

THE RECONCEPTUALIZATION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULUM AND CHILDREN'S CIVIC COMPETENCES

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ABSTRACT

The paper discusses possible improvements of the conditions relevant for developing preschoolers' civic competences, which implies a series of qualitative changes in the structure of preschool institutions and in the organization of educational process. Encouraging the development of children's civic competences as well as the development of a new culture of preschool learning can contribute to the implementation of humanistic curriculum in the context of early childhood education, as the authors suggest. The paper promotes the idea of preparing children for self-evaluation in their learning process, which is required for their active process (co)modelling and (co)managing, and for the recognition of their active role in the curriculum research process. This is considered a precondition for developing a new concept of institutionalised childhood, also a possible direction for reconceptualizing the early childhood curriculum.

Key words: institutionalised childhood, culture of learning, children's rights

INTRODUCTION

Creating a humanistic curriculum (Stenhouse, 1975; Miljak, 1996; Malaguzzi, 1998; Elliott, 1998), which sees children not as disempowered

objects, but as equal participants in the process of shared learning with other children and adults, departs from the traditional perception of children as passive and incompetent beings, that is, 'imperfect' adults (MacNaughton & Smith, 2009). This is precisely the reason why it is not based on pedagogical practices aimed at transforming or 'mending' children. On the contrary, according to Curtis and Carter (2008), it is the pedagogy and curriculum that is most frequently in need of 'mending' to be able to adequately respond to the changing and increasingly complex demands of its own time. Humanistic curriculum is based on the perception of children as competent social beings, whose ideas and ways of thinking/understanding are valid and should be appreciated; this may result in the gradual acceptance of children as partners in the development of an entirely new educational policy and educational practice (MacNaughton & Smith, 2009). The humanistic perspective in creating the curriculum can be recognized in the affirmation of children's rights and individual freedoms, which is a prerequisite for developing qualities and competences needed for their free, active, creative and responsible living. The foundations of this approach can be also found in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, since one of the most important determinants of the humanistic curriculum is its focus on children's rights. Implementing young children's rights sometimes needs to be preceded by a complex change in the structure of preschool institution in terms of its democratization in all aspects, especially in the humanization of interpersonal relationships of all subjects included in the process of education. Democratic educational process in preschool is aimed at constructing children's identity, self-esteem, self-confidence and self-realization, as well as at fostering the autonomy of their thoughts and actions. Namely, democratic features of the organization of educational process in preschool enable children's participation in the process of making decisions that affect their education and learning, as well as they prepare children for a democratic dialogue with other participants in the process. Consequently, this means that, in an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual appreciation for all participants, a child has the opportunity to actively participate in considering, implementing and evaluating the educational process. For this to be achieved, preschool needs to be a place where the atmosphere of equality, mutual appreciation and mutual understanding of all participants in the educational process is (being) developed, as will be explained in detail in this paper.

DIFFERENT STARTING POINTS IN CREATING THE EARLY EDUCATION CURRICULUM

Different articles of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* can globally be classified into four categories, on which the basic groups of children's rights can be derived. These are: rights of provision (e.g. right to life and development, nutrition, shelter, health care, etc.), rights of protection (right to protection from abuse and neglect, right to equality in every sense, etc.), rights of development (e.g. rights to education, play, information, freedom of thought and expression, etc.) and rights of participation (child's rights to actively participate in the community, decision-making, freedom of expression, also to have his or her opinion taken into account, etc.). The above-mentioned categories should be interpreted as cohesive units, mutually interrelated. Moreover, the deprivation of opportunities for achieving any of these rights may simultaneously compromise the achievement of all the others and, thereby, impair child's integrity as well as his/her complete development and education.

Different possibilities for the implementation of children's rights in preschool may arise from different starting points in creating the curriculum. In this sense, MacNaughton and Smith (2009) discuss three possible starting points; namely, 'for the child', 'about the child', and 'with the child'. The first two perspectives are based on the universal, 'generally usable' knowledge about child and his/her development, education and learning; they usually result in adult-centric features of the curriculum. The rationalization of this approach can be noticed in the belief that, in every situation, adults - not children themselves - know what is best for children, and that it can be achieved by using familiar and predictable educational practices.

In contrast, the third perspective 'with the child' contributes to designing the curriculum that begins with a specific child, i.e., his or her ideas and ways of thinking, which requires a high level of sensitivity for (each) child and his/her individual and developmental characteristics. It is quite clear that the notion of children as authentic and irreplaceable individuals with different 'personal equations' cannot result in the educational process, based on methods that can be universal and uniform. Understood like this, the curriculum, which *starts from the child and is 'framed' by preschool teachers* (Malaguzzi, 1998), is based on proper understanding and appreciation of (each) child, i.e. his/her interests, individual differences in developmental needs and possibilities, cognitive strategies and learning styles, intelligence profiles, existing knowledge and understanding, modalities and quality of communication with others,

creative and other resources, etc. Given the current discussion, it is clear that the possibilities for exercising children's rights in the described curriculum orientations vary greatly.

Different curriculum orientations reflect different philosophical and theoretical considerations, different viewpoints of its aims and purposes, and, especially, different application areas. Furthermore, the sensitivity of young children as well as the specificity of their education and learning requires some special attention in terms of curriculum design, since it is particularly difficult to ensure the recognition of child's rights at this education level. Moreover, when implementing children's rights in preschool, it is often necessary to take a series of different actions in order to raise the awareness of possible interfering structures which collide with children's rights. The reason for this is that none of these structures can be removed in practice unless educators, in their work, recognize them as such, i.e. unless they become aware of them. Gradually increasing the overall quality of children's life in preschool, which requires permanent professional development of preschool teachers, opens up a whole new area for implementing children's rights. Similar ideas are also discussed by Stainton Rogers (2009) who, considering educational policy (early childhood education), highlights three different discourses. The first one is *children's needs discourse*, whose aim is to identify children's basic needs and search for ways of their fulfilment. The second one is *children's rights discourse*, which is aimed at establishing children's fundamental rights and providing possible solutions for their implementation. And, finally, the third one is *children's life quality discourse*, focused on the discovery of constituent elements necessary for ensuring children's life quality (analysed also from children's perspective) and taking actions towards the life quality improvement. This discourse takes into account all the circumstances of children's life and experiences, allowing various understandings of the concept of quality for different children, families or communities. Raising the overall quality of children's life in preschool, which is often used as a common denominator for their entire education and learning (Miljak, 2009), *per se* leads to some higher quality in fulfilling their needs and more efficient recognition of their rights.

PREREQUISITES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S CIVIC COMPETENCES

The implementation of children's rights to participation, as emphasized in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, is an important

prerequisite for the development of their civic competences. In other words, civic competences are a necessary precondition for individual active participation in the community with the aim to improve general life conditions in the community. The prospects of a democratic society largely depend on the number of citizens willing to become active in their community (Ćulum & Ledić, 2009). In the context of a preschool institution as a social community, in which the development of civic consciousness and civic competences is founded, the lack of willingness on the part of adults to perceive children as (possible) active citizens and prepare them for this role frequently poses a more significant problem than children's reluctance in accepting this challenge.

Article 13 of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* emphasizes that every child has the right to freedom of expression, which includes freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, either orally or in writing, in the form of art, or through any other media of child's choice. The preschool implementation of the above stated children's rights requires two basic preconditions: creating some social atmosphere, i.e. the quality of interpersonal relations, where children will feel that expressing personal opinions (attitudes, ways of thinking) freely is not only acceptable, but also desirable, as well as facilitating the development of necessary competences which would enable children to openly express their opinions and discuss them with others in a substantiated and respectful manner.

