

UDK:37 0225(091)
Izvorni znanstveni rad
Primljeno: 15. siječnja 2013.

TWENTY YEARS OF THE COURSE BOOK *DIDACTICS* **How we created the course book *Didactics***

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Abstract: The course book *Didactics*, published by Bognar and Matijević in 1993 is the result of a years-long engagement in the process of changing teaching. In these endeavours, the authors have realised that it is not possible to change teaching unless the theory on which that teaching is based is changed as well. This relates to a synchronised change of theory and praxis, whereby the participants themselves experience a personal change.

This process took place in specific social conditions in the eighties of the last century. Turbulent events that took place in Europe in 1968 had a huge impact on the democratisation of society, namely on the changes in education. It all affected the situation in Croatia and former Yugoslavia to a great extent. Back then, European Forum for Freedom in Education was founded, and many educationists participated actively in its work, whereas the authors of this chapter were among its founders in Croatia. Now, we witness the rise of promoters of pluralism in education among Croatian educationists.

Trying to find new practical solutions, the authors have carried out a number of projects including the model of initial education and the model of primary school that required new theoretical approaches and a diversion from traditional didactic concepts. Furthermore, they have studied numerous didactic approaches and in finding new didactic solutions they have cooperated not only with many high quality teachers, but also many scientists. They have surveyed numerous theoretical approaches, and on the basis of those rich resources, they have built a general personal system, taking into account new trends in the field of philosophy, psychology, pedagogy, didactics and teaching theories. This *Didactics* has not sought out to be the reflection of “what is” but the theory of “what could be” and that is why it has remained important for all these years. The book has had three editions so far.

Keywords: didactic theories, didactic pluralism, teaching, holistic approach.

Introduction to the problem

Twenty years ago our university course book *Didactics* was completed and so far it has had three editions. It was the result of a 10-year long action

research, carried out with numerous associates, in which we created models and tested them in practice. This was possible only because we simultaneously worked on the theoretical concept. Although our empirical studies were aimed at primary schools only, it was concluded that didactic level as a general theory of the educational process can also be applied to secondary schools and universities, which was confirmed by our further studies.

Starting from the methodological approach of “living theories” (Whitehead, 2011), we explained the circumstances in which we felt the need for a new didactic approach, our personal dilemmas and temptations as well as changes in our misconceptions and rigid concepts, how we came up with new ideas and tested them in practice.

Didactics that we created was not supposed to be a reflection of the present, but a theoretical foundation and anticipation of possibilities and desires. Therefore, even after 20 years, this course book is still relevant, it represents a shift from bad practices and is the basis for new approaches which tend to create ideal conditions for developing individuals and societies respecting human needs.

Methodological approach

Our *Didactics* was created in accordance with the following epistemological scheme: a years-long study of theory and practice, logical and scientific analysis, synthesis, explanation (terms, definition, classification, schemes, explanation, models, etc.) which can serve for better understanding, organisation and control of complex processes and outcomes in education.

Looking for new practical solutions and theoretical explanations of the educational processes, we carried out a number of projects looking for new theoretical approaches and changes of traditional didactic concepts. We studied numerous historical and contemporary didactic approaches and cooperated with many expert teachers and scientists trying to find new solutions. We studied numerous didactic approaches on the basis of which we created a comprehensive system that acknowledged current cognitions in the field of philosophy, psychology, sociology, pedagogy, didactics and teaching theory.

Thus we were not merely writing a course book, but we researched (action research) and created new models of teaching and school. We learned from theories and scientific achievements of numerous world-famous authors, but we also learned from creative teachers in Croatia and Slovenia. Everything written and described in this book happened, has happened or is still happening. We tried to dissociate from unilateral approaches which characterised earlier didactics course books by other authors. It was important to step away from e.g. centuries-old attempts to, based on a traditional

paradigm of cognitive learning (“learning using your head”), prescribe models and instructions for learning in other fields of students’ development.

We were not very concerned about qualitative and quantitative scientific methods. We did not want to build a scientific system (a holistic theory of the educational process) on a rather aggressive methodological positivism, which, especially lately, has been paying more attention to numbers and not to an individual – student. Our work contains numbers as well as people, photographs and charts. We attempted to change practices and create an adequate scientific theory relying on transformation of practice and creating solutions together with teachers. They were aware of the problems, but did not dare to change and improve practices without the support of the Education and Teacher Training Agencies or colleges. We were sometimes surprised at courage and suggestions made by teachers knowing what the situation was like in classrooms. We monitored and assisted them. Our support was highly appreciated. With the help of our discreet moves teachers created teaching scenarios such as the ones confirmed by our theories – a pure didactic constructivism in practice. Their experience and ideas were framed within a scientific theory presented to the public in this book 20 years ago.

