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SENSE RELATION IN VOCABULARY ACQUISITION

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Abstract

Foreign language teachers must select vocabulary carefully to ensure that high quality items are included and provide varied opportunities for practice. Teachers should pay the most prudent attention in organization of lexis for the classroom as to offer as wide a range of practice ideas in order to facilitate effective learning. Acquiring a large, coloured and nuanced vocabulary knowledge does not imply simply studying a list of words alongside with dictionary definitions. Language diversity implies great possibilities of lexical choice as means of enhancing the effectiveness and accuracy of speech. Modern foreign languages teaching methods should aim at building a broad, deep, rich and flexible vocabulary corpus of words. Grouping of words is based upon similarities and contrasts. Every language has in its lexicon a variety of words, kindred in meaning, but distinct in morphemic composition and usage, ensuring the expression of the most delicate and somehow hidden shades of human perception, thought, feeling and imagination. The use of synonyms and antonyms is a quick and effective way of explaining unknown words and teachers can resort to them as means of describing words' meanings.

Key words; synonyms, antonyms, lexical choice, vocabulary acquisition, meaning

1. Introduction

The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter- tis the difference between the lighting bug and the lighting

Mark Twain

As Gains and Redman have pointed out "Some of the most amusing errors a learner can make in a foreign language arise from the lack of awareness of appropriacy of items" [Gairns and Redman 1998, 5] and the appropriate choice of synonyms seems to be one of the most struggling challenges both teachers and students might come across. Kevin Flanigan emphasizes the fact that "a powerful vocabulary consists of more than simply knowing a lot of words; it is the ability to grasp the just the right words to communicate precisely what you want to say or write" [Flanigan 2015, 2]. The meaning of the word can be only understood and learned in terms of its relations with the other words. An alternative way of conveying the meaning of a new word is simply to use words-other words. Teachers should constantly raise their students' interest on semantic relations and emphasise the need for approaching lexical choice and meaning variety as straightforwardly and remarkably as possible.

2. How to teach sense relations based on similarities (synonyms)

According to Lyons "words' meaning can be descriptive, expressive and social and many lexemes combine two of these or all of three. If synonymy is defined as identity of meaning, then lexemes can be said to be completely synonyms if and only they have if they have the same descriptive, expressive and social meaning" [Lyons 1981, 148]. As stated by many scholars, if synonymy is described as identity of meaning then lexemes can be said to be absolute synonyms if they have the same the same distribution and are completely synonymous in all their meanings (figurative meanings comprised). It is generally recognized that absolute synonymy of lexemes is relatively rare and as it is defined, is almost non-existent. The degree of interchangeability of two lexical items is undoubtedly, conditioned to a significant extent by the very complex structure of polysemous words, especially indicated by the integration of the connotative element, the stylistic reference, dialect, affective value,

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collocation or indirect and moderate choice of lexical units(euphemisms). The choice of synonyms in teaching vocabulary process is challenging and often not too easy to overcome. It is teachers' duty to give a fully depicted picture of words' meaning complexity startingly by introducing to their class a designed scheme of semantic componential analysis aspiring at the evaluation of the constituent elements especially reinforcing the need for a full awareness of the sense-related differences that may be directly indicators for an accurate choice of synonyms in given contexts.

Let us illustrate the point by providing some examples on how to describe the meanings of the following words by exploring the embedment of the connotative emotive values which directly determine the selection of words. Gairns and Redman suggest that the teachers will need to highlight the aspect of connotation, particularly in cases where the denotational meaning alone does not explicit the attitudinal force of a word [Gairns and Redman 1998, 18]. The figurative, emotive or evaluative associations should be clarified. Connotation is a permanent striking feature of every language thus students will not find this approach insuperable. Students need to know in what way the figurative "burden" is added to the denotational(literal) meaning and to what extent the words' meaning is dependent on the context. Advanced learners are expected to deal with a range of communicative activities and immense cases of linguistic interrelations of both oral and written speech and these situations will demand an understanding of the role the connotation plays in the differentiation of synonyms as a means of selection and proper use of these similarly sense related items. Of a relevant importance would be even the appreciation of the connotative values from the elementary level students. Using mother tongue translated cognates will help their general interest and awareness of the importance of this element. Here are some examples of sense relation complexity and diversity that can normally be traced in vocabulary acquisition process which should necessarily achieve emphasis in teaching English as a foreign language.

Lonely and ***alone*** might be considered as synonyms as far as the denotational component of *"being on one's own, without anyone else"* is concerned. According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 2006 the adjective ***lonely*** is emotively charged by the presence of the connotative component "*unhappy and sad because you have no one to talk to*". Thus, in the sentence "*You should not leave a child-----* between the two alternatives, the right one would be **alone.** The teacher him or herself can ask the student to make a sentence using the other component of the synonymic pair.

Another pair of synonyms demonstrating the same noticeable complexity is **well known** and **notorious**. The negative evaluative embedded connotation value as "*famous or widely known for something bad*" [Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2006] entailed in the adjective notorious makes the choice of the synonym strictly restricted to specific contexts as in the sentence "*He was a judge-------- for his cruelty and corruption"*. The use of words "cruelty" and "corruption" determine the choice of the right alternative and facilitates students' decision. Neither ***famous, well known or celebrated*** would fit the context besides ***notorious.*** At this point students must also know that **famous** and **well known** might be completely interchangeable in more than one context, as they are stylistically neutral. So, in the sentence "*Many------ people have lived in this hotel"* both alternatives might be perfectly accepted.

To shiver, **to tremble** and **to shudder** form a line of synonyms as far as they share the same denotational component that of denoting "*the act of shaking slightly in a way you cannot control"* [Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2006].The difference between these lexical units stands in the fact that there is a relevant added connotational value *that of cause* as in the case of ***to shiver*** which means "*to shake slightly because you are cold*" or a complex addition of *the connotation of cause* and the *emotive value* as in the case of **to shudder** which means *"to shake for a short time because you are afraid or because you think something is very unpleasant"* [Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2006].

Once more the teacher should absolutely point out the connotational, emotive added values and ask students to consider the context before selecting the right alternative. For instance, in the sentence *"I----- with embarrassment whenever I think about it"*, the choice of the verb **shudder** is evidently conditioned by the context and more specifically by the word *embarrassment*. Whereas in the

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sentence "*Jack stood--------- in the cold air"*, the choice of the verb **to shiver** is once more determined by the phrase *cold air*.

Skinny and **thin** are two more excellent examples of how connotation is packed and is worth noting that this component marks the striking difference of emotive values burden. Thin means "*having little fat on your body*" whereas skinny means "*very thin, especially in a way that is unattractive*" [Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 2006] indicating a pejorative attitude.

At intermediate and advanced stages of foreign language acquisition, teachers should provide full contextual examples and advice students to write many context-based sentences in order to gain a perfect command of sense related words.

2.1 Register and style

Gairns and Redman suggest that "Style and register strongly affect the impression we gain of a speaker's linguistic competence, and this is shown amongst other things by his choice of words" [Gairns and Redman 1998, 21]. The term **style** in linguistics indicates the language that can be used in a particular way, usually depending on people's behaviour flexible and adaptive to the speech situation. Style also includes the level of formality; from formal to informal, neutral, colloquial, slang etc. Dictionaries themselves have a set of labels to mark words or senses that are usually restricted and dependent in the context they may occur. Apart from the contextual indicators related to region(dialects) or historical background (archaisms), style and register is also labelled in general-purpose dictionaries. Howard Jackson in his book "An introduction the lexicography" stated that "the words characteristic of conversation and casual writing are labelled as informal usually greatly outnumbers the words characteristic of formal speech situations, academic, literary words marked as formal". Concise Oxford Dictionary 10th edition the "informal" label occurs over seven times more frequently than the "formal" label [Jackson 2002, 111]

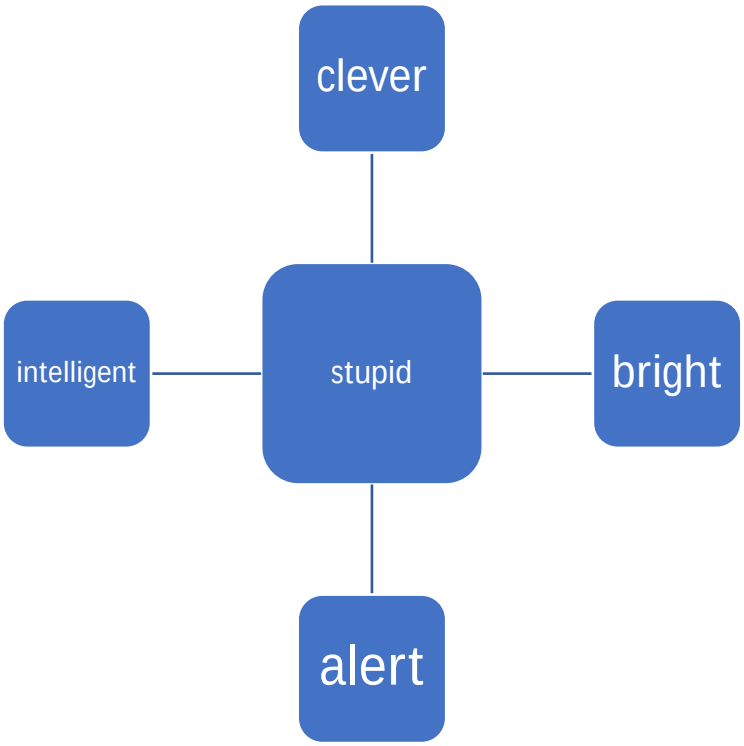
At intermediate and advanced level, there is an immediate need for the acquisition of some specialized words related to a variety of styles and specific register. Teachers should carefully identify and mark particular features of style and register by indicating what is the necessary item to be approached. In this context students should know how to use words in respect to their style and make appropriate choices in given contexts. As neutral stylistically words have a high degree of frequency and cover a wider range of collocation, the acquisition of neutral layer synonyms would be more than satisfactory to elementary level students. Whereas for advanced learners the information and a deep exploitation of words' registers and style of usage is more than appropriate. The process of defining the specific stylistic values and formality of the context in which a word is deemed to be appropriate must be governed by students' need and interest. The teachers' role in this process is to intentionally select the lexical items and what features to explore. For example, the word **children** is neutral in style, whereas **nippers, kids** and **brats** are colloquial. Moreover, **nippers** is humorous, whereas **brats** is derogatory. Another example would that of referring to the synonymic line **to leave**, **to abandon**, **to desert**, **to forsake**, it is of great importance to teach to the students that **to leave** and **to abandon** are stylistically neutral, whereas **to desert** is poetic and **to forsake** is formal.

3. How to teach sense relations based on contrast (antonyms)

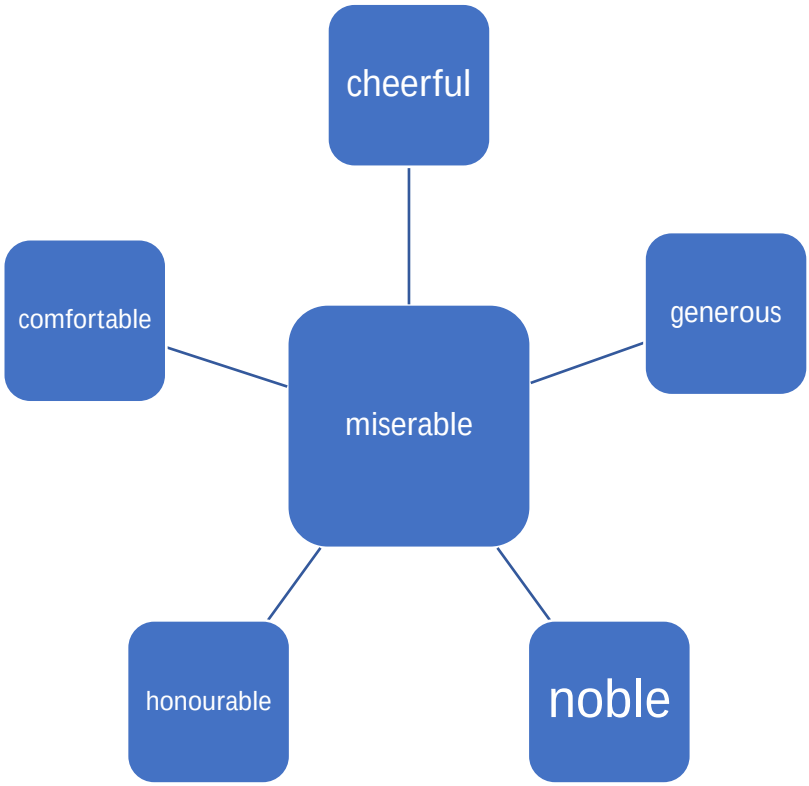
Words characterized by semantic polarity or opposite meanings represent another language's important expressive means and as such they should absolutely consider as powerful means of bridging an important gap in foreign language acquisition. There are a variety of different forms of oppositeness which are relevant to learners and teachers. The point to be made here as in the case of synonyms is that the problem of multiple senses, should be taken in account. It is worth noting that a polysemantic words may have an antonym or several antonyms for each of its meanings and quite frequently antonymic relations are established not between words, but between meanings.