In fact, the issue of children's safety in preschool has been widely covered in writing and discussions from different perspectives, which is certainly very positive. However, it would be inappropriate to limit such discussions only to children's physical safety, because it is far from 'covering' all the rights of preschoolers. As already noted, in addition to the right to survival and preservation of physical integrity, children have the right to education, play, information, freedom of opinion and expression, equality in every sense of the word, privacy, active participation, making decisions, and many more. In this sense, we discuss the safety of children in understanding that expressing their own opinions is both acceptable and desirable. If children do not feel that kind of safety in preschool, any further discussion on education for human rights and democratic citizenship becomes meaningless.

Civic competences needed for children's successful and active participation in a preschool community are developed through quality experiences in negotiating conflicts, dealing with different perspectives, as well as children's opportunities for taking responsibility for individual and shared decisions (Curtis & Carter, 2008). The possibilities for children to

obtain such experiences are subtly woven into the daily educational process in preschool institutions, characterized by humanistic and democratic features.

Attentive 'listening' to children, sometimes called 'the pedagogy of listening', can greatly contribute to the consideration and realization of such an educational process. It is an idea advocated by the proponents of the Reggio concept, which is based on observing children carefully and comprehending their activities, ways of thinking, understanding, etc. Rinaldi (2006) considers 'listening' to children as the premise of quality education in general, and an important component of any relationship in the process of learning and teaching. This is an approach characterized by careful observation, i.e. detailed and correct interpretation and explanation of children's activities, which are then taken as the starting point for the consideration (and evaluation) of the educational process. As the quality of educator's work highly correlates with his/her ability to establish children's perspective, an essential part of his/her role refers to observing, interpreting, understanding, and documenting children's efforts to comprehend the surrounding world (Goldhaber et al., 1997). Through the affirmation of this approach, children can become (co) creators of the educational process and active (co)designers of the curriculum (Goldhaber et al., 1997; Malaguzzi, 1998; Slunjski, 2006; Rinaldi, 2006; Miljak, 2007). Hence, children can truly become active citizens in their preschool community as they act and participate in their community life organization in a proactive, committed and competent manner.

DEVELOPING A NEW CULTURE OF LEARNING AND CREATING THE EARLY EDUCATION CURRICULUM

Recognizing children's perspective in the process of learning involves a very subtle educational approach on the part of preschool teachers, based on a good understanding of children as well as acceptance of their thinking and their existing knowledge. Such an educational approach, as emphasized by MacNaughton and Smith (2009), supports the thesis that children are able to construct valid opinions about the world and themselves, that children's knowledge about the surrounding world differs from adults' knowledge but is in no way inferior to that knowledge, and that children's insights and perspectives can help adults better understand children's experiences. In other words, when creating the curriculum, children's intuitive knowledge and understanding need to be recognized (Malaguzzi, 1998; Bruner, 2000; Carre, 2001), and the role of preschool teachers is to help children understand, transform and continuously upgrade their existing knowledge and interpretations.

Different ways in which preschool teachers indirectly support this form of children's learning are frequently referred to as scaffolding ('supporting' children's learning process), which implies such an interaction with children that enables their transition to a higher level of understanding and knowledge (Vygotsky, in Inan, 2007). This approach attempts to stimulate children's higher cognitive processes, i.e. thinking, speaking, reasoning, understanding, problem-solving, decision-making, symbolic representations, etc. It is in this sense that the role of preschool teachers is invaluable; instead of teaching directly, through using carefully chosen and thoughtful questions, preschool teachers can encourage clarification, argumentation, negotiation, and expansion of the existing knowledge and understanding. In this way, children are encouraged to think more deeply and to generate new knowledge, but they can also develop autonomy, which is necessary for them to be able to gradually take a responsibility for their own learning. Therefore, according to the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, children have the right to education that will prepare them for a responsible life, which can be achieved if the educational process is organized in such a way to enable them at least (co-)authorship. Naturally, it would be unrealistic to expect children to take a responsibility for some activity or behaviour (and indirectly their education) unless they are provided with sufficient (or at least minimum) level of autonomy. However, an important prerequisite for the development of children's (intellectual and any other) autonomy is the establishment of social context in preschool institutions that will be appreciated. To encourage children's intellectual independence, according to Bobbitt Nolen (2001), requires mutual respect in their relationships with adults, which is closely connected to power relations that prevail in a particular educational institution. Autonomous, i.e. appreciating relationships with adults allow children to question various issues from different perspectives, also teaching them to think and act independently, as opposed to 'the authoritarian teaching styles that can deprive children of their independent thinking' (Brownhill & Jarvis, 2003:51).

Generative (incentive) questions, displayed within the following categories according to Godinho and Wilson (2008), present a possible contribution to the promotion of such learning.

In the context of learning understood like this, discussion is especially appreciated and encouraged (with children and among children), as it is considered to be a fundamental modality of modern learning. Learning through critical evaluation, reflection and open discussion, children can realize that learning should not imply uncritical acceptance of authority, nor should be reduced to fulfilling the expectations of others. In fact, learning is also a social process (Vygotsky, in Berk & Winsler, 1995; Rinaldi, 2006), where a diversity of perspectives, knowledge and understanding of individuals, if discussed,

presents a strong potential for (shared) learning. Learning is 'at its best when it is participatory, proactive, cooperative and devoted to the construction of meaning, rather than when it involves monotonous repetition' (Bruner, 2000: 93). For this purpose, preschool is transformed into a sort of negotiation forum, genuine 'social knowledge construction site' with a flexible approach to learning, timetable, curricula and learning environment (Cohen et al., 1996) where children learn in a two-way communication, i.e. a dialogue with other children and adults.

Table 1. Questions to encourage pupils to think more deeply

Questions that encourage deeper understanding	Questions that encourage logical thinking and deduction	Questions that require clarification
What other points need to be taken into consideration? What might be the implications of such comprehension (or action)? What other related questions need to be asked? Has anyone got different views of the problem?	Why do you think that? How do you know? What are some possible explanations? How could we prove this? How is that different from what was already said or meant?	Do you agree with this? Is that what you meant? Where could we learn more about this? What other questions would be useful to ask? Are those ideas consistent?

Table 1 Adapted from Godinho and Wilson (2008)

Insufficient use of the potential for shared learning based on discussions is not an exclusive problem of early education (this also applies to primary, secondary and, even, tertiary education), nor is this exclusively the problem of Croatian educational system. Discussing the misconceptions on which the educational process may be based, Barth (2004) emphasizes the problem of compliance with the generally accepted idea of passive reception of the knowledge being taught, or the lack of opportunities for finding and engaging in the exchange of ideas. 'In the rare moments when these active exchanges do occur, it is surprising to observe the difference in managing the knowledge in question: they (students) know how to use it in order to participate in the discussion, to ask questions, to convince someone or dismiss something' (ibid., p. 23).

For the discussion-based learning to be possible in preschool, there is a need for specific, supportive 'learning infrastructures' that reflect the overall culture of preschool (or certain educational groups) based on the equality of all participants in the process (children and adults) and respect for the values of a debate in the process of shared learning. Otherwise, the strength of arguments in the debate is determined by participants' position in the hierarchy of power - the more pronounced the hierarchy of power, the less favourable the position of children as opposed to adults. Consequently, children try to decode their teachers' expectations and formulate their responses in a way that would meet those expectations, rather than sharing their own opinions with others. Starting from this, we conclude that the prerequisite for children's learning based on an indirect support of preschool teachers, as well as on discussions with other children and adults, is the establishment of collaborative preschool culture and 'the context of listening' (Rinaldi, 2006) as an important component of such a culture.

This is an educational approach which requires a change in implicit, deeply rooted perceptions of children, but also in the nature of knowledge and its construction. For such a conceptual transformation of the educational approach to be achieved, as emphasized by Barth (2004), it is necessary to reject the idea of knowledge as the already constructed, static and unchangeable truth in favour of the knowledge seen as a complex system of dynamic relationships under constant construction, to abandon the idea of transferring knowledge through descriptive presentations in favour of the perception of learning as a process of exchange and collaborative search for meaning, and to focus the learning process on understanding what the child already knows, understands and can do.