From didactics as a theory of teaching to didactics as a theory of the educational process

DIDACTICS as a term was first mentioned by Ratke and Comenius and authors cannot agree on determining the content of this term. These differences do not only refer to a formalized perspective on the definition of didactic, but also to theories regarding these definitions.

For the past three centuries authors have been discussing the following terms: learning, teaching, instruction, education and upbringing. Of course, other sciences, e.g. pedagogy, psychology, sociology, teaching theories, have also been interested in these terms. European concept of the term *didactics* (or its content) emphasises one or more abovementioned terms. Americans dealt with this term in the theory of curriculum and offered approaches and theories more appropriate for present time. As a reminder, without any intention to discuss advantages of any of the definitions of *didactics*, we list a few representative ones:

Ratke: Didactics is a theory of teaching including preschool, school and post-school period of a person’s life.

Comenius (1900) regards didactics as the art of teaching: “We dare to promise the Great Didactic, i.e. a general art of teaching everybody about everything.” (p. 12)

- Didactics is a theory of education and instruction or a theory of students' intellectual education (Jesipov and Gončarov, 1947, p.129). (Note: This definition had the greatest influence on Croatian educationists 30 years after WWII!)*
- Koletić, M. (1951) (In Pataki, S. *Pedagogija*, p. 127): "Didactics as a theory of education primarily studies the essence of the teaching process, its cognitive-theoretical and psychological foundations."
- Šimleša (1969): "We will not be wrong if we define didactics as a science of education and instruction" (p. 207).
- Poljak (1970): "Didactics is a branch of pedagogy which studies general principles of education."
- Filipović, N. (1988): "Didactics studies teaching practices and scientific works about teaching."
- Prodanović and Ničković (1984): "Didactics studies instruction as a social phenomenon and a certain didactic process in historical, theoretical, and practical-dialectical union." (p.6)
- Didactics belongs to a narrow circle of scientific disciplines which study education of young people and adults.*
- Vilotijević, M. (2001): "The subject matter of didactics is the unity of teaching and learning." (p. 14 and 15)
- Blažič et al. (2003): "Didactics studies general principles of planning, realizing and evaluating education of young people through teaching, its structure and processes, which are common for all types of formal and informal education, teaching and learning." (p.11)
- Pranjić, M. (2005): "The subject matter of general didactics deals with problems and tasks for planning, implementation and evaluation of teaching and learning. Therefore one can say that general didactics starts with the process of personal learning, its support and evaluation. (p. 241)
- Jelavić (2008) in *Didactics*, which has had a few new editions, directs a definition of didactics towards teaching. He sees learning as "educational process" (p.10) and continues that "nowadays didactics defines itself as a science which studies intentional and systematically organised learning aimed at an individual's development – personality" (p.10) On the same page the author says that "didactics is a theoretical reflection on instruction (considering teaching and learning)" (p. 10).

Cindrić, M., Miljković, D. and Strugar, V. (2010): "An adequate criterion of its definition is the one which considers the educational process as a whole. Didactics is regarded as a pedagogical discipline and the theory of the educational process" (p. 18).

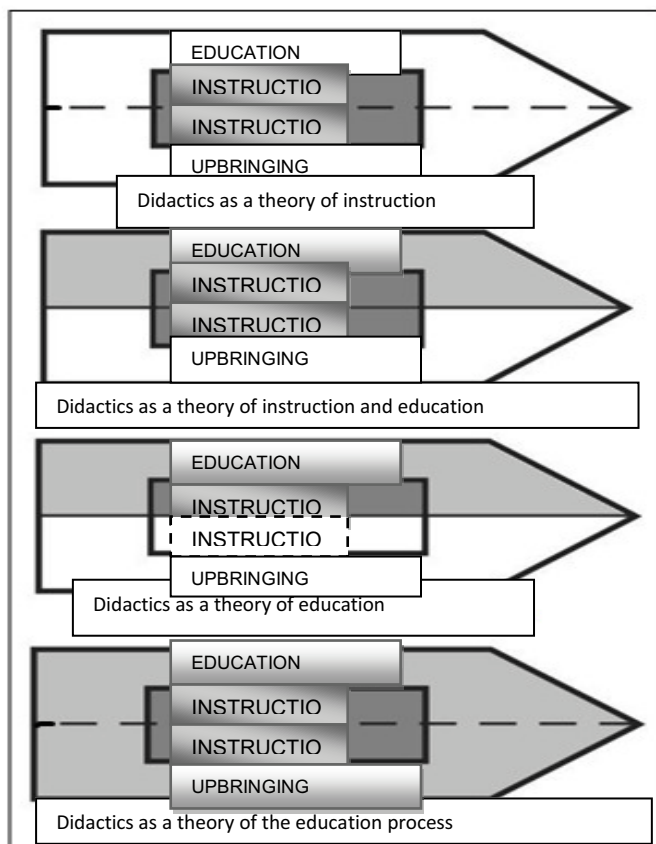
Bognar and Matijević (1993): "Didactics is a branch of pedagogy dealing with the theory of the educational process. The educational process is traditionally defined as instruction and teaching, but since today there are other types of organised education, didactics cannot be limited to a traditional concept of instruction, especially not instruction as teaching.