Let us study the antonymic pairs that the respective adjectives; ***stupid, miserable, hard, different, slow, ugly***, can form.

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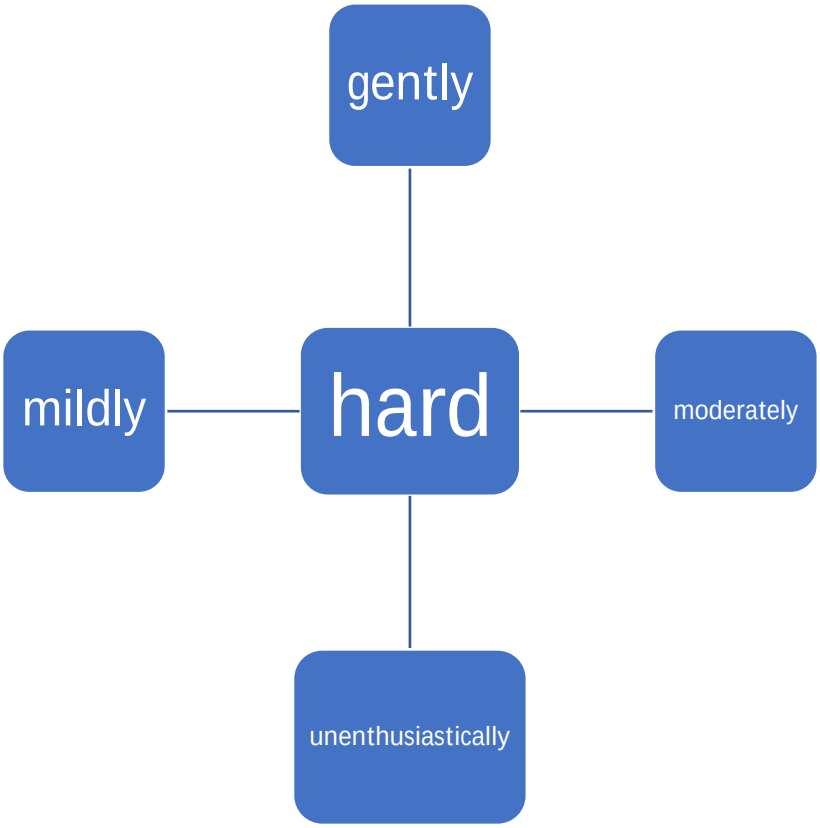


According to Chambers Pocket Thesaurus 1992, the adjective ***stupid*** can be associated to these lexical items (*clever, intelligent, bright and alert*) and form parallel antonymic pairs.

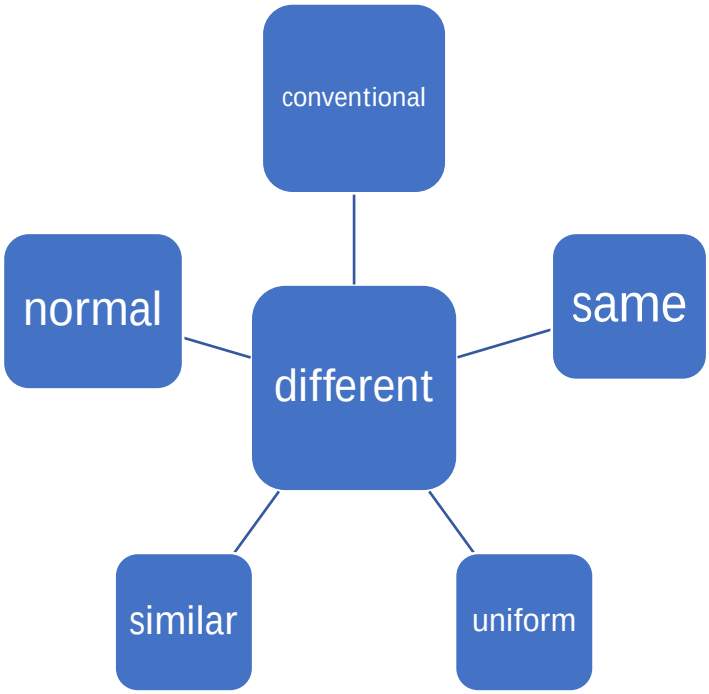


As referred to Chambers Pocket Thesarus, 1992, the adjective **miserable** on the other hand can form antonymic pairs respectively with *cheerful, generous, comfortable, generous, honourable, noble.*

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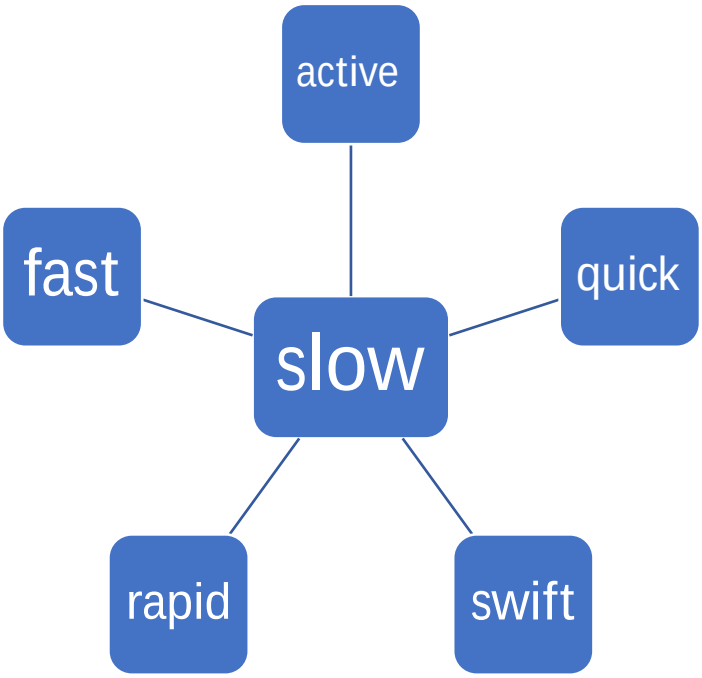


The same lexicographical source suggests the adjectives *mildly, gently, moderately and unenthusiastically* as having opposite meanings with the adjective **hard**.

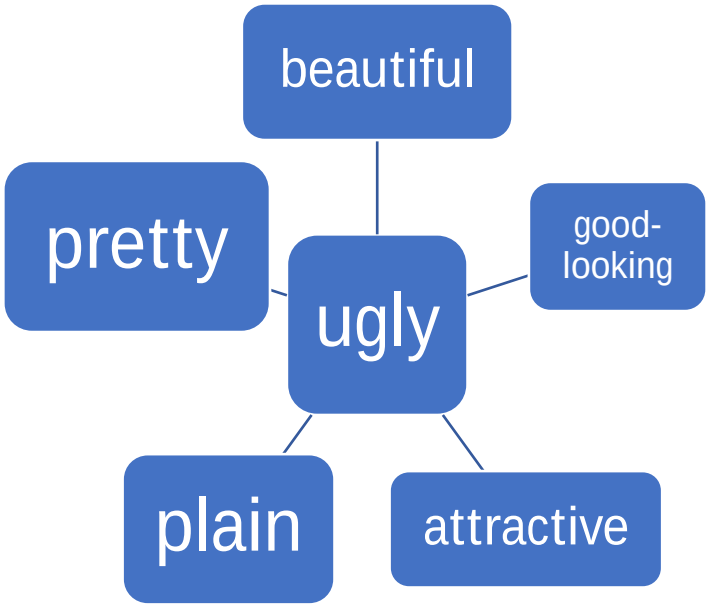


Similarly, a wide range of opposite adjectives to the word **different** such as *conventional, same, normal, similar, uniform* is recorded in Chambers Pocket Thesaurus,1992.

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The adjective **slow** is referred as being antonymous with a considerable number of adjectives, including *fast, rapid, active, quick, swift* [Chambers Pocket Thesaurus,1992].



A noticeable number of adjectives such as *beautiful, good-looking, pretty, plain, attractive* form parallel antonymic pairs with the adjective **ugly** [Chambers Pocket Thesaurus,1992].

Many other examples may be added to the list. At this point, its teachers' duty to provide a satisfactory account on the complexity of establishing semantic polarity to polysemous words and to provide rich supplies of specific examples on how different meanings of the same multi sense word can be related in several remarkable ways to other word and set up distinguishable antonymic pairs as the one listed above. As most of the antonyms are adjective and verbs, the provision and the inclusion of the other element of the pair might result as an effective step especially to young learners.

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Lipka calls the traditional lexical relation of antonymy "oppositeness of meaning" and distinguishes three different types of antonyms respectively complementary, converses, gradable antonyms [Lipka 1992,145]. As these sense relations are defined based on logical relationships these types of binary oppositions do present a considerable degree of difficulty while interpreting and then while teaching for the methodical purposes of vocabulary acquisition. It is worth examining these relations in greater depth as they may help to highlight the difficulties students sometimes experience if they are asked the ubiquitous question What is the opposite of…

3.1 Complementarity

It can be illustrated by pairs of words such as **male and female** or **single and married**. These are forms of antonyms which truly represent oppositeness of meaning. They cannot be graded and if one of the pair is applicable than the other cannot be. This means that the denial of one implies the assertion of the other and vice versa. They are said to be mutually exclusive, and this type of opposition is based on a yes or no decision. [Lipka 1992, 146]. This is a clear-cut area of oppositeness and a "safe" one for every common teacher question or provided task especially with elementary students especially considering the traditional questions ***What is the opposite of…?*** or ***Give the opposites to the following words***

3.2 Converses

Another type of oppositeness which would bring about another controversial issue to be considered in English classes is the existence of certain pairs of opposite lexical items characterized by relational oppositeness such as: ***husband and wife- above- below, doctor-patient, teacher-student, precede-follow***, ***before-after, in fort of-behind*** the nature of oppositeness is reciprocal. They can be as mirror-images relations or functions. There is also a parallel to antonyms in the comparative form, and thus ***bigger than*** is equivalent to ***smaller than.***

As noticed above, we cannot ask the students to give the "opposite" of the lexical items. Where there are many cases when the techniques of asking the opposite would be explicit and effective, there are obviously cases, especially where no context is given, when confusion can arise.

With converses the following technique may be acceptable especially with transformation sentences as in the examples below-

John and Marry are Ben's parents so John and Marry are…..

Jim is Anna's husband, so Anna is….

John bought the car form Bill so…

James is my doctor, so I am…

3.3 Antonymy (Gradable antonyms)

Teachers should also emphasise the need for further interpretation for pairs of antonyms such as ***good/bad/ big/small, high/ low, love\hate, hot\cold*** where only the second one of the above-mentioned relationships of implication or (entailment) holds. This type of oppositeness is also termed as "polar opposition". The assertion of one member of the pair does not imply the negation of the other, but not vice-versa. [Lipka 1992, 145] **John is good** implies that **John is not bad.** But **John is not good** does not imply that **John is bad**. And what is more the difficulty increases from the fact that English lexicon has elaborated an almost limitless number of synonyms learners can benefit from, but this rich supply can sometimes multiply students' difficulties in setting up correct semantic relations between the "right" word to be selected. For example, as far as the word **bad** is concerned Chamber Pocket Thesarus 1992 has collected 85 synonyms to this lexical item, ranging from **damaging** to **criminal,** which could be at times, potentially approachable as "semantically contradicting" the adjective **good.**

Let us probe into the insight of two other adjectives semantic values. **The water is not hot** does not imply that the water is cold. However, from **the water is cold** the negation **the water is not hot** follows. Oxford Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms 2007 has displayed three opposites for the word **hot**, respectively ***cold, mild, weak*** and three for the word **cold**, ***hot, mild and warm.*** Following the previously stated logical assumption, the choice of all the options may be considered as plausible,

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unless we as teachers do not reinforce the need for a full understanding of the situation and context which in a yielded ground would determine the choice of the adjective to constitute the antonymic pair.

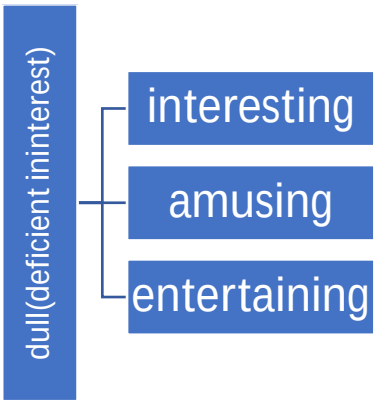
Similarly, if we compare these two sentences: ***Sue's house is big*** and ***Mary's house is small*** a logical question that may arise is: Are **big** and **small** opposites Most of the teachers might use opposition to these two antonymic pairs but are these two units opposite as ***male and female.*** In the first place Sues' house might be "*relatively big"* compared to its old house, compared to how many people live there, her income or her status. Mary's house may be "*relatively small"* in the light of the same factors. Mary and Sue may live in the same identical house, but the sentences are subjective and dependent on people's perception and opinion. Once more, a careful, detailed inquiry on situation and context-based use of these words, would facilitate students' decisions and help them approaching the selection of opposites form a different angle, apart from indispensably choosing the polar binary level of contrast following the strict already given traditional suggestions.