In the process of developing the so-called new culture of learning, redirecting the focus from teachers' intentions and actions to children's existing knowledge, understanding, and (self-)organizational abilities probably presents the greatest conceptual transformation in the educational process. So, 'it is easy to change our vocabulary, and say that learners need to become independent participants in the construction of their knowledge, but when it comes to changing our beliefs and our implicit habits, we are rather slow' (Barth, 2004:85).

CHILDREN'S SELF-EVALUATION IN THE LEARNING PROCESS – A WAY TO RECONCEPTUALIZING THE CURRICULUM

Encouraging learners to take responsibility for their own learning, as well as fostering the so-called learning meta-level, also illustrates the so-called new

culture of learning. It is an approach that allows learners to become aware of their intellectual capacities, and to develop confidence and autonomy in their current and future learning (Barth, 2004).

Confirming the fact that children also have metacognitive abilities (Bruner, 2000) casts an entirely new light on organizing the preschool educational process and on modelling the early education curriculum. In the past, metacognitive processes were believed to be unique to adults. Knowing that children can also become aware of their thinking and learning processes, i.e. discover ways of developing some new knowledge or understanding, requires an entirely different quality of support for their learning. In this sense, we can also discuss the so-called new culture of teaching. This new culture of learning/teaching in preschool institutions is directed towards the encouragement of children's self-initiated and self-directed learning and, consequently, children's control over their own learning process and willingness to take (co-) responsibility for it.

Continuously recording the different stages of learning process (through collecting various ethnographic records or the so-called documentation), children may be permitted to recall not only their previous activities, but also their previous thoughts and progress, i.e. the progression of their own learning (Houk, 1997; Malaguzzi, 1998; Rinaldi, 2006). Thus, children can become reflective about their experiences, i.e. 'retrace' their own learning ways and apply self-correction methods (Rinaldi, 2006).

In this context, Godinho and Wilson (2008) consider the actions of preschool teachers aimed at encouraging children's reflection and meta-cognition particularly useful, as they enable the development of the so-called self-regulated learning. The two authors suggest some of these procedures, in the form of 'reflective' and 'metacognitive' questions. 'Reflective' questions, as they suggest, may assist subjects (children or adults) in reviewing the effectiveness of their own actions and the quality of their own experiences. At the same time, 'metacognitive' questions are focused on the awareness of subjects (children or adults), thus, encouraging the evaluation and adjustment of their own opinions, selection of strategies that are more appropriate for their personal thinking and, accordingly, selection of more appropriate actions. It is understandable that the development of reflective and metacognitive skills in children can be encouraged by the preschool teachers who have already developed these skills, so they apply them in their educational work (the so-called reflective practice) every day. For this reason, Godinho and Wilson (2008) present the possibility of using these questions from the perspective of preschool teachers, and then from the perspective of children.

Table 2. Reflective and metacognitive questions

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS	
<i>Preschool teachers' reflections on their own educational practice</i>	<p>Were my actions in a particular situation appropriate (or justified) and why?</p> <p>Were my actions in a particular situation inappropriate (or unjustified) and why?</p> <p>How did I successfully encourage children's activity, i.e. learning?</p> <p>How can this (self-) evaluation be useful for me?</p>
<i>Questions asked by preschool teachers to encourage reflection</i>	<p>How did you like the (specific) activity?</p> <p>What skills did you use during the activity?</p> <p>How successful were you during the activity?</p> <p>What else could you do to make the activity more successful?</p>
<i>Children's reflection</i>	<p>How did I contribute to the success of the activity?</p> <p>What could I (alone or with other children) do even better?</p> <p>Which of my skills could I develop further?</p>
METACOGNITIVE QUESTIONS	
<i>Preschool teachers' metacognitive questions about their own educational practice</i>	<p>What learning sources did I provide or use?</p> <p>How did I contribute to the development of children's existing knowledge?</p> <p>What did I learn about the way children think and learn?</p> <p>What should I do to improve my own learning and teaching?</p> <p>What should I do differently?</p>
<i>Preschool teacher's questions to elicit children's metacognition</i>	<p>What makes this topic (problem) interesting?</p> <p>What is the most interesting to you about the topic (problem)?</p> <p>How would you begin to solve the task (problem)?</p> <p>What ways of thinking should you apply to be able to solve the task (problem)?</p> <p>How did your thinking change during the activity?</p> <p>What ways of thinking helped you in solving the task (problem)?</p> <p>What else could you discover or learn?</p>
<i>Children's metacognitive questions</i>	<p>What do I already know about this topic (problem)?</p> <p>What do I want to explore or learn?</p> <p>What is the most interesting to me about the topic (problem)?</p> <p>In what way did my ideas (understanding) change during the activity?</p> <p>What did I discover or learn?</p> <p>How did I discover or learn it?</p>

Table 2 Adapted from Godinho and Wilson (2008)

The notion of knowledge as a result of children's active participation and creative contribution, i.e. process which can be directly 'seen' and actively affected by children, is the basis for the realization of lifelong learning concept which, as has been presented, can start as early as in preschool age. Thus, preparing children for self-evaluation in the process of learning, seen as a prerequisite for their active (co-) creation and (co-) management of this process, is a possible way to completely reconceptualizing the early education curriculum.

AFFIRMATION OF CHILDREN'S ACTIVE ROLE IN THE CURRICULUM RESEARCH – DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW CONCEPT OF INSTITUTIONAL CHILDHOOD

Contemporary approach to children's education in an institutional context is based on the establishment of appreciating and reciprocal relationships between adults and children. Understanding children as subjects, rather than objects, of the educational process entails a series of questions about children's status, rights, and civic competences in the process of curriculum research. Is the child a subject or an object in this process? In this sense, a number of ethical and other issues, such as the privacy of children, could be discussed. Some of these issues refer to whether children have the possibility to refuse their participation in some research and who should give the permission to include children in some research.

For example, recently there has been much discussion about whether preschool children should be photographed or videotaped, i.e. for what purposes can the material be used (for the purposes of monitoring children's progress, presenting segments of the educational process to parents or professionals, promoting the preschool institution, publishing various professional and scientific publications, etc.). These discussions mostly focused on the question of who (e.g. preschool principal, parent, or somebody else) should allow someone to take children's photographs and videotape them, i.e. publishing children's photographs and videotapes for particular purposes. The common practice is to have parents' approval for these purposes, which can be achieved upon children's enrolment in a preschool institution or before their use in the public or in publications. An interesting fact is that none of these discussions focused on children's rights in this process - should children be entitled to say something about the research (conducted on them)?

Penn (2008) emphasizes that it is common, during a research, for adults (subjects) to be approached with much more respect than is the case with children, as exemplified many times. Using one-sided mirrors or recording people without their knowledge (or approval) is not tolerated in research involving adults as subjects, whereas in research involving children it is considered quite acceptable. Likewise, adults (subjects) are more frequently involved in the interpretation of research results than children, etc. Should the cause of such unequal, or even disempowered status of children in comparison to adults be their age (they are considered to have less experience and competences than adults, so they cannot be considered 'relevant' data source), or perhaps they are simply not entitled to make any decisions when it comes to research (which relates directly to them)?