Finally, here is a more recent definition from Germany: Broadly speaking, didactics incorporates theories of learning and teaching in all possible situations and contexts (Böhm, 2005:155).

The aim of this paper is not to present a comprehensive analysis and criticism of theories and definitions, but to illustrate ways of looking for definitions of this important scientific discipline starting from didactics as a science of teaching everybody everything and regarding didactics as a theory of instruction, education and the educational process (picture 1).

It is useful for didactics experts to know about the development of basic ideas and didactic models and theories during the 17th, 18th, 19th century, but it is also useful to study didactic theories in Croatia which were dominant in the 20th century.

At the beginning of the 20th century Croatian teachers and pedagogues were under the influence of Reform pedagogy's ideas and theories. Journals published articles about Maria Montessori, the Dalton Plan, Brigade-Laboratory method, while ideas and methods of work schools (*Arbeitsschule*) were implemented in practice. Teachers in Zagreb tried to apply Rudolf Steiner and Maria Montessori's ideas and all schools had crafts as a compulsory activity. Prominent didactic experts of that time were entirely familiar with the didactics developed by Mid-European educationists in Germany, Austria, France and Switzerland (Basariček, Matičević, Pataki, etc.).



Picture 1: Differences between the definitions of didactics

Special attention should be paid to the events following WW II. Immediately after the war the leading political party introduced teachers to pedagogical ideas of Soviet educationists. Thus in the first two years after the war they followed pedagogy and works of the prominent Soviet educationists Gruzdjev, Jesipov and Danilov. Their books were reissued between 1946 and 1966 and represented the main source of reference for students of teacher training colleges and academies. Later on, our authors started publishing “their” works on pedagogy and didactics, but they were in fact firmly guided by Russian basic theories, ideologies and concepts. Even 30 years after the war, Soviet pedagogy and didactics were still dominant in this area and only few managed to dissociate themselves from them. Those were Dr Vladimir Poljak, Dr Pataki and Dr Šimleša, and even though they were also familiar with Mid-European didactics theory, they still used terminology and theories which were close to Soviet pedagogy.

Scientific language and terminology are well illustrated by the following sentences explaining the educational aim in the translation of Russian pedagogy 60 years ago: “In the Russian language lesson the aim is to introduce students to the concept of adjectives and to explain their importance in speech.

This is the educational aim. But in order to achieve this aim, a teacher selects certain learning content. This learning content has a major influence.” (Jesipov and Gončarov, 1947, p. 203). Despite all new didactics theories or books translated from English, this “scientific language” (“knowledge transfer”, “learning content selection”, “presenting new learning content”) has been used, and it is present even today in some didactics and teaching references in Croatia and especially in everyday colloquial school language. The only reason for this can be explained by the following proverb: old habits die hard.

One more fragment illustrates the relationship between Soviet pedagogy and didactics and contemporary didactic theories: 30 years after WW II, types of lessons at teacher training colleges and academies were based on Danilov, Jesipov and Gončarov’s theories. These are the following lesson types: “(1) presenting new learning content, (2) knowledge and habit reinforcement, (3) revision, (4) testing knowledge, (5) analysis of works of arts and (6) a mixed lesson” (Jesipov and Gončarov, 1947, p. 206). The additional explanation follows: “When organising a certain lesson type, one should not think that this lesson cannot contain other elements as well. Thus when presenting the new learning content, we can also revise the content from previous lessons and test students’ knowledge” (p. 206-207). Therefore it is very hard to determine whether “learning content” and “knowledge” are synonyms, i.e. what “learning content” actually means.

