social reality.

So far, we have tried to give a base to our didactic proposal, which is to be understood within the framework of the constructivist paradigm presented above.

## 2. Learning Unit

The epistemological framework offered by constructivism forces us to reconsider teaching and learning processes. Knowledge, from this perspective, is understood as a process of joint construction that does not



only depend on an intrapsychic process, but culture also has an important role when negotiating and constructing meanings. This involves setting didactic interventions out from every pupil's previous knowledge and meanings, adjusting and sequencing learning and assessment objectives, content and activities, in a process ascribed into a *learning unit*.

In this sense, Gallego (1997) presents a learning unit as an immediate action project that contextualizes and sequences school tasks for a group of pupils, states some objectives, selects some content, chooses appropriate methods, and finally verifies the educational processes of pupils. Programming has to be considered, from the constructivist point of view, as a joint action for pupils and teacher with the objective of planning the educational process bearing in mind the centre's educational project and the pupils' own characteristics. In this chapter, we will attempt to present the basic characteristics of the learning unit, as well as to analyze its different elements from a theoretical and practical perspective.

The basic characteristics of a learning unit have been summarized by Medina and Salvador (2002), by stating that a programming unit has to show: (a) coherence with the school's overall project; (b) contextualization in a certain educational reality with certain children; (c) real practical use or applicability; (d) realistic in its possibilities of success; (e) collaborative and interdisciplinary aspects in its initial design; (f) flexibility when being put into practice; and finally (g) diversity when developing tasks proposed.

Before analyzing and describing the different elements of a learning unit from a theoretical and practical perspective, it is essential to remember at this moment that the nature of the MOST project implies mobility of prospective teachers and putting into practice their educational interventions in schools from different European countries. This is the reason why we propose, as a previous step before developing the elements of the learning unit, to have some basic knowledge of the country where the educational intervention has to be carried out, at the level of its history, cultures and, certainly, educational policies. The framework of this previous knowledge will guarantee the understanding of the teaching practice developed in schools from different European countries.

Once clarified this need to get to know the host country, we now want to analyze the basic elements of a learning unit that Gil (1997) and the UNESCO chair specify as follows:

1. Initial evaluation
2. Specification of objectives
3. Description of content
4. Selection of learning activities
5. Methodological approach
6. Assessment strategies

In order to make this proposal more intelligible, we will develop each element in two ways: firstly, we will present the elements from a theoretical point of view, and secondly we will set out an example or

practical case, using a fictitious axis called 'European citizenship'. Let it be clear from now that Point 6 of assessment strategies will be included in our proposal in section 4, called in our case design of learning and assessment activities.<sup>iv</sup>

### 3. Initial evaluation

#### 3.1. Description of element

Initial evaluation implies to analyze previous ideas and knowledge of pupils concerning the issue to be worked on with the objective of promoting learning improvement and adjusting didactic strategies more effectively to their capacities and interests (Tejada, 1999). Therefore, this is an individual and group process that will help the teacher to describe the teaching goals of the intervention in more detail, and will also be helpful to propose individualized curricular adaptations for those pupils with learning difficulties.

Initial evaluation can be carried out differently, although the most common ways are as follows:

- (a) *Individual and in written*: In this case, the teacher would write a list of questions in a piece of paper to be answered by pupils anonymously, if appropriate, and individually. Once the questions have been answered, the teacher collects and analyses them in order to rewrite his/her teaching goals. This structure makes it easy to initially assess

all pupils quickly, but it is restrictive and limited, as the instrument is often unable to grasp all the meanings and knowledge of pupils about a topic.

- (b) *Collective and oral*: In this case, the analysis of previous ideas is carried out through a conversation led by the teacher, who addresses the class group and asks different questions about the topic to be programmed. This formula is slower and requires strong and precise conduction from the teacher so as not to let the conversation drift to the pupils' other fields of interest. On the other hand, this conversation, free and shared between pupils and teacher, enhances the elicitation of ideas and shows the pupils' interactions among pieces of knowledge more clearly, although some care has to be taken so that the dialogue does not end up by being monopolized by a reduced group of pupils, initially more motivated by the topic. So this is a very enriching manner to understand the initial state of the question in every pupil.

In any case, the initial evaluation can have a correcting value for the teacher; that is, this is a moment to highly motivate the pupils' free cognitive exploration in order to analyze the pupils' previous cognitive structure with regard to the topic. For the same reason, if this element is carried out properly, it will become an activity that promotes motivation for the topic to be worked on.

An interesting way of finishing individual or collective initial evaluations is by creating a poster or mural with a synthesis of all the ideas that pupils have written or explained in their conversation, whether they are appropriate or not. In this way, at the end of the intervention or learning unit, the revision of old ideas and knowledge from the initial evaluation can be used to reinforce the pupils' new cognitive structure.

### 3.2. Practical case

Once situated in the country where we will develop our intervention and guaranteed our knowledge of the school and the psychological characteristics of the pupils with whom we will carry out our learning unit, in our case twelve-year-old boys and girls, we will start the initial evaluation of the ideas that our pupils show concerning the topic to be worked on: 'European citizenship'. Below we present some questions that could be useful to elicit the pupils' ideas and knowledge about the topic. In this case, we propose an analysis of previous ideas through a collective and oral initial evaluation. The questions that we could use as guidelines would be for example:

- Have you heard about the European Union? What countries belong to it?
- Do you know what the flag is like?
- Have you been to any other European country? Which?
- Would you like to study or work in any other European country? Which? Why?

- What languages are spoken in Europe?
- Do you think that the diversity of languages is a problem or a treasure?
- What would you ask a pupil from a Belgian school?
- What do you think we all Europeans have in common?
- What concerns do we Europeans have?
- What does feeling European mean? Do you feel European?

#### 4. Teaching Goals

##### 4.1. Description of element

In this case, the idea is to specify the goals that pupils have to attain individually throughout the educational process. These goals can be adapted and individualized depending on the previous evaluation carried out by the teacher at the beginning of the intervention.

Beyond grammar needs, it is important to specify teaching goals properly in order to facilitate the progression of the educational process among the pupils. For this reason, we will discuss some characteristics that always have to be taken into account when formulating teaching goals in a learning unit.

- (a) *Flexibility in the initial design*: Teaching goals have to be flexible concerning the possibility to be written or structured again after the

results of the initial evaluation with the class group, both from a group and individual points of view (Medina & Salvador, 2002).

- (b) *Goals versus purposes:* Teaching goals have to establish objectives attainable through an educational process that takes into account the different learning rates of pupils in the class group. In this sense, it is important not to mistake teaching goals for learning purposes, because while the former are concrete and attainable, the latter present general tendencies, to what end things are done, but are never attainable ultimately.
- (c) *They have to be liable to evaluation:* Teaching goals have to be written in such a way as to establish the degree of specification and resolution and, therefore, all the participants in the educational process should be able to evaluate them at the beginning, continuously, or at the end, through learning or assessment activities (Fernández & Elortegui, 1999).
- (d) *They have to be complex in their design:* Teaching goals have to establish objectives that include not only the acquisition of theoretical concepts, but also at the level of skills, abilities, and techniques (procedures in general) that pupils have to attain in order to be able to manage their own learning; as well as attitudinal objectives that specify attitudes, values and basic norms to be attained by the group and individuals in a negotiated manner as a crucial part of their

learning process (Coll, 1987; Medina & Salvador, 2002; Díaz, 2002). Procedural and attitudinal elements have to be also liable to evaluation.

- (e) *Goals have to be sequenced:* It is important to establish some order of resolution and attainment of teaching goals in order to enhance the educational process. In the case of conceptual objectives, this sequencing will be established from the epistemological rationale of the discipline(s) worked on and, in the case of procedural and attitudinal objectives, with the process that will go from totality to specificity.

#### 4.2. Practical case

Now we present what could be the display of teaching goals with the initial topic of 'European citizenship' with the fictional group of 12-year-olds. Obviously, the exercise is presented without the context of a particular reality, as the aim is only to provide an example of the different characteristics from the theoretical framework. For this reason, we present some general teaching goals for the entire class group, without specifying possible individualized curricular adjustments.

We would also like to say that teaching goals are written by using infinitives, as this form is the most representative to attain a goal in general.



At the end of the educational process, pupils should be able to:

- (a) Learn the roots of the European Union and know what countries belong to it at present.
- (b) Get to know the culture of countries belonging to the European Union: geography, customs, language, currency, flag...
- (c) Reflect on what being a European citizen means and its implications at the level of rights and duties.
- (d) Look for information in small groups in order to be autonomous in their learning process and summarize this information when explaining it to the group, using the proper language.
- (e) Talk in an orderly fashion within the class group, by respecting the floor and classmates' opinions.
- (f) Value the European cultural diversity and be aware of the importance of exchanges to get to know other European countries.

## 5. Learning content

### 5.1. Description of element

Content is made up of information, learning experiences and attitudes needed to attain teaching goals (Hornero, 1987). The idea is, then, not to limit learning content to the field of concepts only, but also to introduce at the same time procedural and attitudinal content that guarantees the

global attainment of proposed goals. Below we specify every kind of content in order to understand the practical case more clearly.

- (a) *Conceptual content*: It represents the set of information and concepts required to attain the goals. In this aspect, Coll (1987) differentiates between: (a) *concepts*, defined as a set of objects, events, actions, ideas, or symbols with some characteristics in common; (b) *principles*, referring to statements that describe how changes that happen are related to other changes; (c) finally *facts*, which represent support content.

Although historically this content was at the forefront of any educational process, nowadays its selection is understood to respond to criteria of importance, usefulness and applicability in the daily life of our pupils.

- (b) *Procedural content*: It refers to the set of actions, usually resulting into abilities, skills and techniques, orderly and addressed at achieving some goals (MEC, 1989). Procedures are learning tools ascribed into the section of ‘know-how’ in order to solve problem situations and are characterized by: (a) they require some action; (b) the action has to be orderly; (c) the action has to be addressed at attaining a goal. Procedural content has been gaining ground in the pedagogical field as a result of the methodological changes in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, when pupils became the protagonist of their own learning and ‘learning to learn’ became a fundamental competence for every pupil.

(c) *Content of attitudes, values and norms*: We refer to *attitudes* as tendencies, acquired or not, which persist in the behaviour of people (Zabala, 1998). They should not be exclusively mistaken for behaviours, as they introduce emotional (feelings and preferences), cognitive (knowledge and beliefs), and finally behavioural (actions and intentions) elements.

Coll (1987) defines *values* as ruling principles that regulate individual behaviour and are part of the social culture where the school is in.

Finally, values are shown in some *norms*, which refer to some rules or behaviour patterns (Medina & Salvador, 2002), negotiated and agreed on in a social context.

## 5.2. Practical case

Following with the proposed working line of European Citizenship with 12-year-old boys and girls, we would establish the following content to be worked on, divided into three types:

Conceptual content:

- The European Union: countries, geography, and cultures.

Procedural content:

- Search for information about the different countries belonging to the European Union in different documentation sources.

- Arguing and supporting one's own point of view in a dialogue.
- Analysis and synthesis of research outcome.
- Appropriate use of language.

Attitudinal content:

- Interest in getting to know current Europe and the chances of mobility among the different countries.
- Awareness of the added value that the diversity of cultures in Europe represents.
- Respect for speaking turns and for classmates' opinions.

## 6. Design of learning and assessment activities

### 6.1. Description of element

In this chapter, we have already hinted the need to present learning and assessment activities at the same time. We think that learning activities cannot be separated from assessment activities, as assessment, in its dimension of continuity, has to measure the pupil's daily and continuous process. In this sense, concepts, procedures, and attitudes are assessed every day through learning activities.

Once this point is clear, we will understand learning activities as that set of actions or events that help pupils attain some goals (Fernández & Elortegui, 1999). It has to be taken into account that one activity has to

contribute to attain different goals, and that one goal has to be worked on in different activities. Learning activities have to be thought so as to be adjusted to the different levels in the class group, guaranteeing the appropriate educational process for every one.

Below we present the different kinds of learning activities that Fernández and Elortegui (1999) specify in: initiation, development, ending, assessment, deepening, and reinforcement activities.

- (a) *Initiation activities:* They are a set of activities carried out during initial evaluation with the aim of placing and motivating pupils for the topic to be worked on. As has already been seen, they represent an assessment of the pupils' previous knowledge on the topic. They can be carried out by analyzing different videos or articles, outings, brainstorming, lab experiences, open debate within the class group, and so on.
- (b) *Development activities:* Addressed at finding and analyzing significant information from the creation of working hypotheses. In this moment, the topic is developed at most, by collecting and discussing information. Different activities can be proposed, such as bibliographical research, individual or small-group working plans, outings, experimental activities inside and outside the classroom, teacher's explanations, debates and discussions within the class

group, elaboration of portfolios or working dossiers, resolution of cases, and so on.

- (c) *Ending activities:* We refer to those learning activities that allow pupils to elaborate their initial positions again and reconstruct their cognitive schemas through new meanings, resulting from the conclusions of the studied topic. These ending activities can be essays or reports, discussions, debates, presentations, posters or murals, elaboration of presentations using ICT, elaboration of mind maps or working outlines, and so on.
- (d) *Assessment activities:* These activities should allow the teacher and pupils to assess the development in their learning of the matter, as well as the degree of satisfaction with the task carried out. These assessment activities often coincide in time with learning activities. The final aim is not for the teacher to supervise or punish, but to be aware that, through these activities, pupils or the group should be able to extract information for the self-regulation of their learning process, by introducing, if appropriate, procedural or attitudinal correctors. Some of these activities could be as follows: self-evaluation patterns, personal working diaries, direct observations on the work carried out, periodic revisions of portfolios or working reports, partial presentations of work, surveys, and so on.

- (e) *Reinforcement and deepening activities:* We should always remember that within a class group there will be different levels of knowledge and motivation with regard to the topic to be worked on. For this reason, some reinforcement activities should be always proposed for those pupils with comprehension difficulties, and deepening activities for those pupils that attain teaching goals faster than the rest.

## 6.2. Practical case

Initiation activities:

- *Class debate:* We will negotiate with the class group what is going to be learnt in this learning unit called ‘European Citizenship’. We will reflect with the class group on the meanings of the teaching goals proposed, and present them with the need to go deeper into some other points they think interesting in relation to the learning unit.
- *Brainstorming:* A brainstorming activity will be carried out with the entire class group about the European Union to see their knowledge and ideas about this topic, on the basis of the questions expressed in the previous section of initial evaluation and the pupils’ personal experiences.

Development activities:

- *Pedagogical contract:* Four-pupil mixed groups will be formed and they will sign a small-group pedagogical contract, where they will commit themselves to develop the objectives of this learning unit (if they consider it appropriate), and to plan and carry out different tasks needed to attain the goals. Once written their working plan, they will present it to the teacher, who will accept the proposal and, together with the small group, sign the pedagogical contract, which commits them to carry out the designed tasks.
- *Search for information:* The group will begin a period of information collection through a research based on different information sources, as guided by the teacher: Internet, bibliography, outings or visits, video viewing, and so on.

Ending activities:

- *Elaboration of a working synthesis:* Working groups will have to summarize all the collected information in order to present it to their classmates.
- *Discussion:* The different working groups will present the outcome of their research to the rest of the class group, and will develop their assessments on the topic worked on.



- *Debate:* After every presentation by a working group, there will be an open debate to share ideas and meanings of every group.
- *Writing minutes:* Every group will have to be responsible for taking notes of the ideas that arise in the presentation of one group's work, so that at the end of the presentations there will be a collection of minutes that will become a final dossier of the topic.

Assessment activities:

- *Field diary:* Every small group will have to write a field diary throughout the different developmental moments of the working project, where they will express, objectively, the development of the tasks carried out in the working day by the entire group; and their assessment on this work: time was not wasted, all the members were involved in the work at the same degree, difficulties that arose... This diary will be discussed daily with the teacher and the working group.
- *Self-assessment form:* Every pupil, at the end of the presentation, will carry out self-assessment on his/her performance and general participation in the work developed by the group.
- *Assessment of small group:* At the end of every presentation and general debate, the rest of the class group will assess the task carried out by the pupils who presented their work, trying to contribute with ideas

for improvement and change, as well as highlighting strengths in the classmates' work.

- *Assessment of large group*: It can be carried out in groups or individually, by revising the knowledge items collected when implementing the learning unit for the first time, when pupils expressed orally and freely everything they knew or thought they knew about the topic through a brainstorming activity.
- *Conversation with teacher*: Finally, every small group will meet the teacher in order to assess the task carried out and the process followed, using as tools: the initial pedagogical contract, the group's field diary, self-assessment forms of every pupil, and assessment carried out by the entire class group on their presentation.

Reinforcement or deepening activities:

- *Readjustment of goals and tasks to be carried out*: Reinforcement or deepening activities will depend on the reality of the moment. We have to take into account, though, that the small-group work is always inclusive, as it promotes participation by all the members on the basis of the idea of reciprocal support or teaching among pupils. Even so, if through the daily revisions of the field diary we could see that a group is not evolving properly, their pedagogical contract could be changed by guiding the pupils towards rethinking the progression of their tasks and their workload.

## 7. Methodology and didactic resources

### 7.1. Description of element

Before describing this element, we think it is important to clarify the terms used in this section, more particularly the difference between method and methodology, in order to be able to identify what we mean at every moment of our discourse.

The word method comes from *methodus*, which comes from Greek *méthodos* that means ‘path with a particular aim’. Therefore, we understand method as an orderly and systematic manner of acting in order to achieve a goal. On the other hand, methodology means ‘science of method’ and, therefore, has to be interpreted as the study of methods. Thus, methodology and method are not synonymous but have more or less global meanings to be respected.

The methodological question always responds to *how* to teach and learn (Medina & Salvador, 2002). However, the answer we can give to this question can never be disconnected from *what* or *what for*, that is, the teaching goals or initially planned objectives, as the criterion to use one methodology or another is always dependent on the type of teaching goals proposed. In this sense, we could state that there are no *good* or *bad* methods deriving from methodologies, but rather teaching goals of diverse nature.<sup>v</sup> Nevertheless, we have to consider that, as expressed by

Díaz (2002, p.181, translated by author): “(...) we can see that there is no universal method applicable to every situation and pupil, but, on the contrary, the method to be chosen is that resulting in the pupils’ significant learning”.

The same author describes four didactic methods: the traditional method, the discovery method, the expository method, and globalized teaching methods.

- (a) *Traditional method*: In this method the protagonist of the teaching-learning process is always the teacher, who designs, plans a fixed programme, presents content in a lecture style, and assesses it as a group, without considering possible differences among pupils. The role of pupils is rather passive, as they are understood as empty containers to be filled with conceptual content that they have to memorize by reproducing the teacher’s discourse.

Among its most important defects, Díaz (2002) stands out, firstly, that the method takes into account neither the pupils’ attention spans, nor their interests and motivations. Secondly, it focuses too much on repetition and reproducing memorization procedures and unidirectional dialogue. It is, therefore, an exaggeratedly intellectualist method.

- (b) *Discovery method*: It springs from the basic principle by Novak and Gowin (1984) that human learning produces a change in the meaning

of every individual's experience and, therefore, has a clear constructivist concept of teaching-learning processes. From this perspective, the proposal of the traditional method, where pupils accumulated some knowledge receptively and passively, is totally brought into question. On the contrary, the discovery method transforms the pupil into an active agent of knowledge. The teaching-learning process proposed follows the rationale of the scientific process; for this reason, it is fundamental to provide pupils with some content of a procedural nature (skills, techniques, and strategies) that allows them to approach learning with success and autonomy. Therefore, this method promotes the person's integral learning, as in this active intervention the development of all the person's dimensions is enhanced: cognitive, emotional, social, and physical.

Although it is rather difficult to explain the steps to be followed in a discovery method, as there are many versions and particularities in its implementation, there are five steps that are practically common to all discovery practices (Joyce & Weil, 1978):

- Posing a problem or problematic situation to pupils.
- Searching for and collecting information about the topic.
- Experimenting and reflecting on the data and information collected.
- Organizing and summarizing information collected. Elaborating one's own theory.

- Reflecting on and assessing one's own strategy throughout the process.

In this process, the teacher becomes a guide or companion for the pupil or group of pupils that construct their own learning actively.

- (c) *Expository teaching*: As expressed by Díaz (2002), it is characterized by setting out the conceptual structure of the scientific discipline to be taught with the aim that pupils are able to relate it with their previous ideas and knowledge about the matter. This method, therefore, tries to find a balance between the expository need, that is, the inward process in teaching-learning processes, and the pupils' inner process of giving meaning to new learning, thus, an outward process. The method usually develops in the following phases:
- Presentation and previous organization of goals and content.
  - Presentation of materials and learning activities.
  - Development of the conceptual structure by contrast between previous ideas and thematic area worked on.
- (d) *Globalized teaching methods*: We refer to a set of methods based on the need to approach knowledge globally and, therefore, from interdisciplinary elements. Their origin is in the New School and studies by Decroly, who, as a doctor, studied the spontaneous procedures used by children to learn. Decroly proposes that the mental activity is always produced by some first global knowledge,

and its analysis always depends on the subject's interest in approaching the topic. Thus, just like reality is not broken into pieces, knowledge cannot be divided into independent plots, but has to be based on the complexity and interaction among pieces of knowledge from different disciplines.

Some concrete proposals to approach interdisciplinary and globalized teaching are as follows:

- Focus of interest: It refers to topics used to organize the content of different subjects.
- Project method: They are small research projects carried out by groups of pupils or the entire class group in general, through a topic generally agreed upon by them.
- Environmental research method: In this case, the research is proposed as a natural learning process. The topics to be worked on have to come from the pupils' environment or immediate experience.
- Workshops: In this way of organizing the teaching-learning process, the tasks proposed always have a theoretical-practical element that forces pupils to learn by doing, activating all kinds of strategies and techniques to develop their learning.

## 7.2. Practical case

As can be seen both in the development of activities and in the description of methods, the working method we proposed is easily identified as a synthesis between the discovery method and the globalized teaching method. Therefore, it is a highly focused choice, appropriate for the constructivist approach of teaching-learning processes.

Thus, with this section about the methodological option of the didactic intervention comes the end of the presentation of characteristics of the learning unit and the analysis of its different elements.

Finally, we would like to say that, although the didactic intervention represents a broad topic to be approached from different perspectives and analyzed from different viewpoints, we think that using the constructivist approach to education represents quite a consistent option, bearing in mind the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Future Europe has to go for education based on the cognitive complexity of its future citizens, as the best option to take the greatest advantage of our cultural diversity. A Europe where differences count can only be imagined from a Europe that goes for education based on brave, global and complex approaches.



## **What competencies do teachers need to be competent inclusive teachers?**

***Björg Klock and Hermann Skogsholm***

### **1. The challenge of inclusive education.**

In the debate about education and what competencies teacher trainees need, it would be important to know something about the overall objectives of education. What priorities are reflected in the countries objectives of education? Do these priorities stimulate or discourage inclusion? Is references made to UESCO declarations and the Salamanca Statement?

It would be wise to know something about the schools and the students the teacher trainees going to another country will meet. In most countries they are talking about the challenges of inclusive education. But what do the ideas, the vision of inclusive education mean when you meet the practice field? Are children with special needs educated in the regular classrooms? If that's the reality, how well are the teacher trainees prepared to teach students at different ability levels in the same classroom.

What attitudes will teacher trainees meet as it comes to the question of teaching the students with behaviour problems or and learning disabilities? Do differentiation policies of justice and equality in the various countries enhance relatively homogenous or pluralist

environments? Is there an overall aim towards the universal inclusion of all children? We know that there are basic cultural differences between countries in Europe. But we know that most countries have designed the Salamanca declaration!

The teacher trainees in the MOST project come from industrialized countries that have given their commitment to the Salamanca statement. They are all introduced into the philosophy of human rights and inclusion. But the teacher trainees will notice that the school systems and legislation acts are different, and as they enter the classrooms, they may wonder how idealistic ideas about inclusion are realized. Countries that have signed the statement, are working on different paths to implement the philosophy of inclusive education. What does the concept of inclusion means? Is inclusion the same word as integration? And what competences do teacher trainees need to be competent inclusive teachers? In this article we have focused on some of these questions, and we are reflecting upon which competences teachers need to be inclusive teacher. We are giving examples from legislation and experiences from Norway.

## 2. From segregation to integration

In Norway a special school act was passed in 1951, which formed the legal basis of the establishment of a nation-wide network of special schools under the governance of the state (Smehaugen, 2004). In the

1960s the policy of building many state-owned special schools became increasingly a subject of debate. In 1967 an act passed in Parliament, making clear that children with malfunctions were to be educated in their local environment and were only to be moved to central state schools or local special schools if absolutely necessary. The integration and normalisation debate in Norway resulted in a change in the legal framework of education. The legal framework of special education was incorporated into the basic school law and became operative in 1976. The aim of the incorporation of the special education law was as far as possible to integrate all pupils in regular schools and to teach them according to their abilities and qualifications. The responsibilities for students with special needs were transferred from the state to the municipalities. Many state own special schools were closed and the local community became responsible for the fulfilment of the right of each child to be educated in the local environment.

When integration came on the agenda in the 1960s and 1970s, it was, first of all an attempt to system reform. Vislie (2003, p.19) describes the reforms as having three core foci, demanding:

- (a) Rights to schooling and education for disabled children. Although all children at that time were said to have a right to education, there were groups of children in all countries who did not have this right.

- (b) Rights to education in local schools for disabled children were originally formulated as an attack on the centralized institutions normally established as special schools for designated categories of disabled children
- (c) Totally reorganization of the special education system focusing all aspects of it, from the identification of it to the financial issues followed by integration, the internal school organization structure, and the handling of teaching and learning, including education, in integrated classes.

During the 1980s the great majority of the state centralised special schools in Norway were closed and the students were transferred to local provision.

## 2.1. From integration to inclusion

The Salamanca statement

While integration was the main issue on the agenda until the end of the 1980s, inclusion captured the field during the 1990s.

According to Vislie (2003) the World Conference on Special Needs Education in Salamanca in 1994, with the adoption of the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, represents the event that definitely set the agenda for inclusive education on a global basis.

92 governments and 25 non-governmental organisations attended the world conference on the theme: ‘Special Educational Needs: Access and Quality’ in Salamanca, Spain. From this meeting the philosophies of an inclusive education were ratified, and the Salamanca Statement on Inclusive education was signed. The document is based on Education from a fundamental universal human rights perspective, as was documented in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (U.N., 1948).

The document declares five main principles (UNESCO, 1994):

- (a) Every child has a fundamental right to education and must be given the opportunity to achieve an acceptable level of learning.
- (b) Every child has unique characteristics, interests and learning needs.
- (c) Educational systems should be designed and programmes implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics, interests and learning needs.
- (d) Those with special needs must have access to regular schools that should accommodate them within a child-centred pedagogy, capable of meeting these needs.
- (e) Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminating attitudes, creating welcoming opportunities, building an inclusive society, and achieving education for all, moreover they provide an effective education to the majority of children, and improve the cost-effectiveness of the entire educational system.

The Salamanca Statement addresses the issue of the inclusion of children-at-risk from a human perspective, stating that all children have the right to education, and that inclusive education is the preferred option. .