Research is a crucial source of pedagogical theories, both regarding children and the ways in which they develop, get education and learn. However, the nature of these processes evolves, according to Kellet (2010), so the way in which their research is approached should also change. For this reason, the author emphasizes the need for some radical repositioning of children in the process of pedagogical research; from the perception of children as objects, which is dominant in the traditional research, to the perception of children as social subjects with all the rights incorporated in this role. Kellet (2010) further claims that the key to such a change is in abandoning the approaches to research conducted 'on children' in favour of those conducted 'with' children, which may ultimately lead to expanding the focus on research 'by' children (conducted by children). Referring to the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the author places children in 'the research arena' with an entirely changed role: she considers them equal participants in pedagogical research, i.e. equal co-researchers. This position of children in the process of curriculum research leads not only to the affirmation of their participatory (and other) rights, but also to discovering and understanding many, still less known, dimensions of institutional childhood. Furthermore, children's knowledge is always considered inferior to that of adults, but 'children's knowledge about what it is like to be a child is certainly superior to that of adults' (Kellet, 2010:18). Children's perception of preschool, including all the processes and relationships that develop there, qualitatively differs from adults' perception. Correspondingly, children perceive (evaluate) the quality of preschool differently. For this reason, any preschool quality assessment which excludes children's perspective is mainly incomplete and may be even utterly wrong. Children are part of the subculture of preschool childhood, which allows them to have the perspective of 'insiders'; they are quite familiar with preschool 'from the inside', in a way that is inaccessible and largely unknown to adults.

Therefore, establishing and respecting children's perspective, i.e. understanding preschool as seen through children's eyes, can lead to a completely new understanding of children's preschool experience and represent a potential source for developing a new, more humane concept of institutional childhood.

Accepting children as equal co-researchers is complementary to accepting them as (co-)creators of the educational process and active (co-)constructors of the curriculum, as previously explained. This is because early education curriculum is a theoretical concept that is, in the preschool educational practice, continuously being researched, constructed, modified, and developed in a co-operation (Šagud, 2006; Miljak, 2007; Petrović-Sočo, 2007, 2009; Slunjski, 2011), i.e. constructed and co-constructed through equal engagement of everyone who participates in the process (children and adults).

CONCLUSION

Some possible affirmation of preschoolers' rights, as guaranteed by the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, also the development of their civic competences, depend on many different factors whose effects are complex and interrelated. They primarily depend on our understanding of children, which directly reflects on the complete organization of educational process and the curriculum design. The democratization of preschool organization in different functioning segments, as well as the humanization of interpersonal relationships of subjects in the educational process, are the essential prerequisites for recognising children's rights and developing their civic competences. Shaping the curriculum in democratically organized preschools is directed towards developing children's self-esteem, self-confidence and self-realization, as well as supporting the autonomy of their thoughts and actions. In this sense, the affirmation of children's rights is manifested as a possibility for their participation in considering, implementing, and evaluating the curriculum. The possibilities of implementing children's rights and developing civic competences at this level are interwoven into everyday educational process in preschools, revealing the overall quality of children's life, education and learning. Modelling the curriculum as such is contributed by the so-called 'listening' to the child, which refers to the careful observation of children, as well as to the appropriate interpretation and explanation of their activities. The support of this approach allows children to actively participate in shaping

the educational process and curriculum design, which is seen as the highest level of the role that active citizens may have in their social community.

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REKONCEPTUALIZACIJA KURIKULA RANOG ODGOJA I GRAĐANSKE KOMPETENCIJE DJETETA

SAŽETAK

U radu se raspravlja o unapređivanju uvjeta za razvoj građanskih kompetencija djeteta u vrtiću, što podrazumijeva niz kvalitativnih promjena u njegovu ustroju i organizaciji odgojno-obrazovnog procesa. Ostvarivanju humanistički orijentiranog kurikula ranog odgoja, za koji se autorice opredjeljuju, mogu pridonijeti poticanje razvoja građanskih kompetencija djece kao i razvoj nove kulture učenja u vrtiću. U radu se promovira ideja osposobljavanja djeteta za samoevaluaciju u procesu vlastitog učenja, kao pretpostavke njegova aktivnog (su)oblikovanja i (su)upravljanja tim procesom te afirmaciju aktivne uloge djeteta u procesu istraživanja kurikula. To se smatra pretpostavkom razvoja novog koncepta institucijskog djetinjstva te mogućim putem reconceptualizacije kurikula ranog odgoja.

***Ključne riječi:** institucijsko djetinjstvo, kultura učenja, prava djece*

UVOD

Oblikovanje humanistički orijentiranog kurikula (Stenhouse, 1975; Miljak, 1996; Malaguzzi, 1998; Elliott, 1998), u kojemu djeca nisu obespravljeni objekti nego jednakovrijedni sudionici u procesu zajedničkog učenja s drugom djecom i odraslima, udaljuje se od tradicionalnog shvaćanja djeteta kao pasivnog i nekompetentnog bića, tj. «nedovršenog» odraslog (MacNaughton i Smith, 2009). Upravo zato, ono nije temeljeno na pedagoškim postupcima namijenjenim preoblikovanju ili «popravljanju» djeteta. Naprotiv, ističu Curtis i Carter (2008), pedagogija i kurikulum su najčešće oni koje treba «popravlјati» kako bi mogli adekvatnije odgovoriti na promijenjene i sve složenije zahtjeve vremena u kojemu egzistiraju. Humanistički utemeljen kurikulum zasniva se na percepciji djeteta kao kompetentnog socijalnog subjekta čije su ideje, načini razmišljanja i razumijevanja validni te ih treba uvažavati, što može voditi postupnom

prihvaćanju djeteta kao partnera u razvoju jedne posve nove obrazovne politike i odgojno-obrazovne prakse (MacNaughton i Smith,2009). Humanistička perspektiva u oblikovanju kurikula prepoznatljiva je po afirmaciji prava i individualnih sloboda djeteta, što predstavlja preduvjet razvoja kvaliteta i kompetencija potrebnih za njegovo slobodno, aktivno, kreativno i odgovorno življenje. Uporište takvog pristupa moguće je pronaći i u *Konvenciji o pravima djeteta* jer jedna od važnih odrednica humanistički orijentiranog kurikula i jest njegova usmjerenost na ostvarivanje prava djece. Ostvarivanju dječjih prava ponekad treba prethoditi kompleksna promjena ustrojstva vrtića u smislu njegove demokratizacije u svim segmentima djelovanja, a posebice humanizacija interpersonalnih odnosa svih subjekata odgojno-obrazovnog procesa. Demokratično ustrojen odgojno-obrazovni proces vrtića usmjeren je izgradnji identiteta, samopoštovanja, samopouzdanja i samoostvarenja djeteta, kao i poticanju autonomije njegova mišljenja i djelovanja. Naime, demokratične značajke organizacije odgojno-obrazovnog procesa vrtića djetetu omogućuju sudjelovanje u donošenju odluka koje se tiču njegova odgoja i učenja, kao i osposobljavanje za demokratski dijalog s ostalim sudionicima procesa. U krajnjoj konzekvenci to znači da dijete u ozračju suradnje i međusobnog uvažavanja svih sudionika ima priliku aktivnog sudjelovanja u promišljanju, realizaciji i evaluaciji odgojno-obrazovnog procesa. Da bi to bilo moguće, u vrtiću je potrebno razvi(ja)ti ozračje ravnopravnosti, uvažavanja i dobrog međusobnog razumijevanja svih sudionika odgojno-obrazovnog procesa, što ćemo u poglavljima koje slijede i detaljnije obrazložiti.

RAZLIČITA POLAZIŠTA U OBLIKOVANJU KURIKULA RANOG ODGOJA

Različite članke *Konvencije o pravima djeteta* globalno je moguće razvrstati u četiri osnovne kategorije i iz njih derivirati osnovne skupine prava djeteta. To su: *prava djeteta na preživljavanje* (npr. pravo na život i razvoj, prehranu, smještaj, zdravstvenu zaštitu i dr.), *zaštitna prava* (pravo na zaštitu od zlostavljanja i zanemarivanja, pravo na jednakost u svakom smislu i dr.), *razvojna prava* (nr. pravo na obrazovanje, na igru, pravo na informiranje, pravo na slobodu misli i izražavanja i dr.) i *participacijska prava* (prava djeteta na aktivno sudjelovanje u svojem okruženju, na donošenje odluka, na slobodu izražavanja, pravo djeteta da se njegovo mišljenje uzme u obzir i sl.). Spomenute kategorije prava valja tumačiti kao povezanu cjelinu, svaku u odnosu sa svim ostalima. Naime, lišavanje mogućnosti ostvarivanja bilo kojeg prava istodobno može ugrožavati i ostvarivanje svih

ostalih i time narušavati integritet kao i cjelovit razvoj, odgoj i obrazovanje djeteta.