In the 70s and 80s Croatian authors led interesting discussions about the definition of *didactics*, mostly about the relationship between didactics and educational dimension of the teaching process and upbringing at schools. The review of these discussions is not the purpose of this chapter.

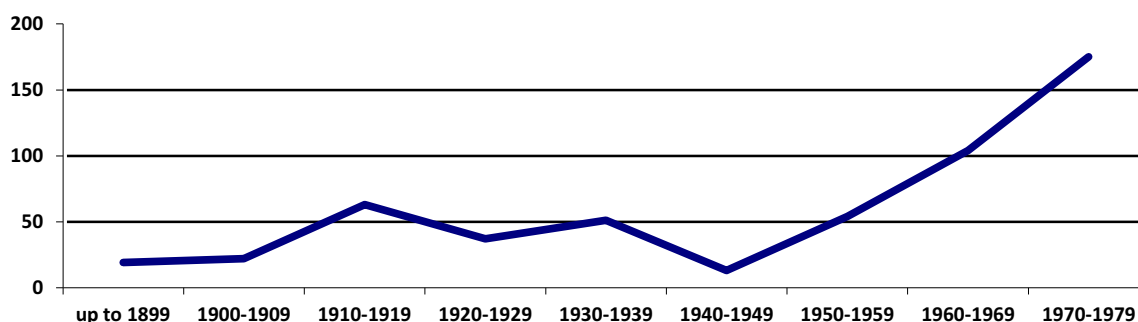
In our *Didactics* we decided to “do away” with the terms such as “learning content”, “lesson type” or “educational work” since we believed that these indefinite or ideological terms and phrases (upbringing and education seen as *work!*) were not necessary for the theory of the educational process. Some other authors (e.g. Cindrić, Miljković and Strugar 2010) did the same. Yet, in many works translated from English these terms still exist because the translators, in the course of their education, were exposed to Russian literature or older Croatian literature. They did not attempt to find the real meaning and definitions in the original languages. Therefore all translated works should be read critically from the didactic terminology perspective.

Social and pedagogical circumstances

After student protests in European countries in 1968, changes in education took place and the ideas of Reform pedagogy were popular again. Humanist psychology influenced the creation of a humanistic orientation in

pedagogy which was supported by numerous authors (e.g. Singer). This tendency is also present in the studies on the phenomenon of games in German-speaking countries (picture 2).

New pedagogical ideas were created in our pedagogy in the 70s and 80s. Pedagogical faculties used foreign literature; professors and students organised study visits abroad and embraced changes. The ideas of that time are best illustrated in the following book titles “Open-door school”, “Pluralism of education and schools”, “Primary school in the world”, “A unique state school or school pluralism”, “Contemporary concepts of primary education”. Atmosphere in education was positive and the school system was decentralized and financed by the local governments. All this prompted the creation of various models in primary education, but changes were also possible in secondary education.



Picture 2: The number of books about the phenomenon of games published in German

In these circumstances we were motivated by the fact that children started school at the age of six and not at the age of seven so we began to create a new model of initial education and studied the possibilities of using games in teaching. The first ideas were provided by Dr Ivan Furlan who was delighted by his experience during his study visit in the USA. He was usually very supportive of our ideas and even participated in our seminars for teachers in which he emphasised that it is not only a child who adapts to a school, but a school also adapts to a child (He published a paper “Should the mountain come to Mohammed or Mohammed to the mountain”, this was his reply to questions about children’s “school maturity”!). These ideas were also supported by other prominent educationists, so our book *Games in teaching at the beginning of education* was reviewed by Dr Ivan Furlan and Dr Vladimir Poljak. Nevertheless, there were some who opposed to these ideas. So this is how one educationist at the Faculty of Pedagogy explained this new approach to students:

There are some who advocate playing games in lessons. This is stupidity because school is not and cannot be a game. It is serious work and not a game.

Still, our concept of primary education generated a great interest and soon “the Osijek model” was widely talked about and officially implemented in 30 classes. Moreover, teachers from other parts of Croatia who did not participate in the project contacted us and accepted the model. There was also a considerable interest in this model in Slovenia. First, members of Agency for Education visited us and after that many Slovene teachers joined the project. The project was realised by organising distance learning and consultative courses, seminars, and visiting teachers who had already implemented this model and participated in the project. Since the teachers who used this model in the first grade wanted to continue with it in the second grade, we developed “the Osijek model” for the first four grades (see: <http://ladislav-bognar.net/drupal/node/23>).