According to the UNESCO documents inclusive education

- challenges all exclusionary policies and practice in education
- is based on a growing international consensus of the right of all children to a common education in their locality regardless of their background, attainment or disability
- aims at providing good-quality education for learners and a community-based education for all

The Salamanca Statement specifically urges UNESCO to ensure that the inclusive education issue is dealt with in all bodies where education is discussed.

UNESCO's role in the development of inclusive education has been undeniable. Today, little over a decade after Salamanca, many advances have been made towards inclusion and ensuring the right for all children regardless of their emotional or intellectual differences.

## 2.2. Inclusive education

The practice of developing inclusive schools involves understanding inclusion as a continuing process (rather than a state), by which a school attempts to respond to all pupils as individuals. Inclusion is about school

change to improve the educational system for all students and is a much broader concept than integration. The main challenge with integration is that ‘mainstreaming’ has not been accompanied by changes in the organisation of the ordinary school, its curriculum and teaching and learning strategies.

Inclusive education means that curriculum, instruction, and assessment are carefully designed to incorporate the need of the learners upfront. Inclusive education practices reflect the changing culture of contemporary schools with emphasis on active learning, authentic assessment practices, applied curriculum, multi-level instructional approaches, and increased attention to diverse students’ needs and individualization (Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2003).

We know that inclusion remains a controversial concept in the educational debate. It relates to social values, as well to our sense of individual worth. Any discussion about inclusion gives us important questions (WEAC, 2001) to think about.

- Do we value all children equally?
- Is anyone more or less valuable?
- What do we mean by inclusion?

There is not a fixed definition of the concept inclusion, and even if there were, our understanding of it would be different. Our experiences, values

and cultural background will give us different associations, and we tend to think in terms of what is possible, are there some children for whom 'inclusion' is inappropriate? In the discussion you hear people talk about the difference between inclusion and full inclusion. Inclusion is talked about as a term that expresses commitment to educate each child, to the maximum extent appropriate, in the school and classroom he or she would otherwise attend. It involves bringing necessary support to the child and requires that the child will benefit from being in the classroom. With full inclusion means that all students, regardless of handicapping condition or severity, will be in a regular classroom/programme full time (WEAC 2001).

### 2.3. A short glimpse from legislation and plans of Norway

What do statistics tell us about inclusion in the terms of 'full inclusion' or inclusion?

In Norway ca. 0.5 per cent of students with special educational needs were taught in special schools, and the remainder was educated in mainstream schools. 5,5 per cent were offered some sort of special education in regular schools.

Compared with data from OECD Education Database (1996) we find that the percentage of students in segregated schools varies from 0.3 percentages to 3.4. Spain, Norway and Sweden have less than 1 percentage of students in segregated schools.



In Norway a new school reform passed in 1997 declaring that pupils with special needs have the right to participate in social, cultural and subject-related environments that are characterised by the spirit of community and equality. The underlying thought behind the new Reform is to create equal possibilities for all pupils where schools help pupil develop into value-aware, socially committed and learning-oriented individuals. In Norway the word integration has been changed by the word and vision of inclusion.

Until 2003 pupils were organized in classes were 'permanent' ability grouping between classes was legally prohibited. The most common differentiation method was team teaching, whereby a teacher collaborates with one or more other teachers to arrange teaching so that students can work according to their own level of knowledge and have individualised instruction (Smehaugen, 2004). The legislation act saying that each student has the right of belonging to a class was changed in 2003, saying that each student has the right of belonging to a group. But still it is prohibited to establish permanent ability groups.

A Strategy Plan for Learning Environment in Primary and Secondary Education in Norway (2005) claims the overall objectives:

All pupils and apprentices are to be ensured a physical and a psycho-social learning environment that promotes health, well-being and learning. Primary and secondary education is to

promote the pupils' and apprentices' value awareness in a positive and accepting learning environment. A good learning environment must take into account the diversity to be found among pupils, apprentices and parents, and comply with the variations in preconditions and need of pupils and apprentices.

School must meet the challenge of giving the same possibilities of participation in the local school with a principled attitude towards diversity and the management of differences. Emphasis must be put on dialogue with parents, on *user participation* and mutual respect. Furthermore, education must give pupils and apprentices knowledge about human rights and democracy, so as to facilitate their participation in the democratic system.

In the strategic plan for the learning environment areas of measures is to improve competence in schools, training establishment and *teacher training* in order to achieve a health-promoting and accepting learning environment for all.

### 3. What competences do teachers need?

The renaissance Group by the Department of Special Education, University of Northern Iowa has presented standards on teacher competencies asking what competencies do general education teachers and special teachers need to be competent inclusive teachers. After

studying different criteria and plans, we found it interesting to present this list of competences:

- Ability to problem solving, to be able to informally assess the skills a student needs (rather than relying solely on standardized curriculum).
- Ability to take advantage of children's individual interests and use their internal motivation for developing needed skills.
- Ability to set high but alternative expectations that are suitable for the students; this means developing alternative assessments.
- Ability to make appropriate expectations for EACH student, regardless of the student's capabilities. If teachers can do this, it allows all students to be included in a class and school.
- Ability to determine how to modify assignments for students; how to design classroom activities with so many levels that all students have a part. This teaching skill can apply not just at the elementary or secondary level, but at the college level as well. It will mean more activity-based teaching rather than seat-based teaching.
- Ability to learn how to value all kinds of skills that students bring to a class, not just the academic skills. In doing this, teachers will make it explicit that in their classrooms they value all skills, even if that is not a clear value of a whole school.
- Ability to provide daily success for all students. Teachers have to work to counteract the message all students get when certain students are continually taken out of class for special work.

Other competencies that will help general education teachers in an inclusive environment include:

- A realization that every child in the class is their responsibility. Teachers need to find out how to work with each child rather than assuming someone else will tell them how to educate a child.
- Knowing a variety of instructional strategies and how to use them effectively. This includes the ability to adapt materials and rewrite objectives for a child's needs.
- Working as a team with parents and special education teachers to learn what skills a child needs and to provide the best teaching approach.
- Viewing each child in the class as an opportunity to become a better teacher rather than a problem to be coped with or have someone else fix.
- Flexibility and a high tolerance for ambiguity.

#### 4. Competences of the inclusive teacher – what is inclusive education?

Reflections by the teacher trainees (MOST participants)

The teacher trainees were presented the standards of teacher competences from the Northern Iowa and they were asked to reflect upon the questions: What competences do inclusive teachers need? What is inclusive education?

The teacher trainees in the MOST programme had different opinions when it came to the idea of inclusion, how they understood the concept and their view upon what competences teachers need to be inclusive teachers.

One of the students Marieke, wrote:

The competences presented by the Northern Iowa are well chosen. They are clear and well thought. I especially agree on the last one flexibility and a high tolerance for ambiguity, because I saw this happening while I was observing in my practice school.

According to me, inclusive education is a type of education that involves every pupil and in which the pupil is central, despite his or her weaknesses or strengths. However, it is not easy to do: you first need to get to know every pupil, you need to know how far you can go, what is possible in the classroom and how the atmosphere is. Will the pupils help each other? Do they accept each other? What are their different levels? Only once you have collected all this information, you can start the real work, differentiation.

Another student Matthias wrote: “First of all, to become an inclusive teacher, you have to accept the Salamanca Statement.” Matthias made a division of the competences saying that the primary competences must

be reached before teachers can reach the competences of the next level. He found two competences to be the primary:

- Ability to determine how to modify assignments for students, how to design classroom activities with so many levels that all students have a part.

To be able to have inclusive education, teachers have to be able to adapt the lessons and design the classroom with many different levels that all the students are able to participate. If a teacher can't do this, the inclusive education will fail and the purpose won't be reached. It is not an easy thing to do even it is basic and the most important competence.

- Ability to take advantage of children's individual interests and use their internal motivation for developing needed skills

Teachers can only take advantage of children's interests and use their internal motivation if the students are participating in the lessons. So be able to with this competence, the first have to be reached.

Competences at the next level, Matthias found:

- Ability to make appropriate expectations for each child, regardless his capabilities. If teachers can do this, it allows all students to be included
- Ability to prove daily success for students.

Teachers have to differentiate in levels and capabilities of the students, so that every student experiences daily success. All students must be able to see the success of the other (special need) student.

Mariona from Spain wrote:

In most documents on teacher standard skills diversity among students is highly taken into account but this document takes into account the ability to take advantage of children's individual interest and use their internal motivation for developing needed skills. Furthermore, the IOWA standards points out the importance of praising all kind of skills different from the academic ones which students bring to class.

Mariona also thought that the importance of having the willingness and competence of cooperating with other teachers, inclusive special education teachers is of great importance. "But not least", she wrote, "I'd like to add to the MOST standards, the importance of being flexible and tolerant."

One of the students presented another challenge:

The idea about inclusion itself is perfect. The problem is how to implement it in ordinary schools. I do not think this is simple to do. I am sure there is much discussion that every child has fundamental right to education, but if this child has special needs is it the best place for him to stay in an ordinary class? In Norway you say yes, may be because you are more ready for this step. I am not for discrimination, but I clearly see how much we should work to achieve this goal in my home country, starting for broadening minds in society because often those with special needs stay aside also it is necessary to provide schools with modern equipment as well to pay assistances for pupils with special needs. Here we also talk about educational programmes to prepare future teachers, and only then we could come to teacher's competences. This can be something invented by you but rather guided from the educational programmes.

5. Is it possible to make set standards of competences?

After three years meeting teacher trainees from different countries in Europe we have understood that there are basic cultural differences between countries in Europe related to the issue of inclusion. We may illustrate the difference by an example.



After several debates and “agreement” on the topic, one of the MOST participants met the classroom, 5<sup>th</sup> grade. After half a day I asked him about the atmosphere and his thoughts about the diversity among students. He replied me but asking how some of the students could have passed. I got confused by his question, and asked him to explain. He answered by telling me, that in his home country these students should have been in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade for another year, because they had not reached the ability to be in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. I told him that in Norway we have no tests, you just move from one grade to the other. He answered by wondering: How are you able to motivate students if they do not have to pass a test?

We all understand the Salamanca Statement and what competences teachers need in the light of our own experiences, pictures of school practice and what we think is possible and important to develop our schools.

Research on teacher’s perception about inclusive classroom (Lambe & Bones, 2006; Mintz, 2007) concludes that positive attitudes towards inclusion by practitioners will be essential in ensuring successful implementation. The research indicates (Mintz, 2007) that students attitudes are fluid and you have to prepare and develop a workforce that is attuned to the individual pupil in the classroom.

As we have met the teacher's trainees, and after discussion and debate at the university and during their practice period we have found it important that teacher trainees are open-minded, have tolerance and respect for each other and for other cultures, have good communicative abilities and are willing to work and to learn. And we think the teacher trainees must be prepared for meeting the diversity and have the competence to handle pupils as individuals by having the

- Ability to determine how to modify assignments for students; how to design classroom activities with so many levels that all students have a part. This teaching skill can apply not just at the elementary or secondary level, but at the college level as well. It will mean more activity-based teaching rather than seat-based teaching.

The idea that all citizens should have equal educational-career opportunities irrespective of social and cultural background is a deep-rooted principle in democratic societies (Smehaugen, 2004). We think we all have the obligation to give the same opportunities to all, and work towards a society that value all children equally. However, it is a great challenge for welfare states to fulfil this goal.

### **Another Two Small Talks:**

**- An example of how to elaborate on a teaching – learning situation within the MOST project**

**- Description and reflections upon two lessons of English in a Swedish school**

***Bengt Söderhäll***

In the second year of MOST, we had Two Small Talks in class 7 Alfabet at Älvboda Friskola, reported in the article Two Small Talks in MOST handbook edited by Julie De Ganck (2007). 'We' were ten visiting teachers from Vilnius, Gent and Barcelona. The word or rather concept of visiting teacher was created in the second year, as I have problems understanding the word 'trainee' and some of the pupils at Älvboda Friskola asked me who the 'visitors' were. The answer came naturally: - They are visiting teachers from European countries. Looking back, I can understand this as a way of working with induction and helping the visitors to a more symmetric situation in relation to the staff. Maybe it is an after construction, but it might have been a way of helping the visitors to become members of the community of interpretation.

The plan was to go on this third and last year of the project and evaluate the pupils' oral competence as described in the criteria of the syllabus and also ask the pupils to evaluate the teaching competence of the visiting teachers steered by the assessment criteria preliminary suggested by the partners of the MOST/Comenius project. Alas, this showed impossible to practical things and instead we had two talks of a more free nature.

Pupils and visiting teachers sat in groups and talked with no specific tasks more than talking about what felt important for the moment.

This text will focus on the part of journal of competence/portfolio written by the students (visiting teachers) about these two lessons of English and my own observations and talks with staff and pupils at the school. As in the article mentioned, some ideas are steering the way the writer of this text is thinking. I am at the moment trying to understand if and how ricoeurian thinking can have a positive impact on teacher education specifically and education as a whole. In the two studies *Soi-même comme un autre* (1990) and *La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli* (2000) Paul Ricoeur developed the concept of the capable human being, *homo capax*. With five verbal sentences and five questions I sum up my understanding of the concept and the five studies leading to the concept of *homo capax*.

- (a) The dimension of language: The study of philosophy of language gives us:  
Who is talking? - I /You/She/He can speak.
- (b) The practical dimension: The study of philosophy of action gives us:  
Who is acting? – I/You/He/She can act.
- (c) The ethical dimension: The study of philosophy of moral gives us:  
Who is being responsible? – I/You/She/He can be responsible.
- (d) The narrative dimension: The study of narration gives us:  
Who is telling/narrating? - I/You/He/She can tell/narrate.

(e) The dimension of history: The study of memory, history, and oblivion gives us:

Who is remembering? – I/You/She/He can remember.

As shown in the scheme, these five paths to the understanding of our speech, our acts, our ethics, our stories and what we choose to remember for our identification of self, other and world, points out first person, second person and third person, i.e. we can talk to, we can talk about and we can be talked about and in this reciprocal grammar and movement I believe we can find methods to understand more and deeper in our discourse.

This, together with a design or a didactic construction defined as follows, is between the implicit and explicit at the moment:

We argue (...) that there is a need for qualitative intensive studies within the complex didactic domain of research, where it constantly is shown impossible or problematic to make generalizing conclusions. Didactic approaches to problems concerning teaching – learning are always ‘complex,’ contextually bound’ and furthermore ‘historically formed’, which make intensive studies necessary (, 2002, p.7, translation by writer).

And, of course, at least one of the three objectives/aspects of the project is in the background: ‘promote reflections among teacher students’ and it seems from seminars and text production that this objective has been

accomplished, a lot according to the big differences the students have experienced between their own country and the Swedish school they have been practicing in. Note that when writing ‘one’ Swedish school the meaning is to emphasize that schools are different, though steered with the same legislation, funding and other framing work. I guess this position could be labelled social constructive and/or sociocultural.

When it comes to the construction of a standard for the assessing of teachers, my (preliminary I add a bit cowardly) viewpoint, is that this would be contra productive to the art of learning and teaching, as cultures, traditions and situations are very different. But, a continuing talk about standard, contrasts, likenesses and differences in the different local, national, regional and European schools is necessary for generative development in Education.

From the criteria of assessments being constructed in the project, the following have been in focus and each of them will be reasoned about below.

- The lesson is creative and motivating for the pupils
- Pupils are actively involved in the learning process
- Manages the learning environment effectively

From my observations and notes, I can say that the talks were creative and motivating for the pupils - and for the visiting teachers. The pupils were indeed actively involved in the learning process and the visiting

teachers could manage the learning environment effectively and creatively.

It should be mentioned that before entering the practice school, we had a series of seminars on the Swedish Education System, Swedish history and the students read the article 'Two Small Talks' from MOST handbook. They also got the background of the school, being established as an independent compulsory school seven years ago and before getting to teach, they had been at the school to take in the atmosphere and to get acquainted with staff, pupils and the situation as such. As tutor, I spent a lot of time while visiting teachers were at the school and this was an agreement between the headmaster and me. We also had some seminars in the school, attended by mentors, headmaster, students and tutor.

To get a glimpse of the situation, here are some cuts from the journal of competence of the visiting teachers. Most of the reports from these lessons were positive, but almost all fourteen also reported on the difficulty at the beginning and that there were some minutes of insecurity at the beginning of the lessons/talks.

Comments of visiting teachers

(a) The lesson is creative and motivating for the pupil

but I could sense that although they were not using their proper language but with their eyes and gestures they showed us that

they understood everything and really appreciated our stay with them.

The first thing I noticed about the four girls we were going to talk with was their eager anticipation. You could feel how eager they were to hear more about us. It was nice to see them chatter and giggle among each other. There was immediately a sense of relaxation and anticipation from my side as well, because now I too wanted to hear more about them and their experiences of living in Sweden and going to Älvboda Friskola here.

As the talk progressed, I noticed that the students became even more relaxed and at ease and they were using the English language quite confidently and fluently now. The initial shyness had been won over by a feeling of trust within the group where they felt comfortable to disclose with us.

The three quotations show that the visiting teachers are reflecting upon and learning from the experience in class. We can also see that the developments among the pupils are noticed and it seems as if the relaxed situation has been productive. This might be a proof of the school code. Many of the students coming to the school mention a ‘familiar feeling’ and this has been heard over the years about the school.

(b) Pupils are actively involved in the learning process



Personally, I was very pleased with the students and contented for the fact that they spoke good English and made their very best to continue with the conversation.

Sometimes children couldn't find the word to explain one or other thing, they lacked of words, but still tried to answer any way.

In my opinion this Small Talk boosted the students' self esteem to think about themselves as potential learners and being able to try out something that might be difficult for them, even if this might involve making a lot of mistakes in the beginning.

(...) we created great atmosphere for conversation between "visiting teachers" and students of Älvboda Friskola. I haven't heard students talking a lot English during the lessons, but here they were talking, answering questions and asking us about our countries.

In general terms they were able to express their ideas and thoughts with good pronunciation and fluency. Also they were capable of describing past experiences. However they found some problems to find the correct word but they tried to explain it in other words which is also a good strategy.

The five voices describe a learning situation that is productive and the involvement is obvious.

(c) Manages the learning environment effectively

I believe that the circle formation is a good way for a group discussion to be possible since there are no boundaries built and physical proximity is all the same to everyone. I could sense it in the group that they were feeling comfortable and glad to be in this group.

We decided to go at the back of the class so as to form a circle so that we could easily see one another. We also thought that it would be more plausible if we sit alternatively for the reason that we wanted to bring about the idea that we are all equal and there are not distinctions between students and teachers.

I believe that such a talk has helped me to think and reflect upon the teachers' role in the group and his/her importance to be flexible to the students' needs. It has also helped the students to build up self confidence especially when it comes to talk with others using a foreign language.

But the beginning is always the most difficult. First you have to break the ice; you have to find a way in these children's hearts. Another thing is, to my mind, that they were a little bit shy to speak in English. We talked about very simple things such as school, travelling, hobbies, friends, future jobs, food, etc. I found the level of English they spoke quite well. They spoke fluently, just sometimes didn't know some words. The pronunciation was good, intonation made the narration even more interesting

Even the way how the students were divided made it easier for the students to talk and not to be shy. I think that being around a table talking to two visiting teachers was a very comfortable setting for the students.

Hearing the word 'Two Small Talks' was something that I could not really understand, yet reading the report that we were given from last year, I could get an idea of what it really was: what was expected out of me and out of the students.

The six comments from journals of competence show a willingness and understanding for understanding and using the learning environment and this will probably show to be productive for the future building of a professional teaching repertoire.

## Comments of tutor

When I understood that the planning I had done early January could not be worked out, I began to think about how to arrange the situation. My decision was to have some seminars talking about philosophy of teaching and the need to be open to the new. In the journals of competence written by the visiting teachers a lot of frustration was shown, as the clash between the tradition, or culture, they were used to and our situation was so different. All students said that they were used to a schedule in detail, with hours, classes, rooms and contents decided. As the education at Älvboda Friskola is not like that, the problem was to work inductively in the seminars and later when we came to the school. If I should add a theoretical background to how the seminars, the talks with each student and the talks in little groups were conducted (a word maybe not appropriate; 'worked through' might be better), it is Habermas' idea of Communicative Action (Habermas 1981/1984-7) deliberate democracy together with the above expressed ricoeurean thinking that are taking out the direction. This together with the Swedish philosopher and writer Hans Larsson (1862-1944) writes in *Pedagogiska miniatyrer* ('Pedagogic miniatures'):

The pedagogic intellectualism has its fault right there, that it does not give enough enlightenment. If the elaborate comments, usually named moral lecture, do not persuade, it is because the educator does not succeed to make understandable what he

wants. He does not hit. He does not attain on that road what ethics name precision: he can mention the extremes, that should be avoided, and approximately say what is to be done, but where exactly the right way is, he can not say. (...) What is it, then, that gives the precision? Sometimes an apt word, to succeed to, concretely, bring out the desired. Most common is the manner, the tone, used saying it, the essence, and the personality by the one talking. (...) (Larsson, 1912, p.120-121, translation by writer.)

The frustration mentioned is in one journal of competence expressed as below.

Now I find myself really confused! I never had this kind of lesson. No tables, no notes, just talking and singing. Is this the Swedish way? What about the programme, we were supposed to learn about the educational system and we have to write a paper about it. What now, how do we have to do it? I decided to go for a walk in the park after the lesson by myself. It was really quiet in there, such a beautiful place. It started snowing again, and there were no more questions, the city was silent and so was my head. What is the meaning of this? I really don't understand what we have to do here. I hope everything will be all right and will become clear after a while.

These notes were from the first days in Sweden. The same student wrote the second week, after having been at the practicing school for some days and the induction of the seminars she was so frustrated about:

The fact I think that it's strange that they are so friendly at the school makes me wonder. Why is it strange when people are friendly to a teacher-student? Isn't it the most normal thing? Apparently not. I feel really at ease with those teachers.

From the journal of competence, final week, we can read: "Now I understood the lesson about 'glocal'. We have to learn our children about their environment at home before we go further and explore the world." ('Glocal' is a word made from glo(bal) and (lo)cal, i.e. think global(ly), act local(ly), a word that in this discourse takes in the distant and the near and in seminars, teaching and learning, used for elaborating on the connection between the two - and the range in between.)

This comment was after the last lesson that this student was responsible for and over the five weeks, entangled in discussions, work, reading, seminars, teaching, observing the student had taken enough steps into the culture of a school system different from hers, maybe even a bit exotic. The frustration being changed into understanding, and to some extent even liked, looks about the same among all fourteen students, though differently expressed. The conclusion is that our visiting students have accomplished a critical constructive understanding for the 'complex',

‘contextually bound’ and ‘historically formed’ activity in schools. The tutor of this has understood that even more of inductive work ought to be done to make it possible to come from one community of interpretation to another. The creation of a common understanding is crucial. If we want to build a community of interpretation, the academic part of a work like MOST, would not suffer if we did cut down the amount and length of lectures and that time was used more to maximize dialogue.

Also, having seen the pupils at Älvboda Friskola taking active part in arranging good education for themselves and visiting teachers this inductive instance might be as important in compulsory school as in the academy. To borrow from Beauchamp (2006) we can say that we should emphasize less on ‘introduction to’ the situation and more on ‘induction to’ it, if we are striving for making it easier for more of us to be active and responsible members of communities of interpretation. This also is working in the same direction as the above mentioned ideas of Ricoeur (homo capax) and Habermas (Communicative Action).

Before ending this text, a result of the project needs to be described. The class alfabeta will next school year make their last year in the compulsory school and the pupils have articulated a will to talk about a new attitude to education. Over two years they have met visiting teachers from different countries and used English actively, they have been confronted with academic teachers from six countries and just before the end of the spring semester they addressed and invited the Swedish partner of the MOST project to come back in the autumn to continue the dialogue on

how to study, what to study, why study, when and where and with whom and also to go on with talks on responsibility and democratic values and action.

Getting back to the five aspects of homo capax and putting them in a questioning mode and adding the three assessment criteria of MOST we started off with, we will have this:

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| - Who is talking?           |  |
| - Who is acting?            | - The lesson is creative and motivating for the pupils |
| - Who is being responsible? | - Pupils are actively involved in the learning process |
| - Who is telling/narrating? | - Manages the learning environment effectively         |
| - Who is remembering?       |  |

**Figure 1: Questions related to the five aspects of Homo Capax**

Here, our next deliberation can begin, and as I wrote earlier I believe it to be counter productive to the different forms of educations to work out a European standard for the assessment of those that are working with the art of teaching and the art of learning. But, again: a continuing conversation and generous telling each other about generated ideas on the field of teaching-learning is something we need if we do not wish to be framed in and blind to defects and problems - as well as the good - in our own school and work.



## **Classroom Management for the Beginning Teacher**

### ***Christopher Bezzina***

#### 1. Introduction

Knowing how to prepare a plate of pasta or a salad does not make you a successful restaurateur. For that you need to know about accountancy, local regulations, EU standards, sanitation laws, customer care and employee relations amongst others. In other words, the first thing you need to know is how to manage the restaurant.

The same applies to teaching. Whilst successful teachers operate in many different ways, they have one thing in common – an ability to manage their classrooms effectively. As Wragg (1994, 2001) points out, without this basic skill, the most inspiring and knowledgeable teacher will fail.

As we address the challenges of national curricula and a host of other reforms we come to realise that knowledge of a subject or a degree in a particular area does not make a teacher. You need to know about formative and summative forms of assessment, portfolios and profiling, learning styles, motivation theory, identification of learning difficulties, parent participation, gender issues, and a host of other things.

Whilst teachers have to think of content (i.e. knowledge of a particular subject), of lesson planning and preparation, of activities, handouts, ICT,

etc., we also realise ‘that we are employed so as to take a group of students and turn them into interested and productive learners’ (Bezzina, 2001, p.13). Therefore, the first thing teachers need to know is how to manage a class full of students. This is what this chapter aims to address.

This chapter focuses on what we consider to be some of the most important issues when discussing the area of classroom management. These are treated in a number of sections. In the first section we discuss a more inclusive definition of classroom management which goes beyond mere discipline and control. From there we move on to discussing the characteristics of the classroom as a learning environment which we consider to be another important requisite in the process of learning to teach. Undeniably, this process also involves the acquisition of basic skills which we describe at some length in the concluding section.

## 2. What is Classroom Management?

Traditionally, the teacher’s task was conceived as consisting of two separate and separable commitments. First he/she was expected to be skilful in the keeping of order and discipline and, secondly, to be able to communicate knowledge to the students. In the nineteenth century, the first was given far more importance than the second. In fact, being able to discipline and control classes, even in the absence of a satisfactory knowledge of subject matter and pedagogical skills, qualified a candidate

for teaching (Grace, 1985). It is this pervasive assumption that is captured in Delamont's (1976, p.99) observation:

Much teacher behaviour is in accordance with the role expectations held for them by their pupils and society at large. They attempt to control their classes and then to teach them something.

The management task of teaching was not only narrowly conceived as consisting of the ability to control students in the classroom, but it was assumed that control preceded instruction.

Decades later, educators, especially those involved in teacher training programmes, while accepting the distinction between the two roles, redefined the first one to include, besides discipline and control, the following skills:

- Establishing rules and procedures;
- Developing a rapport with students;
- Managing time;
- Using resources; and,
- Organizing the classroom space.