Another important linguistic difference of antonyms from complementary is that antonyms are always *fully gradable*, which should be considered of a special interest and consideration form the part of the teachers. They may consider providing and sharing with their students, designed schemes of scale of values that might include some of related adjectives as the one designated in the following example.



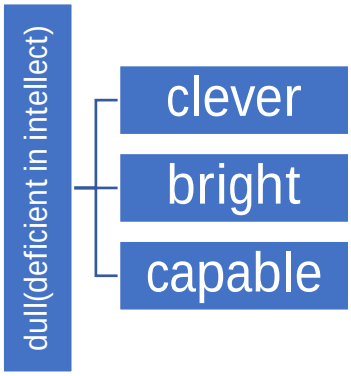
Students must be taught that there is an evident difference between ***huge*** and ***tiny*** and several alternative options, (mild and moderate ones) to denote the degree of amount from les to more without necessarily pointing at the adjectives conveying the extreme polar level of contradictory.

On the other hand, a polysemantic word may have an antonym or several antonyms for each of its meanings as in the following examples. At this point there is a call forth a direct deduction of polysemous words' semantic structure and a carefully paid attention to the grids that may be established among words' diverse derived meanings and respective oppositional counterparts that may be created. The following example clearly demonstrates and clarifies the stated complexity.

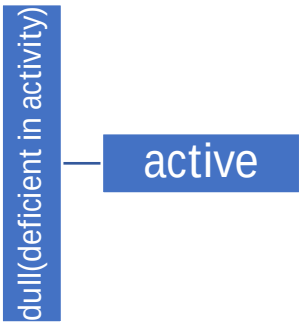


As being a polysemous word, the adjective **dull** when used with the meaning *being deficient in interest* can constitute antonymic pairs, respectively with the adjectives ***interesting, amusing*** and **entertaining** [Oxford Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms, 2007]

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Due to the complexity of the semantic structure, the same adjective has acquired the meaning "*deficient in intellect*" and when in context used with this sense, the following pairs of antonyms may be established; ***dull-clever, dull-bright, dull-capable*** [Oxford Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms, 2007]

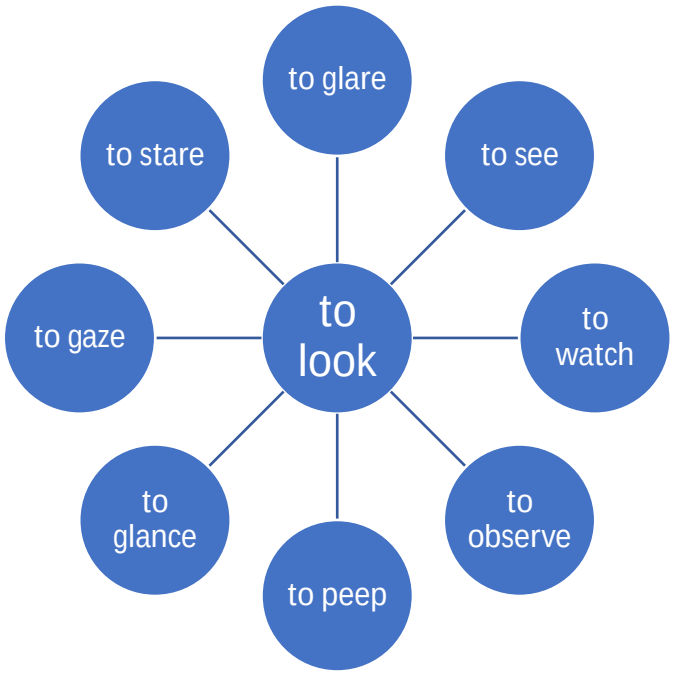


As far as the meaning "*deficient in activity*" is conceived, there is another word contributing on the constitution of the antonymic pair, the adjective **active** [Oxford Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms, 2007]

As sense relations can be used as alternative ways of conveying the meaning of a word in teaching English as a foreign language some means of explanation and clarification of the meanings are listed as below.

a-Introducing synonymic lines as to extend and empower students' vocabulary can also provide a satisfactory achievement. Teachers may use **association network**, drawing a diagram centred on the synonymic dominant. Students are supposed to add as many synonyms as possible, compare their network to the other students and the teacher can draw it and wait for students' suggestions to complete it. The same technique can be used for antonymic pairs.

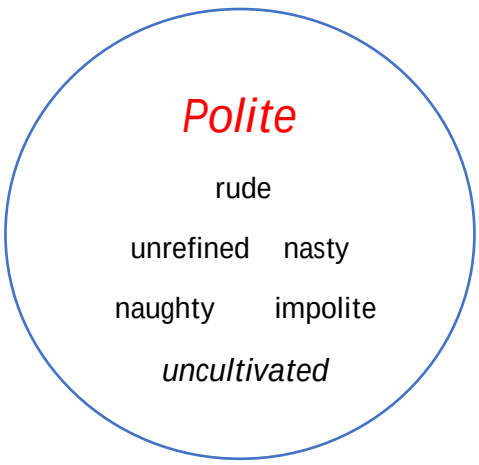
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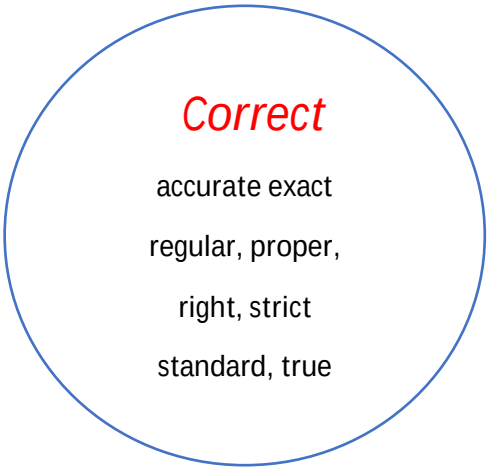


As displayed in the diagram, the verb "to look" can in several, diverse ways be sense related as being a synonym to the extended line of verbs such as ***to glare, to see, to watch, to observe, to peep, to glance, to gaze, to stare.***

b-Peer teaching. The teacher can give to each of the students in a group a card with the meaning of the words explained by a different synonym. Students should study the word silently. Then the teacher gives to gives to the group a task for example a **story-construction activity** or **a short narrative** which involves using the words. To do the task each of the student would have to explain the other members of the group the words that they have just studied.

c-Word pair race is a matching task which involves first recognizing words than pairing them with a synonym or antonym. In five minutes write as possible synonyms or antonyms to this word.





As an illustrating example introduced in the above diagram, an overwhelming number of synonymic items among which we could mention ***accurate, exact, regular, proper, right, strict, standard, true*** can be associated to the adjective **correct.** Similarly, as presented in the example above, to the already recognized adjective **polite,** the adjectives ***rude, unrefined, nasty, naughty, impolite*** and ***uncultivated*** are said to be antonyms and can be added as alternatives to complete the chart. [Chambers Pocket Thesaurus,1992]

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d-Pelmanism is a memory game. Word pairs are placed face down. Players, in turns, pick up a card and look for its partner. If they correctly locate the partner, they keep the pair, and have another turn.

e-For vocabulary building purposes, texts- whether written or spoken- have enormous advantages over leaning words form the list. Thornbury in his book How to teach vocabulary emphasises points out that "the fact that words are in context increases the chances of learners appreciating not only their meaning but their typical environments, such as their associated collocations" [Thornbury 2002, 53]. Different kinds of texts(genres) are likely to display different lexical and sematic features. It goes without saying that **short literary texts** offer various multiple possibilities for vocabulary development. Writers and poets can only enrich the network of word associations for the learner.

f-Gap-filling either open or closed and **multiple-choice task** can be used as production tasks to test the appropriate use of both synonyms and antonyms.

Synonyms and antonyms can also be used as sustainable ways of converting the meaning of a new word by using other words. The meaning and use of both indicators of semantic relations can be clarified in different ways, among which we could mention

1-situational presentations (providing a scenario which contextualises the target word/words and their possible clarification by using synonyms or antonyms)

2-example sentences (providing a typical instance of the target word in context)

3-dictionaries (either monolingual or thematic dictionaries offer to both teachers and learners a reliable convincing source they should rely on)

5. Conclusion

Modern English lexicon is characterised by an immense and profound corpus of synonyms and antonyms which contribute to the generation of diverse, vivid, effective possibilities of lexical choice and ample purely natural means of expression. Exploiting semantic relations as part of language processing might directly contribute at moulding students grounding and empowering their ability to use language at its depth. Teaching synonyms and antonyms is one of the most evident challenges foreign language teachers and learners can face. Exploring new ways and investigating novel perspectives through more upgraded teaching strategies and techniques, would help learners and teachers succeed in this process.

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APPLICATION OF FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN PRISHTINA UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

Examining the evaluation process and the items used to evaluate students is crucial. For student evaluations, teachers are either staying with more traditional methods that need significantly less commitment than present methods, or they are adopting more modern alternatives. The purpose of this research is to find out whether and how Kosovo's student teaching content is evaluated. Thus, the study focuses on identifying various types of test designs that are employed to determine their effectiveness. The goal of this study is to improve teaching and learning by offering reliable information on evaluation. The results display that most teachers are trained to use summative methods, and occasionally formative methods are implemented. The information gathered also reveals that the application of particular strategies by teachers is significantly influenced by their age, length of service, and attendance at training. The results show that older teachers tend to use summative assessments. whereas younger educators use formative strategies.

Keywords: evaluation, training, teacher development, formative and summative, and conventional strategies of assessment

1. Introduction

Assessment is defined as a systematic collection of data which refers to the knowledge of the student, checking out and using the educational program to improve the student's knowledge and ability to learn new things over time. The assessment process begins by gathering different sources to try to understand what students know from their educational experience. This process is useful as the results of such assessments help to improve the learning process. Students are involved in this process at the same time. The process provides information and achievements for the progress of this process which indicates the directives for teaching and learning. The deciding factor for this research topic was the role of teachers in this process and the students' roles in the evaluation of outcomes. Assessment is an integral part of the learning process. Learning style, strength and needs can be reached by a good assessment. This process is flexible and reflects the achievements of students. Effective assessment can be developed over time and is diversified in its approach. It is important to know that this assessment is not an extra activity, but necessary within the learning process, with the focus on the teacher. Assessment is part of the everyday learning process.

This assessment can take place at any moment, not only at the end of a thematic unit or semester. Assessment should not only be followed in a numerical order, but students should have the freedom to give suggestions for their progress in overcoming the difficulties they face. Teachers have to involve their students in this process, to encourage them, to work in teams, include them in debates, and discussions, and allow them to show themselves. Creating a speaking culture is important because its average in our environment is very low. Students should be encouraged by their teachers to be active in class, to learn from each other, and to let them discover what they need starting from the needs of a modern society. Consequently, the assessment can encourage the student in the process of learning. The

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assessment is a critical part of the differentiated learning process and assists in effective strategies and activities. Traditionally, it is accepted that assessment should occur at the end of the class, when in fact, this is not true. Assessment should take place throughout the class. Once it is decided what students should learn, we should also determine the evaluation of the learning within the instructional content.

Clarifying our motivations for the assessment will make it easier to determine which specific techniques are most appropriate for our goals and who is most qualified to conduct it, as well as when and where to perform it (Race et al., 2005). The development of students should be understood and monitored. Their testing and assessment have to be all-purposed. Traditional assessment is simple and widely criticized. An integral part of teaching and learning in schools is traditional assessment. Each activity consists of special procedures in order to evaluate student progress. The most difficult 'moral' duty for each teacher is the assessment of students. When teachers grade their students, they use a consistent pattern that is widely disputed. Using assessment outside of the traditional model is the focus of this research.

1.1. Research problem

When formative assessment is used, pupils' growth and progress must be continuously monitored; knowledge must not only be evaluated after the assessment process. The intellectual, psycho-physical, and social-emotional domains of pupils' growth are all covered by this type of qualitative assessment. It is the teacher's responsibility to carry out pedagogical documentation, which includes gathering information about individual student growth. Summative assessments, on the other hand, are designed to evaluate students' learning after an educational unit or school semester. They can take the shape of a test (such as a midterm exam), paper, or final project. Both theoretical and practical implications arise from this research. Theoretical significance is demonstrated by how all components of the various assessment methods are integrated, facts, scientific knowledge, and research findings are gathered, and integrated into a single system, and the significance of using these methods in the student assessment process is highlighted. Analyzing the existence and use of various methods in the assessment process, as well as differences in teacher attitudes, upbringing and educational practices, and pointing out the significance of the individualization principle—which is best realized through the formative assessment method—as well as class teachers' attitudes and preconceptions regarding the value of other assessment methods—aside from the traditional one—all demonstrate practical importance. The significance of the research is further increased by the lack of evidence supporting the existence of any previous studies addressing issues on the application of all methodologies in the assessment process in elementary and high schools located within the boundaries of Prishtina, Kosovo.