Različite mogućnosti ostvarivanja prava djeteta u vrtiću mogu proizlaziti već iz različitih polaznih točaka u oblikovanju kurikula. U tom smislu, MacNaughton i Smith (2009), raspravljaju o tri moguća polazišta u oblikovanju kurikula, a to su perspektiva «za dijete», «o djetetu» i «s djetetom». Perspektiva «za dijete» i «o djetetu» temelji se na univerzalnim, «općeprimjenjivim» znanjima o djetetu i njegovu razvoju, odgoju i učenju te uglavnom rezultira adultocentričkim značajkama kurikula. Racionalizaciju takvog pristupa predstavlja uvjerenje kako odrasle osobe, a ne djeca, u svakoj situaciji znaju što je za djecu najbolje te da se to može postići unaprijed poznatim i predvidivim odgojnim postupcima.

Nasuprot tome, perspektiva «s djetetom» vodi oblikovanju kurikula koje započinje s konkretnim djetetom tj. njegovim idejama i načinima razmišljanja, što iziskuje visoku razinu senzibilnosti za (svako) dijete i njegove individualne i razvojne značajke. Posve je jasno kako shvaćanje djece kao autentičnih i neponovljivih jedinki s različitim «osobnim jednadžbama», ne može rezultirati odgojno-obrazovnim procesom temeljenom na postupcima koji mogu biti univerzalni i unificirani. Tako shvaćen kurikulum, koji *polazi od djeteta te je "uokviren" od odgojitelja (Malaguzzi, 1998)*, temelji se na dobrom razumijevanju i uvažavanju (svakog) djeteta, tj. njegovih interesa, individualno različitih razvojnih potreba i mogućnosti, kognitivnih strategija i stilova učenja, profila inteligencije, postojećih znanja i razumijevanja, modaliteta i kvalitete komuniciranja s drugima, kreativnih i drugih potencijala djeteta itd. S obzirom na izneseno, razvidno je kako se mogućnosti ostvarivanja prava djece u opisanim orijentacijama kurikulumuma uvelike razlikuju.

Različite orijentacije kurikula odražavaju različita filozofska i teorijska promišljanja, različita shvaćanja njegova cilja i namjene, i kao posebno bitno, različita područja primjene. Naime, osjetljivost djeteta rane dobi, kao i specifičnost njegova odgoja i učenja, iziskuju posebnu pažnju u oblikovanju kurikula – upravo na toj razini odgoja i obrazovanja najteže je osigurati afirmaciju prava djeteta. Štoviše, za ostvarivanje prava djeteta u vrtiću često je potrebno poduzeti niz različitih akcija u smjeru osvještavanja mogućih interferirajućih struktura koje s pravima djeteta kolidiraju. Jer, nijednu od interferirajućih struktura u praksi nije moguće otkloniti ukoliko ju odgojitelji u vlastitom radu kao takvu ne prepoznaju, tj. ne osvijeste. Postupnim podizanjem ukupne kvalitete življenja djece u vrtiću, za što je potreban kontinuirani profesionalni razvoj odgojitelja, otvara se i posve novi prostor za ostvarivanje prava djece. Na tragu ove ideje raspravlja i Stainton Rogers (2009) koja u promišljanju odgojno-obrazovne politike (ranog odgoja) ističe

tri različita diskursa. Prvi je *diskurs potreba djeteta*, koji je usmjeren identificiranju osnovnih potreba djeteta i traganju za načinima njihova zadovoljavanja. Drugi je *diskurs prava djeteta*, koji je usmjeren etabliranju osnovnih dječjih prava i ustanovljavanju načina njihova ostvarenja. I napokon, treći je *diskurs kvaliteta življenja djeteta*, usmjeren otkrivanju konstitutivnih elemenata nužnih za osiguranje kvalitete življenja sagledane i iz perspektive djeteta te poduzimanju akcija u smjeru poboljšanja te kvalitete. Ovim se diskursom u obzir uzima cjelina okolnosti življenja i iskustava djeteta, dopuštajući varijacije u značenju pojma kvalitete za različitu djecu, obitelji ili zajednice. Podizanje ukupne kvalitete življenja djece u vrtiću, što se često rabi kao zajednički nazivnik za cjelinu njihova odgoja i učenja (Miljak, 2009), samo po sebi vodi i kvalitetnijem zadovoljenju njihovih potreba kao i uspješnijoj afirmaciji njihovih prava.

PRETPOSTAVKE RAZVOJA GRAĐANSKIH KOMPETENCIJA DJETETA

Ostvarivanje prava djeteta na sudjelovanje, koje se također ističe u *Konvenciji o pravima djeteta*, predstavlja važan preduvjet razvoja njegovih građanskih kompetencija. Naime, građanske su kompetencije nužan preduvjet aktivnog sudjelovanja pojedinca u životu zajednice u cilju općeg poboljšanja uvjeta života u njoj. Perspektiva demokratskog društva uvelike ovisi o tome koliko je građana spremno prihvatiti ulogu aktivnog građanina u svojoj zajednici (Ćulum i Ledić, 2009). U kontekstu ustanove ranog odgoja, kao društvene zajednice u kojoj se stvara temelj razvoja građanske svijesti i građanskih kompetencija, često veći problem predstavlja nedostatna spremnost odraslih da djecu percipiraju kao (moguće) aktivne građane, te ih za tu ulogu osposobljavaju, nego nespremnost djece na prihvaćanje tog izazova.

Članak 13. *Konvencije o pravima djeteta* ističe kako dijete ima pravo na slobodu izražavanja, što uključuje slobodu traženja, primanja i davanja informacija i ideja svih vrsta, bilo usmeno ili pismeno, u obliku umjetnosti ili preko bilo kojeg drugog medija po dječjem izboru. Za realizaciju ovog prava djeteta u vrtiću potrebno je zadovoljiti dvije osnovne pretpostavke: razviti takvo socijalno ozračje, tj. kvalitetu interpersonalnih odnosa koja djetetu jamči sigurnost u to da je izražavanje vlastitog mišljenja (stava, načina razmišljanja) prihvatljivo i poželjno, te djetetu omogućiti razvoj kompetencija potrebnih da bi svoje mišljenje moglo slobodno iznositi i o njemu s drugima argumentirano i uljuđeno raspravljati.

Naime, u posljednje se vrijeme o sigurnosti djeteta u vrtiću mnogo pisalo i raspravljalo, iz različitih kutova i perspektiva, što je svakako pozitivno. Nije, međutim, primjereno takve rasprave svoditi samo na fizičku sigurnost djece jer to ni izdaleka ne «pokriva» sva prava djeteta u vrtiću. Kako smo već istakli, dijete osim prava na preživljavanje i očuvanje fizičkog integriteta, ima i pravo na obrazovanje, na igru, na informiranje, na slobodu mišljenja i izražavanja, na jednakost u svakom smislu, na privatnost, na aktivno sudjelovanje, na donošenje odluka i mnoga druga. U tom smislu, ovdje raspravljamo o sigurnosti djeteta da je izražavanje vlastitog mišljenja prihvatljivo i poželjno. Ukoliko dijete u vrtiću nema tu vrstu sigurnosti, svaka daljnja rasprava o odgoju za ljudska prava i demokratsko građanstvo, gubi smisao.