The lessons were organised as integrated days and integrated weeks during which students could choose activities, while books and materials were left at school since homework was not assigned. Students could progress at their own pace and negative grades were not given since every child’s success was based on their own abilities. The classrooms were arranged in a way which allowed students to walk around and sitting during lessons was abandoned. Changes also affected teaching approaches so learning by heart was replaced by natural learning. The results indicated that this type of instruction was not less successful and it created a positive attitude towards school. What is more, parents supported all these changes (<http://ladislav-bognar.net/drupal/node/24>). There were other similar initiatives at that time. Dr Valentin Puževski worked with a group of young teachers (the couple Čmelar was particularly prominent) in school Radovanci who organised a school without classes.

Since there was a great interest in creating a new model of primary school, based on these concepts, we started a project “Inner (pedagogical) reform of primary school” which included numerous professors from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, advisors from Education and Teacher Training Agency Osijek and four primary schools from Slavonia and Baranya. The teachers underwent intensive teacher training supported by university professors, advisors and foreign lecturers. The Agency and Faculty organised discussions about theoretical issues. After two years models were defined by the teachers from schools participating in the project.

This model introduced a five-day week, 37 lessons for eight graders were reduced to 25 lessons per week for all students and teachers. In this way the number of students per class was also decreased. Double lessons lasting 120 minutes were introduced, while elective subjects had a double lesson of 60

minutes and extracurricular lesson of 45 minutes every day. We also introduced individual lesson planning. The teachers created new teaching methods which were discussed in seminars organised at schools participating in the project (see: <http://ladislav-bognar.net/drupal/node/25>).

And even though students' workload was considerably reduced, evaluation showed that the achievements were the same as in the previous models, but there were changes regarding the ability to learn independently, creativity and attitude to school¹.

A great number of journals were published at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb and Education and Teacher Training Agency Osijek as well as numerous papers on the action research and educational, cognitive, experiential and psychomotor characteristics of instruction. It was evident that we could not change practice unless we change theories at the same time and this is what we were systematically doing. But the more we progressed, the stronger the resistance was since we advocated a shift from traditional didactics and pedagogy.

The result of this research was a decision to present our findings in the course book *Didactics*. The book was supposed to provide a theoretical basis for a new approach which was tested and proved to achieve good results.

From one-dimensional individual to holistic approach

Naturally, both of us were very critical of dominant didactic approaches of that time. We were professor Poljak's students and he taught us a lot about didactic phenomena and aroused our interest in didactics by advocating certain approaches. However, as we were becoming more involved with the criticism of contemporary school and started looking for new answers to existing problems, we had to question certain definitions and theoretical explanations from Poljak's didactics. Since we were his supporters, this was also a fight with our own ideas and beliefs.

After studying available didactic resources, we noticed that there were no two didactic experts who completely agreed on everything. We realised that there were different theoretical orientations in pedagogy as well as in didactics and they reflected authors' various philosophical, psychological and social perspectives. We did not want to impose our didactic concept as the only one, so we decided to elaborate on various didactic perspectives, historical and contemporary ones, and to systematically present our didactic concept and its theoretical basis.

¹ The complete report on the research results is published in: Bognar, L., & Štumfol, B. (1998). *Model of primary school: Research results*. Zagreb: Korak po korak, p. 99.

First of all, we decided that didactics could not be a theory of education and instruction only and disregard the phenomenon of upbringing. Didactics studies both education and upbringing. The next step was to define upbringing not only as teaching children values, as advocated by socio-centric approach of that time, but as the development of personality through satisfying basic needs. We studied numerous authors and their definitions of needs and values and it seemed most appropriate to classify needs as biological, social and self-actualisation and values as existential, social-moral and humanistic. In this way we emphasised that individual and social aspects have the same importance in upbringing².

The problem with education was that everything was based on a cognitive approach defined as Lenin's tripartite system and the rest was observed as a *psychological aspect of teaching* consisting of intellectual and emotional experiences. In their *Pedagogy* Malić and Mužić already used Bloom's taxonomy dividing objectives into three domains: cognitive, affective and psychomotor, which was slowly being accepted by other didactics experts. But the problem was that all three aspects were either insufficiently researched (affective and psychomotor) or there were different theoretical perspectives (cognitive).