1.2. The research subject

The viewpoints of educators regarding different approaches to assessment during the teaching process, individual differences in implementation, and understanding of the importance of employing different approaches when evaluating pupils are the focus of this study. This study aims to examine instructors' attitudes to determine whether there are differences in beliefs on the possible results of various approaches to student assessment during the educational process. It is crucial to let teachers know about the potential and significance of the improvements that could be observed in students' performance and final grades if a variety of assessment techniques were employed. The viewpoints of educators regarding different approaches to assessment during the teaching process, individual differences in implementation, and understanding of the importance of employing different approaches when evaluating pupils are the focus of this study. The purpose of this study is to examine instructors' attitudes to determine whether there are differences in beliefs on the possible results of various approaches to student assessment during the educational process. It is crucial to let teachers know about the potential and significance of the improvements that could be observed in students' performance and final grades if a variety of assessment techniques were employed. The viewpoints of educators regarding different approaches to assessment during the teaching process, individual differences in implementation, and understanding of the importance of employing different approaches when

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evaluating pupils are the focus of this study. This study aims to examine instructors' attitudes to determine whether there are differences in beliefs on the possible results of various approaches to student assessment during the educational process. It is crucial to let teachers know about the potential and significance of the improvements that could be observed in students' performance and final grades if a variety of assessment techniques were employed. Additionally, this study will clarify the role that individualization plays in current assessment practices and the significance of this idea for educators in general.

1.3. Research objectives

1. To what extent do teaching and assessing content match?
2. What learning assessment mode is generally used and how reliable is it?
3. To what extent does the learning assessment consider other factors?
4. To what extent are teachers aware of the variety of learning assessments?

1.4. Research Hypothesis:

The following is the primary hypothesis that the entire study is based on.:

H1: The following factors are taken into consideration when doing an assessment: teachers' age, their experience, the number of pupils in their class, their training in assessment techniques, and their conviction that a specific methodology is more effective than another.

H2: Teachers who participate in assessment seminars and trainings where all assessment modalities are equally emphasized stick with the more conventional modalities of assessment.

H3: Students believe that their teachers evaluate them using the conventional approach.

2. Literature review

Assessment is a significant part of teaching. Imagine it as a phase, stage, or process of teaching that can be applied throughout the year or the unit. The assessment focuses on a well-organized class and through this process, satisfactory levels can be reached. Over the years the educational system has changed. Rowntree says, "If we wish to discover the truth about an educational system, we must look into its assessment procedures." (Rowntree D et al., 1987). He continues to explain that these procedures answer the following questions: "What student qualities and achievements are actively valued and rewarded by the system? How are its purposes and intentions realized? To what extent are the hopes and ideals, aims and objectives professed by the system ever truly perceived, valued and striven for by those who make their way within it? . Next to planning, grading student work is probably the most time-consuming aspect of teaching. Yet assessment is essential if we are to hold students accountable for their learning. Measuring student achievement also serves another vital purpose. The information gathered when student work is graded helps us to know if we have done *our job* in teaching the skills and information we are assessing. (Naegle et al., 2002). Assessment, as a part of the teaching process, can be affected by the following elements; preparation, applying the lecture content, repetition, exercises, and checking. Additional parts of this process are the introduction, and the main part (processing, repetitions, exercises, and assessment). It is very important that given tasks are fulfilled and these tasks are; material tasks – acquisition of the necessary knowledge, skill and ability development; instructional goals, such as adopting values, and functional tasks, which are the application of knowledge. Students who complete material tasks have a broader perspective on the world and are more equipped to face life with the knowledge, abilities, and habits they have learned. Students are getting used to the environments which surround them. In addition, they have to develop their skills and abilities and this can be achieved through formal or functional tasks as a process related to their psycho-physical development. This is related to their reflective, sensory, verbal, practical and physical development. They learn, live, and achieve success within their life situations. This helps to develop their opinions and thoughts. Absolutism is the most important part of the teaching process as Herbart and Pestalozzi have claimed.

Material and formal tasks play an important role in the learning process. When the quality of the school is in question it can mean one is missing and can cause issues within the learning process. Educational tasks are important because they assist in developing what is good for their life and society.

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Educational task results might be reached thanks to the social interactions and this helps them to take an active role in their own lives. Children have an acquisition process with which they are taught discipline and moral norms code. In the classroom, there should be concrete activities for the goals and objectives for necessary achievement to be reached. Students may progress when objectives are met. They should know what is required of them, how they can progress only if they know what the expectations are, and how they can obtain and develop their skills. If the assessment is used to achieve necessary levels of knowledge it is important to know what is being assessed, how it will be assessed, what is expected from the student, and what is required to develop a specific skill. In the classroom, some changes should be made to follow the reforms of the education system when it is necessary. Changes can be applied due to the following reforms; dissatisfaction of students with the education curriculum, society development and changing values in society, democracy development and respect for human rights, change of role of teachers, applying new teaching methods, and respecting the needs of the student. This proves that the system of education is innovative and has a purpose.

The Ministry of Education and other institutions deal with education and within this education system a strategic plan is set, indicating what exactly has to be achieved. It is important to develop programs that strengthen the capacity of teachers, formative assessments, trainings related to assessments, improvement of education in the class, and assessment learning for teachers. Glasser (1994) in his book "Quality School - Managing students without coercion" expressed his opinions about grades. The students who make a good beginning can achieve a high grade but those who postpone his/her achievement cannot receive a higher grade. This means starting to study later cannot assist much in improving grades. Receiving a grade of 5 is important for everyone but it cannot be the primary motivation to learn and progress. It is important that the student study with an interest in the topic. Often grades are accepted as punishment. This cannot be accepted. Grades should not create stress in students. The task of the assessment is not to give grades but to encourage the student to work harder and to dedicate him/herself to developing his/her knowledge. High grades can empower students but poor grades should not create impassion and should motivate them to work harder. In addition to assessing students, teachers should also assess themselves. As Naegle cites, "In some ways, your student's grades are your grades. You are the one who taught them the information and skills being assessed. Their success is your success." (Naegle et al., 2002). Assessment cannot be independent as a teaching method. For effective teaching, these methods have to be used. Assessment is also important for the self-assessment process with a given criteria. That is how teachers and the students will have subjectivity. For the assessment to be realistic and objective a special branch of psychology, dealing with the factors that affect the assessment and the methods of training the system of assessment was developed. The concept of docimology, as well as term itself, was first used by Henri Pieron in 1922. We find it in his vocabulary Vocabulaire de la psychology, I edition, 1951. In one of his works from 1963, Pieron includes the name of this new discipline in the title Examen ET docimologie. Constructing the title of this discipline (using the Greek terms docime and docimazo), H. Pieron considered docimology to be one of the branches (disciplines) of modern pedagogy. (Gojkov et al., 2003).

In their book "Assessment of Student Development, A Teachers' Guide" Havelka, Habib, Baucal (2003) clearly described every principle that was worth mentioning to facilitate the process of assessment. According to them, principles are general, though some of them bring to the forefront the needs of students while others focus on teachers' expectations. *In short, the principles are:*

Indicate that the assessment is part of the effective planning of teaching and learning, critical activity in the classroom and special professional skill of a successful teacher;

Highlight the question of how students learn, the importance of supporting students' progress, the impact on motivation, emotion, and self-esteem of students;

Help the assessment become a factor that explores the goals of learning and the criteria for evaluating learning outcomes, the factor that develops students' ability for self-assessment and an activity that should cover the whole range of students' achievement.

Principle 1: Assessment is part of the planning of the teaching and learning process.(ii) Assessment is included in all activities in the classroom.; (iii) Assessment is one of the key professional skills of teachers; (iv) The assessment focuses on the question: How do students learn?: (v) During the

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process of assessment, the teacher gives the students specific suggestions on how to more effectively use their learning potential;(vi) Assessment encourages the development of students' motivation'(vii) assessment should be careful and constructive support to students because it always uses awakens different emotions' (viii) Assessment advances students' interest in the goals of learning and criteria against which their progress is evaluated; (ix)Assessment develops students' ability for self-assessment so that they can independently monitor and evaluate their performance. (x) Assessment should include the full range of student achievement. Assessment should advance a student's ability to learn in all areas of academic work. It should enable all students to achieve their fullest potential and to respect their efforts and achievements. In the pre-university education system in Kosovo, the principles of assessment are determined by the Administrative Instruction of the MEST Ethics Code for Student Assessment. According to this code, six basic principles of assessment should be respected by educational institutions:

1. Respect for the law and the principles.
2. Respect for individuals, their rights and individual differences.
3. Equal justice and fairness for all in the application of rules and procedures of student assessment.
4. Highest standards of integrity in all aspects of the assessment process.
5. Accuracy in gathering information about students' achievements and their reporting.
6. Promotion of the highest standards of behavior and achievement of learning all the time (MEST).

Nowadays, a man spends a significant portion of his time at school. Certain states have already established the minimal requirements for a twelve-year obligatory education in public or private educational establishments that are authorized to interface with the public. According to Diaz-Rico (2012), assessment is the beginning of instruction. A teacher can begin teaching at the right place when they have a reliable evaluation of the learner's present knowledge base. In addition to updating parents, guardians, and other interested parties on the student's progress, it provides educators with information about the needs and strengths of their pupils, enabling them to position and instruct them correctly. Assessments shouldn't be limited to assigning students to classes and creating remediation plans. Its finest application is as a crucial component of education to enhance students' knowledge and skills. (Diaz et al.2012). Therefore, as a variable in school curricula, the method of student monitoring and assessment is always searching for critical reassessments and solutions that will work for the achievement of educational goals, which again, will not jeopardize the health and chances of full life success (optimal realization of each individual's abilities). Research in this field looks for ways to include extracurricular activities into school curricula that will, in terms of pedagogy, better prepare future educators to be therapists, implementers, evaluators, and diagnosticians. Teachers will only be prepared and trained in this manner, enabling them to oversee and control the intricate process of teaching pupils.

Given all of these detrimental consequences that subpar evaluations may have on a student's life beyond school, educators should make every effort to be fair and accurate in their assessments of their pupils (Saginor et al., 2008) presents some of the characteristics that make a successful process of assessment. Many assessment activities provide both formative and summative information (Cameron et al., 2001), that's why according to a report from the Department of Research, Assessment and Assessment (Number 1, November 6, 2008) many educators don't know the most important difference between the two of them. Chappuis and Chappuis (2007/2008) consider that the major difference between the formative and summative assessment stands in the aim of the assessment and how the results will be used. In other words, it is necessary to be clear as to the primary purpose and use of an assessment because this can affect what kind of information the activity needs to produce (Cameron et al., 2001).

Below there is a table regarding the characteristics of both formative and summative assessment, adapted from McMillan, 2007 (McKay et al., 2006).

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Characteristic	*Formative Assessment*	*Summative Assessment*
Purpose	Provide ongoing feedback to improve learning	record the knowledge that the students have gained.
Student Involvement	Encouraged	Disappointed
Student Motivation	Intrinsic, mastery-oriented	external, performance-focused
Teacher Role	To provide immediate, specific feedback and instructional correctives	To assess student learning and assign grades
Assessment techniques	Informal	Official
Effect on Learning	Strong, positive, and long-lasting	record the knowledge that the students have gained.

Table 1 Characteristics of formative and summative assessment

Formative assessment is an assessment of prior knowledge and knowledge adopted during the teaching process. It is an ongoing, usually informal assessment, during teaching and learning (McKay et al., 2006). Its results provide feedback to students and teachers about which part of the material was learned well and where further work is required. This is the starting point for further teaching and learning. In other words, it is an assessment method that has to do with monitoring performance, process, and progress, and provides feedback for improvement. As seen from above, teachers can learn about their students' performance through formative evaluation. Teachers make constant decisions about how to respond based on students' responses or students. The outcomes of formative assessments most interest teachers, as the information gathered aids in their decision-making regarding future instruction. Formative assessment often involves *diagnostic assessment*, when teachers analyze learners' specific strengths and weaknesses. (McKay et al., 2006). Diagnostic assessment aims to uncover the cognitive, physical, emotional, and social causes of students' problems, strengths and weaknesses of teaching to define the corrective techniques. *Observation* is one of the most useful assessment techniques used with students because it does not disturb them and allows them to be assessed in the process of ordinary classroom activities. Skilful teachers observe their students constantly and adjust their talk or their lesson activities to take into account the feedback they get from observation. (Cameron et al, 2001). Observations can be formal (miscue analyses) or informal such as anecdotal reports to record students' telling a story and a report. This assessment technique should be extended across all areas of the curriculum and in all types of interactional situations to show students' progress (Diaz et al., 2012).

