

DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO LEARNING AND INSTRUCTION

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Learning and instruction can be approached from different theoretical positions. So far, learning has been the subject of research in psychology as a scientific discipline (psychology of learning). Teaching is the best known institutionally organised form of instruction. Different types of teaching, its quality, or the effectiveness of teaching have always been justified by reference to a distinct understanding of the learning process.

In the first edition of the journal "Odgojne znanosti" (Educational Sciences) on the subject of "DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO LEARNING AND INSTRUCTION, we present several papers which treat this subject from rather unfamiliar perspectives – at different levels, and in different contexts.

LUTZ KOCH demonstrates that, apart from the psychology of learning, the logic of learning is also possible. A specific perspective of the logic of learning is connected, among other things, with General Didactics (a theory of teaching and learning) by reference to the degrees of learning, or degrees of knowledge. In contrast to the definition of learning in psychology, where it is defined as a change in behaviour, learning from the perspective of logic is defined as access to cognition, or knowledge.

OTTO HANSMANN discusses teaching and learning from the constructivist - systematic perspective. The author promotes the thesis (as do many contemporaries who are in favour of introducing changes in the school system) on the need to change a paradigm which stresses teaching based on a model oriented towards learning for the purpose of increasing the success of pedagogical action in situations of school learning. The author finds theoretical support for this change in the principles of radical, methodical and social constructivism on the one hand, and in Luhmann's theory of systems on the other.

MUJO SLATINA outlines and analyses the key characteristics of confluent learning/teaching. Learning from this perspective is defined as a process in which individual human strengths are partly confirmed and partly developed, so that through interaction they become closely connected with corresponding educational benefits. Similar to biology, where the fundamental structure is the cell, the author finds that in pedagogy (different forms of education) the fundamental structure is learning/teaching. The key feature of this structure is the indissoluble link between learning and teaching.

GEORG HANS NEUWEG discusses the concept of tacit knowing which is the "knowing-how" type of knowledge, and not some mentally stored knowledge. The author explains this concept and the three main types of tacit knowing: the art or skill of something (for instance, teaching); the tacit "knowing-that" type, which is acceptable in the form of interpretative frames, stances, paradigms, beliefs, etc., and the tacit roots of our integral explicit knowing, i.e. its semantic and pragmatic basis. The basic didactic ideas raised by the author in relation to transferring and acquiring tacit knowing imply a distinct concept of learning and teaching.

KLAUS PRANGE relates the function of education and the non-transparency of learning. The difference between learning and educating (a constituent differentiation in pedagogy) is responsible for the fact that what is shown is accepted differently from what

is thought. For the demonstrative structure of education, the pedagogic difference between educating (as one way of showing) and learning is crucial. Educating is communicative in its nature, whereas learning is an individual act. Therefore, the effects of learning are, in principle, uncertain. According to Prange, all attempts to objectivise learning (for example, in investigating learning in psychology) fail to create a solid basis for education – through acquiring objective knowledge about learning – because such research neutralises the cultural content of learning and excludes the self-referential nature of the subject of learning. Instead of non-critical acceptance of different proposals from psychology (learning) and modern neurosciences on how to organise education in the form of teaching, the author proposes the building of a pedagogic concept of learning within didactics, which he defines as learning about the forms of education.

MARTIN KRAMAR writes about didactic analysis as an original didactic perspective in discussing the issue of the quality of teaching. This is an extended understanding of didactic analysis (according to Wolfgang Klafki). The author primarily discusses the issues of choice, functions and the purpose of executing didactic analysis, which he sees primarily as determining the effects of educational work. Didactic analysis is an activity carried out by the teacher and other pedagogic professional associates, which serves to plan, prepare, execute and constantly develop the quality of overall teaching.

WALTER HERZOG, in the first paper presented in this thematic edition, deals with the quality of teaching, or at least the attempt to increase the quality of teaching, as well as the overall educational process. The author critically analyses the concept of educational standards (as a new instrument of school reform) in the context of quality of education through an analysis of the following issues: ‘standards for what?’; competencies and the core curricula; supervision of the educational system and evaluation; reservations about standards in the educational system (weak theoretical foundations, undesired and undesirable side effects, the overly promising concept of competence, the inaccessibility of knowledge about good teaching, the deprofessionalisation of the teaching profession, and problems of implementation).

The diversity of approaches to the phenomena of learning, educating and school teaching shown in these papers is quite evident. The basic purpose of this thematic edition of “Odgojne znanosti“ is to highlight the diversity (but also distinctiveness) of these approaches.

We hope that in one of the following editions of our journal we will be able to publish papers in which different approaches to learning and instruction will be confronted, leading to mutually productive dialogue, both at the level of theory, but also at the level of practice and reform (for instance, in relation to increasing the quality of teaching and instruction in educational institutions).

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