At this time a heated discussion was led among philosophers about the process of cognition. They also criticised the, so called "reflection theory" on which Poljak's *Didactics* was also based. Poljak was right to conclude that education should be based on theories of cognition, but he explained this theory by Lenin's remark written in Hegel's book: observation – thinking – practice. The major error was that cognition never starts with observation, but with thinking and action³, noticing problems, opposites and making assumptions, hypotheses, constructs. This may seem insignificant at first, but it in fact changes the cognitive aspect of education. Instruction coming down to a mere observation (listening and watching) leads to a simple memorising of ready-made solutions, answers which students did not discover by thinking, and in order to "remember these facts and generalisations" it is necessary to introduce a stage of revision. Revision is redundant if students realise certain things on their own. Such instruction is not followed by evaluation seen as celebration of learning, but as assessment and grading which is always repressive. Unfortunately, we have to admit that our natural and social science teaching experts still share these perspectives of reflection theory and forced learning by heart.

The second important aspect of education is *experiential sphere* in a cold intellectualised school in which works of art (music, literature, visual arts)

² This is further elaborated on in: Bognar, L. (2001). *Metodika odgoja*. Osijek: Pedagoški fakultet, Osijek.

³ Piaget (1983). states: "A term cannot be reduced to simple abstractions and generalisations starting from observation: it is a consequence of constructs.those constructs connected to action." (p. 93)

are analysed instead of being experienced and expressed. Emphasising experience in teaching can be achieved by telling stories, listening to music, watching films, acting, dancing and it all opens up a new neglected dimension of teaching. Similarly, psychomotor skills are especially neglected in lessons where students only sit. We concluded that successful education is a union of cognitive, experiential and psychomotor aspect. But this is an individual aspect of education, whereas education has its social dimension reflected in the acquisition of scientific, artistic and technological achievements of a society so we can state that there is scientific, arts and technology education.

	UPBRINGING	EDUCATION
INDIVIDUAL aspect	<i>Satisfying needs:</i> biological, social and self-actualisation	<i>Satisfying interests:</i> cognitive, experiential and psychomotor
SOCIAL aspect	<i>Acquiring values:</i> existential, social-moral and humanistic	<i>Acquiring achievements:</i> scientific, artistic and technological

Table 1. Multidimensional perspective of upbringing and education

This led us to a multidimensional perspective of the educational process consisting of upbringing and education and their individual and social aspects (table 1).

This theoretical approach includes a holistic perspective of an individual and does not reduce him to one dimension, but takes into consideration all human needs and interests. But since upbringing and education have their social dimension (children acquire a certain social value system through upbringing) and scientific, artistic and technological achievements, this social aspect should not be neglected. In this way we solved the opposites between socio-centric and pedo-centric approach. Since the educational process is a shared activity of teachers and students, we had to redefine stages of the educational process. Stages in which students prepare, learn, practice, revise, are evaluated and graded represent a manipulative system. Therefore educational process should start with *agreement* in which students' interests and needs are revealed and plans and preparations are made. The next part is *realisation*, which has an organisational aspect, but it is carried out with respect to satisfying needs and interests. *Evaluation* has a formative aspect (evaluation of the process) and summative aspect (evaluation of achievements).

From official *Didactics* to didactic pluralism

In 1990 a harsh transfer from a political monism to political pluralism took place in Croatia. Many were not aware that this would bring about pluralism in all other aspects of social life, in pedagogy and education as well. All this created room for developing pedagogical pluralism at all levels of education.

Non-governmental organisations supporting various pedagogical concepts were founded (e.g. Step by Step, Quality school, Waldorf school, Montessori, Forum for Freedom in Education, etc.). Besides numerous projects financed by UNICEF or UNESCO, Georg Soros Foundation and other international organisations, many seminars were organised offering teachers opportunities to learn about didactic and teaching scenarios which were vastly different from what was going on at schools or what Croatian authors had published. Some politicians did not handle this pluralism well so some teachers were forbidden from attending these ‘politically inadequate’ seminars.

Besides dozens of didactics books by Croatian authors which are still relevant and used by teachers, students and professors at teacher training faculties today (see References!), there were numerous translated books by foreign educationists and works on alternative pedagogies and ideas offered by NGOs (Montessori, Steiner, Glaser, Step by Step, Sai Baba and other movements and individuals). Parents were able to choose among various private schools, more in secondary than in primary education.

Alternative didactic and pedagogical ideas slowly started entering state schools with both warm or grudging approval and financial support by governing political bodies. So pedagogical pluralism started happening at schools, which was a good idea and solution. But at the same time there was a certain didactic chaos which many teachers, head teachers and advisors were not aware of and this called for a more thorough pedagogical analysis than this chapter. In newspapers and literature appeared statements such as: This cannot be allowed at state schools because it is not in line with the “official” state pedagogy or perspective. Although an “official state pedagogy” has never been established, it did exist (and is present even today) as implicit pedagogy or as a hidden school curriculum.