The portfolio is a selective, systematic collection of students' work, reflection on that work and teachers' observations of the students' work. When portfolios are planned with assessment purposes in mind, the information is much more manageable and useful to both the teacher and the student (Brown et al., 1998). The advantage of the portfolio as a means of assessment is that it does not rely on how well the learner performs on a single day, as a test or examination does, but looks at their work over some time. A portfolio usually includes written work, such as research papers, case studies, personal essays, drawings, tests and exams, teacher's notes, self-assessment forms, etc. Because every portfolio is unique, each student is evaluated according to their standards. As portfolios are learner-centred and collaborative, they encourage the learner to become more involved in the learning process and develop an awareness of how to assess their progress (Cora et al., 2006)

Group work/Pair work is another important technique where students feel more relaxed and less stressed while working in group and pair work. Group/pair work as an assessment technique is useful because a) it provides opportunities to assess actual knowledge production, b) it matches with the pedagogical classroom practices, c) students feel relaxed and less threatened when assessed in groups or pairs, and d) such assessment can be much more efficient timewise than other techniques. However, this technique has its negative sides, for example, it may favor the more vocal students in class, while some students may not speak up at all when paired or grouped with others, leaving teachers little space to score them or give them any kind of feedback (Brown et al., 1998). ***Self-assessment and peer assessment*** the technique that requires students' full involvement. It is a reflective process in which students evaluate their work based on pre-set criteria (Beckman et al., 2006). The students, beside

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themselves, rate one another, preferably using rubrics, providing them additional opportunities to apply grading criteria to their work and discuss it with others, while using their metacognitive skills to plan, monitor and evaluate their efforts (Tico, 2013, p. 5)):

According to Cameron (2001) through self-assessment:

Students can understand more about the learning process;
Students can be motivated towards more involvement in their learning;
Teachers can understand more about individual students;
Students will be better prepared to carry on learning, beyond the classroom;
A more equal relationship is created between teachers and students (Cameron et al., 2001)

In Vygotskyan terms, a student who learns to assess his or her work moves from being 'other-regulated' to being 'self-regulated' or autonomous (Cameron et al., 2001)

Summative assessment may be based on results of internal or external tests or teacher's summative decisions after observations of the student's performance made during the year (McKay et al., 2006). Most people are probably far more familiar with this method as it is precisely this method of assessment that dominates traditional schools, resulting in campaign learning, orientation towards the grade rather than towards knowledge, appropriate access to learning, and in the selection of students, instead of encouraging them to more qualitative work. Usually conducted in the last few weeks of the school semester or school year, this method causes a lot of anxiety to students considering that the grades they receive are final and public, thus affecting their prospects. Therefore, as authors Biggs and Tang (2007) in their book "Teaching for Quality Learning" cite, at this stage of the teaching process, students are less keen to experiment with ideas and concepts, preferring to 'play it safe', giving the answers they believe are expected of them, and banking the marks provided. Techniques that are commonly used to collect data within the summative assessment are oral and written examinations, essay writing and testing (standardized measuring instruments).

Knowledge and understanding	*Oral assessment allows for probing students' understanding through follow-up questioning*
Problem-solving & Application	Oral assessment can be used to test students' ability to 'think on their feet through diagnosing problems in novel situations as they apply knowledge to scenarios provided
Interpersonal skills	Generic or transferable skills, including communication and interview skills in the context of professional situations, are well suited to measurement through oral assessment
Personal attributes	It is often claimed that oral assessment can be used to measure personal qualities such as alertness, reaction to stress, adaptability, self-awareness and self-confidence

Table 2. Kinds of knowledge and abilities for which oral examination is useful do not know, nothing else. Still, practice shows that testing as a tool for assessment is overly present at all educational levels throughout the world.

2.1. Assessment process in Kosovo

This study provides an overview of the assessment procedure used in Prishtina's pre-university schools. The general evaluation procedure was covered in the first chapter, and assessment techniques were covered in the second. However, to completely comprehend the Prishtina evaluation method, one must first examine the Kosovo education system, the changes that have occurred there, the consequences, and the training that instructors receive on the teaching/learning process, all of which are equally significant. Relevant, fundamental, and standard topics about Kosovo's assessment procedure will be covered through the subtitles that follow.

Kosovo's educational system

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The main tool used by society to get students ready for adulthood is education. Their lives are significantly impacted by the lessons they acquire throughout their school years, from early childhood education to graduation. The calibre of their results depends on several factors, including the curriculum, the expectations for them to learn, the way they were taught—that is, the experiences they had that allowed them to learn—how well they were supported during assessments, and—above all—how much their families, teachers, and communities encouraged them to learn. An essential goal for Kosovo society, as well as a challenge for its realization that takes into account all relevant aspects, is the start of the reform of the education system in general and the pre-university education system in particular. Reforms in the education system in Kosovo from 1999 onwards are characterized by the support of various international institutions. The structure of the pre-university education system in Kosovo includes preschool (3-6 years), primary education (grades 1-5), lower secondary education (grades 6-9) and upper secondary education (grades 10-12/13 - Gymnasium and vocational schools). Based on the legal framework in force, primary and secondary education in Kosovo is compulsory for all children in Kosovo.

3. Research methodology

A designed questionnaire has been provided to three primary target schools to gather information regarding the types of assessments that teachers use and may provide insights into the awareness of the importance of assessing what is being taught and how this is done. Such information is presented in the table after being processed with SPSS. Additionally, the questionnaire aims to reveal the environment where assessment and teaching take place. The respondents are all English teachers for sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth graders, as well as, individuals involved in assessment. The collected data are analyzed and shown on tables with SPSS so that the conclusion becomes more comprehensive and based on specific recommendations.

The research methodology employed in this work is:

Descriptive techniques:

- This approach will describe the research's problem and content.

The research will integrate theory and practice—that is, the application of theory in practice—by employing the modelling technique.

Comparative approach:

This approach will be utilized to compare the research's independent variables as well as its primary and secondary data. Analytical approach: To get the final results, this approach will examine the information gathered from the survey administered to primary school teachers in Prishtina, Kosovo. Method of surveying: - To gather the information included in this paper, a survey of primary school teachers will be conducted using this method. The British School of Kosova is a primary and lower secondary school that served as the research sample.".

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3.1. Analysis and interpretation of the research data

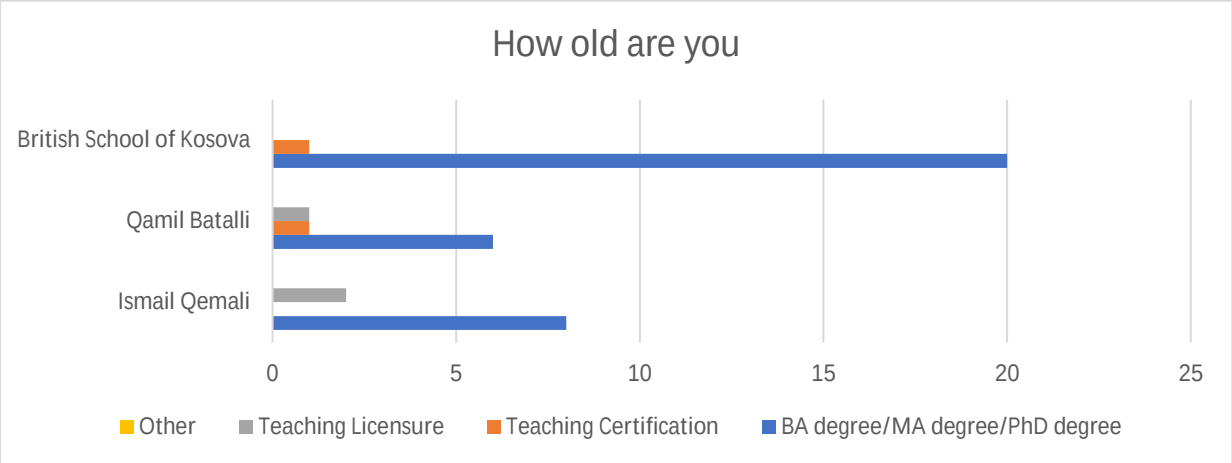


Figure 1. Age of subjects

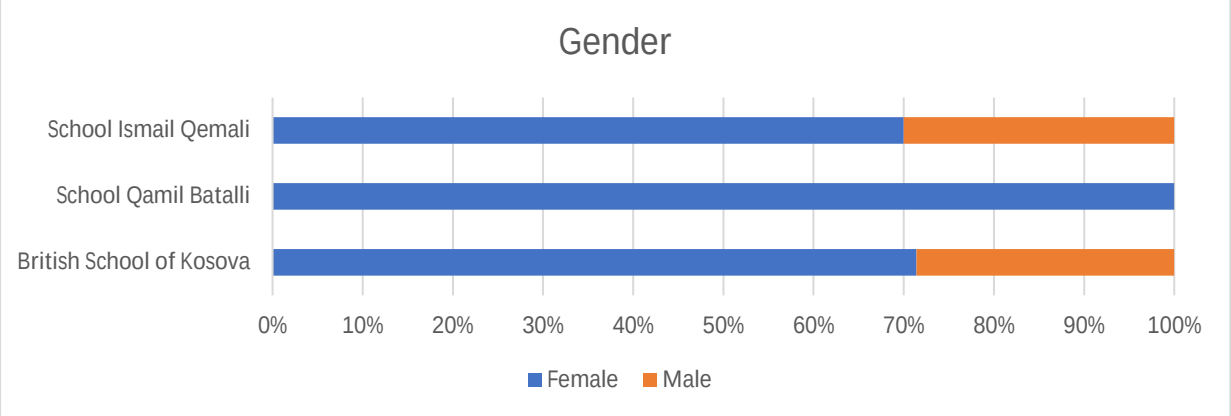


Figure 2. Gender of subjects

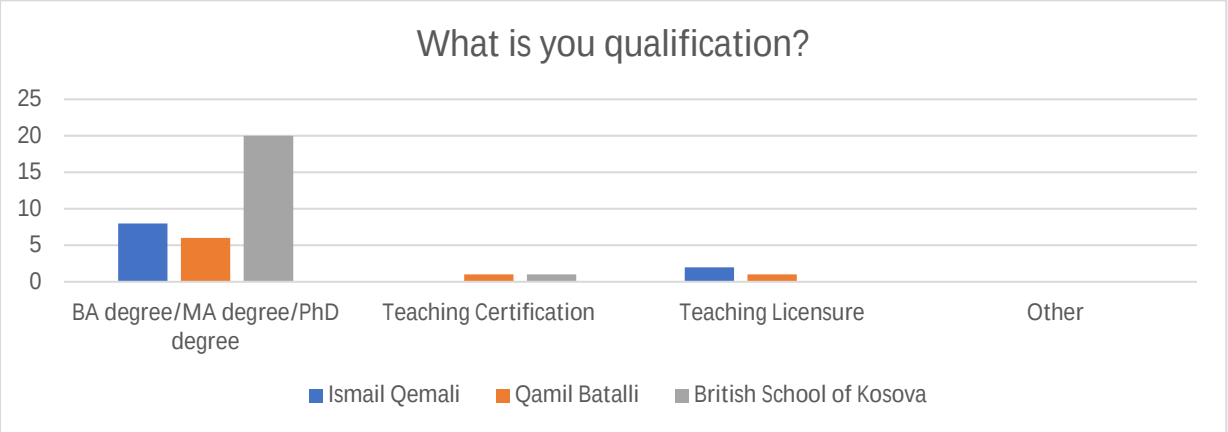


Figure 3. Qualification of subjects

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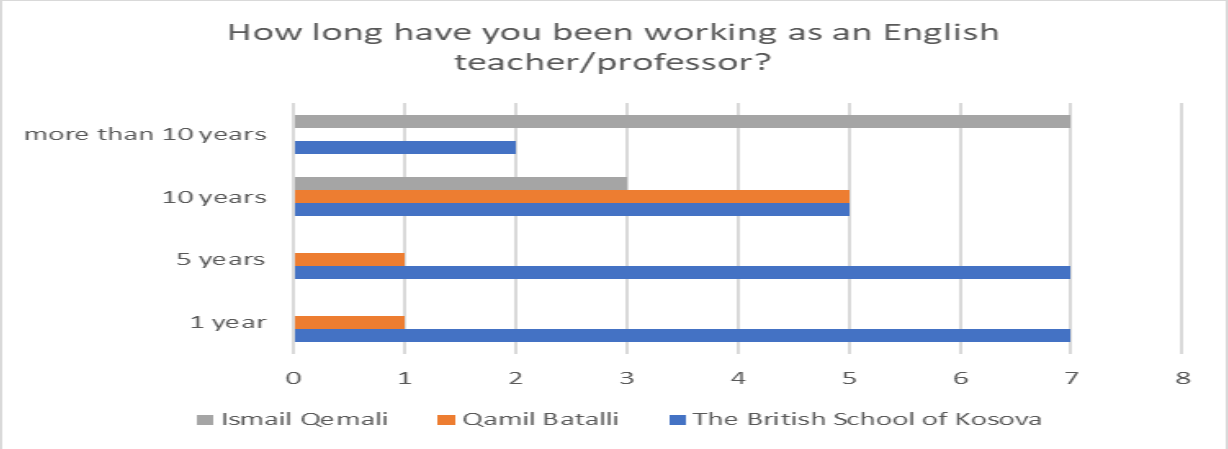