However, it became increasingly apparent that, in learning to teach, the twin tasks of management and instruction flow and feed into each other. This is evidenced even by everyday experience. The advice in the pedagogical folklore to beginning teachers *first* to establish order and *then*

begin to teach may not be that logical after all because the way the teacher selects and organizes subject matter and communicates it to the students with the support of appropriate resources, is an enabling factor in the successful management of the classroom. A forceful argument for the integration of the twin tasks of management and instruction has been made by Boostrom (1991), Richardson & Fallona (2001) and Fenwick (1998).

Therefore, classroom management includes many different skills, including the way a teacher arranges the classroom, establishes classroom rules, responds to misbehaviour, monitors student activity, selects rewards and reinforcement, and uses daily routines to maintain a caring, supportive, efficient and productive learning climate.

If you ask a number of teachers how they handle particular classroom management issues, you are likely to receive several different, and perhaps even contradictory, responses. As Davis (1983) has pointed out, different teacher personalities, teaching styles and management practices will create very different classroom atmospheres. We go on to add, that, as a result, they will encourage different forms of feedback from students. Depending upon their own experiences and personal views, teachers approach classroom management from a number of different philosophies. For our purposes, these approaches to dealing with classroom behaviour can be grouped into three general traditions.

One tradition emphasizes the critical role of communication and shared problem solving between teachers and students. This approach is called the *humanistic* tradition and is represented by the writings of Ginott (1972) and Glasser (1986, 1990). The second tradition comes from the field of *applied behaviour analysis* and is best represented by the writings of Madsen & Madsen (1970), O’Leary & O’Leary (1977), Alberto & Troutman (1986), Jones (1987) and Canter (1976, 1989), who apply behaviouristic principles, such as behaviour modification, to the classroom. The third approach, which is the most recent, emphasizes skills involved in organizing and managing the classroom. This approach is called the *classroom management* tradition, and its major principles can be found in the writings of Kounin (1970), Doyle (1986), Good & Brophy (1990), Emmer, Evertson, Clements & Worsham (1997) and Wragg (1994, 2001).

Our discussion in this chapter will emphasise the classroom management tradition. We have chosen to highlight this approach because its principles are derived from research in the classroom and the central role that teachers play in the learning process.

The research indicates that the amount of time that students spend actively engaged in learning activities is directly linked to their academic achievement. It also shows that teachers who are good classroom managers are able to maximize student engaged time or academic learning time.

Various research studies of teacher effectiveness (e.g. Wragg, 2001; Emmer, Evertson and Anderson, 1980; Brophy & Evertson, 1976) report that classroom management skills are of primary importance in determining teaching success, whether it is measured by student learning or by ratings. Given this, management skills are crucial and fundamental. A teacher who is grossly inadequate in classroom management skills is probably not going to accomplish much (Bezzina, 2001).

As MacDonald & Healy (1999, p.205) state, competent classroom management is essentially a human relations skill. It reflects a teacher's ability to purposefully organize individual and group learning activities within a supportive classroom climate. Teachers need to possess the leadership skills to draw students into orderly encounters with activities/tasks which they may initially be indifferent or resistant to. This usually requires a firm presence and a strong sense of purpose, qualities that need to be balanced with considerable patience and good humour.

Classroom management includes all of the things a teacher must do towards two ends:

1. To foster student involvement and cooperation in all classroom activities.
2. To establish a productive working environment.

To foster student involvement and cooperation in all classroom activities, the effective teacher plans a variety of activities that are appropriate for

learning. These activities may include reading, taking notes, participating in group work, taking part in class discussions, participating in games, and producing material. An effective teacher has every student involved and cooperating in all of these activities.

For all students to work on their activities, the environment must be conducive to learning. Students must pay attention, be cooperative and respectful of each other, exhibit self-discipline, and remain on task. In addition, the room must have a positive climate, all materials must be ready and organized, and the furniture must be arranged for productive work.

### 3. Characteristics of a Well-Managed Classroom

We are living in a period of time where many stores, large departmental stores are the rule of the day. And, as we all know, one expects such establishments to be well managed. When asked what that means, one expects the following characteristics to be mentioned:

- The store: its layout, organization, and cleanliness
- The merchandise: its display, accessibility, and availability
- The help: their management, efficiency, knowledge, and friendliness

You could probably do the same for a restaurant, an airline, or a doctor's office. In fact, you have probably said more than once, 'If I run this place, I would do things differently.' Well, if you ran a school or a

classroom, which is what you do, how would you run this place? That is called classroom management, and the characteristics of a well-managed classroom are well known.

**Read Chapter 15 ‘The Classroom Environment and situational factors’, in Guide to Teaching Practice by Cohen, Manion and Morrison**

**Figure 2: Recommendation for reading**

### 3.1. Activity

Imagine that you are taking the class for the first time. Think of answers to the following questions:

1. What information about the class would you find useful before meeting the students?
2. What would you try to communicate to them during the initial encounters?
3. What would you be paying attention to during the first lessons?
4. What kind of expectations would you have of the class?

### 3.2. The Characteristics of a Well-Managed Classroomvi

1. Students are deeply involved with their work, especially with academic, teacher-led or guided instruction.
2. Students know what is expected of them and are generally successful.



3. There is relatively little wasted time, confusion, or disruption.
4. The climate of the classroom is work oriented, but relaxed and pleasant.

Veenman (1984) observed that classroom management is the most often reported concern of beginning teachers. Classroom management is most likely a concern (to some degree) for all teachers. When 25 to 30 children are placed in one room at the same time with one teacher, some system of order must exist so that learning may take place.

Much information and several excellent models are available on classroom management. Some resources are listed throughout this handbook. What follows, are some bottom line, practical considerations that many classroom management models have in common.

#### 4. Some Considerations

Classroom management is not simply establishing rules and routines, which you will use for the remainder of your teaching career. The rules and routines you choose will vary depending on the building and its principal location, students (grade level, interests, aptitudes, maturity, and cliques), activities, time of year, and most importantly your philosophy of education.

- Work on that mental image of what you want your room to be like. What is the feeling? How does it look (ordered, relaxed)? How does it sound (low buzz, quiet)? What does it say to your students?
- Be flexible. Hang on to those things that work, but don't be afraid of those things that don't. Few teachers use one model or approach to classroom management. They borrow from several models to create the learning environment they want for their students.
- On the other hand, don't give up on a new idea too quickly. One must give a new idea a fair chance, and that means, allowing time to practice, making mistakes, observing effects, and adjusting.
- Students need continuity and stability. Avoid making frequent drastic changes in, for example, seating order, expectations and rules. Make changes only when necessary.
- Base changes you make in classroom management on reasons which are educationally sound. A large body of solid research is available today. Consult the literature.
- The key to classroom management is to be proactive. This means organizing the classroom to maximize time on task. It is based on the ability of the teacher to foresee learning.
- Develop a resource file for classroom management with ideas from conferences, books, workshops, and other teachers. You should eventually have several different ways on file to carry out every routine task.

| Techniques to help you implement the four characteristics of a well-managed class |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| Characteristics   | Effective Teacher  | Ineffective Teacher   |
| High level of student involvement with work                                       | Students are working.  | Teacher is working.   |
| Clear student expectations  | Students know that assignments are based on objectives.                        | Teacher says, "Read Chapter 2 and learn the material by heart."   |
|   | Students know that tests are based on objectives.                              | "I'll give you a test covering everything in Chapter 3".          |
| Relatively little waste of time, confusion or disruption                          | Teacher has a discipline plan.   | Teacher makes up rules and punishes according to his or her mood. |
|   | Teacher starts class immediately.  | Teacher takes roll and dallies.                                   |
|   | Teacher assigns tasks/work   | Students repeatedly ask for work to be assigned.                  |
| Work-oriented but relaxed and pleasant climate                                    | Teacher has invested time in practicing procedures until they become routines. | Teacher tells but does not rehearse procedures.                   |
|   | Teacher knows how to bring the class to attention.                             | Teacher yells.  |
|   | Teacher knows how to praise the deed and encourage the student.                | Teacher uses generalised praise or none at all.                   |

Figure 3: Techniques for a well-manged class

## 5. The Room

In Reggio Emilia, a city in northern Italy where preschools are renowned for their quality of education, the two teachers in every classroom refer to the environment as the *third teacher*. They recognise the importance of the

physical setup of the classroom and, therefore, take great care in preparing it.

I share this view. The environment one creates can either make or break one's effort to work effectively with students. How one arranges the furniture, utilizes floor and wall space, and select and organise resources and materials all need to be carefully considered. Here are some ideas for creating a purposeful environment – one that will help students become strategic learners.

Your teaching styles and the types of activities you plan will help you make these decisions. The best room arrangement is one which puts the least distance between the teacher and any student in the class. However, there are some guidelines to keep in mind:

- Keep high traffic areas free of congestion!
- Be sure you can see all of the students at all times.
- Keep frequently used materials readily accessible.
- Be sure students are able to see presentations.
- The placement of the teacher's desk is best in the side or back of the room. Teaching from a sitting position behind a desk is one of the least effective styles you can use.
- Students seated facing each other or at tables in small groups are more likely to interact with each other. Students facing the teacher from rows, or a horseshoe are less likely to interact. The type of

lesson should dictate the chair arrangement. Some possibilities for alternative room arrangement are given next.

### 5.1. Room Arrangement

The most widespread instance of visual distraction occurs in the classroom where students are seated around tables looking at one another during teacher talk. Four of the five senses are distracted: sight, hearing, smell, and touch. Thoughts about what that person across the table is wearing or doing compete with the teacher. Placing students with distractibility problems around tables all day only exacerbates their problems. In fact, students diagnosed with attention deficit disorder (ADD) should have nothing between them and the teacher during teacher talk. In addition, they should not be seated close to other students with distractibility or hyperactive symptoms. Neutralizing the distractions in the classroom is a necessity if we aim to get active listening and not just hearing from all students.

The questions below will help you decide how you are going to arrange your room.

(a) How will you use your bulletin board space?

- List daily assignments
- Post daily objectives
- Display student work
- Communicate unit theme.

(b) How will you arrange the desks and chairs?

- Rows
- Horseshoe
- Square
- Groups
- Circles

Figure 4 shows five possible configurations. The seating pattern should maximize the opportunity to focus on a task and listen actively. It should also minimize transition time between activities. Competing distractions must be minimized during teacher talk. The transition from teacher talk to group work or independent work should take only seconds. What other configurations have you come across? Which ones have you used? Which ones have you found effective? Why?

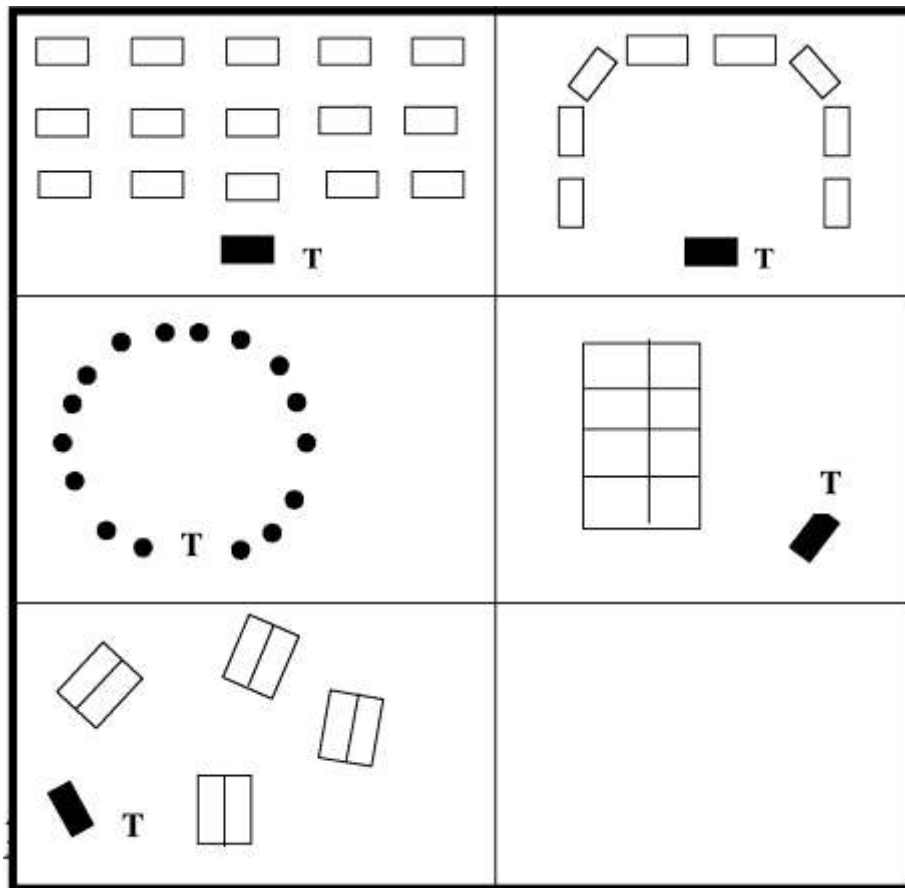


Figure 4: Five rooms configurations

(c) How will you use your desk?

- Conference centre (i.e. to meet students individually or groups)
- Work station (i.e. to conduct an experiment)
- Supply cabinet (i.e. to pass on materials)

(d) Where will you put your desk?

- At the front of the room
- At the side of the room
- Behind students
- In the centre of the class

(e) Where is the best place for these items?

- File cabinet
- Supplies
- Learning Centres
- Book Case
- Overhead projector
- Computers
- Plants
- Personal items
- Items easily stolen
- Other items?

(f) Where will you meet individual/small groups of students?

- Near a black board/white board
- Near a bulletin board
- In a corner of the room

(g) Do you want an open area for movement activities?



- (h) Do you want a 'time out' area?
- (i) Do you want to display pets or plants?
- (j) Do you want a special cabinet spot in the room for paperwork?
  - Collecting papers/copybooks
  - Folders or Files
  - Homework assignments
  - Returning papers/copybooks
  - Portfolios
  - Self-assessment sheets
  - Others

## 6. Procedures

### 6.1. Introduction

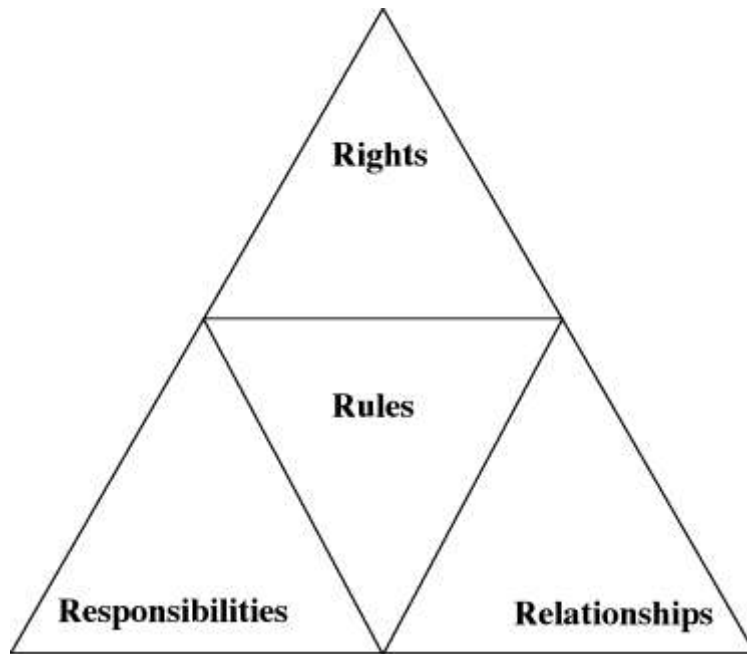
During your school experience phases in schools you have observed students acting differently to different teachers. You have reflected, made observations and shared ideas as to why this is so. Central to classrooms being described as safe, busy, buzzing with learning or even chaotic are procedures. Students readily accept activities. As Thody, Gray and Bowden (2000) point out, the lack of procedures also leads to students

acquiring undesirable work habits and behaviours that are then quite difficult to handle and correct.

Read Chapter 2 “Creating a positive learning environment” in *The Teacher's Survival Guide* by Thody, Gray and Bowden.

**Figure 5: Recommendation for reading**

Thody et al. (2000, p.17) talk about a framework for the development of positive behaviour involving four elements. These elements work together to create a caring community of learners in which all the strands are interdependent and all are dependent on the quality of the relationships in the school.



**Figure 6: Four elements for the development of positive behaviour**

*These four elements show that, whilst each element is distinct from the other, they are closely bound:*

**Rights:** The right for everyone (teacher and students alike) to feel safe (physically and emotionally); to be treated with dignity and respect; to be listened to, and to learn.

**Responsibilities:** According to Thody et al. (2000, p.18) “responsibilities go hand in hand with rights”. Covey (1987, p.71) expresses this well as “response - ability”, which he defines as “the ability to choose our response”. To demonstrate responsibility, students need to be given

opportunities to practice. In this way, students learn the skills of making decisions and *reflecting* on the effects of their choices.

Rules: Rules are based on rights and responsibilities. There are, at least, two types of rules which are used in schools: *School rules and Teacher's rules*. School rules, which can be similar or different from those of other schools, concern issues such as dress code, behaviour in the school yard, gym or science laboratories. Then, there are teacher's rules on matters such as talking and movement and setting-out of work.

It is essential to remember, that rules need to be expressed in positive phrases, written in terms which show what you and your students will do.

Ted Wragg presents a very interesting chapter on Rules and Relationships in the practical manual entitled *Class Management* (1994), London, Routledge.

Figure 7: Recommendation for reading

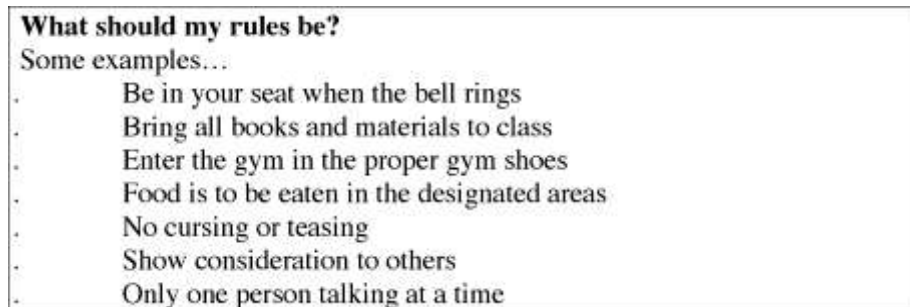
Effective teachers present their rules clearly and provide reasonable explanations for their need. In fact, the most successful classes are those in which the teacher has a clear idea of what is expected from the

students and the students have a clear idea of what the teacher expects from them (e.g. Wragg, 1994).

- Rules are expectations of appropriate student behaviour.
- Rules help to create a work-oriented atmosphere.
- Rules create a strong expectation about the things that are important to you and the school.
- It is important to clearly communicate to students in both verbal and written form to students what you expect from them as appropriate behaviour.
- As a teacher you will have more confidence in your ability to manage a class if you have a clear idea of what you expect from your students and they know that that is what you expect from them.
- It is easier to maintain good behaviour than to change inappropriate behaviour.

|   |
|---|
| <p>Do you agree with the elements put forward by Ted Wragg?</p> |
|---|

**Figure 8: Activity box 1**



**Figure 9: Figure 9: My rules**

Rules can fall under various headings. In a research study involving primary school teachers Wragg and Bennett (cited in Wragg, 1994) identified a variety of rules used by teachers. These fell under nine headings. Some examples for each case follow<sup>vii</sup>:

Movement:

- No running in the corridors
- Ask first if you want to go to the toilet

Talking:

- No shouting out
- Put your hands up, if you want to ask a question

Work-Related:

- Being able to work independently on your own
- Do not distract others when they are working

Presentation:

- Taking care with content
- Knowing how to set out work and when to hand it in

Safety:

- Take care with scissors, rulers, pencils etc.
- No swinging on chairs

Space:

- Not allowed in classroom during break time

Materials:

- Keep library books tidy
- No scribbling on desks or books

Social behaviour:

- Be willing to share things and cooperate
- Show good manners

Clothing:

- Clothing to be neat and clean
- Wear designated school uniform

What are your reactions to this list?

**Figure 10: Activity box 2**

Wragg presents a series of questions, which are worthy of consideration. Teachers, individually and more so collectively, should be discussing the importance behind rules, especially within the context of a school-wide discipline plan.

The following questions will help you get started:

- From the above set of rules which do you consider most important and which trivial?
- Which would you wish to see in operation in your own class?
- Take a particular rule, and discuss with other teachers how you would: a) establish it, b) explain the need for it, and c) fine tune it.
  
- Identify rules on which disagreement amongst teachers exists. Discuss a) what problems may emerge, b) what solutions need to be found to avoid difficulties.
- Discuss the extent to which there should be uniformity and diversity in different teachers' class rules within the same school.



Relationships:

Positive relationships are built when people feel valued and respected. Establishing effective relationships should be tops on our agenda. I would go on to add that relationships are essential at all levels: administrators and teachers; teachers and teachers, teachers and students, students and students, and the school and the community. All forms of relationships will, to a large extent, effect the rapport that people build *within* the school and more so between teachers and students.

Learning is enhanced or hindered by the social processes at work. When good relationships have been established, we can create opportunities for personal development. You have the necessary building-blocks for creating a positive climate for learning when members of the class community know and trust each other, are able to skilfully communicate with each other and are able to solve relationship problems. Genuine openness requires self-awareness and self-acceptance: you need to be able to trust to be able to express how you feel. All members of the class community should be enabled to listen to each other and to learn how other people want to be treated.

Naturally, we all know that this is far from an easy undertaking. At this point, therefore, the question: 'What about the need for discipline?' is legitimate.

Isn't discipline necessary for learning to take place? Effective teachers know and research shows (Bennett & Dunne, 1992) that the more time on task spent by students the more they learn. Learning takes place when students are focused and at work. All discipline does is stop misbehaviour. The reason coaches have their teams go through certain steps or paces over and over again is that the more they practice the better they will be to execute them during the game. The reason parents have their children practice the piano is that the more they practice, the better they play. Descriptions of the effective and ineffective classrooms are captured in the box below (figure 11).

| An Effective or Ineffective Classroom  |   |
|--|---|
| Effective Classroom  | Ineffective Classroom   |
| The students are actively involved in meaningful work. The procedures govern what they do and they understand how the class functions. The teacher is moving around the room, also at work, helping, correcting, answering, monitoring, disciplining, smiling, and caring. | The students are in their seats doing busy work or nothing. The only person who is observed working is the teacher. The teacher is in control of the class. |
|  | Learning only occurs when a person is actively engaged in the process.  |
| <i><b>Are students actively engaged in your classroom?</b></i>   |   |

Figure 11: An effective of ineffective classroom

Procedures, like rules, communicate expectations for behaviour. However, they apply to specific activities. Teachers of well-managed classrooms think about appropriate behaviour during different activities. These procedures fall into three categories:

- beginning of class
- during the class
- end of class

Procedures need to be clearly explained, modelled, and reviewed with students. Procedures for starting class should not require your input or attention to begin. Students will try to distract the teacher from his/her task. The teacher needs to be consistent about reinforcing the opening procedure. Materials for the start of class should be centrally located so that students may get them and quietly get to work. Distractors, such as calling out names, should be avoided.

Consistency is essential to maintain a productive classroom. Procedures need to be established that the teacher will be able to reinforce all the time. Some students are conditioned at home to wear the rule-giver down. Effective teachers set standards that they will not negotiate. In establishing these standards they also consider the time of day. Teachers may consider varying standards in the time after lunch, for example, if they feel that the students need a little leeway. So long as the students know and appreciate what the ground rules are than this option should

be considered. Never assume that they know or understand your expectations. These clearly need to be set and discussed at the start of a scholastic year.

Research shows that teachers can increase student learning by taking time at the end of class to summarize the day's objectives. To do this they establish clear ending procedures and watch the clock carefully. At the same time the end of lesson/day bell should never be the signal for students to move out of class. It is always the teacher who should dismiss students.

On the following pages a series of questions aim to help you outline your expectations for classroom procedures.

(a) Beginning of the class

- Where will you keep the materials you will need?
- Where will you position yourself in the room to take the attendance?
- Will you call out the names?
- What will students do with absentee notes?
- How will you handle tardy students?
- What do you expect students to do while you take their attendance?

(b) During the class

- What procedures will you use when the students need to leave the room?
- How will you handle forgotten materials/books?
- Will you allow students to return to their lockers for forgotten materials?
- Which materials and equipment are students allowed/forbidden to use?
- How will you expect students to behave when you are presenting information?
- How will you expect students to behave during seatwork activities?
- How will you expect students to behave during group work?
- What will be acceptable behaviour when asking for help?

(c) End of class

- How will you assign homework?
- How will the students help straighten up the room?
- How will you handle an incomplete lesson?
- How will students know that they can get out of their seats?

## 6.2. Activity

Observe two teachers in the school you are attached to. Notice the techniques they use to start their lesson and to gain student attention. Do they get students in tune with them before they attempt to teach? What attention-getting and initiatory manoeuvres do the effective teachers employ most frequently? What do the less effective teachers fail to do or do ineffectively when they attempt to initiate classroom activities? Think about what specific initiatory moves you would use in those situations.

## 7. Conclusion

This chapter has helped the reader to appreciate what it takes to create a positive and rewarding climate for learning to take place. It has shown, amongst other things, that the most important factor governing student learning is classroom management. It has been emphasized that how teachers manage the classroom is the main determinant of how well students will learn. The chapter has shown that teachers who spend the first days/weeks of the scholastic year establishing procedures and routine help to set the class up for success to take place. Indeed, the teacher makes the difference in the classroom.

## Communication for the beginning teacher: order out of chaos

*Julie De Ganck*

### 1. Introduction

A precondition for effective communication is revealing what others, consciously or unconsciously, want us to understand. As humans are social beings who are born in a linguistic culture, we communicate about 80 percent of the day. This means that most of our waking hours are spent reading, writing, listening or speaking (Gilbert, 2004, p.19). Following the national curriculum and our European Standard – developed within the MOST project – teachers and teacher trainees are supposed to act as good communicators within the classroom and school. The issue of communicating has become more than a tribal concern in school life. Effective teaching depends on successful communication. Nevertheless we often aren't conscious of *what* we are communicating, *how* we are communicating, even of the fact *that* we are communicating and of the consequences of these processes.

Good teachers are supposed to listen actively to verbal and non-verbal signals, to use facial expressions effectively, to use adequate non-verbal gestures and intonation, to know when to use humour and when to be serious, to act friendly and patient with pupils. A competent teacher possesses good questioning skills, he is able to explain lesson contents, and he can check if the message has been understood,... But often

teachers and teacher educators have become so involved with delivering the curricula and standards that they fail to acknowledge *how* to deliver the curricula (Johnson & Morrow, 1999, p. 1). To meet this need and to become conscious about *what, how, why and that* we are communicating, this article considers

- (a) a structural framework of the communication process,
- (b) an interactional view on communication

In an additional article<sup>viii</sup> on communication we will discuss the art of listening and the different forms of verbal and non-verbal communication.