Concluding remarks

We have reached various conclusions while searching for a new model of compulsory education and new scientific explanations of everything happening at schools. One of these cognitions is that *school is made of people not buildings and the new media!* These people are students, teachers and

parents. Even in the most derelict building with modest equipment, if they are motivated, they will succeed in organising a humane school which children are happy to attend.

There are no children who do not want or do not like to learn. Children just do not like to be forced to learn or to learn in a way which does not respect their developmental needs and individuality. What happens at schools depends to a great extent on teachers and head teachers. They are all reluctant to change. If you ask them if something should be changed at schools, they will easily list five or ten variables, but we have never heard any one of them saying: I should change! People do not like changes! People do not like being changed by others. But all changes in education always imply changes in people. With well-selected and andragogical scenarios (projects, action research) even this problem can successfully be solved.

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Dvadeset godina jedne *Didaktike* (Kako smo stvarali Didaktiku)

Sažetak: Sveučilišni udžbenik *Didaktike* (Bognar i Matijević, 2002), koji je nastao prije dvadeset godina i do sada je doživio tri izdanja, nastao je kao rezultat višegodišnjega angažiranja na mijenjanju nastave. U tim nastojanjima uočili smo da je nemoguće mijenjati nastavu ako se istovremeno ne mijenja i teorija na kojoj se ta nastava zasniva. Radi se o sinkroniziranom mijenjanju i teorije i prakse pri čemu i sami sudionici toga procesa doživljavaju osobnu promjenu. Događa se „suštinsko učenje“ (Rogers).

U ovom radu polazeći od metodološkog pristupa „living theory“ (Whitehead) objašnjavamo okolnosti u kojima smo osjetili potrebu za novim didaktičkim pristupom i kroz koja smo iskušenja i osobne dvojbe prolazili, kako smo postupno mijenjali vlastite zablude i okoštale koncepte, kako smo dolazili do novih ideja i kako smo ih provjeravali u praksi.

Taj buran proces događao se osamdesetih godina prošloga stoljeća u specifičnim društvenim okolnostima. Burna događanja iz 1968 imala su utjecaj na demokratizaciju društva, ali su posebno utjecala na promjene u odgoju i obrazovanju. Sve je to imalo velik utjecaj na stanje u Hrvatskoj i tadašnjoj Jugoslaviji. U to vrijeme osniva se i Europski forum za slobodu u odgoju u kojem su aktivno sudjelovali i mnogi naši pedagozi, a autori ovoga rada i jedni su od osnivača Foruma za Hrvatsku. Među hrvatskim pedagozima javljaju se mnogi zagovaratelji pluralizma u odgoju i obrazovanju.

Tražeci nova praktična rješenja, ostvarili smo niz projekata od modela početnog školovanja do modela osnovne škole koji su zahtijevali nove teorijske pristupe i odmak od tradicionalnih didaktičkih koncepcija, proučili smo velik broj povijesnih i suvremenih didaktičkih pristupa i u traženju novih didaktičkih rješenja surađivali s velikim brojem vrsnih učiteljica i učitelja, ali i mnogim znanstvenicima. Proučili smo velik broj didaktičkih teorijskih pristupa i na osnovi tih bogatih izvora gradili cjeloviti vlastiti sustav koji je uvažavao dostignutu razinu spoznaja na području filozofije, psihologije, sociologije, pedagogije, didaktike i metodike.

Didaktika koju smo stvarali nije trebala biti odraz postojećega, nego teorijska osnova i anticipacija mogućega i poželjnoga. Zbog toga je ova Didaktika i nakon

dvadeset godina ostala po mnogočemu i dalje aktualna i predstavlja odmak od loše prakse te oslonac za nove pristupe koji teže stvaranju uvjeta za optimalni razvoj ljudske jedinice i društva okrenutoga ljudskim potrebama.

Osnovna pitanja o kojima se raspravlja u radu sljedeća su: Metodološki pristup, Društvene i pedagoške okolnosti, Od službene didaktike k didaktičkom pluralizmu, Od didaktike bez djeteta do humanističke orijentacije, Od teorije odraza do konstruktivizma, Od čovjeka jedne dimenzije do holističkog pristupa, Od koncepcije početnoga školovanja do modela osnovne škole, Od didaktike kao teorije obrazovanja do didaktike teorije odgojno-obrazovnoga procesa, Zaključna razmišljanja: Suvremeni didaktički izazovi.

Ključne riječi: didaktika, didaktičke teorije, didaktički pluralizam, pedagojska metodologija, teorija konstruktivizam, teorija kurikuluma.