Figure 4. Work experience

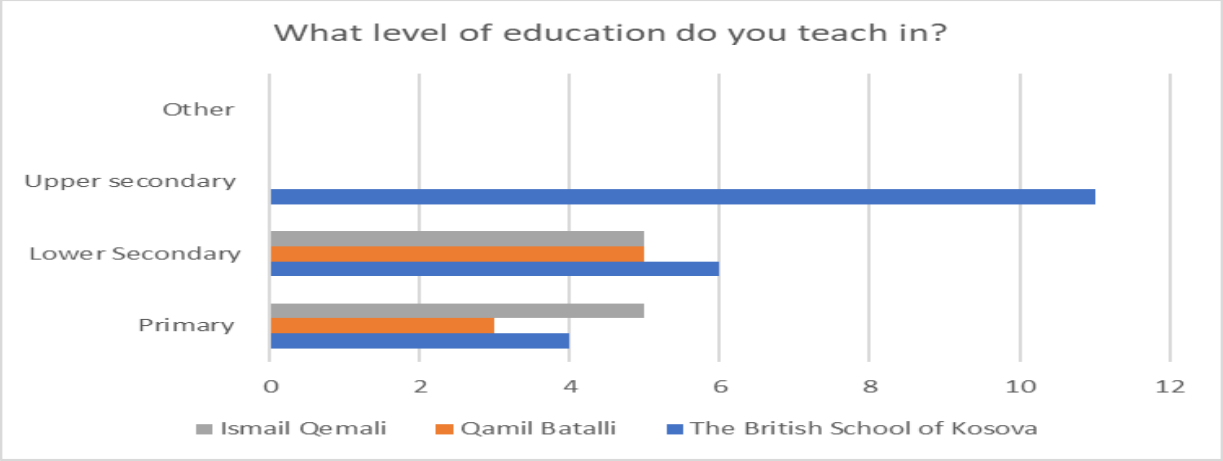


Figure 5. What educational level do you teach

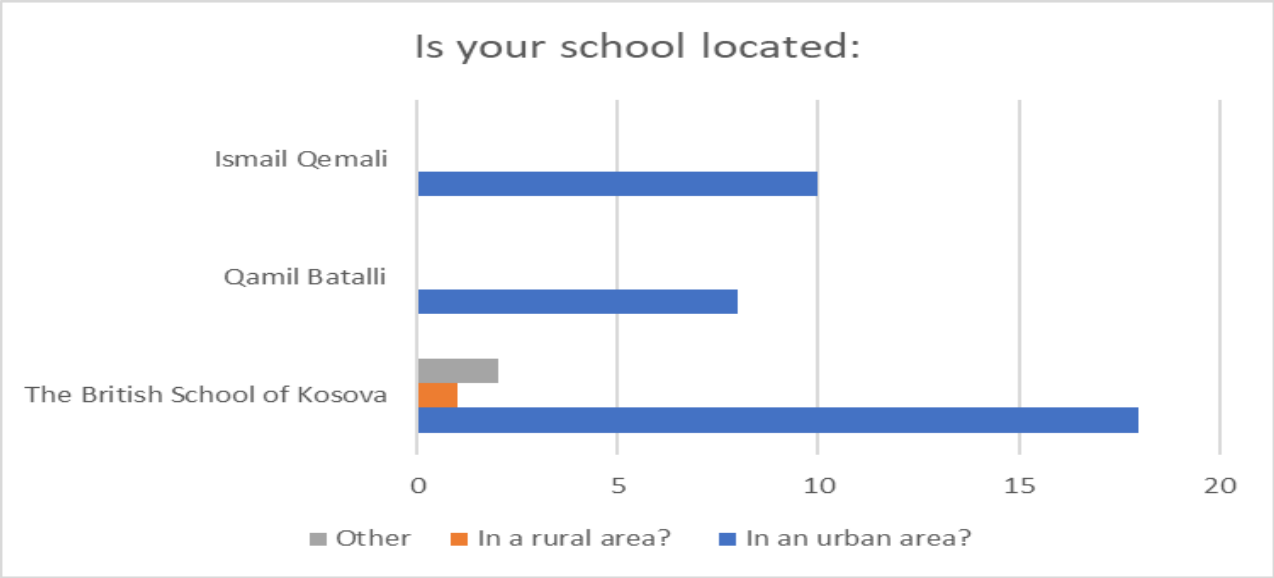


Figure 6. Location of the school

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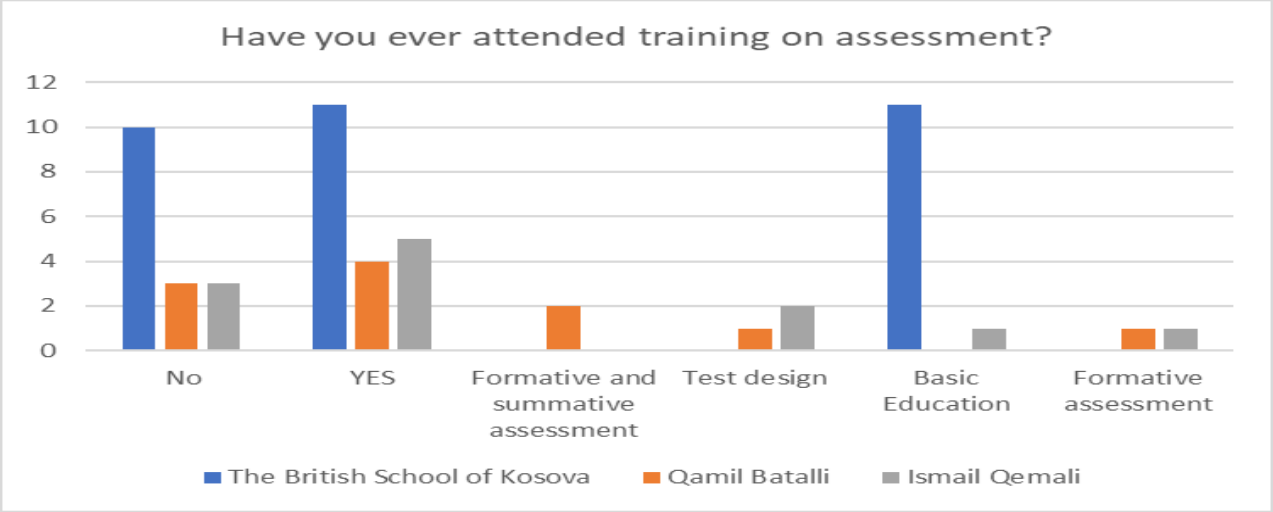


Figure 7. Training of the participants

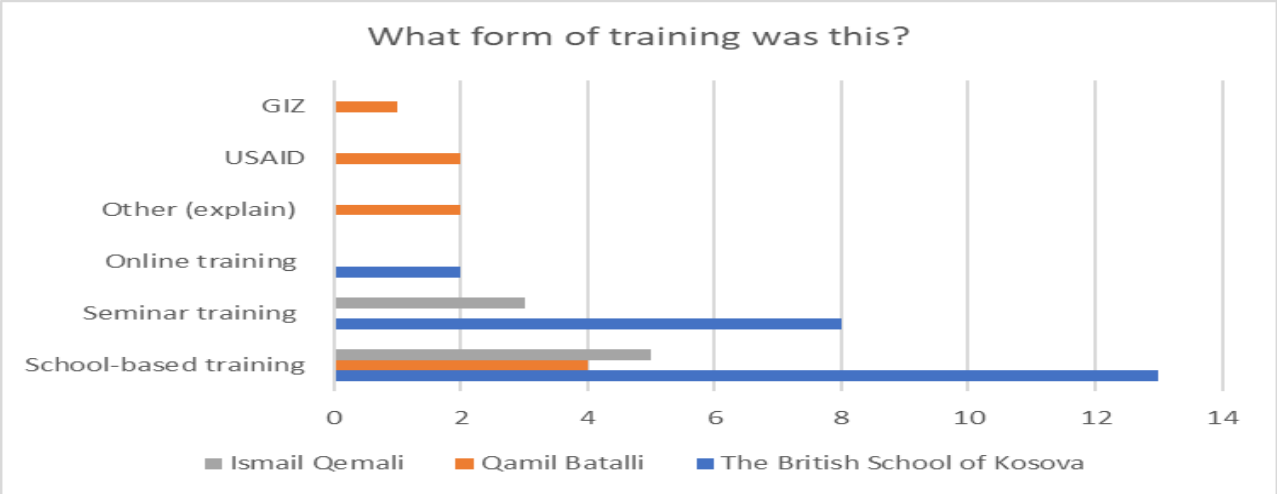


Figure 8. Training form of the participants

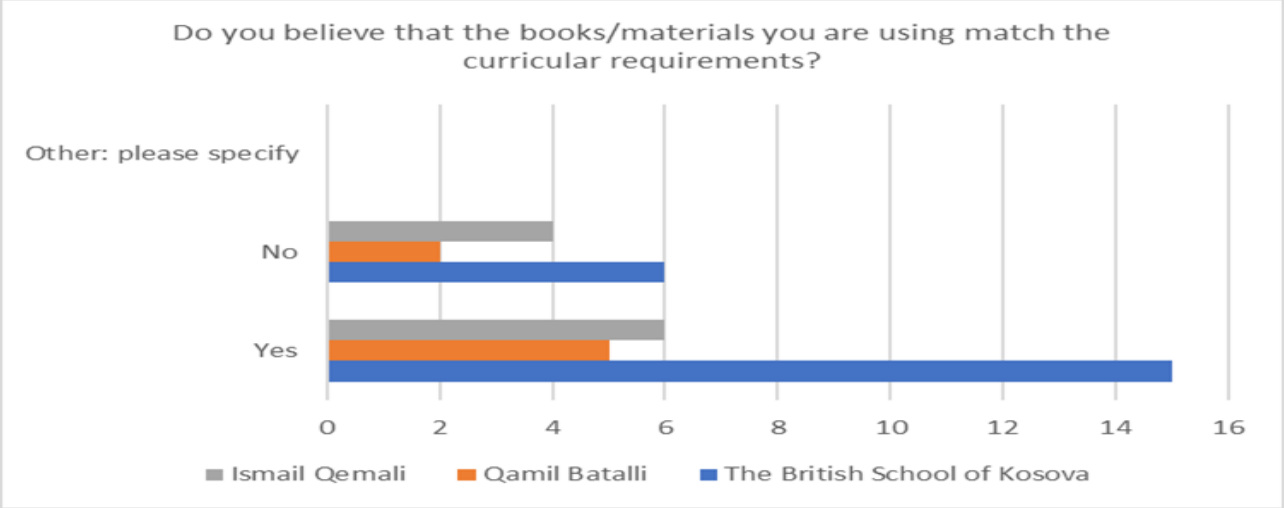


Figure 9. Learning materials assessment

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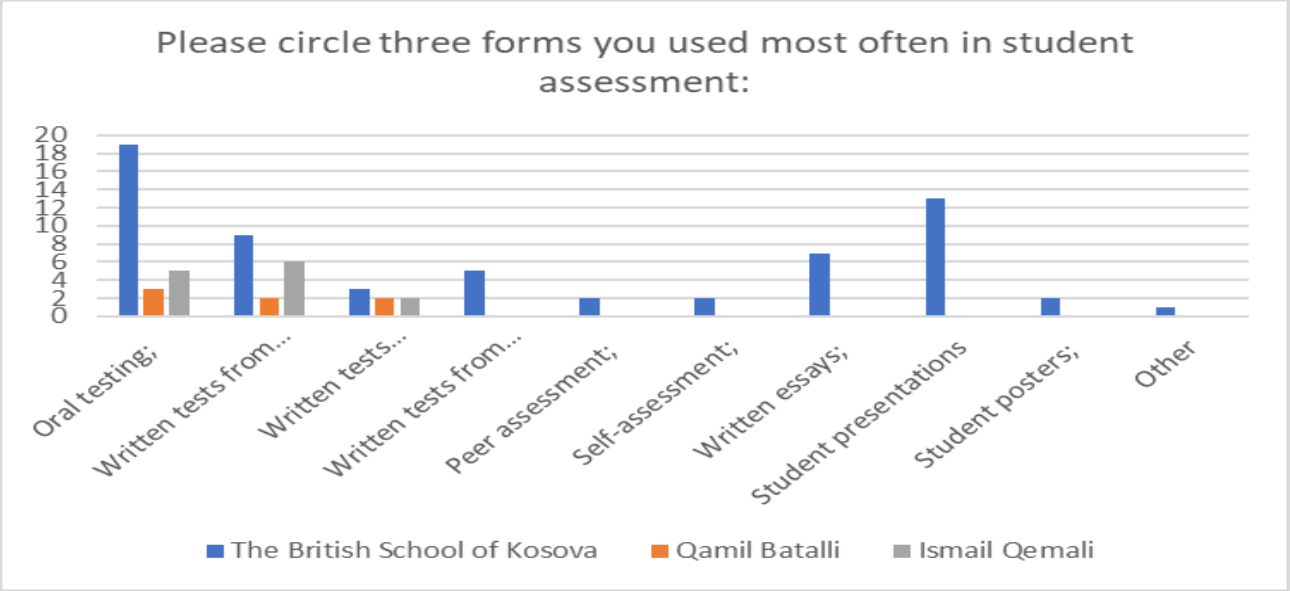