Građanske kompetencije, nužne za uspješno i aktivno sudjelovanje djeteta u vrtićkoj zajednici, razvijaju se kvalitetnim iskustvima pregovaranja u konfliktima, suočavanjem s različitim perspektivama kao i prilikama preuzimanja odgovornosti djeteta za vlastite i zajedničke odluke (Curtis i Carter, 2008). Mogućnosti stjecanja takvih iskustava djeteta suptilno su utkane u svakodnevni odgojno-obrazovni proces vrtića kojeg karakteriziraju humanističke i demokratske značajke.

Promišljanju i realizaciji tako shvaćenog odgojno-obrazovnog procesa uvelike može pridonijeti i kvalitetno «slušanje» djeteta, što se ponekad naziva i «Pedagogijom slušanja». Riječ je o konceptu koji zastupaju pobornici Reggio koncepcije, a koji se zasniva na ideji pažljivog promatranja i razumijevanja djece, njihovih aktivnosti, načina razmišljanja, razumijevanja i sl. «Slušanje» djeteta Rinaldi (2006) smatra premisom kvalitetnog odgoja i obrazovanja uopće i važnom sastavnicom svakog odnosa u procesu učenja i poučavanja. Riječ je o pristupu koji karakterizira pažljivo promatranje djece, tj. kvalitetno interpretiranje i tumačenje njihovih aktivnosti, što se onda uzima kao polazište promišljanja (i evaluacije) odgojno-obrazovnog procesa. Kako kvaliteta odgojno-obrazovnog djelovanja odgojitelja visoko korelira s njegovim umijećem ustanovljavanja dječje perspektive, esencijalni dio uloge odgojitelja je opažanje, interpretiranje, razumijevanje i dokumentiranje nastojanja djeteta da razumije svijet oko sebe (Goldhaber et. al., 1997). Afirmacijom ovakvog pristupa djeca postaju (su)oblikovateljima odgojno-obrazovnog procesa i aktivnim (su)konstruktorima kurikuluma (Miljak, 2007; Slunjski, 2006; Goldhaber et. al., 1997; Rinaldi, 2006; Malaguzzi, 1998). U tom slučaju ona istinski ostvaruju ulogu aktivnih građana u vrtićkoj, svojoj zajednici jer u oblikovanju njezina življenja (su)djeluju proaktivno, angažirano i kompetentno.

RAZVOJ NOVE KULTURE UČENJA I OBLIKOVANJE KURIKULA RANOG ODGOJA

Uvažavanje perspektive djeteta u procesu njegova učenja podrazumijeva vrlo suptilan odgojno-obrazovni pristup odgojitelja, temeljen na dobrom razumijevanju djeteta, prihvaćanju njegovih razmišljanja kao i postojećih znanja i razumijevanja. Takav se odgojno-obrazovni pristup, ističu MacNaughton i Smith (2009), temelji na prihvaćanju teze da je dijete u stanju konstruirati validna mišljenja o svijetu i sebi samom, da je znanje djeteta o svijetu koji ga okružuje različito od znanja odraslih, ali ne i inferiorno u odnosu na znanje odraslih te da uvidi i perspektive djeteta odraslima mogu pomoći u boljem razumijevanju djetetovih iskustava. Drugim riječima, u oblikovanju kurikula uvažavaju se intuitivna znanja i razumijevanja djece (Malaguzzi, 1998; Bruner, 2000; Carre, 2001), pri čemu je uloga odgojitelja pomoći djeci u osvještavanju, preoblikovanju i stalnom nadograđivanju tih znanja i razumijevanja.

Različiti oblici indirektna potpore odgojitelja u procesu tako shvaćenog učenja u literaturi se često nazivaju *scaffoldingom* (prijevod: postavljanje "skela" ili "podupiranje" učenja), što podrazumijeva takav oblik interakcije s djetetom, koja mu može omogućiti prijelaz na višu razinu razumijevanja i znanja (Vygotski, prema Inan, 2007). Takvim se pristupom nastoji stimulirati više kognitivne procese djeteta, pod kojima se misli na mišljenje, govor, zaključivanje, razumijevanje, rješavanje problema, donošenje odluka, simboličku reprezentaciju itd. Upravo u tom smislu odgojitelj ima neprocjenjivo veliku ulogu; umjesto da djecu izravno poučava, odgojitelj pomno, odabranim i promišljenim pitanjima, potiče na razjašnjavanje, argumentiranje pregovaranje i proširivanje postojećih znanja i razumijevanja. Na taj način djecu potiče na dublje razmišljanje i generiranje novih znanja, ali im osigurava i razvoj autonomije, potrebne za postupno preuzimanje odgovornosti djece za vlastito učenje. Jer, kako se ističe i u *Konvenciji o pravima djeteta*, dijete ima pravo na obrazovanje koje ga priprema za odgovoran život, što je moguće postići takvom organizacijom odgojno-obrazovanog procesa koja mu osigurava barem (su)autorstvo. Naime, od djeteta nije realno očekivati preuzimanje odgovornosti za neku aktivnost ili postupak (a indirektno i vlastito obrazovanje), ukoliko mu se ne osigura dostatna (ili barem minimalna) razina autonomije. No, važna pretpostavka razvoja (intelektualne i svake druge) autonomije djeteta je uspostava uvažavajućeg socijalnog konteksta vrtića. Poticanje intelektualne samostalnosti djeteta, tvrdi Bobbitt Nolen (2001), zahtijeva obostrano poštovanje u odnosima s odraslim osobama, koje je usko povezano s odnosima moći koji vladaju u odgojno-obrazovnoj ustanovi. Autonomni, tj.

uvažavajući odnosi s odraslima djeci dopuštaju propitivanje stvari iz različitih perspektiva, čime uče razmišljati i djelovati samostalno, različito od "autoritarnih stilova poučavanja koji djecu mogu lišiti njihova samostalnog razmišljanja" (Brownhill i Jarvis, 2003, str. 51).

Mogući doprinos u poticanju ovako shvaćenog učenja djece, prema mišljenju Godinho i Wilson (2008), predstavljaju generativna (poticajna) pitanja, koja prikazuju u okviru sljedećih kategorija:

Tablica 1.

U kontekstu tako shvaćenog učenja posebno se cijeni i potiče dijalog (s djecom i među djecom), koji se smatra temeljnim modalitetom suvremenog učenja. Učenjem kroz kritičku provjeru, refleksiju i otvorenu zajedničku raspravu djeca uviđaju kako učenje ne mora značiti nekritičko prihvatanje tvrdnji autoriteta, niti se mora svoditi na udovoljavanje očekivanjima drugih. Naime, učenje je i socijalni proces (Vygotsky, prema Berk i Winsler, 1995; Rinaldi, 2006) u kojem različitost perspektiva, znanja i razumijevanja pojedinaca, ukoliko o njima raspravljaju, predstavlja snažan potencijal (zajedničkog) učenja. Učenje je "najbolje kad je sudioničko, proaktivno, suradničko i posvećeno konstrukciji značenja umjesto njihovoj suhoparnoj repetitiji" (Bruner, 2000, str. 93). U funkciji toga vrtić se pretvara u svojevrsan forum za pregovaranje, u jedno autentično «socijalno gradilište znanja» s fleksibilnim pristupom učenju, fleksibilnim vremenskim rasporedom, fleksibilnim kurikulumom i fleksibilnim okruženjem za učenje (Cohen i dr., 1996), u kojem dijete uči u procesu dvosmjerne komunikacije, tj. dijaloga s drugom djecom i odraslima.