## 2. The process of communicating and the transfer of information

*There is more than a verbal tie between the words common, community and communication...Try the experiment of communicating, with fullness and accuracy, some experience to another, especially if be somewhat complicated, and you will find your own attitude toward your experience changing.*

John Dewey

### 2.1. The behavioristic view: content over relationship



Human beings distinguish themselves from other living organisms by the use of language. People are linguistic beings. One of the values of language is that it can be used as an instrument to communicate and to make oneself clear to another. Etymologically *communication* comes from the Latin *communicare* which means *to make common* or *to share*. Within a traditional, behaviouristic view, communication often is reduced to the action (cause)-reaction (consequence) process whereby the behaviour of one individual (the sender) influences the behaviour of another (the receiver) by transmitting a message through a channel and with the interference of noise. Behaviour can be defined as communicative to the extent that it reduces uncertainty in the behaviour of another (Buck, 1984, p.4).

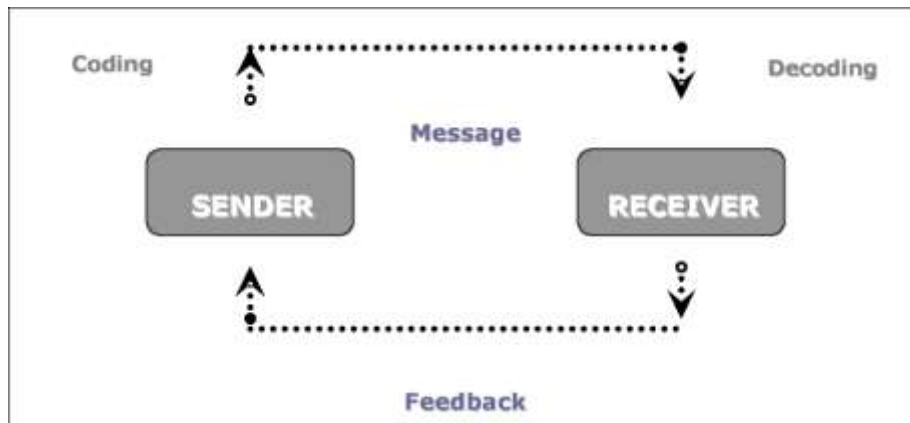


Figure 12: Schema of communication

From the point of view of this tube metaphor, in which *information* is transmitted along a figurative tube from a sender to a receiver (Burris, 2004, p.38) *noise* is defined to be “anything that distorts the message intended by the source, anything that interferes with the receiver’s receiving the message as the source intended the message to be received” (DeVito, p.209). Communication is thereby a *process* that enables humans to share knowledge, skills and attitudes. Effective teaching depends on successful communication. When students and teachers interact, explicit communication is occurring (Miller, 1988, p.4). Within this objectivistic view there is a great emphasis on *content*. Translated to interaction processes within the classroom, learning consists of information processing, which is the *reception* of information, the intelligent *storage* of that information in schemata, and the competent *retrieval* of the information on demand (Burris, 2004, p. 37).

Together with many others (Maturana & Varela, 1987; Burris, 2004) we are convinced that this simplified view on symbolic communication doesn’t give a satisfying answer to a lot of questions and issues at stake in the interaction processes of linguistic organisms. Alternatively we will illuminate communication processes from the viewpoint of complexity theory, as we believe human beings are signifying and meaning-generating beings (De Ganck, 2002). To understand thoroughly the phenomenon of communication, we have to understand that the communication process

“depends not on what is transmitted, but on what happens to the person who receives it” (Maturana & Varela, 1987). Therefore, in this article we will discuss in short:

- The theory of autopoiesis and its significance within communication processes
- The influence of transference processes in the act of lecturing or teaching and its implications for the conception of good teachers and good students
- The arbitrary relationship between signifier and signified

## 2.2. The structural view: the classroom as a complex social living system

### 2.2.1. Human beings as autopoietic systems

Whereas the content emphasis within the tube metaphor relies on the following assumptions (Burris, 2004, p.37-38):

- (a) that information has its own independent existence outside of the student
- (b) that knowledge is solely brain-based
- (c) that knowing is an individual experience and learning is social insofar as information is passed from one individual to another
- (d) that teaching is the provision of information and learning is the absorption of that information

the complex system approach states that there is no such thing as information, because living systems are *organisationally closed*.

The theory of autopoietic or self-organizing systems, as conceptualised by the neurologists Maturana & Varela (1980 & 1987, cited in De Ganck, 2002) explains the *autonomy* which characterises living systems. An *autopoietic system* exists as a network of processes which continuously coincide with the processes by which they are generated. There is a *circular closure*; the processes which occur within the autopoietic system are the processes by which the system can reproduce itself and by which it can stay alive. “The tree develops itself by means of a material which is its own product; thus the preservation of its parts depends on the preservation and production of the whole, and vice versa” (Juarero, 1999, p. 46, cited in De Ganck, 2002).

Maturana appoints this as *organisational closure*. All events an autopoietic system undergoes from the environment become *incorporated* in the self-producing process. “Autocatalysis’ goal is its own maintenance and enhancement in the face of disintegrating pressures from the environment. It is to that extent partially decoupled and independent of the environment: autonomous” (Juarero, 1999, p.127).

All these aspects of the environment with which the system exists in an interdependent relationship become a part (incorporation) of the *structure* of the system.

(....) when I say organizationally closed, in no way I do mean closed in the traditional of the dichotomy between open and

closed systems (...). But the comparison with open, non-equilibrium systems is relevant at this point because their interpretations in terms of differentiable dynamics can be taken as the only well-developed means of presenting the autonomous side of systems. (Varela, 1979, p.81; cited in Van de Vijver, 1991, p.186)

So the system interacts with the environment (is thermodynamically open for energy, stimuli) but is at the same time autonomous; the organisation is given from the inside. An example: the biologic system that monitors a more or less constant body temperature (homeostasis) is a self-organising system. On the other hand a coffee thermos which causes coffee to maintain its constant temperature isn't an autopoietic system because its function and organisation is given by an external designer.

### *Embodiment*

The organisational closure and structural determination of human, linguistic beings has exciting consequences for the act of communication:

Each person says what he says or hears what he hears according to his own structural determination; saying does not ensure listening. From the perspective of an observer, there is always ambiguity in a communicative interaction. The phenomenon of communication depends not on what is transmitted, but on what

happens to the person who receives it. And this is a different matter from transmitting information. (Maturana & Varela, 1987, p.196; cited in Burris, 2004, p.38-39)

Therefore, human beings interact with their environment in ways that are constrained both by their physiology and their psychological, behavioural history. “Their destiny isn’t predetermined, but the options they exercise in a particular situation are limited by these physical and behavioural factors” (Burris, 2004, p.35). “As both a biological and social entity human beings extend into the world and are embedded in it” (Juarrero, 1999, p.141). Therefore, the environment can not only be understood as an input condition, an efficient cause, because of the fact this environment will be part of the structure of the system.

So, living systems do not ‘use’ information. In fact there is no such thing as information for a living system, because they are organisationally closed (Dell, 1985, p.6; cited in Buris, p.38). “Like reality, information can have no absolute, objective existence apart from the system that specifies it” (Ibid, p.38).

Fogel (1993, cited in Ibid.) states that information is always *in formation*, always being created out of itself and always changing with respect to action. So,

Information is offered and detected through action, and its meaning varies depending on the actors in the situation. When (I

think) I see you smile, I do something based on my interpretations of the act. I smile in return; I blush, I worry, without moving a muscle, that you are secretly making fun of me. Or I do nothing at all, physically, emotionally or mentally, which can indicate that the information of your smile was lost on me. (Buris, 2004, p.38)

In accordance with what we have discussed above, the scope of the relationships teachers can enact in a classroom is necessarily limited by the structure of each actor in the system, and the structure is heavily influenced by experiences over time. We can connect this with Freud's theory upon transference processes.

### 2.2.2. Teaching and Transference

*If there's one thing that psychoanalysis should force us to maintain obstinately, it's that the desire for knowledge has no relationship with knowledge... A radical distinction, which has far-reaching consequences from the point of view of pedagogy – the desire to (k)now is not what leads to knowledge. What leads to knowledge is...the hysteric's discourse.*

(Miller, Seminar XVII, p.12)

Lecturers and students, teachers and pupils spent time together. Enough time to give rise to those particular relations which Freud calls transference and counter transference. The concept of transference

(Übertragung) refers to the phenomenon within the psychoanalytic cure or even within social encounters, whereby infantile constellations are repeated and are relived. The analyst or the person we met in a social context will take the place of the key characters in the infantile constellation (Freud).

Burris (2004, p.47) gives the example of a student which reminds a teacher of his abusive father, which can unconsciously force the teacher to experience and treat that student in the ways he interacted with his father<sup>ix</sup>.

With the theory of autopoiesis we wanted to explain that in social interactions “there is more between sender and receiver than ever dreamt of in your philosophy”. We all have blind spots, unconscious desires, ... For this reason it is valuable to recognise the complex influences that can constitute successful or unsuccessful teaching and learning in a *particular* classroom<sup>x</sup>.

### 3. An interactional view on communication: paradigms of human communication

Watzlawick, a researcher at the Mental Research Institute of Palo Alto, defined 5 axioms in his theory on communication (1977) which must to be taken into account to have an effective communication between two individuals. If one of these axioms is to some extent disturbed, communication might fail.



### 3.1. Axiom 1: One cannot not communicate

Within the system approach on communication each behaviour which is shown in the accompany of other human beings is defined as communication. Because behaviour does not have a counterpart (there is no non-behaviour), it is logically impossible not to communicate. So communication always takes place, even when it is not intentional or consciously reasoned. Silence may be interpreted as ignorance, embarrassment, agreement, lack of attention, ... Translated to the classroom situation every observed behaviour of pupils and teachers will have an influence on the other persons.



Illustration by Yvan Boeckmans

Teacher educators and mentors aren't always conscious about the reality of this paradigm. A striking example can be found in the case a pedagogue or a subject teacher observing a student during the practice period and saying afterwards to a colleague: *"I entered the classroom, I only watched her from the back row, and without me doing a thing she started to tremble"*

*and cry...*”. This example illustrates that even only the presence of someone has undoubtedly an influence on the other persons in the room. And even though the mentor had no ‘reasoned’ *intention* with his behaviour (presence), it clearly distorted an *effect* on the other subject.

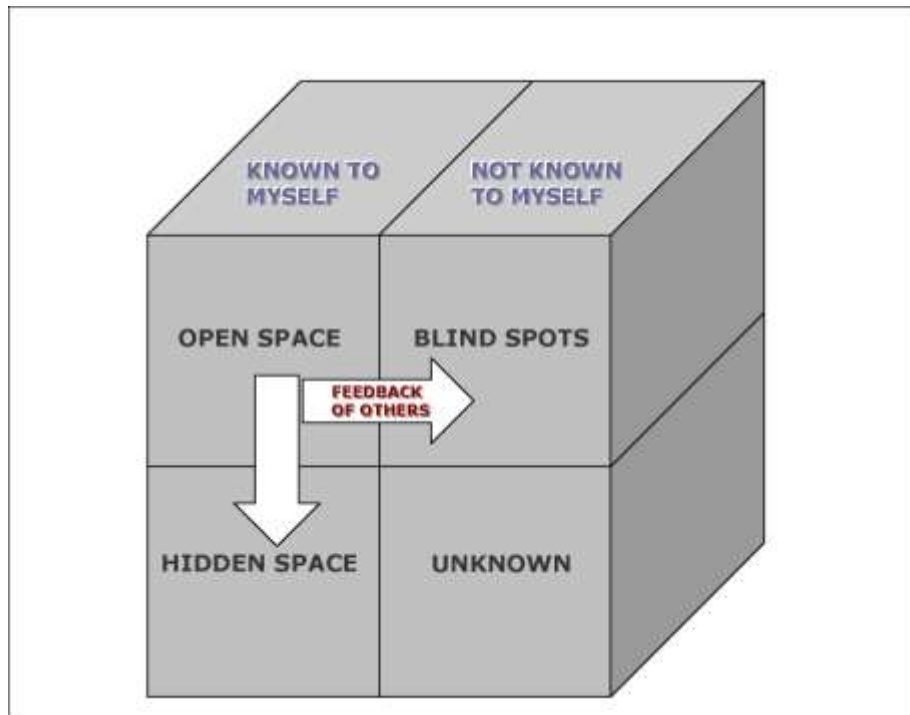
Another way the difference between intention and effect can cause a communication disorder within a relationship is when the intention of the sender is good, but it isn’t perceived positively by the receiver.

Recently you went living together with your partner. Because you have a busy student live, your future mother-in-law wants to help you a little bit. As a surprise (without asking you) she washes your laundry, cleans the whole house and prepares the dinner. You are furious and define the work of your mother-in-law as a violation of your private life! In accordance with your reaction your mother-in-law is hurt because you don’t appreciate her work.

Most people only focus on the good intentions and assume good intentions will always cause a good effect. This is a typical linear, behaviouristic way of causal thinking. To promote successful communication it is valuable to examine if your good intention also has the intended effect. And if not so, to make it discussable and in accordance to adjust your behaviour. Also, we can not deny most people have good intentions. It is promotive for the quality of the relationship

that you notice the good intention of the sender (even when the behaviour had not the intended result).

We already mentioned, by discussing the transference processes within the classroom, the fact a teacher can't escape the influence he or she has on his or her pupils and vice versa. On the other hand what we can do is making the process of reciprocal influence transparent by becoming conscious about our own blind spots and the ways we relate to others. One way to become conscious about our blind spots is by the feedback of others; within supervision and intervision sessions, by peer-observation exercises, through psychoanalysis, ...The change feedback causes in our relationships and in the knowledge of ourselves is illustrated in the Johari-model of Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham (Verhoeven, 2002, p.104).



**Figure 13: The Johari Window**

This four-paned window divides self-awareness into four types, each corresponding with a quadrant; the open space, the hidden space, the area of the blind spots and the unknown self. These represent 4 areas of knowledge upon one's personality.

(a) The open space

This is the part of your personality which is known to yourself and to others. It includes actual information (like your name, hair colour, hobbies,...), but also feelings, characteristics,... For example, you know you are quite jealous, and your friends know it too. Or that you don't have a lot of patience with your students, and your colleagues know that too.

(b) The hidden space

The hidden space represents things that you know, but that other persons do not know. It can be secrets, things that you are afraid of to tell others or that you think are private. For example, you are anxious of being in front of a classroom, but to other persons you seem very confident.

(c) The blind spots

The blind square represents things that others know about you, but that you are unaware of. In popular literature this area is sometimes called 'the bad breath'-space. Within your practice as a teacher you often may use or repeat a non-sense word or phrase as 'you know', 'euh', 'nevertheless', ... Or you often put up and down your glasses, ... You are not conscious of these automatisms or tics, but your pupils are. That's why it is often confronting to see yourself on a video recording.

(d) The unknown self

The unknown self represents things that neither you know about yourself, nor others know about you. It corresponds roughly with the unconscious, as defined by psychoanalytic theory. Maybe you have a panic fear for becoming deaf, neither you or others know the reason why. Although in slips of the tongue, the misuse of words in writings, the forgetting of names, and other similar errors and dreams we can find witnesses of the unconscious.

By communicating with others and the process of feedback, your open space gets bigger and your blind spot smaller. If others give you feedback, you will automatically talk more about yourself. By this process of self-disclosure, your hidden space gets smaller. Your personality and way of communicating is not described by means of one Johari-Window. You have as many personal Johari-Windows as you have different (types of) relationships. Probably your open space as a teacher will be smaller in relation to your pupils as in to relation with your partner.

**Activity**

- What implications does the first axiom have on the teaching practice? Give some examples.
- Draw your personal Johari Window representing your personality in relation to pupils in the placement school.

Figure 14: Activity box 3

3.2. Axiom 2: Every communication has a content and relationship aspect such that the latter classifies the former and is therefore a metacommunication

Every message has a content, which is labeled as the report aspect in communication. This content consists out of spoken, written or sign language. On the other hand a message also has a relationship and appeal or command aspect. We always speak on two levels. The relationship aspect reveals how persons relate to each other. ‘Who wears the trousers?’ So every message consists out of information on how the talker wants to be understood and how he or she sees him or herself in relation to the other. This doesn’t mean that the receiver of the message agrees with the announced relationship rules of the sender. You can respond in 3 ways on the self-description of another person (Van Craen, 1997, p.45):

- By confirmation or acceptance  
You deal with the person the way he subscribes.
- By rejection  
You explain to the other that he must not aspect you to handle the way he subscribes. You notice his self-description, but don’t agree with it.
- By ignoration or disqualification  
You indicate the other person he can not be seen or heard. You act as if he or she doesn’t exist.

In this context Hanks refers to the link between communication and self-esteem: "Every human being is trying to say something to others, trying to cry out, 'I am alive. Notice me! Speak to me! Confirm for me that I am important, that I matter'" (Hanks, 1974, p.91). Both acceptance and rejection of (the relationship aspect of) communication have affirming aspects. In both cases (so even when the relationship proposal isn't accepted) it's communicated to the other that the receiver is listening and that the thoughts, ideas, ... of the first do matter. Even rejection can be useful and even stimulate personal growth.

A couple on a party. The same content and context, two different conversations in relationship terms:

a. M: *"Hey, do you know what time it is??"*

F: *"Okay, you win. We are leaving."* (acceptance)

b. M: *"Hey do you know what time it is??"*

F: *"Yes, 12 o'clock p.m., and I'm really having a great time!"*  
(rejection)

On the contrary, the disqualification response gives the message that the other person's feelings, thoughts, ...don't matter and that he or she has no influence however. Watzlawick (1977) postulates that such communication responses can inhibit the development of a positive self-esteem, when given frequently by significant others.



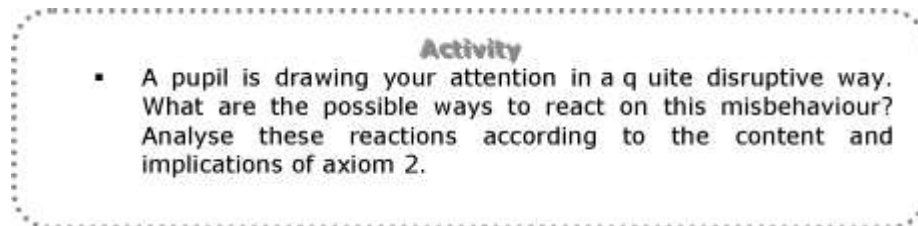


Figure 15: Activity box 4

Watzlawick (1977) suggests that often the relationship aspect of the communication is sent and received without the full awareness of either sender or receiver. Since the relationship aspect is communication about communication, it is said to be metacommunication. Translated to the classroom situation this means that pupils don't only listen to the content of the message of teachers. Students also infer from these messages to what extent certain behaviours in relation to the teacher are allowed and what relationship the teacher communicates to them. So, a remark by the teacher as *"That's not a good answer, Ivan!"* can be interpreted by students as *"you're so stupid"*, or as *"I want to help you, I want to coach you in your learning process"*, or as...

In that way teachers and students within the communication process are continuously defining the kind of relationship they have; how the teacher sees him- or herself, how the teacher views the students, how the teacher imagines the pupils see him or her, ...

Often when people fight or have a discussion they fight on the level of the relationship (who is wearing the trousers?) and not on the level of content.

*Two colleagues are discussing in the teacher's room the theory of Jacques Lacan. Mrs. Bucket says he is a psychoanalyst, who continued the work of Freud. Mrs. Bouquet says that Mrs. Bucket knows nothing about psychology. Lacan was a behaviouristic psychologist in hart and soul. They look it up in a psychoanalytic magazine, available in the room. There it is written; Lacan was a French psychoanalyst. Mrs. Bucket replies: "No one believes what's written in that populist magazine! I will immediately call the editor to communicate what an unqualified mistake the author has made."*

3.3. Axiom 3: The nature of a relationship is dependent on the punctuation of the partners' communication procedures

We've already mentioned that our society is conditioned to think linear (behaviouristic), according to arbitrary cause-effect groupings. People tend to talk about events in a linear way, with a clear starting point (cause). This can often be observed in the reports of an unsuccessful lesson made by teacher trainees: "I became nervous and started to tremble *because* the pupils didn't listen to me". The pupil's version will probable sound different: "We didn't listen anymore because the teacher appeared very nervous and very strict". So verbal interchanges between two persons are often divided in arbitrary stimulus-response groupings.

These divisions are called punctuations. Depending where you make the punctuation, a different (idiosyncratic) meaning will be attached to the message. Watzlawick (1977) defines that "the nature of a relationship is contingent upon the punctuation of the communication sequences between communicants". According to Watzlawick one cannot make up who's to blame or 'who started', because of the circular character of messages, without no 'absolute starting point'<sup>xi</sup>.



Illustration by Ivan Boeckmans

In such disputes we should *reframe* the discussion and become conscious of the fact everyone draws his own truth and that whenever something goes wrong we tend to blame the other. Reframing thereby is the process of altering punctuation and looking at things in new lights.

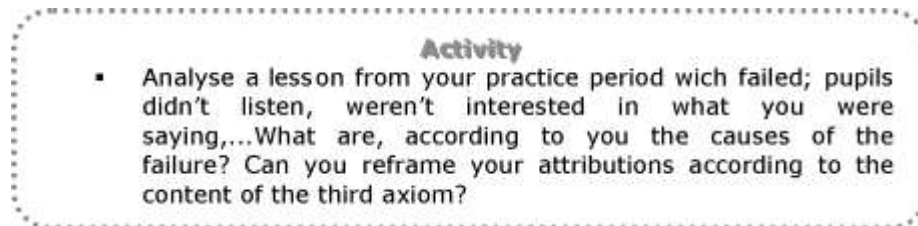


Figure 16: Activity box 5

3.4. Axiom 4: Human communication involves both digital and analogue modalities

Some years ago my little cousin Marie (4 years old) and me visited the SMAK, the Urban Museum for Contemporary Art in Ghent. Together we watched a painting. The only thing I remembered was that the painting consisted out of a strange composition of airplane-like objects and a huge portrait of a human being, slightly in disproportion with the composition of the objects. My little cousin immediately (she's very bright) 'interpreted' the painting. I was interested in what she was telling, because I only saw a huge human figure and a strange composition of objects. I was astonished when I read the intention of the artist: my cousin's interpretation exactly matched the artist's intention.

Through the use of colour, lines, perspective,...a painting or a piece of art communicates to the viewer in an analogical way. On the other hand, in our culture we are extremely focused on *what* people say, rather than on *how* they say it. Through the acquisition of language, I think, we lose

the capacity to have a kind of ‘direct access’ to analogue modes of communication. As adults we are extremely focussed on the interpretation of digital communication. Digital communication refers to the content of the message and is usually verbal. In the second axiom we stated that every message has a report (content) and command (relationship) aspect. It’s analogical communication that mainly possesses the semantics of relationships. Analogical communication, which is mainly non-verbal language, refers to the way a message is pronounced: by means of gestures, mimics, voice pitch and volume, ...The way the message and the relationship is interpreted mainly depends on analogical communication. Digital communication with its logical syntax however lacks efficient semantics in the field of relationships. Many aspects of relationships defy digital description and thus remain somewhat vague. Words alone often fail.

### *Congruency*

Sometimes digital and analogical aspects in communication aren’t congruent. What you say isn’t expressed in how you say it. This can cause severe communication disorders and misunderstanding between people, also in classroom situations!



**Illustration by Ivan Boeckmans**

A Greek empirical study of non-verbal communication in 9 kindergarten classes in Rhodes with an average number of 10 children per class (Kodakos & Polmikos, 2000, p.131-136) showed that there was a significant incongruence between kindergarten teacher's verbal and non-verbal behaviour in the case of negative behaviour. The percentage of agreement was only 38,6%. The inconsistency of kindergarten teacher's behaviour is not proved in the case of positive non-verbal behaviour, which spontaneously leads to an acceptable and desirable behaviour,

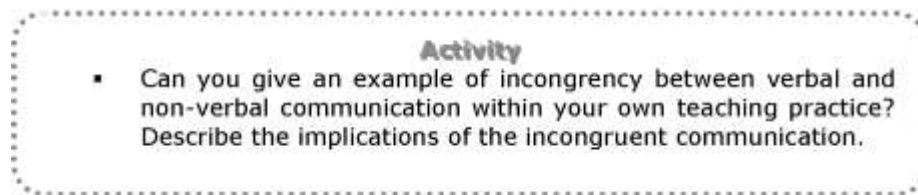
socially, pedagogically and in terms of communication. Similarly, intentional verbal behaviour of kindergarten teachers agrees only at a percentage of 66,1% with the positive non-verbal message and it contradicts 33,9% to the negative non-verbal message. However when negative verbal messages are unguarded, negative verbal behaviour nearly degrees with the relevant nonverbal behaviour and only in 8,5% it was accompanied by a positive nonverbal behaviour. On the other hand, children's verbal and non-verbal behaviour seemed to be congruent at a higher degree (Kodakos et al., 2000).

Most of the time adults (and certainly teachers because of their psychopedagogical training) seem to be aware of the impact of their words on others. On the other hand, adults don't always have full awareness of their nonverbal behaviour.

Nonetheless within the context of the classroom, congruency between verbal and non-verbal communication is very important.

- A teacher tells his students; *"I really don't care that you don't listen to what I'm saying"*, while his voice is trembling and his face is red.
- After the holidays another teacher says: *"I'm glad the holidays are over, so we can get back to business"*, while standing very monotonous in front of the class, with an expressionless face and with no intonation in his voice.

In these cases students will not believe the authenticity of the content of the message. They will let them guide by the meaning that appears through the non-verbal language.



**Figure 17: Activity box 6**

3.5. Axiom 5: Inter-human communication procedures are either symmetric or complementary, depending on whether the relationship of the partners is based on difference or parity.

In the 1930's Gregory Bateson created the concept of schismogenesis. This concept etymologically derives from the Greek words 'skhisma', which means 'cleft', and 'genesis', meaning 'creation'. Literally schismogenesis means 'the creation of a division'. In a psychological way this concept refers to the process whereby individuals or groups within a system develop recursive patterns of behaving and communicating, through repeated interactions over time. To some extent, there exist two kinds of relationships and two types of schismogenesis between two people; symmetric or complementary.



*Symmetric relationships* can be described as involvements based on parity; the behaviour patterns are mirror images of one another. The communication partners strive to be equal and they use a similar communication strategy. Within these kinds of relationships there is danger of an escalation of sameness and competition (schismogenesis); they want to be 'more equal than the other person'. Translated to the education context: teachers become each others duplicate, they strive for symmetrical classes with 'brave new world' students.

*Complementary interactions* consist of role opposites: leader – follower, top - dog – underdog, dominant – submissive, active – passive,... They are based on difference. In complementary communication the opposite strategies fit together, they complement each other. Problems develop in complementary interactions as they become increasingly rigid (schismogenesis); then the relationship expires in a master-servant involvement. This ends in a relationship in which the other person is ignored. Translated to the reality of the classroom, this could mean teachers would interpret their relationship with their students as uni-directional. They would be blind for the interactional context.

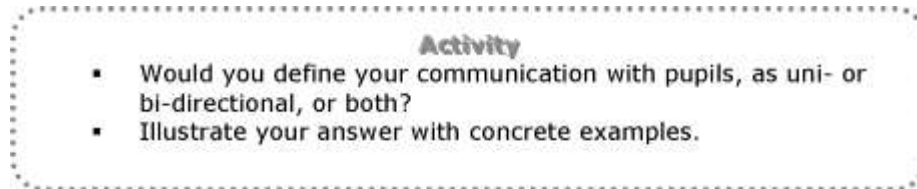


Figure 18: Activity box 7

As such, complementary and symmetric relationships are neither good nor bad. In a healthy (personal or professional) relationship both forms occur alternatively.