Figure 10. Forms for student assessment

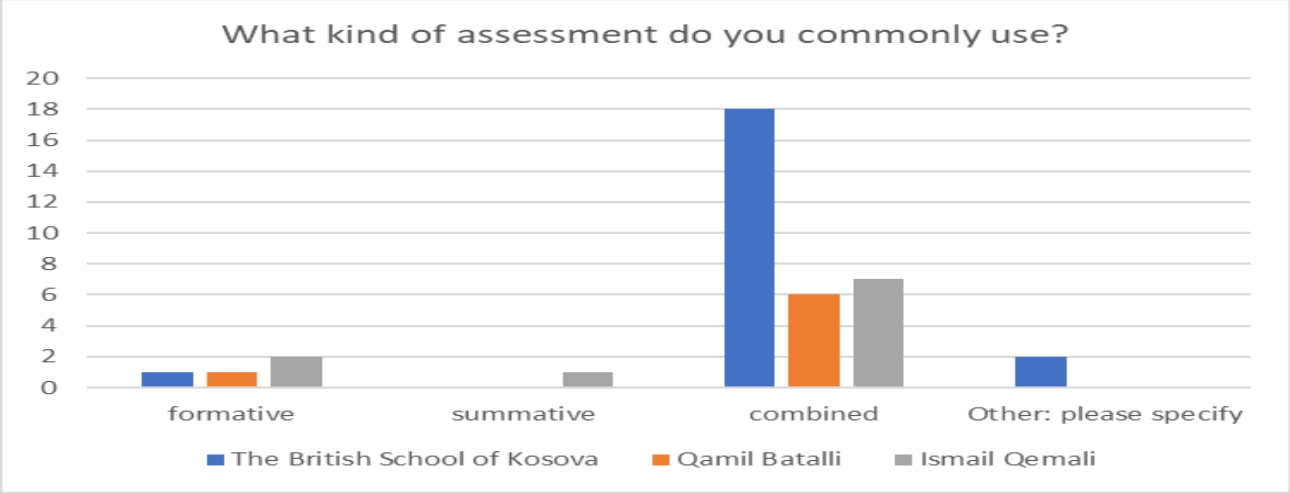


Figure 11. Best form for student assessment

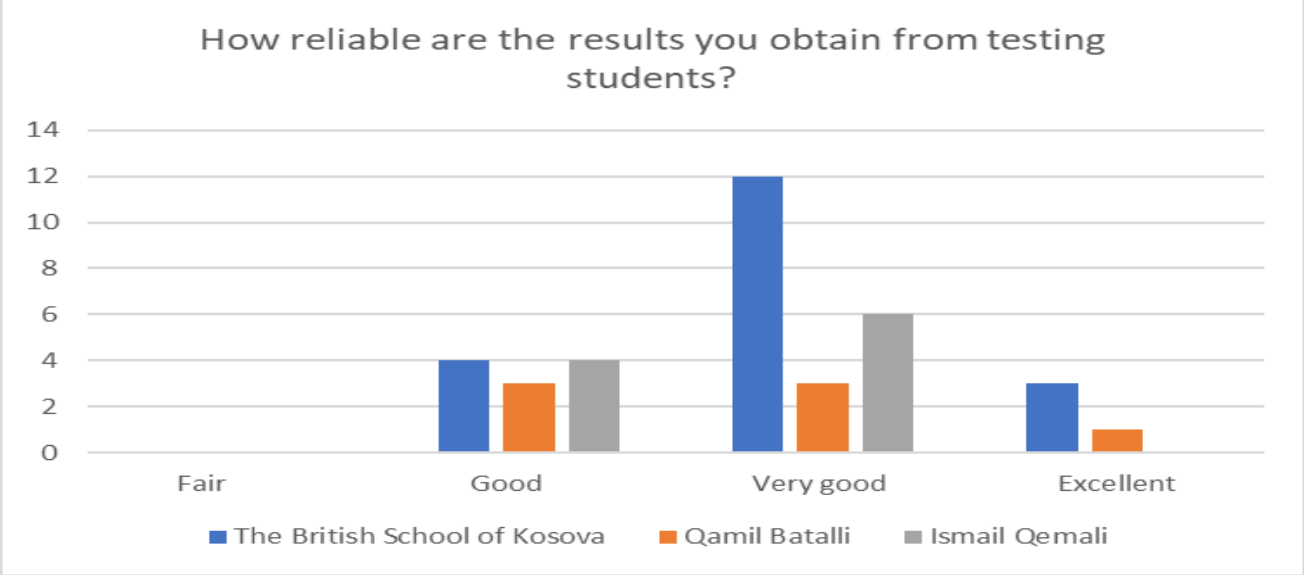


Figure 12. Results from student assessment

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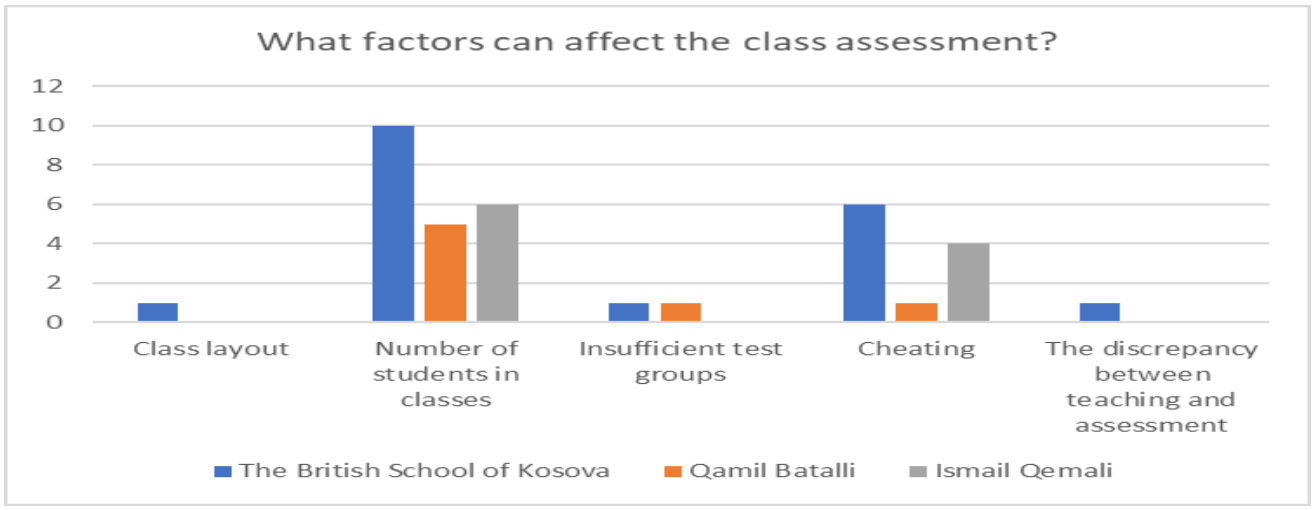


Figure 13. Factors that affect the assessment

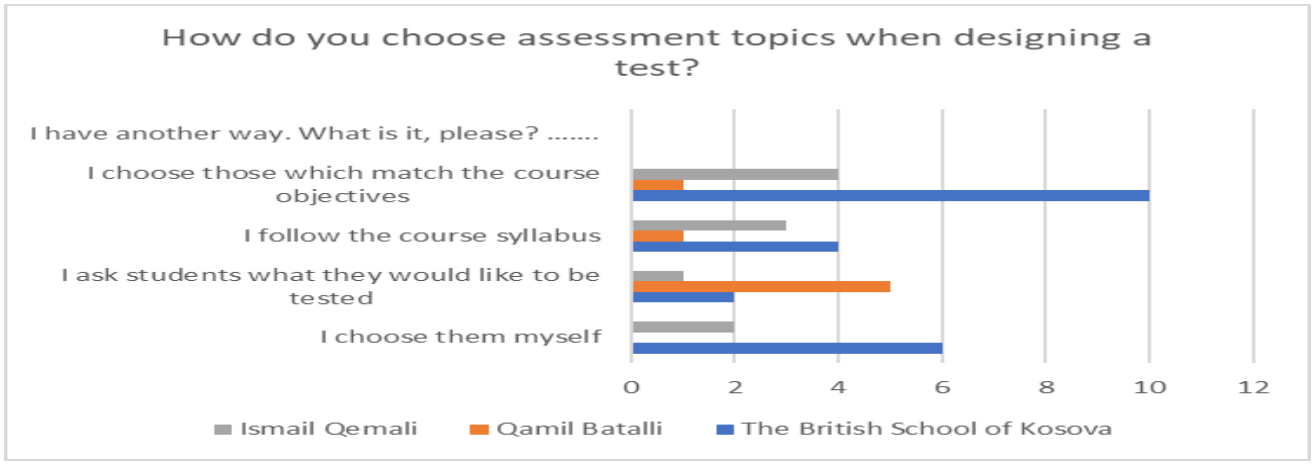


Figure 14. Choosing assessment topic

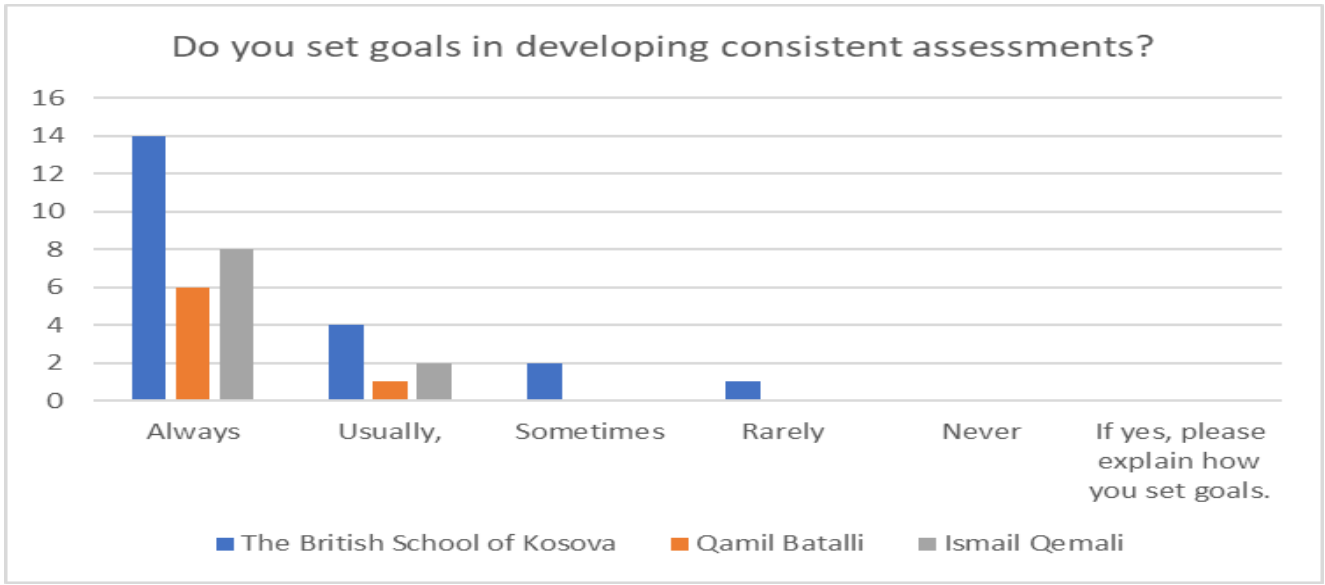


Figure 15. Setting goals for the assessment

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Conclusions

Research shows that public institutions have older staff, while private institutions have younger staff. Public institutions tend not to use many new methods, while private institutions' creativity in teaching, plus the circumstances and environment is better at private institutions and as such creativity can easily be put into practice. Regarding the qualification of teaching staff, over 80% have BA/MA/PhD degrees, whereas a small number have teaching certificates or licences. Work experience largely depends on the age of teachers, therefore age and experience seem to be more distributed in private institutions, whereas in public institutions there are more experienced teachers as they have been longer engaged in the teaching process. From the question of what level of education, they have experience it can be said that public institutions have mainly experience in higher education, while private institutions have experience in primary and secondary education. Regarding staff training in two types of institutions, approximately half of the staff have attended training for evaluation, in public institutions the teachers were trained in different forms of assessment, this training has mainly been conducted by international organizations that have supported education in Kosovo, whereas in private institutions all trained teachers have basic training. Training attended by teachers in private institutions is 57% basic school training, 35% seminar training and 9% online training, while public institutions are 64% basic school education, 21% have seminar training and 14% other training (where 65 % have been trained by USAID and 35% by GIZ). The method of assessment in private institutions is 30% oral tests, 21% use student presentations, 14% use textbook tests, 11% use essays, 8% use tests from web pages reserved for members and the rest use tests downloaded from the internet, while in public institutions 40% oral test, 40% written tests from school books and 20% downloaded tests from the internet. From this, it can be seen that public institutions have a traditional way of testing and do not distribute them in different ways, which we see in private institutions have a comprehensive approach to evaluation. As for testing at all institutions, combined testing methods dominate.