Nedovoljno korištenje potencijala zajedničkog učenja putem dijaloga nije ekskluzivni problem ranog obrazovanja (nego je to slučaj i u osnovnoškolskom, srednjoškolskom pa i visokoškolskom obrazovanju), niti samo hrvatskog odgojno-obrazovnog sustava. Raspravljajući o pogrešnim koncepcijama na kojima se može temeljiti odgojno-obrazovni proces, Barth (2004) posebno ističe problem pokoravanja općeprihvaćenoj ideji pasivnog primanja znanja koje se učenicima predaje, tj. premalo prilika za traženje i angažirano razmjenjivanje ideja. «U rijetkim trenucima kad dolazi do tih aktivnih razmjena, začuđujuće je promatrati kako se (učenici) drugačije snalaze sa znanjem o kojem je riječ: znaju se njime služiti kako bi sudjelovali u raspravi, kako bi postavili pitanja, kako bi nekoga uvjerali, ili nešto odbacili (isto, str. 23).

Da bi učenje kroz raspravu u vrtiću bilo moguće, potrebne su određene, podržavajuće «infrastrukture učenja» koje odražavaju cjelokupnu kulturu vrtića (ili određene odgojno-obrazovne skupine), zasnovane na

ravnopravnosti svih sudionika procesa (djece i odraslih) i uvažavanju vrijednosti dijaloga u procesu zajedničkog učenja. U protivnom, snagu argumenata u raspravi određuje pozicija sudionika na hijerarhijskoj ljestvici moći, a što je hijerarhija moći izraženija, to je položaj djeteta naspram odraslog nepovoljniji. Shodno tome, djeca nastoje dekodirati očekivanja odgojitelja te svoje odgovore formuliraju rukovođena idejom udovoljavanja tim očekivanjima, a ne idejom razmjene vlastitog mišljenja s drugima. Na tragu iznesenog zaključujemo da je pretpostavka ostvarivanja procesa učenja djeteta temeljenog na indirektnoj podršci odgojitelja, te raspravi s drugom djecom i odraslima, upravo stvaranje suradničke kulture vrtića kao i «konteksta slušanja» (Rinaldi, 2006) kao važne sastavnice takve kulture.

Riječ je o odgojno-obrazovnom pristupu za kojeg je potrebna promjena implicitnih, ukorijenjenih percepcija djeteta, ali i ukorijenjenih percepcija u svezi s prirodom znanja i njegova oblikovanja. Da bi se postigla takva konceptualna transformacija odgojno-obrazovnog pristupa, kako ističe Barth (2004), potrebno je odbaciti ideju znanja kao već izgrađene, statične i nepromjenjive istine u korist shvaćanja znanja kao složenog sustava dinamičkih odnosa u stalnoj izgradnji, napustiti ideju prijenosa znanja u obliku deskriptivnog izlaganja u korist percepcije učenja kao procesa razmjene i zajedničkog traganja za smislom te fokusiranje procesa učenja na razumijevanju onoga što dijete već zna, razumije i može učiniti.

U procesu razvoja tzv. nove kulture učenja možda najveći konceptualni pomak predstavlja preusmjeravanje težišta odgojno-obrazovnog procesa s namjera i postupaka odgojitelja na postojeća znanja, razumijevanja i (samo)organizacijske sposobnosti djeteta. Jer, «lako mijenjamo naš rječnik, govorimo da je nužno učenika učiniti samostalnim sudionikom u izgradnji njegova znanja, ali smo spori kad treba promijeniti naša vjerovanja i naše implicitne navike» (Barth, 2004, str. 85).

SAMOEVALUACIJA DJETETA U PROCESU UČENJA – PUT K REKONCEPTUALIZACIJI KURIKULA

Poticanje učenika na preuzimanje odgovornosti za vlastito učenje, kao i osnaživanje tzv. meta-razine tog učenja, također oslikava tzv. novu kulturu učenja. Riječ je o pristupu koji učenicima omogućuje da postanu svjesni svojih intelektualnih kapaciteta te da razviju samopouzdanje i autonomiju u svom sadašnjem i budućem učenju (Barth, 2004).

Ustanovljavanje činjenice da i djeca imaju metakognitivne sposobnosti (Bruner, 2000) baca jedno posve novo svjetlo na organizaciju odgojno-obrazovnog procesa vrtića i oblikovanje kurikula ranog odgoja.

Naime, ranije se mislilo kako su metakognitivni procesi svojstveni samo odraslim osobama. Spoznaja da djeca mogu osvještavati procese svog mišljenja i učenja, tj. otkrivati put kojim su razvili neko novo znanje ili došli do nekog razumijevanja, iziskuje sasvim različitu kvalitetu podrške njihovom učenju. U tom smislu, možemo raspravljati i o tzv. novoj kulturi poučavanja. Ta nova kultura učenja/poučavanja vrtića usmjerena je poticanju samoiniciranog i samoupravljanog učenja djeteta i, u krajnjoj konsekvenci, upravljanja procesom vlastitog učenja kao i preuzimanja (su)odgovornosti za taj proces.

Kontinuiranim bilježenjem različitih etapa procesa učenja (prikupljanjem različitih etnografskih zapisa ili tzv. dokumentacije) djetetu se može omogućiti prisjećanje ne samo na prethodne aktivnosti, nego i na prethodne načine vlastitog razmišljanja kao i tijek, tj. progresiju vlastitog učenja (Rinaldi, 2006, Houk, 1997, Malaguzzi, 1998). Tako djeca mogu postati refleksivna glede svog iskustva, tj. «retrasirati» put vlastitog učenja te sama sebe korigirati (Rinaldi, 2006).

U tom kontekstu Godinho i Wilson (2008) posebno korisnim smatraju one postupke odgojitelja kojima potiču refleksiju i metakogniciju djeteta, čime mu otvaraju prostor za razvoj tzv. samoregulirajućeg učenja. Spomenute autorice predlažu neke od takvih postupaka nudeći ih u formi «refleksivnih» i «metakognitivnih» pitanja. «Refleksivna» pitanja, tumače spomenute autorice, subjektu (djetetu ili odraslom) mogu pomoći u razmatranju učinkovitosti vlastitih akcija i kvalitete vlastitih iskustava. Istodobno, «metakognitivna» pitanja usmjeravaju se na svijest subjekta (djeteta ili odraslog), čime ga potiču na evaluaciju i regulaciju vlastitog mišljenja, odabir primjerenijih strategija vlastitog razmišljanja i, u skladu s tim, primjerenijih oblika vlastitog djelovanja. Razumljivo je da razvoj refleksivnih i metakognitivnih umijeća kod djece mogu poticati odgojitelji koji su ih prethodno i sami razvili te ih prakticiraju u svom svakodnevnom odgojno-obrazovnom radu (tzv. refleksivna praksa). Iz tog razloga Godinho i Wilson (2008) mogućnosti korištenja ovih pitanja prikazuju iz perspektive odgojitelja, a potom iz perspektive djece kako slijedi:

Tablica 2.

Spoznaja da je znanje rezultat procesa aktivne participacije i kreativnog doprinosa djeteta, da je to proces kojeg ono posredno može «vidjeti» i na kojeg može aktivno utjecati, podloga je ostvarenja koncepta cjeloživotnog učenja koji, kako smo prikazali, može započeti već u vrtiću. Tako je osposobljavanje djeteta za samoevaluaciju u procesu vlastitog učenja, kao pretpostavka njegova aktivnog (su)oblikovanja i (su)upravljanja

tim procesom, mogući put rekonceptualizacije kurikula ranog odgoja u cijelosti.

AFIRMACIJA AKTIVNE ULOGE DJETETA U ISTRAŽIVANJU KURIKULA – RAZVOJ NOVOG KONCEPTA INSTITUCIJSKOG DJETINSTVA

Suvremeni pristup odgoju i obrazovanju djeteta u institucijskom kontekstu temeljen je na uspostavljanju uvažavajućih i recipročnih odnosa odraslih s djecom. Shvaćanje djeteta kao subjekta, a ne objekta u procesu odgoja i obrazovanja, za sobom povlači i niz pitanja o statusu i pravima djeteta i njegovim građanskim kompetencijama u procesu istraživanja kurikula. Je li ono u procesu istraživanja kurikula subjekt ili objekt? U tom smislu mogli bismo raspravljati o nizu etičkih i drugih pitanja, kao primjerice pitanju privatnosti djece. Ima li dijete mogućnost odbiti sudjelovanje u istraživanju te tko bi trebao dati dopuštenje za uključivanje djeteta u istraživanje, samo su neka od tih pitanja.