#### 4. Limitations of human language:

*Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar.*

Sigmund Freud

##### 4.1. The arbitrary relationship between signifier and signified<sup>xii</sup>

*Polonius: (...) what do you read my lord?*

*Hamlet: Words, words, words.*

*Polonius: What's the matter, my lord?*

*Hamlet: Between who?*

*Polonius: I mean the matter that you read, my lord.*

From Shakespeare's Hamlet, Act  
II, scene II, 195-200)

Verbal language consists of words. But how do these words relate to concepts or objects? In other words; how does meaning arises from a chain of words or signs?

In our use of language we often act as if there is a direct one-to-one link between words ('names') and objects ('things'). Contradicting the assumption of this one-to-one link between word and thing, Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure's theory (1976) stressed the arbitrariness of the sign. De Saussure defined a sign as being composed by a signifier S (the acoustic or sound-image; the sequence of phonemes) and the signified s (the mental concept it represents). De Saussure emphasized that there is no inevitable or intrinsic relationship between a signifier and the signified; between the sound of a word and the mental concept that is activated in our mind when we hear or read the signifier<sup>xiii</sup>.

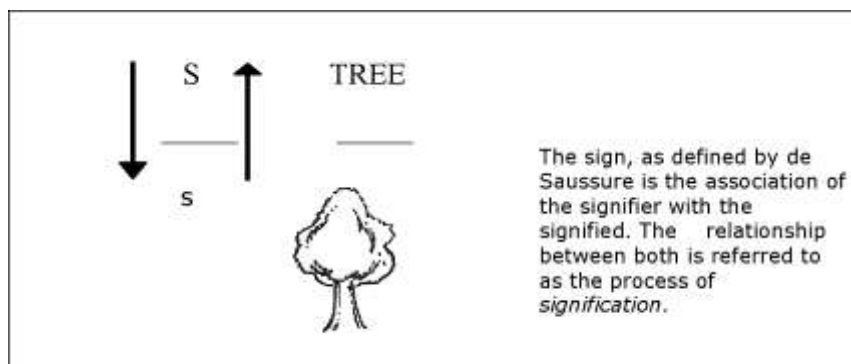


Figure 19: The process of signification

There is no reason why the word *tree* (or the sound of these *phonemes*) produces exactly the mental concept of a plant with branches and leaves. De Saussure defined this process of signification as a result of *convention*: speakers of a certain language group have agreed that these letters or sounds evoke a certain image.

Lacan extended the theory of de Saussure. The latter believed in a reciprocal, yet arbitrary relationship between signifier and signified, whereby the relationship (and the creation of meaning) is defined by convention. Furthermore, Lacan (1966) emphasized the primacy of the signifier ('la suprématie du signifiant sur le signifié') in the signifying process. A signifier as such is meaningless. The process of signification only occurs through the combination and articulation of signifiers, in what Lacan calls a *chain of signifiers*. The production of meaning is the result of the difference between mutual signifiers within the chain. So it is always the *context* which has a meaning-producing effect. This assumption of Lacan can easily be described by means of a rebus<sup>xiv</sup>.

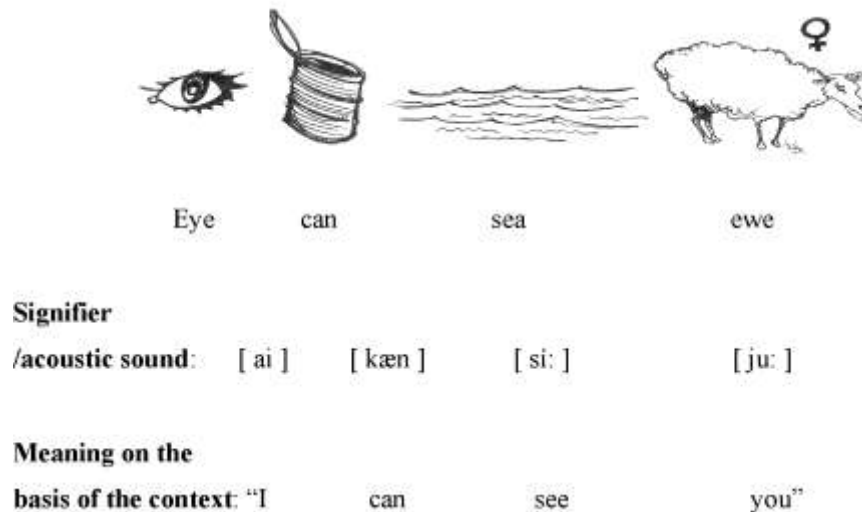


Illustration by Ivan Boeckmans & Julie De Ganck

That's why Lacan defines the chain of signifiers as the constitutive element in language; "C'est le monde des mots qui crée le monde des choses". A single signifier doesn't represent a meaning. It is in the articulation of signifiers within the chain that meaning arises. One word, signifier can have different meanings, depending on the context<sup>xv</sup>. In fact, meaning arises 'après-coup (Lacan)' or 'nachträglich (Freud)'. This means in a deferred action after an interpunction<sup>xvi</sup>. This can be illustrated by a telephone conversation where the connection is broken:

A: I just call to say sorry for this afternoon. Can you forgive me?  
Do you still love me?

B: No, Pig

-----the connection suddenly breaks-----

Person A now thinks that B has hang up and that B doesn't love him anymore. He doesn't know that the ending of the conversation is caused by a technical defect. Because of that he didn't hear the words;

B: (No, pig-)gy, I tremendously love you!

The fact that meaning arises 'après-coup' can also be seen on a more extended level. New events put another light on what has happened before. When you read a book again, new meanings will arise, based on your new personal experiences. A new piece of art could very well give another view on earlier work.

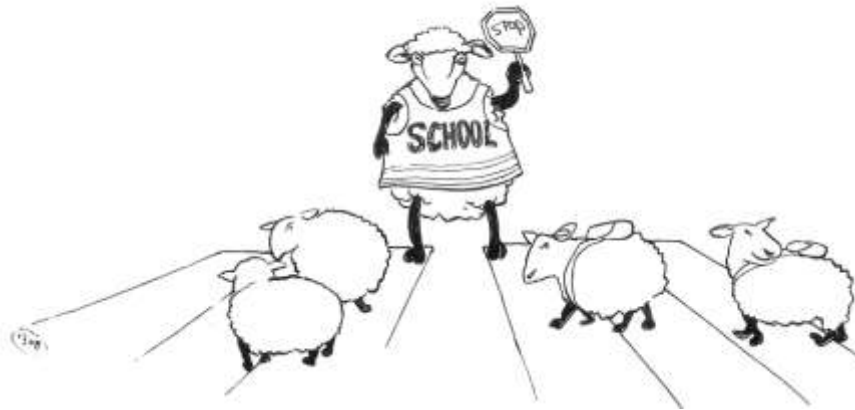
Behaviour, misbehaviour, remarks,... of pupils always must be seen in their context; the personal history of the student, his or her background and abilities. It's important not to draw conclusions too fast as Lacan stated: "Gardez-vous de comprendre".

## 5. Conclusion

Following the national curriculum and our European Standard, teachers and teacher trainees are supposed to act as good communicators within the classroom and school. Each good communication theory starts from a considered ethical framework. Within this article we offered a structural and interactional view on the processes of communicating. Starting from this theoretical context, in an additional article<sup>xvii</sup> we will formulate concrete tips for teachers to improve their classroom communication.

## **II SCHOOL COMMUNITY LEVEL:**

**The teacher in relation to members of the school community**  
*Julie De Ganck*



**Illustration by Ivan Boeckmans**

A second selection of articles enters into the different competencies a beginning teacher should possess on the level of the school community, focusing on the beginning teacher in relation to his colleagues, parents and the school organization he is working in.

A first cluster of competencies on the level of the school community highlights these quality requirements a beginning teacher should possess in the area of *Communication*. In *What it means to be a community member?* Daiva Penkauskiene and Asta Railiene describe several strategies and

methods which can help the beginning teacher to integrate in a new environment and school organisation. In their contribution the authors discuss how beginning teachers can communicate and cooperate successfully with new colleagues.

A second cluster highlights the competencies a beginning teacher should possess in relation to the *School organisation*. In the article *MOSTers in Älvboda Friskola*<sup>xviii</sup>, Kia Kimhag and Bengt Söderhäll, focus on how (beginning) teachers can actively participate in school and school community life. They start with a description of what happened in a little community in Sweden when new legislation reformed education. In a second part they bring the story of fourteen students participating in the Swedish programme of the MOST project; how they experienced their participation in the school life of a little Swedish community. The authors conclude that a responsible citizenship, embodied in the willingness to understand more about similarities and differences in school systems and cultures, is an objective to strive for and that this open attitude is probably more innovative than the development of standards to enhance professional teaching in Europe. In his article *Becoming a Professional Educator*, Christopher Bezzina enters more deeply into this theme of professional development. He argues that a teacher as a leader focuses on enhancement; growth as a person and a professional. The author offers tools for the beginning teacher to improve their performances and the environment in which they work. This article invites the beginning teacher to challenge his conceptualization of the term learning and to



reflect on how he can manage his learning more effectively so that he can leave an impact on pupils and colleagues.

## *SCHOOL-COMMUNITY LEVEL*



Developed by Julie De Ganck & Ivan Boeckmans

## **What it means to be a community member?**

***Daiva Penkauskiene and Asta Railiene***

### **1. Introduction**

Since childhood we get involved in bigger or smaller community life. The smaller and closer it is, the merrier, safer and more comfortable we feel. Without doubt, family and relatives provide the cosiest environment. We know how to behave there, and we are aware of what is acceptable and what is not. We appreciate the acceptable norms of behaviour and rules of communication. Moreover, everybody knows what to expect from us and what we can expect ourselves. When we grow up we integrate into educational institution communities such as kindergartens, primary schools, gymnasiums, or universities. Every time we change the environment, we experience joy, curiosity or anxiety, sometimes even great fear. This happens because we face uncertainty. What awaits us? Are they similar to us? How will they accept us?

All of us expect to meet a close group of people or at least one alter ego. We dream of a new group and imagine it, draw various situations in our minds, simulate our actions in them. However, very often it is opposite to what we have imagined. I remember myself, a first-year student, going to study in an unfamiliar city. The city surprised me. Having grown up in the provinces, in indiscrete cultural environment, I faced the diversity of languages spoken, different architecture and facilities; even every day things were not the same. In my imagination the capital looked different from my native town, but this 'different imagination' was more than I had expected. It was so diverse.

However, the diversity was homelike. I felt curious and enjoyed exploring it, watching the people's behaviour, their intercommunication and relationships, the way they spoke, the intonations they used and the way they dressed. While watching them, I was learning and trying to understand acceptable, written and unwritten rules, their communication culture.

Everyone, who wants not only to understand the new environment, but also successfully join it, constructs his or her own strategies and tactics. It depends on personal qualities, upbringing, culture and other factors. Age also plays a part. The younger, the more flexible and open we are to changes and diversity. Adults, having life experience, set values and attitude, often have negative feelings about job mobility and change of residence. These changes may be very stressful.

Sometimes it is not enough to have some feeling or basic knowledge about a new environment. Although it is said that we best learn from our mistakes, it is always a good idea to consult somebody, ask for some advice, try several communication patterns during seminars, or read what is written and consider your personal strategy. In fact, there are no ready-made recipes for everyone. But we can use universal strategies and methods, applying them in every situation.

This chapter suggests several strategies and methods, which could help us integrate in a new environment. Also, it could help us realize what is expected from us and how to communicate and cooperate with our new colleagues

successfully. To illustrate this let us take the SCHOOL to represent a large diverse community.

Imagine that you are an undergraduate or a very ‘fresh’ young teacher. You are assigned work at a school you do not know. You have never been there before; you do not know the teachers who work there or the acceptable way of communication. You have no idea what their attitude to new colleagues is going to be like. It is very difficult to decide how to get ready for the first meeting, how to foresee what their expectations are and how they will welcome you.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> step – Introduction

Remember the situations when new members joined your class or course. Think of one successful and one unsuccessful case. How did you behave in both situations?

- (a) Who took the initiative to get acquainted – you or the newcomers?
- (b) What was the introduction like?
- (c) What was the first impression the newcomers made? What influenced the formation of the impression?
- (d) Why do think the introduction was successful/ unsuccessful?
- (e) What do you remember up to now? What left the greatest impression?
- (f) Was there a significant event during the meeting?
- (g) How did you cope with your feelings, attitudes and impressions?
- (h) What could have improved the situation?

Most of the time people remember the way they got acquainted, what was said, who started the conversation or who joined later, they also remember things, which at first sight seem insignificant. That can be the person's outfit, his or her style in general, body language and expression. These things seem to be insignificant but we remember them for a long time and that is one of the reasons why we should pay attention to them while preparing for a new introduction.

Now imagine another situation. You are a school community member, a mature member of the school community. A new teacher comes to your school:

- (a) What kind of introduction would you expect from the newcomer?
- (b) When, in your opinion, should he/she introduce himself/herself: at the beginning of the school year, during departmental meetings, during a school board meeting? Should he/she introduce himself/herself to the head teacher first and then to other colleagues? Any other suggestions?
- (c) Would his/her attire be important to you? If yes, what kind?
- (d) How should he/she behave? (E.g.: modest and not very noticeable)
- (e) How shouldn't he/she behave? (E.g.: not present himself/herself as omniscient, being better educated ...). He/she would make the greatest impression if ... (please, continue by yourself)

Despite the fact that both situations are different, the conclusions are similar. Everything is really important for the introduction and the first impression whether it be time, place, speech, or way of communication. Naturally, we feel a little nervous; it is difficult to be self-confident and self-controlled in such a

situation. However, it is important to be open and sincere, without too many restrictions and be ready for a new contact and experience.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> step - Acquaintance with school environment and culture

- (a) Every school like any other community has its own traditions, set of rules and regulations.
- (b) A community is a group of people who share common ideas, common aims and future visions.
- (c) Official information, documents, action plans, reports and the results they seek could help to find out what is important for the school, what its education philosophy and values are.
- (d) Every person who joins a new community has similar questions:
  - Is the school a democratic institution – what are the management styles and principles upheld by the school community?
  - What forms of communication exist?
  - Does the school have its own identity? What is essential and how is it different from other schools?
  - Are the processes of change initiated and supported at school?
  - Is the microclimate friendly? How do teachers communicate with each other, students and parents, administration?
  - Are culture, attitude, opinions and religious diversity respected?

Answers to some of these questions can be found in official documents; sometimes you can refer to the community of parents, students, and teachers or other community members' opinions. However, opinions may vary, very much depending on the experiences people have gone through and the perceptions they have developed. Therefore it is very important to know the school 'from the inside' and form your own opinion. Active observation, listening and socializing strategies are really useful. They are authentic and reliable but at the same time require some concentration, effort and time. Therefore a *Teacher's Diary* may be very handy as you can put down and record observations, feelings and experiences. It can be written in any format similar to an ordinary diary style. On the other hand, you can use a structured *Double Diary* method (Steele, Meredith, Walter & Temple, 1998). Double Diary method is very useful for learners to reflect on the main day events and fix personal opinion. In order to make a Double Diary the participants should draw a vertical line down the middle of a blank sheet of paper. On the left-hand side they should write a facts or main events that happened during the day. Sometimes it looks like as agenda. On the right-hand side of the page they should write a comment about that fact or event: *What was it about the quote that made them write it down? What did it make them think of? What question did they have about it?* It could look something like this:



| Observation time          | Memorable facts, events, meetings or conversations  | Comments  |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| September 1 <sup>st</sup> | School year beginning festival. Official greeting, later teachers and students went to classes. It took 1 hour.   | To be honest, I had a different idea about the beginning of the new school year.<br><i>Only administration members and some guests gave their speeches. Students weren't listening, teachers were trying to make them silent but without any success. After having watched this I was afraid to go to my class.</i><br>I thought they wouldn't listen to me either. At first everything was similar to the previous chaotic situation. I couldn't speak because of the noise. I didn't know what to do. Then I noticed a piano in the corner. I sat down and started playing. There was silence in the class at once. Then we started talking about summer vacations and things we like doing in our free time. It was fun. Everybody wanted to speak. There was no more tension then.  |
| September 2 <sup>nd</sup> | Teachers' meeting. New school year activity plan and some changes were discussed. I was introduced as a new Mathematics teacher and 7 <sup>th</sup> form tutor. | The meeting lasted for 2 hours. I had an impression that the school activity plan was prepared and discussed in the last school year. Now it was introduced once again that new teachers learnt about it. There are two more newcomers besides me. We received quite a warm welcome. We were introduced to teacher-supervisors who would help us to settle in the school community life.  |
| September 4 <sup>th</sup> | September 3 <sup>rd</sup> I had 5 lessons in different classes.<br>Today I don't have any classes but I'm meeting my supervisor.                                | Yesterday I felt very tired and exhausted therefore I didn't write anything in the diary. Introduction and course presentation took half of the lesson time, the other half of the lesson we were trying to remember what we had already studied and what we know. I think the first lessons were successful as there was contact with students. I felt really nervous however I was trying not to show that. Today I met my supervisor. He is also a mathematician. He has been working in this school for 10 years. We talked about many things - my studies, hobbies, school. He allowed me to ask questions and tried to answer all of them. Then we discussed the school. We decided to meet in a week's time. My homework assignment was to get acquainted to school chronicle. He is a very friendly person; I didn't even feel the age difference. It was interesting to talk to him. |
| September 7 <sup>th</sup> | New working week. I had three lessons and observed my colleague's lesson in the 8 <sup>th</sup> form.   | I wasn't so nervous because I spent a lot of time preparing at the weekend. I had two lessons with my class. I have two noisy students who keep punching each other during the lesson. For now I just give them some verbal notices but it doesn't really work. I have to think of something. Deputy for Education unexpectedly offered to observe my colleague's lesson. Although I was planning to work a bit in the library, I agreed. The lesson was really interesting. I had never thought that lesson about percentages could be so interesting. The teacher used a lot of real materials, students worked with articles from newspapers and magazines. After the lesson I had no time to talk about the lesson but we agreed to meet the next day.  |

Figure 20: Double Diary

|   |
|---|
| <p>Your conclusions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2.</li><li>3.</li></ol> |
|---|

**Figure 21: Double Diary - conclusions**

The Diary is usually written after the workday so that the impressions of the day are still vivid and one could remember the facts. It is a document, which provides a lot of useful information about the things that take place at school and helps one to think through a number of points. If we look at that table once again and tried to review it from the school environment and culture point of view, what conclusions could we draw?

Another useful strategy is *active listening* (Steele et al., 1998) and *open questioning* (Steele et al., 1998). It is said if you want to know more, you have to speak less yourself but listen more to what is said. Most probably you have experienced how much you can learn when you are just a listener and observer. If you could remember meetings with your friends, other people or the time when you used public transport or were in a café, you would recall the information you had received as a *passive listener*. In those situations you formed your own opinion about the people and places you had seen. However, sometimes this opinion can be wrong because you did not have a chance to be an *active listener*. What does it mean to be an active listener? It means:

- Listening attentively and being interested in what is said;
- Asking if something is not clear;
- When asking you have to use phrases like ‘It is very interesting but I can’t really catch...’; ‘Excuse me, but I’d like to know...’; ‘Have I understood you correctly that ...’
- Repeating the acquired information, reacting and putting it down;
- Looking at the speaker’s face.

Open questions are questions, which do not require a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer. The person who asks these questions does not expect the final decision or fact statement. He just expects his speaker to express his opinion or attitude. If you are interested what school community members think of one or another thing, what issue they agree on, whether their opinions differ, you have to ask ‘what do you think of...?’; ‘why do you think... ?’; ‘Who do you think...?’ and so on.

Try to be an active listener and observer. Use the opportunity to take part in any community meeting (student organization, club, course mates or school meeting), when important issues are discussed. Be ready to observe how your friends and colleagues are listening. Choose 2-3 people and describe their behaviour and actions. Some of them to your opinion were active listeners. How do you know that? Here is an example:

| Person observed | Behaviour and actions  | Observer's comments  |
|-----------------|--|--|
| <b>R_TA</b>     | She is reading a magazine all the time.                                    | She doesn't look interested because she keeps reading a magazine during the whole meeting.   |
| <b>ANDRIUS</b>  | He is talking to his friend about some sport match.                        | He is not interested in the topic and the process of the meeting. Pays no attention to speakers, speaks to somebody in the corner of the room. |
| <b>EMILIJA</b>  | She raises her hand as she wants to ask a question. She has asked 5 times. | She was sitting in front and was listening to the speakers. During the pauses she raised her hand and asked questions related to the topic.    |

**Figure 22: Observations by teacher trainees**

Observing, analyzing, reflecting on our own and other people's behaviour, we can draw a conclusion whether we know the environment well, what its effect on us is, if we are ready to join it, what we lack as present and future community members.

Assess various information sources, which help you to know or understand the school environment and culture better. Write them down in this table and think of three things which you can learn from each source and when you could use this information.

| Information source | Three things you can learn from it | When could you use this information |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                    |                                    |                                     |
|                    |                                    |                                     |
|                    |                                    |                                     |
|                    |                                    |                                     |

**Figure 23: Information about the school environment**

### 3<sup>rd</sup> step - Involvement into community activity

Involvement into community activity is also a good means to learn about it from the inside. While doing something we are the participants, not the observers, therefore we interpret information in a different way. But how can we start, how do we join it? It would be ideal if they invite you or address you. Sometimes the other side thinks that it is not a good idea to approach the newcomer at once, maybe they could be observers at first. However, in most cases initiative and active people are always welcome, so having evaluated your strengths, likes and abilities, offer your help without hesitation. For example, while organizing Shakespeare's evening at school, one of our students (Magnus, Sweden, 2005) suggested making modern 'Romeo and Juliet' interpretations together with students. Another student offered to film the project and record it onto a CD and make copies for all the partners. Let's use our hobbies, free time activities to make the educational process more interesting and to pull community members together. Sometimes we think that things we like interest us only. If we

found some time to share this with others, we would realize that it is the wrong opinion. You will always find people who support your ideas.

After-school activities, after-school education is the sphere where young people are especially welcome. Young teachers still remember the time when they were students themselves therefore they perfectly know what students like, find something in common very quickly and decide on the acceptable activity. There is another example from MOST student practice. Young men had practice in one Vilnius gymnasium and they noticed that teachers were not willing to allow them to observe or organize classes, after-school activities with the last year students. The reason was very simple and clear to any Lithuanian teacher or anybody who is related to education. The reason behind this was the Matura examinations that students have to sit for in order to join higher education institutions. We discussed this issue with students and why it was so, whether a few lessons with a new teacher, a foreigner in the last year would be such an obstacle and would affect their results. We have agreed that they will look for some ways to make direct contact with those students and involve them into common activities. The most important thing is not to have conflicts with school teachers and mentors. School-leavers suggested this idea themselves. One of the MOST students, studying music in Belgium (Johannes, Belgium, 2006), brought his guitar to Lithuania. One day he just brought the guitar to school and started playing it during one of the breaks. Students surrounded him at once – a teacher foreigner, sitting on the floor in the corridor and playing the guitar during the break is really an

exceptional thing in a Lithuanian school. Among those curious students there were a few school-leavers who spoke perfect English and could play the guitar a little bit just for themselves. There was immediate contact. The young teacher learnt from them that interest in live music was the great and there were several senior classes' students who were trying to play the guitar and music teacher at school was helping them. The result was perfect. Common MOST students and gymnasium graduates had a song contest. Schoolteachers and mentors were fascinated.

You have to think of your hobbies or favourite activities you could use or apply in school community life when organizing some activities with teachers and students. Maybe you have similar experience you could share?

#### 4<sup>th</sup> step – Conflict management

Have you ever been in a situation when you had to take a decision and your opinions were different from that of others? What happened – did you change your mind or did you try to agree with somebody else's opinion, or did you try to persuade the person that it should be done the way you suggested? Describe one of the chosen situations when you changed your mind, when you tried to agree with somebody else's opinion, and when you persuaded the other person:

1 situation:

2 situation:

3 situation:

**Figure 24: Scheme to describe conflict situations**

And now imagine this situation at school:

Teachers decide to organize an excursion to celebrate the end of the school year. Some of them suggest going camping in the picturesque surroundings, others who prefer passive leisure activities would like to go to a country house by bus, and the third group observes the situation passively and do not further any suggestions.

Do you think it is possible to reach a decision that would be acceptable to everybody? If yes, what and how should they agree on? How would you organize such a discussion?



Before you start any group decision making, you should evaluate a real situation whether a group decision is possible in general. Usually it is possible if everyone has positive attitude and there is no preconceived notion or confrontation. It is important not only to speak but also to listen and allow everybody to speak, to discuss all pros and cons, to be ready to compromise.

However, some conflict and unpleasant situations occur when it is difficult to come to one common solution. In figure 25 and figure 26 we give two examples.

***Situation 1***

You have to work in the same classroom with another teacher-trainee. He works in the morning and you work in the afternoon shift. Every time you come to the classroom it is in a mess, desks are not aligned; your books are in a different place. At first you tried not to pay any attention to that and tidied the classroom yourself. Later you tried to tell your colleague in a polite way that you did not like it. Finally you told him to leave the room

**Figure 25: Conflict situation 1**

***Situation 2***


During students practice one teacher-trainee substituted performing arts teacher who was ill. When the new teacher came to the class he asked the students if they liked drawing and what kind of devices they would like to use. Then he presented his favourite collage technique when various types of material and devices are used. Students were impressed by the new method and continued working with it for two weeks. Then their teacher returned and everything was the usual way. Students learnt to make copies

**Figure 26: Conflict situation 2**

They are two different but equally complicated situations. Could you think what makes them similar and different? Is one of the situations easier than the other? Is there a common solution or not? How and in what way can you solve the problem yourself and when would you need somebody's assistance? In both situations we are faced with open conflict and hostility.

The most important thing in this case is to stay as calm as possible and react to this hostile behaviour in a calm and positive manner. Firstly, you should try to understand why that person behaves and reacts like this. What would you do if you were him? You should never respond to a hostile behaviour in a hostile way or avoid meeting and open conversation. Think of the most suitable time to meet and discuss the situation. Think of a location that would be peaceful which would help

you avoid interruptions. A conflict solving algorithm (Shapiro, 1995) would help you during the meeting (Figure 27).



|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>"WORK OFF STEAM"</b>                                       | Let your colleague say everything that he/she does not like and say everything yourself. Try to react in a calm way to your colleague's expressed opinion.   |
| <b>SPECIFYING DISSATISFACTION</b>                             | Take initiative and name your dissatisfaction directly. Avoid such words as 'always', 'never'. Try to express your position in so called "I statement": <i>When you [action], I [feeling], because [reason]</i> . Encourage your colleague to formulate his thoughts in statements like this |
| <b>ADMISSION THAT ACCUSATION AND REPROACHES ARE JUSTIFIED</b> | Tell your colleague that you understand his/her dissatisfaction, reasons for being dissatisfied and so on  |
| <b>EXPLANATION HOW YOU JUDGE THE SITUATION</b>                |  |
| <b>FINDING ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION FOR BOTH PARTIES</b>           |  |

Figure 27: Conflict solving algorithm (Shapiro, 1995)

5<sup>th</sup> step – Preparation for practice

In this article you can find several pieces of advice what you have to think of, what to pay attention to in order to integrate into a new community successfully. But you have to know what to start with, what kind of preparation every new teacher needs, keeping in mind different personal experience, knowledge and cultural environment. We suggest

starting the conversation with new teachers about the integration into school community using 'Active meeting' method (Kjaergaard & Martinėnienė, 2000).