Zwanzig Jahre einer Didaktik Wie wir das Lehrwerk *Didaktik* erstellten

Zusammenfassung: Das vor zwanzig Jahren entstandene Universitätslehrbuch *Didaktik* (Bognar und Matijević, 2002), das bislang in drei Auflagen erschienen ist, entstand als Ergebnis eines langjährigen Engagements bei der Veränderung des Unterrichts. Bei diesen Bemühungen wurde festgestellt, dass die Veränderung des Unterrichts ohne die gleichzeitige Veränderungen der dazugehörigen Unterrichtstheorie nicht möglich ist. Es geht um eine synchronisierte Veränderung sowohl der Theorie als auch der Praxis, wobei auch die Prozessteilnehmer selbst eine persönliche Veränderung wahrnehmen. Es kommt zum „wesentlichen Lernen“ (Rogers).

Ausgehend vom methodologischen Ansatz „living theory“ (Whitehead) werden in dieser Studie die Umstände erläutert, bei denen wir das Bedürfnis nach einem neuen didaktischen Ansatz verspürten und welche Versuchungen und persönliche Dilemmas wir bewältigen mussten. Weiter wird erklärt, wie wir schrittweise unsere eigenen Irrtümer und versteinerte Konzepte änderten, wie wir zu neuen Ideen kamen und wie sie in der Praxis überprüft wurden.

Dieser turbulente Prozess erfolgte in den achtziger Jahren des letzten Jahrhunderts in spezifischen sozialen Umständen. Die turbulenten Ereignisse von 1968 nahmen Einfluss auf die Demokratisierung der Gesellschaft, vor allem auf die Veränderungen im Bildungswesen. All das hatte einen großen Einfluss auf die Situation in Kroatien und dem ehemaligen Jugoslawien. Damals wurde auch das Europäische Forum für Freiheit im Bildungswesen gegründet, bei dem auch zahlreiche unserer Pädagogen aktiv teilnahmen, und die Autoren dieses Beitrags gehören zu den Gründern des Forums für Kroatien. Unter den kroatischen Pädagogen gibt es viele Befürworter des Pluralismus in der Bildung.

Bei der Suche nach neuen praktischen Lösungen realisierten wir eine Reihe von Projekten, vom Modell der Erstausbildung bis zum Grundschulmodell, die nach neuen theoretischen Ansätzen und einer Verschiebung von traditionellen didaktischen Konzepten verlangten. Wir untersuchten eine große Anzahl von historischen und

zeitgenössischen didaktischen Ansätzen und arbeiteten bei der Suche nach neuen didaktischen Lösungen mit einer Reihe von ausgezeichneten LehrerInnen, aber auch mit vielen Wissenschaftlern zusammen. Wir untersuchten eine große Anzahl von didaktischen und theoretischen Ansätzen und auf Grundlage dieser reichhaltigen Quellen erstellten wir ein vollständiges, eigenes System, das den erreichten Wissensstand auf dem Gebiet der Philosophie, Psychologie, Soziologie, Pädagogik, Didaktik und Methodik berücksichtigt hat.

Die von uns kreierte Didaktik sollte kein Spiegelbild des Bestehenden sein, sondern die theoretische Grundlage und die Antizipation des Möglichen und Wünschenswerten. Deshalb bleibt diese Didaktik auch nach zwanzig Jahren in vielerlei Hinsicht immer noch aktuell und stellt eine Verschiebung von schlechter Praxis dar, sowie eine Stütze für neue Ansätze, die zur Schaffung von Bedingungen für die optimale Entwicklung des menschlichen Individuums und der menschlichen Bedürfnissen entsprechenden Gesellschaft neigen.

Über die folgenden Grundfragen wird im Beitrag diskutiert: Der methodologische Ansatz, Die sozialen und pädagogischen Umstände, Von der offiziellen Didaktik zum didaktischen Pluralismus, Von der Didaktik ohne das Kind zur humanistischen Orientierung, Von der Theorie der Reflexion zum Konstruktivismus, Vom eindimensionalen Menschen zum holistischen Ansatz, Von der Konzeption der Erstbildung zum Grundschulmodell, Von der Didaktik als Bildungstheorie zur Didaktik der Bildungsprozessstheorie, Abschließende Gedanken: Moderne didaktische Herausforderungen.

Schlüsselbegriffe: Didaktik, didaktische Theorien, didaktischer Pluralismus, pädagogische Methodologie, Theorie des Konstruktivismus, Theorie des Curriculums.