Primjerice, u posljednje se vrijeme mnogo raspravljalo o tome smije li se djecu u vrtiću snimati (foto i videokamerom), tj. u koje se svrhe snimljeni materijal smije koristiti (za potrebe praćenja napretka djece, predstavljanje segmenata odgojno-obrazovnog procesa roditeljima ili stručnoj javnosti, promidžbu rada vrtića, objavljivanja različitih stručnih i znanstvenih publikacija, i sl.). Te su se rasprave najviše fokusirale na pitanje osobe (npr. ravnatelj vrtića, roditelj djeteta ili netko treći) koja treba dati pristanak na snimanje djece i objavljivanje snimaka za pojedine svrhe. Uobičajena praksa je da se za navedene namjene pristanak na snimanje djece traži od njihovih roditelja, što se katkad čini prilikom upisa djeteta u vrtić ili neposredno prije korištenja snimaka u javnosti ili publikacijama. Zanimljivo je da nijedna od tih rasprava nije bila usmjerena pitanju prava djece u tom procesu - treba li i djecu nešto pitati u svezi s istraživanjima (koja se provode nad njima)?!

Naime, kako to uočava Penn (2008), uobičajeno je da se odraslim osobama (ispitanicima) tijekom istraživanja pristupa s mnogo više respekta nego je to slučaj s djecom, za što postoji niz primjera. Korištenje jednostranih ogledala ili snimanje osobe bez njezina znanja (i pristanka) u istraživanjima se odraslih osoba ne tolerira, dok se u istraživanjima djece smatra posve prihvatljivim. Isto tako, odrasle osobe (ispitanike) se mnogo češće uključuje u interpretaciju rezultata istraživanja nego se uključuje djecu i slično. Treba li uzrok takvog neravnopravnog, čak i obespravljenog statusa djece u odnosu na odrasle tražiti u dobi djece (smatra se da imaju manje iskustva i kompetencija od odraslih pa ih se ne može smatrati «relevantnim»

izvorom podataka), ili im naprosto ne pripada pravo na to da u svezi s istraživanjima (koja se odnose izravno na njih) donose neke odluke?

Istraživanja su ključni izvor pedagoških teorija, kako o djetetu tako i načinima na koji se ono razvija, odgaja i uči. No, kako priroda tih procesa evoluirala, smatra Kellet (2010), tako i način na koji se pristupa njihovu istraživanju treba evoluirati. Iz tog razloga ona ističe potrebu radikalnog repozicioniranja djeteta u procesu pedagoških istraživanja; od shvaćanja djeteta kao objekta, što je svojstveno klasičnim istraživanjima, prema shvaćanju djeteta kao socijalnog subjekta, s pravima koja su u tu ulogu inkorporirana. Ključno uporište takve promjene, naglašava spomenuta autorica, jest napuštanje istraživačkih pristupa koji se provode «nad djetetom», u korist onih koji se provode «s» djetetom, što može voditi ultimativnom širenju fokusa prema istraživanjima «od» djece (koja poduzimaju djeca). Pozivajući se na *Konvenciju o pravima djeteta*, spomenuta autorica dijete smješta u «istraživačku arenu» s posve promijenjenom ulogom: ona ga smatra ravnopravnim participantom pedagoškog istraživanja, tj. ravnopravnim suistraživačem. Takva pozicija djeteta u procesu istraživanja kurikula vodi ne samo afirmaciji njegovih participacijskih (i drugih) prava, nego i otkrivanju i razumijevanju mnogih, još uvijek nedovoljno poznatih dimenzija institucijskog djetinjstva. Naime, znanje djeteta uvijek se smatra inferiornim u odnosu na znanje odraslog, no «djetetovo znanje o tome kako je biti dijete, svakako je superiorno u odnosu na znanje odrasle osobe o tome» (Kellet, 2010, str. 18). Način na koji djeca percipiraju, tj. doživljavaju vrtić, uključujući sve procese i odnose koji se u njemu razvijaju, kvalitativno se razlikuje od načina na koji ga percipiraju i shvaćaju odrasli. S obzirom na to posve je jasno da djeca i kvalitetu vrtića različito doživljavaju (procjenjuju) nego što to čine odrasli. Iz tog je razloga procjena kvalitete vrtića koja izuzima perspektivu djece uglavnom nepotpuna, a može biti i posve pogrešna. Dijete je dio subkulture vrtićkog djetinjstva što mu omogućuje perspektivu «insidera»; ono vrtić dobro pozna «iznutra», na način koji je odrasloj osobi nedostupan i uglavnom nepoznat. Zato ustanovljavanje i uvažavanje perspektive djeteta, tj. shvaćanje vrtića gledanog njegovim očima, može voditi posve novom razumijevanju vrtićkog iskustva djeteta te predstavljati potencijal razvoja jednog novog, humanijeg koncepta institucijskog djetinjstva.

Shvaćanje djeteta kao ravnopravnog suistraživača komplementarno je shvaćanju djeteta kao (su)oblikovatelja odgojno-obrazovnog procesa i aktivnog (su)konstruktora kurikula, kako smo prethodno izložili. Jer, kurikulum ranog odgoja i jest teorijska koncepcija koja se u odgojno-obrazovnoj praksi vrtića kontinuirano zajednički istražuje, izgrađuje, modificira i razvija (Šagud, 2006, Miljak, 2007, Petrović-Sočo, 2007, 2009, Slunjski, 2011), tj. konstruira i

sukonstruira na temelju ravnopravnog sudjelovanja svih sudionika procesa (djece i odraslih).

ZAKLJUČAK

Mogućnosti afirmacije prava djece u vrtiću, zajamčenih *Konvencijom o pravima djeteta*, kao i razvoj građanske kompetencije djeteta ovise o mnogo različitih čimbenika čije je djelovanje kompleksno i međusobno povezano. One prije svega ovise o našem shvaćanju djeteta, koje se izravno odražava na cjelokupnu organizaciju odgojno-obrazovnog procesa kao i oblikovanje kurikula. Demokratizacija ustroja vrtića u različitim segmentima njegova djelovanja, kao i humanizacija interpersonalnih odnosa svih subjekata odgojno-obrazovnog procesa značajne su pretpostavke afirmacije prava djeteta i razvoja njegove građanske kompetencije. Oblikovanje kurikula u demokratski ustrojenom vrtiću usmjereno je izgradnji samopoštovanja, samopouzdanja i samoostvarenja djeteta, kao i poticanju autonomije njegova mišljenja i djelovanja. U tom smislu, afirmacija prava djeteta očituje se kao mogućnost njegova sudjelovanja u promišljanju, realizaciji i evaluaciji kurikula. Mogućnosti ostvarivanja prava djeteta i stjecanje građanske kompetencije u vrtiću utkane su u svakodnevni odgojno-obrazovni proces vrtića, oslikavajući cjelokupnu kvalitetu življenja, odgoja i učenja djeteta u njemu. U funkciji oblikovanja tako shvaćenog kurikula pridonosi tzv. «slušanje» djeteta, koje se odnosi na pažljivo promatranje djece i kvalitetno interpretiranje i tumačenje njihovih aktivnosti. Afirmacijom takvog pristupa djetetu se omogućuje aktivno sudjelovanje u oblikovanju odgojno-obrazovnog procesa i konstrukciji kurikula kao najviše razine ostvarivanja uloge aktivnog građanina u svojoj socijalnoj zajednici.