'Active meeting' is assembled when it is necessary to evaluate target audience needs, find out their expectations and problems on certain issues rather quickly (in 1.5-2 hrs.). This method is really suitable when the aim is to involve as many people as possible. It is very useful if the participants are young people as it takes place intensively without beating around the bush and gives tangible results.

Even teenagers can participate in such meetings. The meeting is called Active as it encourages every participant's activeness: giving opinion, suggesting ideas, taking responsibility. This method involves dividing the participants into groups of 6-12 people in one group. This number of people in one group is optimal as it encourages active participation of each member. Another important step using Active meeting method is electing a secretary in each group. A secretary's role is not to participate but take notes of every participant's announcement without analyzing or commenting on it. The ideas have to be articulated in the way that they are articulated. Besides, secretaries are in charge of providing the opportunity for every participant to say what he/she wants.

*Active meeting* takes place in four stages.

- (a) The first stage is called *Criticism*. Participants say everything about what they dislike on a given topic, what dissatisfies their needs etc. It

starts with criticism that the person could get rid of all negative emotions and can express his/her dissatisfaction at the beginning. Group members brainstorm and say their negative thoughts on the topic given. They must not quarrel or prove who is right. Secretaries write down everything that members say. It takes about 10-15 min. At the end of this stage group representatives provide criticism expressed by the group.

- (b) The second stage is called *What is good and positive*. In 10-15 minutes participants express all the positive things related to the topic. Secretaries, as in the first stage, put everything down and at the end, group representatives read the group ideas to the whole group.
- (c) The third stage is called *Suggestions*. It takes 15-20 minutes. This is time for ideas. Group members discuss what can be done using the means they have. Secretaries write down all the ideas. Before reading the suggestions, the leader gives a piece of paper and a pen for every member.

Group representatives slowly read suggestions, every member takes notes of 2-6 (the number is given by the leader) ideas he/she liked best. If the participants come up with more ideas, they need to choose the best and eliminate the others.

- (d) The fourth stage is called *We want to implement this*. It takes 10-15 minutes. Participants read the selected ideas in groups and discuss them together. Then every group selects 5-6 ideas, which in their opinion are worth implementing in the future. Group members divide their responsibilities. When final group decisions are read, they

can discuss for a longer time. Participants can explain how they would like to implement one or another suggestion.

The method is very useful both in its educational sense (encourages to express opinion, openness, active participation, develops abilities to have arguments) and social sense (participants are taught to analyze the problem critically, take responsibilities for problem solution). The essence of this method is a properly chosen and formulated topic for the meeting. It has to be important and interesting not only for the organizers or executives, but also the participants.

We have tried this method with our foreign students at the third year of the project. Our intention was make them think about teaching practice at school by discussing openly what students are afraid of, what bias they have, what they worry about and how to overcome possible obstacles at school.

All three-guest students expressed theirs concern about teachers and pupils' attitude towards them. They were afraid, that "nobody will listen to them", "that teachers will be busy and will not help them to prepare to the lessons"; "that they will have no access to needed materials" and so on. 'Active meeting' helped them from 'negative' position to step into 'positive' one and look for possible solutions. They were encouraged to put themselves into very 'dark picture', then into 'rosy' and finally 'realistic' one. Students understood, that they are not left alone, that they

have friends, colleagues, school community around that can help them, if they will address them in open, sincere way, not being afraid to look or sound silly, not experienced, not knowledgeable.

While reflecting on teaching practice we came back to the thoughts expressed during ‘active meeting’ and compared feelings before and after. Students admitted that good planning in advance can be helpful in some situations. But there are situations, when one has to make decisions on the spot not having time for consultations or support by other community members. On the other hand, practicing teacher is never left alone – he is among pupils in the classroom, among teachers in the school, among other practicing teachers around him. Everyone is aloud to have ‘wait time’ and if needed to address for help. Pupils always respect teacher who is not afraid to say, “I don’t know, but together we can find out...”. Colleagues will be happy to hear, “I would like to consult with you...”; “ I would like to know more about...”.

There are no ready made recipes or clear prescribed instructions on how a beginning teacher can effectively integrate into a school community life. Everyone has to make his/her own journey with its mistakes, adventures, and findings. It is not only a personal journey. It has to be followed by friends, colleagues, pupils and others. In order to make it more friendly, more inviting, more supportive, one has try to be open-minded, flexible and ready for more questions than answers.





## **School Organisation**

### ***Christopher Bezzina***

#### Becoming a Professional Educator

*You must become an advocate of what  
you believe,  
otherwise you will become a victim of  
what others want you to believe.*

Jesse Jackson

#### 1. Introduction

The teacher who constantly learns and grows becomes a professional educator. Wong & Wong (1998) argue that “how a person chooses to behave will greatly determine the qualities of that person’s life” (p.271). They believe that as individuals we have choices in life: one can either be a worker or a leader; have a job or a career; become a teacher or an educator. The choice is ours. From what we have argued so far, the teacher as a leader focuses on at least one major concern – enhancement, growth as a person and as a professional.

In order to achieve this, teachers as educators seek varied opportunities to improve themselves, the people they work with, and the environment in which they work. A person’s behaviour is key. It will determine what choices we make. What sort of behaviour do we, are we prepared to

manifest? Do we exhibit protective behaviour, maintenance behaviour or enhancement behaviour? Our response will determine, to a large extent, how we approach our work both in class and outside in.

Take some time to think about this point. Determine what kind of behaviour you exhibit most of the time. See how you react to figure 28.

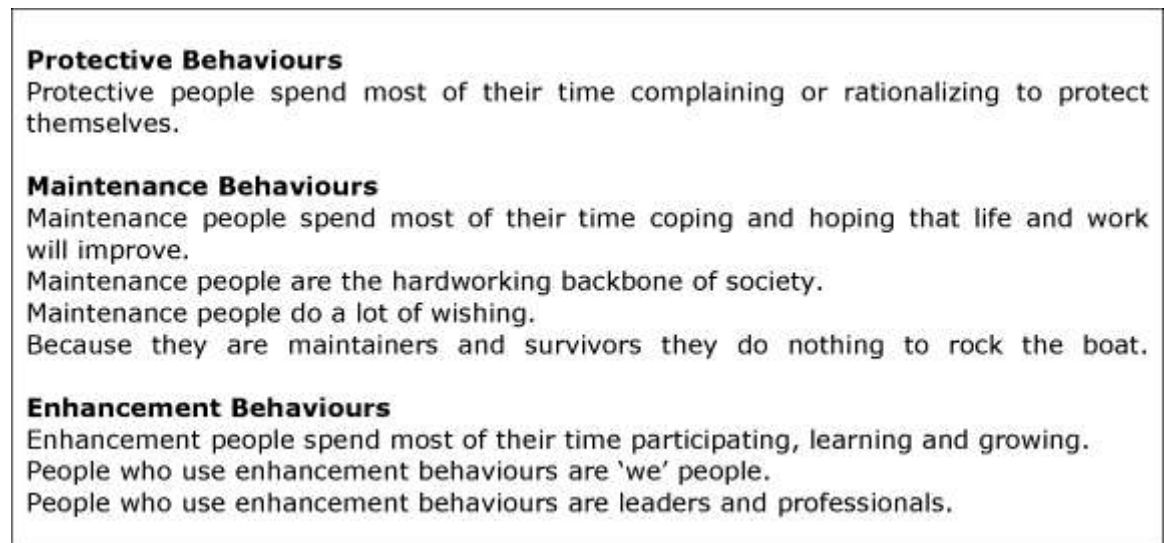


Figure 28: Behaviour patterns of people

The introductory paragraphs and the first two activities challenge us personally to take a stand. From this perspective we can determine our future; we can make choices to live healthy lives as educators or decide to be workers. Take a look at the list that Wong & Wong (1998, p.276) present us with (see figure 29). How do you react and relate to the two columns? Do you have characteristics of both 'worker' and 'leader' as

defined by the Wongs? How do you feel about it? Can you take control?  
Is it that easy? What other variables do we need to consider? What other  
factors determine how we react?

| More Characteristics of Workers and Leaders   |   |
|---|---|
| You Can Recognize Workers   | You Can Recognize Leaders   |
| <p>You see them in the morning. They're tired.<br/> They manage by crisis.<br/> They are full of excuses.<br/> They dress like laborers.<br/> You see them at lunch. They're tired.<br/> They sit at the back of meetings.<br/> They complain about why they have to be in-serviced.<br/> They complain about other people, places, and things.<br/> You see them after school. They're tired.<br/> They blame other people, places, and things.<br/> They are frequently late.<br/> They chitchat.<br/> You see them at a meeting. They're tired.<br/> They are always asking, "What am I supposed to do?"<br/> They do not subscribe to or read journals.<br/> They do not belong to professional organizations.<br/> They seldom, if ever, go to conferences and even complain about district in-service meetings.<br/> They speak negatively of their obligations, as in "Do I have to do this?" and "I'm only doing this because I've got to."<br/> They talk about not getting respect.<br/> They decide to do what others do.<br/> They worry about their jobs and their job conditions.<br/> They are victims.<br/> They are unwilling to learn or turn elsewhere for help.<br/> You see them while shopping. They're tired.<br/> Their outlook on life is "Another day, another dollar."</p> | <p>You see them in the morning. They're helping someone.<br/> They manage by leadership.<br/> They have plans, goals, and vision.<br/> They dress for success.<br/> You see them at lunch. They're on their way to a meeting.<br/> They sit where they can learn.<br/> They enjoy being part of a meeting.<br/> They compliment people, places, and things.<br/> You see them after school. They're waiting for a parent.<br/> They work cooperatively with people, places, and things.<br/> They are prompt and have their materials ready.<br/> They pay attention.<br/> You see them at a meeting. They have a report ready.<br/> They are able to make decisions and help solve problems.<br/> They subscribe to and read the professional literature.<br/> They belong to professional organizations.<br/> They attend and may even contribute academically at conferences.<br/> They speak enthusiastically about their options, as in "I want to go to the conference" and "It is my choice to do a workshop and share with others at a meeting."<br/> Their success earns them respect.<br/> They choose to do what they have determined is best.<br/> They have a career and have options to choose from.<br/> They have power and are in control.<br/> They are knowledgeable and can turn elsewhere for help.<br/> You see them while shopping. They're smiling!<br/> Their outlook on life is "You strive to be a peak performer and pursue life, love, and happiness."</p> |

Figure 29: Characteristics of workers and leaders

## 2. A workplace ethic

Over the past few years we have seen a concerted effort by educators to discuss their mission, their vision and the ethic required to perform to the highest quality. Teachers talk with and encourage students to take greater responsibility for doing their work with care and quality, not just ‘get it done’.

The challenge for schools is to guide students and staff to view the school as a workplace for all who come together there: students, teachers, administrators, parents, other personnel and community members. From what we have already discussed, schools must teach the skills of a work ethic within the school as a workplace, and they must teach those skills to all students. Thus, the challenge is to create the conditions that give students an opportunity to know the expectations, to practice them, and to modify their actions based on feedback from a variety of sources.

### *Clear Vision*

Schools, now, more than ever, need a clear vision of where they want to go. To create the conditions where a work ethic can flourish we must also establish a clear vision of what we want students to know and be able to do. These specific expectations should focus on work ethic, content and process skills.

As we have seen in other chapters, students would demonstrate a work ethic if they:

- would follow directions

- would complete work
- would be punctual
- would listen with empathy
- would support others
- would demonstrate self-control
- would work effectively with others
- would be responsible for setting goals and completing tasks
- would demonstrate respect for self and the diversity of others
- would function as a productive member of society
- others

#### *Role of the teacher*

Within this context the teacher's role is indeed a demanding one. If we want students to perform in ways that demonstrate content, knowledge and skills but also a strong work ethic, then we need to perform in the same ways. The question we need to ask ourselves is whether or not we need to reconceptualise the role of the teacher. Consider the following model which has been presented by Collins and Brown and discussed by Farnham-Diggory (1990). Then reflect on your own and discuss with colleagues.

- *Modelling:* Modelling of what we want students to do. If students need to be excited about their work, teachers need to be excited about their work. If we want students to be thoughtful, we need to demonstrate what thoughtfulness looks like.

- *Coaching*: Helping students to think through what they are trying to do. The teacher raises questions rather than tells students what to do.
- *Scaffolding and Fading*: Providing the content bridges necessary for the task, raising the necessary questions, and giving students the opportunities to explore and perform the task.
- *Articulation*: Explaining what the teacher is thinking about so thinking is visible to the student.
- *Reflection*: Being reflective and thoughtful about the work. Raising evaluation questions. What went well today? Why? If I did this again, how would I do it differently?

This model helps us to appreciate the meaning of ‘being professional’ and so, at least, from two levels. On the one hand we need to appreciate that being a professional implies that master/experienced teachers need to provide support to beginning and less experienced teachers. On the other hand, beginning teachers need to learn to be open and receptive to others. Furthermore, the model also helps us to appreciate that teaching is a formative profession and we need to create contexts in which we can all learn from each other. Whilst this model sees the experienced teacher serving as a mentor and creating opportunities and situations that help and encourage the beginning teacher to question, reflect and articulate ideas about their practice. Eventually we need to create opportunities for all teachers to work and learn from each other. Take time to think of the implications behind such a model? Is it realistic, or idealistic? Draw up a list. Share with colleagues.

Schools are a workplace for the adults and students who work in them. All of us must constantly strive to improve our performances in those areas identified as critical. At that point, our vision of the work ethic will become a shared vision that benefits everyone.

As the other chapters have highlighted, the teacher's work in the classroom is extraordinarily complex. The term 'classroom management' emphasizes the variety and complexity of classroom life and to focus on the wide range of managerial management is not a system of teaching, it is a systematic way of co-ordinating the variety and complexity which is inevitable in the modern classroom. This involves:

- setting objectives
- planning structures and procedures
- attending to communications and motivation
- evaluating performance

This helps us to appreciate that the improvement of teaching and learning is not a one-off action. As Dickinson (in Waterhouse, 2001, p.15) points out, "it is an on-going, cyclical activity". This cycle involves both a thinking and planning stage followed by an action stage. This, in turn, is followed by another thinking and planning stage, and so on. Figure 30 demonstrates the basic components of this cycle.

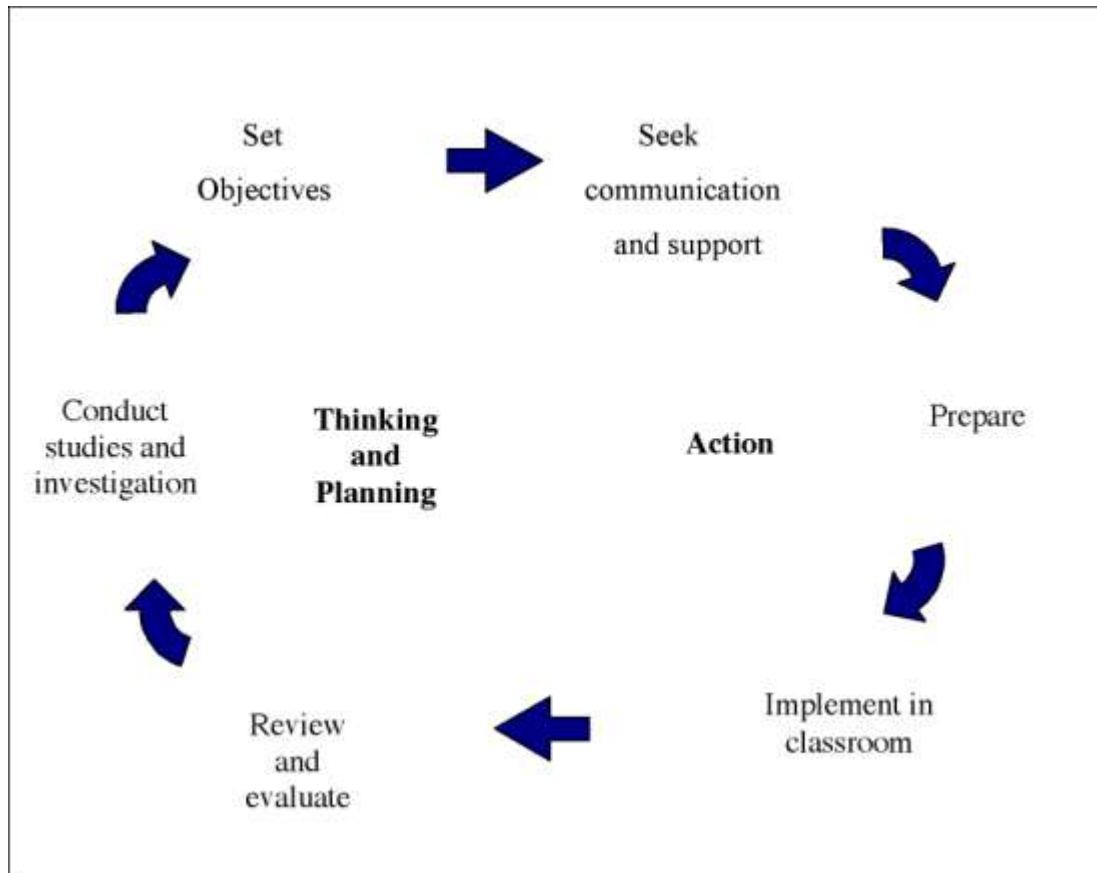


Figure 30: The process of teaching presented as a cyclical activity

### 3. Planning

One critical area that teachers need to master is planning. But, why plan?

The need is obvious when you consider the complexity of trying to:

- Help each individual student meet objectives
- Deal with the wide range of student abilities, aptitudes, and interests



- Use appropriate materials and resources from the many available to us
- Cope with the pace and complexity of the classroom

Without planning, there is little probability of controlling the variables that affect student achievement. Good planning actually increases your ability to be flexible because you have already considered many options. If last minute changes are necessary, you can make them from a solid knowledge base rather than merely reacting to the pressures of the moment. A proactive planner considers planning of units (basic structural plan including objectives, activities of instruction, and evaluation) and routines (mechanisms used to establish and regulate activities). A good planner also plans differently for different blocks of time.

All in all, there are only three basic considerations when you plan:

- *Who* you will teach,
- *What* you will teach,
- *How* you will teach it.

### 3.1. Developing your work

There is no correct way to address planning. You may begin with:

- Objectives from the school syllabus / textbook guides
- The content to which you will apply the objectives

- A need or interest the students have
- A teaching technique you wish to use

Where you start is not important. What is important is that when you have finished, you have considered all of those factors and others that contribute to a good lesson and learning environment. When planning activities to make up your unit, consider:

- Duration
- Location
- Structure of the material
- Sequence of the material
- Type of student-teacher interaction (oral work)
- Type of student-student interaction (group work)
- Materials and resources
- Learning and teaching styles (teacher-led, student interaction, individual work)

Whilst planning is a personal matter as Pollock (2007, p.73) points out he presents teachers with a scheme that helps them to plan instruction in a manner that maximizes student learning. She argues that when teachers regularly plan using a schema based on how learners learn, such planning becomes second nature. Pollock argues that teachers using a teaching schema for learners design lessons deliberately so as to prepare students for learning, help them connect new information to prior learning, and

cement those ideas or skills. The schema is made up of six basic steps, namely:

1. Set the learning goal/ benchmarks or objectives
2. Access prior knowledge
3. Acquire new information – declarative or procedural
4. Apply thinking skills or real-world situation
5. Generalize or summarise back to the objective/benchmark
6. Assign homework, if necessary

### 3.2. Levels of Planning

#### *Basic Requirements*

The basic requirements in planning are that it:

- Communicates clearly what you intend to do
- Serves as a useful tool to guide you
- Identifies objectives to be addressed over time
- Clearly articulates what you want children to achieve (i.e. learning outcomes)
- Is manageable to complete

Finally, your head of school, assistant heads, subject coordinators and teachers, may have particular planning formats that he/she wishes you to use or consider.

#### *Levels*

Too often the only planning that teachers do is unit or daily planning. That can have disastrous results for student learning and teacher stress. Adding long-term planning to your unit and daily planning gives you more flexibility and in the long run requires less paperwork and stress on you.

### *Resources*

In the following pages you are presented with a number of guide sheets which should:

- help you start reviewing planning in a structured manner
- help you identify the type of activities that you need to start reflecting upon and addressing prior to commencement of a new year.

Whilst these are only check lists to get you started, it is imperative to place them within the context of the school you are attached to. Schools are indeed different, and they may have their own practices. See what practices are in place. See how these are going to help you get started.

## TEACHER PLANNING GUIDE

| TYPE            | GOALS OF PLANNING   | FORM OF THE PLAN   | SOURCES OF INFO  |
|-----------------|---|--|--|
| Yearly Planning | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish general content.</li> <li>2. Establishing basic curriculum sequence.</li> <li>3. Ordering and reserving material.</li> </ol>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. General outlines listing basic content; possible ideas based on curriculum objectives.</li> </ol>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students –general information about numbers and returning students.</li> <li>2. Resources available.</li> <li>3. Curriculum guides/syllabi.</li> <li>4. Other teachers.</li> <li>5. Subject Coordinators/Asst. Heads / Head</li> </ol> |
| Term Planning   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Detailing of content to be covered in next three months.</li> <li>2. Establishing weekly schedule.</li> </ol>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Elaboration of yearly outlines.</li> <li>2. Weekly schedule outline with more specifics from information gathered.</li> </ol>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Direct student contact.</li> <li>2. Time constraints set by school schedule.</li> <li>3. Resources available.</li> </ol>   |
| Unit Planning   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a sequence of well organized working experiences based on objectives.</li> <li>2. Present comprehensive, integrated, meaningful content at an appropriate level.</li> </ol>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stated objectives from school curriculum.</li> <li>2. Lists/outlines of activities and content.</li> <li>3. List of sequenced activities.</li> <li>4. Plan in Teacher's File.</li> <li>5. Assessment criteria and procedures.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. NC / school objectives.</li> <li>2. Student abilities, interests.</li> <li>3. Materials, duration of lessons, time on task.</li> <li>4. Facilities available.</li> </ol>   |
| Weekly Planning | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Laying out the week's activities within the framework of the weekly schedule and the unit plan.</li> <li>2. Adjusting schedule for interruptions and special needs.</li> <li>3. Maintaining continuity and regularity of activities.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Names and times of activities in file.</li> </ol>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students performance in preceeding days and weeks.</li> <li>2. Scheduled school interruptions.</li> <li>3. Materials, aides, resources.</li> </ol>   |
| Daily Planning  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preparing students for day's activities.</li> <li>2. Specifying components not yet decided upon.</li> <li>3. Fitting daily schedule to last minute intrusions.</li> <li>4. Setting up and arranging classroom for next day.</li> </ol>          | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Schedule for day written on white board and discussed with students.</li> <li>2. Preparation and arrangement of materials and facilities in room.</li> </ol>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Instructional materials to be used.</li> <li>2. Set-up time required for activities.</li> <li>3. Assessment of class 'disposition' at start of the day.</li> <li>4. Continued interest, involvement, and enthusiasm.</li> </ol>        |

**Figure 31: Teacher Planning Guide**

### 3.3. Guidelines for Planning Beginning of School Activities

- Keep students involved... avoid dead time
- Provide success for all
- Maintain a whole-group focus
- Do things that allow you to place students at the centre of their learning
- Provide variety.
- Change the pace often
- Establish a content focus
- Create positive expectations for students

### 3.4. Getting Hold of the School's Documents

Schools produce a lot of paperwork which will come in use at various stages of the school year. The School Development Plan will be useful as well as the curriculum plans that may be available. There will be no shortage of paper that you need to familiarize yourself with!

The following should be available and invaluable:

- the school prospectus
- the staff handbook

- department handbooks (in secondary)
- subject curriculum documents (in primary)
- the School Development Plan
- schemes of work
- list of resources
- plan of school, classrooms and designated areas
- school calendar
- your timetable

### 3.5. Beginning-of-the-year checklist

| Beginning-of-the-year Checklist  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Routines:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entering classroom</li> <li>• Expectations before class begins</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Housekeeping assignments</li> <li>• Seating chart</li> <li>• Emergency procedures</li> <li>• Use of restroom (between class/during)</li> <li>• Use of playground and equipment</li> <li>• Teacher's desk, supply cabinets, students' desks</li> <li>• Movement of students in room</li> <li>• Expected supplies &amp; consequences for not bringing them</li> <li>• Paper headings/paper and handwriting expectations</li> <li>• Where to turn in completed work</li> <li>• How to return corrected work</li> <li>• How to exchange papers to correct /how to mark</li> <li>• What if work is finished early?</li> <li>• Behaviour and duties in halls</li> <li>• Playground rules</li> <li>• Daily &amp; Weekly schedule</li> <li>• End of day duties</li> <li>• Bus rules</li> <li>• Use of office equipment</li> <li>• Arranging for a substitute.</li> </ul> | <b>Take time to find out other general information, such as:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking</li> <li>• Keys</li> <li>• Money-in-room policy</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Phone use policy</li> <li>• Playground rules</li> <li>• Bus rules</li> <li>• Substitute folder</li> <li>• School rules</li> <li>• Class list</li> <li>• Arrangement of room</li> <li>• Seating chart/name tags on desk</li> <li>• Policy on parents picking students up before end of day</li> <li>• Where to keep materials and supplies</li> <li>• How to get materials and supplies</li> <li>• How the janitor wants the classroom left</li> <li>• Use of equipment</li> <li>• Can you keep students after school? If so, what are the procedures?</li> <li>• Scheduled time for students to attend special classes</li> <li>• Copy machine procedures</li> <li>• Cumulative files</li> <li>• What people resources are available: counsellor, nurse, etc.</li> <li>• Field trip policies</li> <li>• Staff meeting calendar</li> <li>• Find out the head's requirements for lesson planning</li> <li>• Get teacher guides for textbooks</li> <li>• Get copy of portfolio/report card you will be expected to use</li> <li>• Assessment procedures / homework policies</li> <li>• Pastoral Care policies.</li> <li>• Break /lunch procedures</li> <li>• Assembly procedures</li> <li>• Bulletin Boards</li> </ul> |
| <b>Others:</b> <p>Some of the information may be already available in the staff handbook that all teachers would have a copy of. If no said document exists it may be opportune to recommend that such information is brought together in one document.</p>  |  |

Figure 32: Beginning-of-the-year checklist



### 3.6. Preparing for the first day

Efficiency in the classroom is the hallmark of an effective learning environment. Established procedures, consistently applied and taught to your students at the onset of the school year, will significantly improve your classroom management time.

Directions:

- Check ( ) each item for which you already have a prepared process.
- Place an (X) by any item for which you don't have a policy but believe you need one.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>1) Beginning Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- roll call, absent, tardy</li> <li>- academic warm-ups</li> <li>- distributing materials</li> <li>- class opening</li> </ul> <p>2) Room / School Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- shared materials</li> <li>- teacher's desk</li> <li>- drinks, eating</li> <li>- students storage/lockers</li> <li>- student desks</li> <li>- learning centres, stations</li> <li>- playground, school grounds</li> <li>- lunch areas</li> <li>- halls</li> </ul> <p>3) Setting up Independent Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'working alone' time</li> <li>- identifying problems</li> <li>- identifying resources</li> <li>- identifying solutions</li> <li>- scheduling</li> <li>- interim checkpoints</li> </ul> <p>4) Instructional Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- teacher, student contacts</li> <li>- student movement in the room</li> <li>- signals for teacher's attention</li> <li>- student talk during seatwork</li> <li>- activities to do when work is done</li> <li>- student participation</li> <li>- laboratory procedures</li> <li>- movement in and out of small groups</li> <li>- bringing material to schools</li> <li>- expected behaviour in group</li> <li>- behaviour of students not in a group</li> </ul> <p>5) Ending Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- putting away supplies, equipment</li> <li>- cleaning up</li> <li>- organizing class materials</li> <li>- dismissing class</li> </ul> <p>6) Interruptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- rules</li> <li>- talk among students</li> <li>- conduct</li> <li>- passing out books, supplies</li> <li>- turning in work</li> <li>- handing back assignments</li> <li>- getting back assignments</li> <li>- out-of-seat policies</li> <li>- consequence for misbehaviour</li> </ul> | <p>7) Other Procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- safety procedures</li> <li>- fire drills</li> <li>- lunch procedures</li> <li>- student helpers</li> <li>- peripatetic</li> <li>- facilitators</li> </ul> <p>8) Work Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- heading papers</li> <li>- use of pen and/or pencil</li> <li>- writing on back of paper</li> <li>- neatness, legibility</li> <li>- incomplete work</li> <li>- late work</li> <li>- missed work</li> <li>- due dates</li> <li>- supplies</li> <li>- colouring or drawing on paper</li> </ul> <p>9) Communicating Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- use of diary/notebook</li> <li>- provisions for absentees</li> <li>- long term assignments</li> <li>- term schedule</li> <li>- homework assignments</li> </ul> <p>10) Students' Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in-class participation</li> <li>- in-class assignments</li> <li>- homework</li> <li>- projects</li> <li>- field work</li> </ul> <p>11) Checking Assignments in Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- students exchanging papers</li> <li>- marking and grading assignments</li> <li>- turning in assignments</li> <li>- students correcting errors</li> </ul> <p>12) Grading Procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- determining grades</li> <li>- recording grades</li> <li>- grading long assignments</li> <li>- extra credit work</li> <li>- keeping papers, grades, assignments</li> <li>- grading criteria</li> </ul> <p>13) Academic Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- rewards and incentives</li> <li>- exhibiting student's work</li> <li>- communicating with parents</li> <li>- students' record of grades</li> <li>- written comments on assignments</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

Figure 33: Preparing for the first day

### 3.7. Getting started checklist

| List                      | Have | Need | List                   | Have | Need |
|---------------------------|------|------|------------------------|------|------|
| Stationery / Resources    |      |      | Books                  |      |      |
| Paper                     |      |      | Classroom library      |      |      |
| Pencils                   |      |      | Reading                |      |      |
| Pens                      |      |      | (Fiction/Non-Fiction)  |      |      |
| Erasers                   |      |      | English                |      |      |
| Chalk                     |      |      | Lithuanian             |      |      |
| Chalkboard erasers        |      |      | Mathematics            |      |      |
| Crayons                   |      |      | Social Studies         |      |      |
| Construction paper        |      |      | Science                |      |      |
| Photocopy masters         |      |      | Health                 |      |      |
| Copier paper              |      |      | Dictionaries           |      |      |
| Masking tape              |      |      | History (Lithuanian,   |      |      |
| Seating charts            |      |      | European)              |      |      |
| Pencil sharpeners         |      |      | Religion               |      |      |
| White board markers       |      |      | others                 |      |      |
| Wall maps                 |      |      |                        |      |      |
| Stapler / Remover         |      |      |                        |      |      |
| Scissors                  |      |      |                        |      |      |
| Hole puncher              |      |      |                        |      |      |
| Box files                 |      |      |                        |      |      |
| Chart paper               |      |      |                        |      |      |
| Paints                    |      |      |                        |      |      |
| Paint brushes             |      |      |                        |      |      |
| Others                    |      |      |                        |      |      |
| Staff Handbook            |      |      | Furniture              |      |      |
| School calendar           |      |      | Student desk /chairs   |      |      |
| School procedures         |      |      | Bookcases / shelves    |      |      |
| Schedule of specialists   |      |      | Filing cabinet(s)      |      |      |
| Schedule of nurse         |      |      | Keys for room Cabinets |      |      |
| Schedule of librarian     |      |      | others                 |      |      |
| Schedule of support staff |      |      |                        |      |      |
| Schedule of assemblies    |      |      | Teachers File          |      |      |
| Weekly schedule           |      |      | Teacher's manuals      |      |      |
| List of staff             |      |      | Curriculum guides      |      |      |
| First Day procedures      |      |      | Syllabus /Syllabi      |      |      |
| Requisition forms         |      |      | Schemes of work        |      |      |
| Others                    |      |      | Lesson plans           |      |      |
|                           |      |      | Student records        |      |      |
|                           |      |      | Portfolios             |      |      |
|                           |      |      | others                 |      |      |

Figure 34: Getting started checklist

### 3.8. Preparing the Classroom

| Topic   | Check when complete | Notes |
|---|---------------------|-------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. Wall and Bulletin Board Space</b></li><li><b>2. Floor Space</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Students desks / tables</li><li>- Traffic patterns</li><li>- Student work areas</li><li>- Instructional areas</li><li>- Overhead projector</li><li>- Chalkboards/whiteboard</li><li>- Demonstration table</li><li>- Teacher's desk, filing cabinet</li><li>- Bookcases</li></ul></li><li><b>3. Storage Space and Supplies</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Everyday supplies</li><li>- Everyday books</li><li>- Other instructional materials</li><li>- Seldom-used materials</li><li>- Equipment</li><li>- Student materials</li><li>- Teacher supplies</li></ul></li></ul> |                     |       |

Figure 35: Preparing the room

### 3.9. Essential Questions for the first few weeks

| Questions   | Check | Notes |
|---|-------|-------|
| 1) Where are the keys to the building and to the classroom kept? What are the procedures to get them?<br>2) What furniture is available for your room?<br>3) What are the "school rules" for students?<br>4) Are aides available, and if so, on what schedule?<br>5) What are the procedures for obtaining classroom books and for checking them out to the students?<br>6) What expendable supplies are available and what are the procedures for using them?<br>7) What audio-visuals materials and equipment are available and what are the procedures for obtaining them?<br>8) What is the required paperwork for the first day of school, for everyday attendance, for the breaks?<br>9) What is the procedure for the arrival of students on the first day of school; for every day after that? What is your class roster; do you have any special students? Do they, or any other children, leave your room during the day? If so what are their schedules?<br>10) What time will your class have art, drama, music, recess, PE, lunch or go to the library?<br>11) Will there be any assemblies the first day or first week?<br>12) How do children leave at the end of the day? Do you have any bus riders and do they leave early?<br>13) What are your school's policies about discipline, suspension, and keeping children after school? Do parents need to be notified?<br>14) Whom do you contact when you need office assistance for emergencies, illness, or discipline problems?<br>15) What policies or procedures should be followed if a parent requests that a child leaves the school during the school day?<br>16) When is the Head / Asst Head available?<br>17) When is the school nurse available, and what are appropriate reasons for making a referral?<br>18) Is a counsellor available, and what types of referrals does he/she want?<br>19) What resources are available for your room, and what can you do if they are inadequate?<br>20) What janitorial services are available for your room, and how can you make use of such services?<br><b>Others</b> |       |       |

Figure 36: First week questions

#### 4. Professional growth

The focus so far has been on the level of preparation and planning that the teacher needs to be involved in both at the class level or at the institutional level in order to be adequately prepared to work as efficiently and effectively as possible. We have seen that teaching is more than a communication of subject knowledge. It is also a revelation of self, the sharing of a trustful presence which pervades every facet of the dynamics of teaching. As Treston (1997) argues, what matters most in teaching is not the mechanics of the interchange of ideas but the power of the teacher's values and expertise to transform the hearts and minds of those engaged in the experience of teaching and learning. Powerful words. They take us back to the initial exercises that challenge us to decide to be workers or choose to be leaders, to be enhancement people that are self-motivated and self-disciplined and who contribute to the quality of life, first of their own, and then that of others and the organization.

Professionals consult and help one another. Physicians often resort to one another to seek other opinions as they address a particular illness or ailment. Lawyers seek help from colleagues in their firm. Athletes seek advice from their coaches. Should teachers be any different? The literature keeps highlighting that committed teachers constantly seek opportunities to cultivate, promote, honour and empower each other to

create a learning community (e.g. Crowther et al., 2002; Danielson, 2006; Fullan, 2001).

Zmuda, Kuklis and Kline (2004) talk of schools as competent and purposeful systems. They argue that a competent system is grounded in the school as a complex living system with purpose. It is through systems thinking and collegial analyzing assumptions that perpetuate the status quo, recognising previously unseen complexities and conflicts within the school, welcoming problems as friends, and perceiving the gaps between what is and what can be. For the school to have purpose, member so the school community must identify their core beliefs and develop a shared vision. Once these are established, staff development can become purposeful and systematic. In a nutshell the author helps us to appreciate that system thinking is the door to continuous improvement. The need for collegiality is obvious. It is only when teachers, administrators and other stakeholders engage in collegial conversations will they be in a position to learn and grow together. When individuals agree to embark on such a journey they realize they may have very well opened Pandora's box! As they challenge 'what is' they slowly unearth or bring to the surface what they truly believe in, and what they believe in is manifested through what they do and say on a daily basis. Only in such a way will educational leaders, teachers and others discern what 'can be'. Slowly, as people spend more time engaging with each other they help to nurture those principles which are needed for professional growth to take place. These include collegiality, inquiry, learning and sense of community.

The question is how do we as teachers view our own learning? What forms of learning have we been involved in over the past few years? What other options are available? What continuing professional development (CPD) is provided by the school? Am I pleased with my efforts? Can I improve practice? Can I influence the way my school community views professional growth?

I am sure that the reader can add other questions. It naturally all boils down to the way we define the concept of 'learning.' The following questions may help you clarify your own beliefs about approaches to teaching and learning:

- Think about your own experiences as a learner. Jot down three significant learning times for you.
- What was the nature of the learning activities? Why were they effective for you?
- What experiences do you feel have had a marked impact on your own teaching and learning?
- What experiences do you engage in at school and outside? Are you happy with these forms of learning? How effective are they?
- In what ways have the different forms of learning that you have engaged in effected your own teaching strategies?
- What others forms of CPD do you think should be created within the school community?



- Invite other colleagues to reflect on these questions.
- Devise a plan of action that will help the school address the professional needs of the staff.

Take some time to reflect on the following points that others have helped them grow professionally:

- Attending courses (pursuing courses offered outside the school)
- Being part of a support group (adopting a peer coaching approach to learning)
- Having a mentor (relating to a critical friend)
- Reading literature (being subscribed to a professional journal)
- Participating in seminars and conferences
- Adopting an action research approach in school
- Sharing ideas and concerns with others

How do you personally relate to this list? Identify those that affirm, challenge or disturb you. See how others relate to the same items. Can something be done to build on your ideas and beliefs about professional growth? Can the school take on board any of these suggestions? Who can provide opportunities for teachers to learn from one another? Is there anyone who is willing to make the first step and create a learning community?

## 5. Concluding Note

The school is indeed a workplace for adults and students alike. This chapter has emphasized the need for all of us to strive to improve our performances in those areas identified as critical. It is only at that point that our vision of the work ethic becomes a shared vision that benefits everyone. The chapter explored the different levels and types of planning required by teachers with special emphasis on the commencement of the school year. It also places learning within the context of the school as a learning community. It challenges the teacher to review his or her conceptualization of the term learning and how we need to seriously reflect and ponder on how we can manage our learning more effectively so that we can leave an impact on those we relate to – students and fellow educators.

#### 6. Thought for Reflection: Seize the Moment

Life is a series of opportunities.

Most opportunities come only once in a lifetime.

An opportunity is a moving target, and the bigger the target, the faster it moves.

Opportunities always come in when the doors are left open for them.

Research shows that if you do not use an idea or an opportunity within three days, you will never use it. And if you do use it within twenty-four hours, you are more likely to integrate it permanently.

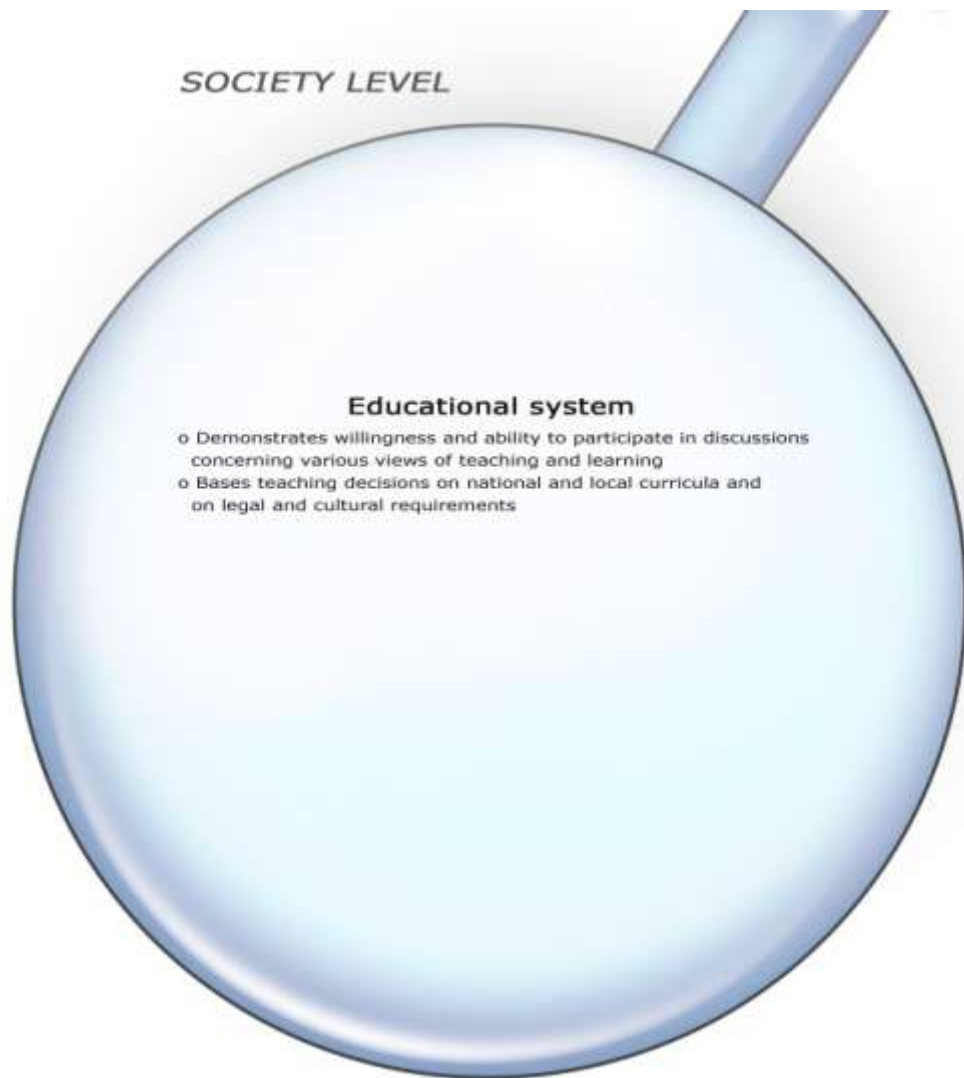
**III SOCIETY LEVEL:**  
**The teacher in relation to the society**  
*Julie De Ganck*



Illustration by Ivan Boeckmans

A final cluster consists of the different competencies a beginning teacher should possess on the level of the society, focusing on the beginning teacher in relation to the *educational system* he is working in. In the article

*Practice with a new curriculum abroad*, Kia Kimhag elaborates on how exchange programmes can help students and pupils to become more educated about citizenship in Europe. Entering a teaching programme abroad includes the experience of working and teaching with the national curriculum of the country one is visiting. During the MOST programme it became clear that an understanding of the educational system and the cultural and legal context one is working in, is a condition for a teaching practice to be successful.



Developed by Julie De Ganck & Ivan Boeckmans



## **Practice With a New Curriculum Abroad.**

***Kia Kimhag***

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (1999) did an evaluation about studying abroad and one of the conclusions are that to study abroad is positive for the development of the society. It helps students to develop and to make them understand themselves and the world. The students receive higher language skills, establish contacts and get more flexible and more open-minded. In our project we have focus on evaluation and finding standards for the practice, but the aspects the national agency mention are of importance for the individual student as well as for society. What we can see after this project is that each participating student will go back to each school system and hopefully bring new things they have learnt and understood during the visit abroad and during the practice abroad. These things will develop and hopefully add something for the development of schools. To exchange is also to get the students more educated about being a citizen in Europe but also for the pupils and students in your own country to understand citizenship in Europe better by meeting the exchange students.

Citizenship education across the countries of Europe aims to equip young people with the values and dispositions, key concepts, knowledge and understanding, skills and aptitudes needed to become citizens within a democratic society. Individually, it helps develop a sense of identity, as students

identify what they believe in relation to the key concepts. (Foster, Graeffe & Zuzeviciute, 2005, p.5)

To be on an exchange programme and to do a part of the education at school practice includes the development of becoming a teacher. To do your practice abroad will also include experience of working and teaching with the national curriculum of the country you visit. Elzbieta Mach (2003) was involved in a project where they tried to find a definition about a European curriculum. In that project they agreed to indicate the cultural diversity and in the cooperation between schools and countries respect aims and contents in the curriculum of each country. A European curriculum should depend on pupils age, structures in classes, educational needs etc. Even if projects like this succeed in sorting out standards for teachers, still we have to follow the curriculum that is specific for each country. To have a national and local curriculum give you the basic knowledge of what you have to do as a teacher. We teacher educators form the students in to a frame of what teaching is, what you suppose to do, why you do it etc. When the student comes to the practice we ask them to plan, to organise, to teach and to evaluate. (Still in a frame, what have we learned by carrying the curricula?) The teacher educator bases teaching and take decisions in the frame but at the same time also is a carrier of the culture. It can be difficult to see and realize your frame and your culture, the context you are in and part of. Could it be more that the students are slowly showed by others how to be a teacher? The teacher education has a system to sort the students, for example by pointing out



who is a good teacher. And who is not. We analyse lessons deciding what a good lesson is and what not. In this new use the curriculum as a steering tool of what you as a teacher student are expected to do. The education system wants good teachers. Do we really know what a good teacher is? Do we understand as teacher educators what is needed by the future teacher? Is it better to copy the frame or is it better to learn how to become a teacher and let student find their way of becoming a teacher?

In this article I will focus on the society level connected to curriculum and students reflection during their stay in Sweden. I will also include my own experience of working as a teacher educator with exchange students. I have also chosen to focus on students from one participating country (Belgium). I have chosen that because of the similarities and the differences and also from the reflections and reports the student made during the project. I have also included one exchange students experience because she compared the syllabi of two of her teaching subjects.

In the project to find standards of evaluating teacher students we found out similarities that we as teacher educators look for in students on the society level. All participants in the project wanted the student to demonstrate willingness and ability to participate in discussions concerning various views of teaching and learning. During the project we have met several students, they have participated and showed the willingness both to discuss and reflect in the seminars at the university and also with pupils at the compulsory school. Reflections from the

students I and my colleagues have met during this project are about the professional freedom and responsibility they feel with teacher educators and teacher mentors at the practice school. They have felt equal and more like colleagues during the stay and at the practice. They also reflect that this make them feel more open-minded and some also experience that their opinion have been important for the teachers they have met, their mentors and academic teachers. At the same time they constantly reflect on the contact they have had with pupils, the close connection that sometimes make them feel like friends with the pupils. They found out that they as teacher students had to change their way of behaviour to adapt the closer contact the pupils are used to.

Here some remarks from the students about the school culture they have met during the stay:

It was although very strange to get to know a new school system, one that is in every aspect different to the system in Belgium. The first thing that sprung to our attention was the contact between the teachers and the pupils. The relationship is more open and warm than in Belgium. When we first got confronted with that connection between teachers and pupils it really amazed us. It was something that really touched me. It's one of the things that I want to experience in Belgium and that I wanted to achieve here in Sweden.

Teachers are like friends who help you to achieve something. During my practice I felt that the pupils really see you like this. They talk to you in the cafeteria, they ask you even personal questions, during the lessons, they just say your first name, etc. In the beginning I thought that this relationship would damage the 'learning situation'. I thought that pupils would work less and talk more. But actually that's not true. By being a friend they accept more from you. They know that you're teaching them because of their own good and they like to work together with you. In Belgium the distance is so big that the pupils work more like it is routine and not because they want to do it.

It was really a challenge to give lessons in English to Swedish teenagers. My role as a teacher there was especially to lead them. I was more like one of them, more like a friend. At the school we were seen as colleagues of the teachers and not as teacher trainees. In Belgium we are more the students, who have to learn a lot.

Charles Cooley (1981) talks about the human life as both a factor of being individual and at the same time being a part in the society. He means that we look at the society from where we stand. When we talk about society we talk in general but when we talk about individuals we forget the general aspects. Cooley means that we constantly are formed by society but it is the individuals that create the society. This is a fact

that we as teacher educator have to understand. In my lessons with the exchange students, I try to make them more wide open when they meet a society they haven't experienced before. On one hand everything seems the same and there are so many similarities. On the other hand, when they get under the surface, they start to see differences. They begin to understand and find their own tools as a teacher in a context they haven't yet met. The atmosphere during the lessons in the classroom is made to give students ability to discuss more about what they have seen, what they think and what they learn. I have found out during this project that it's when you experience different school culture, different curricula and have the opportunity to meet students from different countries, you become more open-minded. You really understand that there are both similarities and differences. We agreed in the project that a student should base the teaching decisions on national and local curricula and on legal and cultural requirements. Even if students do their practice abroad they still have to follow the new curriculum. So is this possible when you do practice abroad far away from your own system, your own curricula? Is it possible to adapt to the new context?

To be in a new system when you are teaching and at the same time include the new curriculum and the syllabi can be difficult but this is the frame to follow, the context to step into. One issue that is important in the Swedish curriculum (Lpo94) for compulsory school is norms and values. Each school has to be active and conscious and influence and stimulate pupils to the common values of the society and include the

questions practically each day in the classroom. The teacher should also clarify and discuss values of the Swedish society and connect it to consequences in the term of individual actions. Different values, ideas and problems should openly be presented and discussed.

Students reflect first on what they see at school visits or practice. To adapt the curriculum takes some time and it might be that students during the stay never understand the deeper meaning of the curriculum. One student meant that in Sweden the teacher has to organize lessons in another way than she was used to. The student realized that a lesson has to be organized so that every pupil feels satisfied afterwards (she meant that this was because of the inclusive education system where there are bigger differences between pupils). The student mentioned that in Belgium you have to organize in another way than in Sweden. First follow the curriculum more strictly included to organize more paperwork. The student could see that in Sweden the teachers organize their work more in the classroom.

They pay a lot of attention to the learning styles (...). So actually in Belgium I pay more attention to the theoretical part of the lesson (the material in Maths, French, English,...) and here in Gävle I paid more attention to the whole situation of the pupil.

The student reflected on the differences and said that it's not that teachers don't pay attention to the character of the pupils in Belgium and

the situation. It's more that you as a teacher has to make sure that you give all material (because of the curriculum) so she meant that there are less time for other things.

One exchange student mentions that it could be a problem when you as a becoming teacher only stay in your own country, born into one system. The student meant that this fact make you believe that this is the only system. No other systems seem to exist. But if you go abroad, you hopefully realize that there are so many systems and so many differences between different countries. She felt that she also started to realize that there are a lot of bad and also very good things in her own system.

The curriculum in Sweden says "Clarify and discuss with the pupils the basic values of Swedish society (...) openly present and discuss different values, ideas and problems" (Lpo94). How can exchange students adapt that part of the curriculum if he or she is used to focus on the subject material and only this?

My colleagues that have been involved in the project mention that more or less each exchange student change their way of discussing during the stay. In the beginning the students are waiting to get the answers from the teacher educators. When they get a new question instead of an answer they slowly change. After a few weeks all students discuss quite openly and they find that their opinions are important. They grow and look more proud when you visit them at the practice.

Students reflected on the role as a teacher in Sweden and what you might need in the classroom:

I felt more like I was the one who has to motivate the pupils. If I didn't make it interesting, the pupils wouldn't have done anything. In Belgium they do it anyway, if it's interesting for them or not. It was more like a challenge to get and keep their attention here. You know here when they are listening and when they like what you are doing.

I however had to prepare my lessons in another way and think more about the class situation. In Sweden you have to make sure none of the pupils gets bored because otherwise they leave the classroom. It was a real challenge for me to make sure everyone was interested in my lesson. I think I succeeded because I had the same amount of students at the end of my lesson! As a consequence of this partnership between my mentors and me and this amount of responsibility I got, I was able to choose my subjects for the lessons myself. Sometimes my mentor of history gave me a global thing to talk about and I could fill the lesson in every way I wanted. That was a really nice feeling to be able to take such an amount of initiative. In Belgium you can't really choose your subjects and when you're really unlucky you have to fill out a textbook and a workbook as well. I would like it more if

this aspect of Swedish teacher training would be included in the Belgian system.

One student compared the national curricula (Sweden and Belgium) between her subjects. During practice she notice that the curricula and the structure with here subject was totally different to what she had learnt in Belgium. She saw after a short time that this 'Swedish' way of teaching could give her new perspectives to bring back home.

I'm very interested in geography and history and I'm even more fascinated by courses like social studies. I namely study to become a teacher in geography and history in Belgium. There, these subjects are always taught separately; they are thus seen as two totally different and independent disciplines. So for me it is a new thing that in Sweden they are both part of the same course, namely social studies, together with religion and civics.

Each country has there own curriculum. This is the frame the student has. They are teaching in there own subject from one curriculum. In this example the student came to Sweden where the subject that she teaching is a part of a bigger subject. In the beginning of the practice she noticed this and starts to ask questions of how it could work to have four subjects in one. In the Swedish syllabus for social studies the aims for the subject are to provide pupils to see their surroundings in relation to themselves and also to understand themselves in relation to the



surroundings. How individuals form and are formed by their world. To get this knowledge the syllabus declares that the pupils have to participate, be responsible and to act as citizens in a democratic society. But also that you as a citizen has to contribute to the development of the society (syllabi, 2001). The student's experience in the subject is more related to history and geography.

I expect to have clearness in what way social studies differs from history and geography as single courses and I also expect to find out how valuable a discipline like civics is for my disciplines history and geography. I would like to take this knowledge back with me to home, so that I can enrich my lessons with it.

The student realize that after she has been both teaching and talking with teacher mentors at the practice school that it's difficult to draw the line between the subjects. She can see both good things and things that are not that good in this matter. What she remarks is that the possibilities to have more subjects in one, makes it easier to include discussions. In the Swedish syllabi (2001) the discussion and to stimulate reflections are central. In the goals to aim for in social studies you can't read about specific aims for history or geography. For example "be aware of people's living conditions, and able to examine their assumptions and compare living conditions in the past and present and in different parts of the world". This example of an aim shows how it opens up many possibilities for the teacher, for example you can include history and the rest of the

subjects in social studies. The student looked at the difference between Swedish teachers compared to the Belgium teachers and the syllabi for the subjects.

If you only talk about the teaching part, I think that the biggest difference is that social studies teachers have more freedom. They can easier walk away from the topic that they are teaching. (...) As civics is also included in social studies, social studies teachers can with no trouble dwell on about valuable things that students bring on. That's harder to do for history or geography teachers, because they have a stricter schedule to follow. They have to stick more to the subject that they are teaching.

The student starts to see that her own subjects at home are within a strong structure. The frame of what you as a teacher actually can do in the lessons is strictly formulated and it is hard to change anything and the teaching is always more or less the same.

In the syllabus of the Swedish compulsory schools I didn't find any differences either between social studies and history/geography/civics/religion. The goals were maybe written down in other words, but for me it seemed that they meant the same. It was even said in the beginning of the common syllabus text of social studies that it's a text that makes up with the

syllabuses of the different subjects; so there aren't a lot of differences.

But still there was a difference but more connected to what and how you teach. If you are free you can easier change if pupils come up with different questions. But in the Swedish curriculum (Lpo94) the aims are connected to words like, able to discuss, to reason around, compare and to understand. The student started to reflect on what she learnt from teaching the subject and compared it with the two subjects she have in Belgium.

From my experience as a teacher student, I can tell that I found it more difficult to teach social studies than to teach only history or geography. That's because as a young teacher, I don't control all topics that well. And if you teach social studies, you have to know a lot about the topics that you teach, more than if you would only teach history or geography. (...) But on the other hand, a teacher who lectures subjects like geography and history doesn't have to same opportunities to dwell on about topics like democracy, world famine, natural recourses, freedom, globalisation, etc. And that's not because they aren't any opportunities in these classes to talk about such topics, but it's because there isn't any time preserved to discuss them. That is at least in Belgium like that, because a course like civics doesn't exist there, and it is not calculated in the curriculum of another

subjects. So, if a student would bring up a topic like globalisation in a geography lesson, most teachers would say: “I’m sorry, we don’t have time to discuss that in this lesson. Talk about it in another class.” Even the more aware teachers would only spend five minutes discussing the topic. For that reason, teaching a course like social studies is maybe better, because then, there is time to discuss life topics. And that is necessary for teenagers; it prepares them to become responsible citizens, who can make wise decisions.

If you compare some parts of the curriculum there can be a difficulty to understand what part of the Swedish curriculum (Lpo94) and syllabi (2001) are equal with the Belgium curriculum (first grade secondary education A-stream). In the Belgium curriculum in the subject geography the teacher has to work with: Landscape and map, population and multicultural society, natural environment, man and the landscape and our living space. In the part population and multicultural society the pupils must “explain basic concepts concerning the population, including cultural aspects, and read off relevant population data from maps and charts”. They also have to “describe elements of other cultures in their own environment”. Finally they have to “learn to show respect for the individuality and specific lifestyle of peoples from other cultures, including in our multicultural society”. In the Swedish syllabus (2001) for the subject social studies there is no exact goals to aim for that are related to the Belgium concrete goals. One goal close related could be “develop their ability to use different sources of information and develop a critical

attitude to these”. But at the same time this goal is also related to history, civics and religion. One goal to strive to attain in the compulsory school in the curriculum is “are familiar with central parts of our Swedish, Nordic and Western cultural heritages”. Another similar is “having developed their understanding of other cultures”. But these goals are also related to all subjects in the compulsory school.

Conclusions from the experience are more about the individual level but it will have effects in the future at a society level. Most students we have met during the project didn’t reflect on the curriculum. They have compared the school systems, but not that often the curricula. The reflections have been more on the behaviour level about the contact between themselves, pupils, teacher educators and teacher mentors. It has been very clear for me and my colleague that the exchange students have a need to get a deeper understanding of our school system, the curriculum and the syllabi. To understand and see both similarities and differences the student need to make analysis and comparisons of their subjects and their national curricula. This is a process during their stay and during the practice. First they have a need to get a distance to their own experience and their own system. Then they need to get the understanding of the new system and hopefully get under the surface.

We have found that when we give the students freedom and responsibility to discuss what they have seen and experienced, they also get more open-minded. They find things in the new system and curriculum that they want to bring with them to their professional work as a teacher of their home country. Mats Trondman (1999) discusses how

easy we follow others and get a direction in what we think and if this is the right thing to do. He means that it is like a hierarchy of different directions of taste. You have a need of finding and seeing your own taste even if others are telling you that your taste is not the right one. This is what happens when you do practice abroad. In your rucksack you have a taste so strong learnt in so many years that this is the system, the right one. Then you arrive and start to see something totally new and it seems as if everyone think this is the right way. When you get in a distance and at the same time see a new system perhaps you for the first time realize what taste you have. If we constantly learn to be in a frame of teaching surrounded of the culture, behaviour, taste and a national curriculum to follow, then it could be difficult to adapt new ideas. But when you are in a new system and see that this is also possible, you open your mind and finally understand that there is no system that is the one.

My colleague and I went on a trip to Belgium and the Netherlands to visit several schools some years ago. We drew a car from Schiphol airport and during these days we slowly changed inside. All hours in the car we discussed the several visits and from each visit we got more and more distance to our own school system. We both found new attitudes, things, methods that were new for us or old fashion. But in the discussion we also understood that it must be a difference when you come to a catholic school where pupils are wearing uniforms compared to our system. Large groups with small pupils and only one teacher is a different situation compared to our system where we have more teachers and more rooms. The behaviour from us was sometimes so different from what the pupils

have seen or met. We are used to bind with each child directly even if we are visitors. In one of the schools the pupils started to ask us about the winter in Sweden. “Is it truth that you can fish on the ice?” We started a pantomime and showed what a fishing trip can be on the ice a very cold day. Later that evening we got a respond from the teacher educator that has followed us to the school. He mentioned for us that the pupils asked afterwards if we where actors. That episode started a new discussion about what is pupil expectation when adults behave in the way you are use to or not. For this class I and my colleagues behaviour was far away from their teacher behaviour. We acted in the way we have learnt is a god way of teaching from own experience. They believed we where actors and not teachers. It seems that a teacher for them should act in another frame then we did. This trip and so many other contacts with students and colleagues around Europe have given us a wider perspective and a large distance to our system. This helps us to meet the incoming exchange students and to understand a new society, a new curriculum or a new cultural context. The conversation, the talks and the discussion must go on. We have to inform and teach the students so they can understand but we as teacher educator have to evaluate and teach with knowledge of each student rucksack. Carl Marx (1845) wrote in his *Feuerbachthesen*: “All social life is essentially practical. All mysteries which lead theory to mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice.”

This is what we have found during the project that exchange student must be met with respect of what they represent but at the same time adapt our system to get distance to their own.



## References

- Ainscow, M., Booth, T. & Dyson, P. (2003) Understanding and developing inclusive practices in schools, *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 8, 125-139.
- Alberto, P., & Troutman, A. (1986). *Applied behaviour analysis for teachers: Influencing student performance* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Columbus OH: Charles Merrill.
- Angelides, P., Stylianou, T., & Leigh, J. (2007). The efficacy of collaborative networks in preparing teachers. *European Journal of teacher Education*, 30, (2), 135-149. Retrieved May 17, 2007 from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02619760701273953>.
- Arfwedson, G. (Ed.) (2002). *Mellan praktik och teori. Tio didaktiska berättelser om undervisning*. Stockholm: HLS Förlag.
- Argyris, C. (1999). *On organizational learning* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Cambridge. Mass: Blackwell Publishing.
- Bachmann, K. & Haug, P. (2006). *Forskning om tilpasset opplæring. Forskningsrapport nr. 62*. Volda: Høgskulen i Volda & Møreforskning Volda.
- Beauchamp, R.A. (1998). *Peirce, thirdness and pedagogy: Reforming the paideia*. Paper given at the Twentieth World Congress of Philosophy, in Boston, Massachusetts from August 10-15, 1998, Retrieved May 17, 2007, from <http://www.bu.edu/wcp/Papers/Amer/AmerBeau.htm>

- Bennett, N., & Dunne, E. (1992). *Managing classroom groups*. Hemel Hempstead: Simon and Schuster.
- Bezzina, C. (2001). *On becoming an effective teacher: An introductory handbook*. Malta: Indigo Books.
- Biggs, J. (2006). *Teaching for quality learning at university* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Trowbridge. McGraw-Hill house: Open University Press.
- Boostrom, R. (1991). Classroom rules. *Curriculum inquiry*, 21, 193-216.
- Bronckart, J. P. (1995). Theories of action, speech, natural language, and discourse. In J.V. Wertsch, P. Del Rio, & A. Alvarez (Eds.), *Sociocultural studies of mind* (pp. 75–91). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Brophy, J., & Evertson, C.M. (1976). *Learning from teaching: A development perspective*. Needham Heights, Mass.: Allyn and Bacon.
- Brown, S., Earlam, C., & Race, P. (1997). *500 tips for teachers*. London: Kogan Page.
- Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. London: Harvard University Press.
- Bruner, J. (1996). *The culture of education*. London: Harvard University Press.
- Buck, R. (1984). *The communication of emotion*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Burris, E.D. (2004). The reality of the classroom: Epistemological Errors in Teaching. In B. Davis, R. Luce-Kapler, & R. Upitis (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 2004 Complexity Science and Educational Research Conference* (pp. 33–54). Retrieved November 15, 2007, from [www.complexityandeducation.ca](http://www.complexityandeducation.ca).

- Canter, L. (1976). *Assertive discipline: a take-charge approach for today's educator*. Seal Beach, CA: Canter and Associates.
- Canter, L. (1989). Assertive discipline: More than names on the board and marbles in a jar. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 71, 57-61.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2000). *A guide to teaching practice* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). London: Routledge.
- Coll, C. (1987). *Psicología y currículum*. Barcelona: Laia.
- Colley, C. (1981). *Samhället och individen*. Göteborg: Korpens Förlag.
- Department for Educational Development. *Core Curriculum for compulsory and secondary school in Belgium*. Retrieved May 17, 2007, from <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/dvo/english/corecurriculum/corecurriculum.htm>
- Coulier, R., De Ganck, J., De Muynck, S., De Schepper, B., & Prins, B. (2006). *Communicatieve en agogische vaardigheden. Syllabus 2 OSO*. Gent: Arteveldehogeschool.
- Covey, S. (1989). *The seven habits of highly effective people*. London and New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Cowley, S. (2003). *Sue Cowley's teaching clinic*. United Kingdom: The Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd.
- Crowther, F., Kaagan, S.S., Ferguson, M., & Hann, L. (2002). *Developing teacher leaders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Danielson, C. (2006). *Teacher leadership that strengthens professional practice*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

- De Ganck, J. (2002). *Over psychoanalyse, chaos en complexiteit: een vergelijking tussen twee conceptuele kaders*. Onuitgegeven licentiaatsverhandeling, Universiteit Gent.
- De Ganck, J. (2007). *Handbook MOST*. Gent: Arteveldehogeschool.
- Delamont, S. (1976). *Interaction in the classroom*. London: Methuen.
- Dell, P.F. (1985). Understanding Bateson and Maturana: Toward a biological foundation for the social sciences. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 11, 1–20.
- Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds.) (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Department of Special Education, renaissance group. *Teachers competences needed*. University of Northern Iowa. Retrieved June, 2007, from [www.uni.edu/coe/inclusion/standards/competencies.html](http://www.uni.edu/coe/inclusion/standards/competencies.html)
- DeVito, J.A. (1986). *The communication handbook: A dictionary*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Díaz, F. (2002). *Didáctica y currículum: Un enfoque constructivista*. Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha.
- Directorate for Primary and Secondary Education. (2005). *The learning environment in schools and training establishment*. Oslo.
- Directorate for Primary and Secondary Education. (2005). *Survey of measures for developing the learning environment during the school year of 2005/06*. Oslo.
- Doyle, W. (1986). Classroom Management and Organisation. In M.C. Wittrock, *Handbook of research on teaching*. New York: Macmillan.

- Fanham-Diggory, S. (1990). *Schooling: The developing child*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Fenwick, D.T. (1998). Managing space, energy and self: Junior high teachers' experiences of classroom management. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 14, 619-631.
- Fernández, J., Elortegui, N., Moreno, T., & Rodríguez, J.F. (1999). *Cómo hacer unidades didácticas innovadoras*. Sevilla: Díada Editora.
- Fogel, A. (1993). *Developing through relationships: Origins of communication, self, and culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Foster, R., Graeffe, L. & Zuzeviciute, V. (2005). *Professional in-service courses that relate to citizenship education and identity - CiCe guidelines on the design of higher education courses*, 4 (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). London: CiCe Thematic Network Project, Institute for Policy Studies in Education, London Metropolitan University.
- Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a culture of change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Gallego, J.L. (1997). Los proyectos de aula: una propuesta para su evaluación. In R. Gómez-Caminero et al. (Eds.), *Prácticas metodológicas y de evaluación en la Educación Infantil*. Granada: Osuna.
- Gil, D. (1997). Los programas-guías de actividades: una concreción del modelo constructivista de aprendizaje de las ciencias. *Investigación en la escuela*, 3, 3-12.
- Gilbert, M. (2004). *Communicating effectively: Tools for educational leaders*. Maryland: Scarecrow Education.
- Ginott, H.G. (1972). *Teacher and child: A book for parents and teachers*. New York: Macmillan.

- Glasser, W. (1986). *Control theory in the classroom*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Glasser, W. (1990). *Quality school: Managing students without coercion*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Good, T., & Brophy, J. (1990). *Looking in classrooms* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Harper & Row.
- Good, T.L., & Brophy, J.E. (1997). *Looking in classrooms* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Harper and Row.
- Grace, G. (1985). Judging teachers: The social and political context of teacher Evaluation. In L. Barton and S. Walker, *Education and Social Change*. London: Croom Helm.
- Guba, E.G. (1990). *The paradigm dialog*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Habermas, J. (1981/1984-87). *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*. 2 vols, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp/ *The Theory of Communicative Action*. trans. by Thomas McCarthy, 2 vols, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hanks, M.D. (1974). *The gift of self*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft.
- Högskoleverkets Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (1999). *Utlandsstudier – till vilken nytta? En utvärdering av utlandsstudier. Rapportserie 1999:10*. Stockholm: Högskoleverket
- Hornero, L. (1987). *Models per a la redacció d'un projecte pedagògic-didàctic*. Barcelona: Laertes.
- Johnson, K. and Morrow, K. (1981). *Communication in the classroom*. London: Longman.

- Johnson, K., & Morrow, K. (1999). *Communication in the classroom: Applications and methods for a communicative approach*. London: Longman Group Limited.
- Jones, F. (1987). *Positive classroom discipline*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Joyce, B., & Weil, M. (1978). *Models of teaching*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Juarrero, A. (1999). *Dynamics in action: Intentional behavior as a complex system*. Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.
- Kjaergaard, E., & Martinėnienė, R. (2000). *Demokratija kasdien*. Vilnius: Garnelis.
- Kodakos, A., & Polemikos, N. (2000). *Nonverbal communication in kindergarten*. Athens: Ellinika Grammata.
- Lacan, J. (1966). *Écrits* (pp. 493-528). Paris : Éditions du Seuil.
- Lambe, J., & Bones, R. (2006). Student teachers' perceptions about inclusive classroom teaching in Northern Ireland prior to teaching practice experience. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 21*, 167-186
- Larsson, H. (1899; 1912). *Studier & meditationer*. Lund: Gleerup.
- Luft, J. (1969). *Of human interaction*. Palo Alto, CA: National Press.
- MacDonald, R.E., & Healy, S.D. (1999). *A handbook for beginning teachers* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Longman.
- Mach, E. (ed) (2003). *European Curriculum for children of migrants workers. Part one, curriculum for primary school. (Project nr: 87271-CP-I- 2000-I –PL – Comenius –C2)*. Krakow, Poland: Education and Culture, Socrates, Comenius.

- Madsen, C., & Madsen, C. (1970). *Teaching discipline: A positive approach for educational development*. Raleigh: Contemporary Publishing Co.
- Marx, C. (1845). *Feuerbachthesen*. Germany.
- Maturana, H.R., & Varela, F.J. (1980). *Autopoiesis and cognition: The realization of the living*. Dordrech: Reidel.
- Maturana, H.R., & Varela, F.J. (1987 {1989}). *De Boom der kennis: hoe wij de wereld door onze eigen waarneming creëren*. Amsterdam: Contact.
- Miller, J.A. (Ed.) (1969-79). *The Seminar XVII, The other side of psychoanalysis*. Unpublished text, established by J.A. Miller, translated by Russel Grigg.
- Miller, P.W. (1988). *Nonverbal communication*. U.S. : National Educational Association of the United States.
- Ministry of Education and Science. (1989). *Diseño curricular base*. Madrid: Servicio de Publicaciones del Ministerio.
- Ministry of Education and sciences in Sweden (1994). *Curriculum for the compulsory school system, the pre-school class and the leisure-time centre, Lpo94*. Sweden: Lpo94
- Mintz, J. (2007). Attitudes of primary initial teacher training students to special educational needs and inclusion. *Support for Learning*, 22, 3-8.
- National Agency for Education. (1994). *Lpo-94, Curriculum for the Compulsory School System, the Pre-School Class and the Leisure-time Centre*. Stockholm, Fritzes Skolverket. Retrieved from <http://www.skolverket.se/publikationer?id=1070>



- National Agency For Education. (2001). *Syllabi, Compulsary school*. Stockholm: Fritzez kundservice, Retieved from <http://www3.skolverket.se/ki/eng/comp.pdf>
- Norwegian Directorate for education and training (2006). *Knowledge promotion*. Oslo.
- Novak, J.D. (1988). Constructivismo humano: Un consenso emergente. *Enseñanza de las ciencias*, 6, 213-223.
- Novak, J.D., & Gowin, D.B. (1984). *Learning how to learn*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- OECD. (1996). *Education at a glance*. OECD indicators Paris: Centre for research and innovation.
- O'Leary, K.D., & O'Leary, S.G. (1977). *Classroom management: The successful use of Behaviour Modification*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Parrat-Dayán, S. (1998). La teoría de Piaget sobre la causalidad. In M. Moreno, G. Sastre, M. Bovet, & A. Leal (Eds.), *Conocimiento y cambio. Los modelos organizadores en la construcción del conocimiento* (pp. 31-46). Barcelona: Paidós.
- Piaget, J. (1954). *The origins of intelligence in children*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Pollard, A. (2002). *Reflective teaching: Effective and evidence-informed professional practice continuum*. London/New York: Continuum.
- Pollock, J.E. (2007). *Improving student learning one teacher at a time*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

- Richardson, V., & Fallona, C. (2001). Classroom management as method and manner. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 705-728.
- Ricœur, P. (1990; 1992). *Soi-même comme un autre; Oneself as another*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil; Chicago: The University Press of Chicago.
- Lecourt, D. (1999). The ideological consequences of technology and education: The case for critical pedagogy. In M. Selinger & J. Pearson (Eds.), *Telematics in education: Trends and issues* (pp. 51-75). Amsterdam: Pergamon.
- Shapiro, D. (1995). *Conflict and communication: A guide through the labyrinth of conflict management*. New York: Open Society Institute.
- Smehaugen, A. (2004). Education, Culture and Welfare in Spain and Norway. Equalities and Inequalities. Akershus: Høgskolen i Akershus.
- Steele, J., Meredith, K., Walter, S., & Temple, C. (1998). *Reading and writing for critical thinking*. Guidebooks I-VIII. New York.
- Strike, K.A., & Soltis, J.F. (1985). *The ethics of teaching*. New York: Teachers college press.
- Students in the MOST project (2005). *Portfolios*. Unpublished manuscripts, Universities & Univesity Colleges in the MOST project.
- Students in the MOST project (2006). *Portfolios*. Unpublished manuscripts, Universities & Univesity Colleges in the MOST project.

- Students in the MOST project (2007). *Portfolios*. Unpublished manuscripts, Universities & Univesity Colleges in the MOST project.
- Tejada, J. (1999). La evaluación: su conceptualización. In B. Jiménez (Ed.), *Evaluación de programas, centros y profesores*. Madrid: Síntesis.
- Tejada, J. (2005). *Didáctica-Curriculum. Diseño, desarrollo y evaluación curricular*. Barcelona: Davinci Continental.
- Thody, A., Gray, B., & Bowden, D. (2000). *The teacher's survival guide*. London and New York: Continuum.
- Treston, K. (1997). *Five dynamic dimensions for effective teaching*. Mystic CT: Twenty-Third Publications.
- Trondman. M. (1999). *Kultursociologi I praktiken*. Studentlitteratur, Lund.
- UNESCO. (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. Madrid.
- Van de Vijver, G. (1991). *Van Cybernetica naar Connectionisme: een epistemologische studie van doelgerichtheid*. Gent: Academia Press.
- Varela, F. (1979). *Principles of biological autonomy*. New York: North Holland.
- Veenman, S. (1984). Perceived Problems of Beginning Teachers. *Review of Educational Research*, 54, 2, 143-178.
- Verhaeghe, P. (2003). *Over normaliteit en andere afwijkingen. Handboek klinische psychodiagnostiek*. Leuven: Acco.
- Verhoeven, N. (2002). *Sterk in je werk: gedrag in organisaties*. Boom: Onderwijs.

- Vislie, L. (2003). From integration to inclusion: Focusing global trends in the western European societies. *European Journal of Special needs Education*, 18, 17-35.
- Watzlawick, P., Beavin, J.H., & Jackson, D.D. (1977). *De pragmatische aspecten van de menselijke communicatie*. Deventer: Van Loghum-Slaterus.
- WEAC (2001). *Special Education Inclusion*. Retrieved from <http://www.weac.org/resource/june96/speced.htm>.
- Wong, H.K., & Wong, R. (1998). *The first days of school*. Mountain View, CA: Harry K. Wong Publications.
- Wragg, T. (1994). *Class management*. London: Routledge.
- Wragg, T. (2001). *Class management in the secondary school*. London: Routledge.
- Zabala, M.A. (1998). Evaluación de actitudes y valores. In A. Medina et al. (Eds.), *Evaluación de los procesos y resultados del aprendizaje de los estudiantes*. Madrid: UNED.
- Zmuda, A., Kuklis, R., & Kline, E. (2004). *Transforming schools: Creating a culture of continuous improvement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

## Notes on contributors

### Walter Baeten

Walter Baeten is an international relation officer at the University College Arteveldehogeschool. He was the coordinator of the MOST-project.

### Julie De Ganck

Julie De Ganck is a lecturer of Pedagogy and Communication at University College Arteveldehogeschool, Gent, Belgium. She was the coordinator of the Belgian team in the MOST-project.

### Daiva Penkauskiene

Daiva Penkauskiene is the director of the Modern Didactics Center in Vilnius, Lithuania.

She was the coordinator of the Lithuanian team in the MOST-project.

### Asta Railiene

Asta Railiene is a lecturer at the Modern Didactics Center in Vilnius, Lithuania.

### Kestutis Kaminskas

Kestutis Kaminskas is a professor at the University of Pedagogy in Vilnius, Lithuania.

He is advisor of the Parliament of Lithuania.

Christopher Bezzina

Christopher Bezzina is a professor at the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta.

He was the coordinator of the Maltese team in the MOST-project.

Anthon Cardona

Anthony Cardona is a lecturer at the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta.

Hermann Skogsholm

Hermann Skogsholm is a lecturer at the Faculty of Arts and Education at University of Stavanger, Norway. He was the coordinator of the Norwegian team in the MOST-project.

Björg Klokke

Björg Klokke was a lecturer at the Faculty of Arts and Education at University of Stavanger, Norway during the MOST-project.

Sara Figueras

Sara Figueras Comas is a lecturer at the Faculty of Psychology, Educational Sciences and Sport, Blanquerna of the Ramon Llull University, Barcelona, Spain. She was the coordinator of the Spanish team in the MOST-project.

Lluís Cumellas Ruíz

Lluís Cumellas Ruiz is a lecturer at the Faculty of Psychology, Educational Sciences and Sport Blanquerna of the Ramon Llull University, Barcelona, Spain.

Kia Kimhag

Kia Kimhag is lecturer at the Institute of Pedagogy, didactics and psychology at the University of Gävle, Sweden. She was the coordinator of the Swedish team in the MOST-project.

Bengt Söderhäll

Bengt Söderhäll is lecturer at the Institute of Pedagogy, didactics and psychology at the University of Gävle, Sweden.

---

<sup>i</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/com392\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/com392_en.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> This article is available on the project's website: [www.most-comenius.eu](http://www.most-comenius.eu)

<sup>iii</sup> This article is available on the project's website: [www.most-comenius.eu](http://www.most-comenius.eu)

<sup>iv</sup> This decision will be later justified.

<sup>v</sup> Some could comment on more appropriate or useful teaching goals here for the pupils' integral training.

<sup>vi</sup> Source: Edmund E., Evertson, C., Clements, B. and Worsham M. (1997). *Classroom Management for Secondary Teachers*. Allyn & Bacon.

<sup>vii</sup> Aadapted from Wragg, 1994, p.28 - 29

<sup>viii</sup> This article is available on the project's website: [www.most-comenius.eu](http://www.most-comenius.eu)

<sup>ix</sup> Another striking example can be found in the article *Transference and Education* by the psychoanalyst and teacher Robert Flamant (1994). Flamant, R. (1994). Overdracht en onderwijs. In F. Geerardyn & K. Libbrecht (Eds.), *Psychoanalytische Perspectieven 24* (pp. 27-36). Gent: Uitgever Psychoanalytische Perspectieven.

<sup>x</sup> Interesting articles on the implications of tranference processes in the classroom can be found in Gallop, J. (1995), *Pedagogy: The Question of Impersonation*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

<sup>xi</sup> Which comes first: the chicken or the egg ?

<sup>xii</sup> Sources:

- Verhaeghe, P. (2003, p.51), *Over normaliteit en andere afwijkingen. Handboek klinische psychodiagnostiek*. Leuven: Acco.
- Lacan, J. (1966, p. 493-528), *Écrits*. Paris : Éditions du Seuil.

<sup>xiii</sup> The referent (or the object an sich, as occuring in the real world) stands beyond this representation of a sign.

<sup>xiv</sup> Freud stated that dreams are structured like a rebus. In contrast to Jung he didn't believe in a one-to-one relationship between dream symbols and meaning. A masterpiece of Freud in this area is "The Interpretation of Dreams"



---

<sup>xv</sup> Examples: He's the father of my children - Freud is the father of psychoanalytic theory, eye – I, bed – bad,...

<sup>xvi</sup> Recall the statement of Watzlawick (1977): "the nature of a relationship is contingent upon the punctuation of the communication sequences between communicants".

<sup>xvii</sup> This article is available on the project's website: [www.most-comenius.eu](http://www.most-comenius.eu)

<sup>xviii</sup> This article is available on the project's website.: [www.most-comenius.eu](http://www.most-comenius.eu)