Teachers generally think that the outcome of the assessment reflects students' achievements, while the factors influencing or making it less plausible are; the number of students in the classroom by 62%, copying at 32% and insufficient test groups by 6%. The way topics and testing items are selected is expressed in percentage as follows; 31% of the course objectives, 31% out of the syllabuses, 28% choose their questions, and 9% selected by students themselves. Teachers in general set goals for consistent assessment. Once teachers publish the results, they give feedback on the results and discuss them with students. They always make sure the oral instructions are given before giving an assessment. Teachers believe that setting success criteria is very important in test designing and tend to find tests reliable.

In conclusion, as assessment is a method used to measure teaching and learning in Kosovar schools, the Ministry of Education ought to move toward providing additional trainings in this area. Furthermore, to assess the training's impact, a post-training phase involving observations should be incorporated.

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THE FEEDBACK CORRECTIVE NATURE IN ESSAYS

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Abstract

Given that the teachers' feedback is among the essential factors that affect students' achievements, the present study examines the teachers' feedback quality in essays in the secondary education of the RNM, regarding its corrective nature, in the teaching subject Macedonian language and literature. Thus, the aim is to obtain a general picture on the feedback quality having in mind the theoretical indications on the way the feedback should be provided to fulfill its main function, i.e. to be corrective and to guide students' toward improvement of their learning and achievements.

The sample consists of 50 students' essays, from first to fourth grade of the secondary education, on which teachers' feedback is written, and the analysis rests upon coding and the inductive-interpretative method, and the comparison, as well.

The research results indicate that there is a gap between the theory and the practice, i.e. the teachers' feedback loses its corrective character. Instead of directing the students to undertake actions for enhancement of the identified shortcomings, the analyzed feedback comes down to the phrase be careful followed by the aspect on which the students should focus on, thus limiting their further steps in learning.

Key words: Learning and teaching process, Macedonian language and literature, feedback, essay.

1. Introduction

The students' accomplishments assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. According to Lambert & Lines (2004), the students should manifest their understanding of the particular teaching subject in the teaching and learning process, and this is very relevant to estimate whether the educational standards and goals are achieved. They, further, claim that teachers should constantly ask themselves whether there is a way to teach the subject better and to promote more effective learning.

Undoubtedly, one of the main aspects of the teaching – learning process and of the students' successful assessment is the teachers' feedback quality. Ur (1996) says that feedback is "information that is given to the learner on his performance of a learning task, usually with the objective of improving this performance". Hattie (2009) argues that the feedback influences the students' attainments. According to him, when teachers are open for the students' shortcomings, then the teaching and the learning are synchronized and powerful. He also indicates that the teachers' and the students' feedback make the learning process visible and that through the feedback, the teaching and learning process can be significantly optimized. As Talevski & Janusheva (2015) suggest, on one side, the feedback helps the students to get information regarding their drawbacks or mistakes and directions to upgrade their results, and on the other side, at the same time, from the students' feedback, the teachers get relevant information on many aspects of their teaching. Therefore, as Hattie (2009) says, the feedback has to

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impact the teaching and learning process positively and to provide students with tools which enable their independent functioning and their awareness of the learning process.

The teachers' feedback provides the students with information on their performances, regarding the learning outcomes and goals. It should refine the students' learning as well as the teachers' teaching and redirect the students' activity to achieve the goals, harmonizing the efforts, activities and the outcomes. Further, according to Popovski (2005) and Mickovska & Tasevska (2015), the teachers' feedback provides a solid base for development of positive relations between teachers and students. A substantial amount of research agrees on the feedback' form and points to the oral or written form (Brown, 2004; Smith & Gorard, 2005; Popovski, 2005; Talevski & Janusheva, 2015). Each form has its advantages and disadvantages, especially regarding the wording which has to govern students to independently identify their learning deficiency and to manage them in their efforts to improve their achievements. Janusheva & Talevski (2015) provide an example. If the student's essay is graded with 3, and it does not have further comments, the student may be confused because he will not have additional information on which part of his essay the grade 3 refers to. In this particular case, the student will not be able to understand why he gets exactly the grade 3 and not the grade 4 or 2, which are the essay's part which are not good enough, where the weak points are, whether the drawbacks refer to the orthography etc. Therefore, the feedback has to be positive and constructive critique of student's downsides, to encourage his independent thinking and provide instructions for his further activities. According to Pintrich & Schunk (2002), the feedback should inevitably take into consideration the students' efforts to advance their achievements because the students' motivation increases if they believe that the success is a result of their effort.

However, it has to be stressed out that delivering an effective, efficient and corrective feedback, regardless of the form, is not a simple task. This especially refers to the essays which as compositions with extensive answers do not have one and only one correct answer and which give students freedom, i.e. they decide on the data that they will use, on the way they organize them in the coherent whole, on the arguments they employ etc. (McMillan, 1999; McMillan, 2000; Popovski, 2005; Nitko & Brookhart, 2014; Talevski & Janusheva, 2015). Yet, they are hard to assess, specifically if consider that there are no exact and precise criteria and indicators (Talevski & Janusheva, 2011; Janusheva, Pejchinovska-Stojkovikj & Talevski, 2021). Essays are very meaningful in the teaching and learning process because they assess all cognitive processes and, in particular, the higher cognitive processes, such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. They also enlarge students' competencies to organize ideas, to develop logical arguments and to showcase original and creative thinking.

With the very significant feedback role in the teaching and learning process in mind, this research looks into the teachers' feedback quality in essays in the secondary education in the RNM, in relation to its corrective nature in the teaching subject Macedonian language and literature. It is of utmost importance to see whether the teachers adhere to the theoretical knowledge on the way the feedback should be provided in written form. Thus, 50 students' essays on which teachers' feedback is written are taken into account.

Although the number of the sample units can be seen as one of the limitations of this scrutiny, the research gives general insights on the feedback's nature, in respect of its corrective character.

1.1. The feedback and the essays

As the other forms of feedback, the feedback in the essays leans on the teaching goals, encourages the students' thinking, and provides directions for further advancement which have to rely on students' activities. As said by Janusheva & Pejchinovska (2011) and Talevski & Janusheva (2015), this type of feedback should be positive and yet a constructive critique to the students' weaknesses. In order to supply the students with an effective and relevant feedback, the teachers and students have to be familiar with the criteria used to assess the accomplishments, meaning that the formative assessment should be planned. Otherwise, the feedback significance, quality, and motivational function may be questioned. Further, when providing feedback, the teacher should concentrate on one very relevant aspect in the answer and to have a positive approach. This means that if the teacher gives feedback on the orthographic shortcomings in the essay, he has to be confident that in such activity, the orthographic

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mistakes are the most crucial and serious features that have to be commented and that he does not neglect other more important characteristic (Talevski & Janusheva, 2011; Janusheva, Pejchinovska-Stojkovikj & Talevski, 2021). The teacher should also discuss the feedback with the student, to highlight the positive aspects in the answer and help him to further use his strengths as well.

For instance, when assessing an essay, it is not sufficient to write that the general sentence is not adequate and it is harder to write down the components which make this general sentence to be satisfactory, good, or excellent. Therefore, as claimed by Janusheva, Pejchinovska-Stojkovikj & Talevski (2021), due to the complex nature of the written text which includes students' personal believes, attitudes, ideas and writing style, the subjective factors, i.e. the teachers' subjective perception of the criteria and indicators have to be considered. As a result, it is very difficult to provide an exact, correct and detailed feedback.

1.2. The feedback's corrective nature

A great body of research points to the feedback's corrective nature (Black & William, 1998; Popovski, 2005; Brookhart, 2008; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Hattie, 2009; Wiggins, 2012; Ellis, 2020). Brookhart (2008) insists on that the effective feedback should guide the students toward understanding the goals they want to attain. She gives an example for productive feedback: This is good introductory part since it contains all main ideas we have discussed. Can you think of a way to extent some of the ideas? She further signifies that it is essential for the students to understand the feedback. Analyzing the feedback in the nature and society classes, Pejchinovska (2011) also provides examples on effective and corrective feedback. A powerful feedback, as said by Chappuis (2012), does not provide students with more instruction then it is needed because, in this case, the students will not have the need to think. Wiggins (2012) indicates that in order to be corrective, the feedback should not lean on simple phrases and words, such: improve your writing, you can do better, put more effort etc. This type of feedback does not tell the students which way to go in order to upgrade their learning and enhance their outcomes. Further, he argues that the feedback is something different from an advice, and that teachers should be very attentive when providing effective feedback. According to him, the comment that the students' written report needs more examples is not feedback, but an advice which contributes to the students' insecurities. He suggests that it would be more appropriate to ask students whether they have an idea on how to refine particular activity because this leads to autonomy and trust development. Furthermore, he believes that trust is the foundation for the effective feedback. As stated by Essel (2020), teachers often provide short feedback, which may lead to lack of students' interest toward that type of feedback. Chen (2021) also stresses the very significant role of the way the language feedback is given since he discovers that teachers do not pay attention to the language that will improve students' achievements.

2. Broader research context

A great body of research points out to the feedback quality relevance (Carrol & Swain, 1992; Boud, 1995; Black & William, 1998; Popovski, 2005; Lin & Miler, 2005; Brookhart, 2008; Hattie, 2009; Janusheva & Pejchinovska, 2011; Chappuis, 2012; Talevski, Janusheva & Pejchinovska, 2014; Mickovska &Tasevska, 2015; Talevski & Janusheva, 2015; Guinness, Detrich, Keyworth & States, 2020; Kerr, 2020). Carrol & Swain (1992) prove the role of the feedback in English native speakers when learning French, especially when new items are learned and memorized. Black & William (1998) claim that the feedback is the base on which the students become independent to plan their own learning. Juwah, Macfarlane-Dick, Matthew, Nicol, Ross & Smith (2004) conclude that the effective and corrective feedback encourages dialog for learning between teachers and students, provides high quality information on students' learning and clarify the preferred results. The effect that feedback has on students' further work in school is proved also by Popovski (2005). He divides the students into three groups and conducts a test. Then, he returns the test back to the students – the first group receives only a grade without any written comment, the second group gets grades as well as some stereotypical comments, such: solid, good, you need more practice etc., and the third group gains grade, and individual comment for each student which content encourages the student to work more on a certain

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aspect. His research confirms that later, the students from the third group, who are given written instructions that certain learning aspects should be improved, achieve the highest results. He suggests that in a written assignment, the feedback should concentrate on the positive aspects and then provide a comment which will refer to the students' shortcomings or misunderstandings as well as instruction on how to eliminate them in future, which activities he should take in order not to repeat them etc. Lin & Miler state that the feedback comprises both, the students' cognitive sphere and the motivational factors, i.e. they learn how to upgrade their achievements and to control their learning. According to Brookhart (2008), the feedback is very meaningful in the teaching and largely in the learning process. Janusheva & Pejchinovska (2011) report that giving feedback is very complex and difficult task. According to them, teachers should evaluate the information which they receive from students, and include only the information that will lead toward the refinement of the students' accomplishments. They pose the question: What if, for ex., teachers make a mistake and if the given feedback is irrelevant to students' attainment? What if students lack to comprehend the feedback? These questions clearly point out to the necessity of planning and the teachers' psychological, pedagogical, and professional competence to perceive all the information, to elaborate them and to make genuine judgment. Further, Chappuis (2012) argues that teachers should carefully chose a feedback from which the students will benefit the most and avoid to comment each students' weak point. This is very significant because such teachers' activities can make students less motivated and not interest in further upgrading of their achievements, thus producing a negative effect. In this sense, Boud & Molloy (2013), report that teacher should provide clear and constructive feedback which will be not comprehended as an accusation. They claim that if the feedback is received as an accusation, students lack their motivation and their willingness to make changes. On the other side, according to them, this may produce negative comments on teachers' work. Given that teachers should have solid communication skills, Dignen (2014) states that feedback is the most relevant communication skill. Guinness, Detrich, Keyworth & States (2020) see feedback as a toll for correcting the students' misunderstandings as well as a component of the students' active reaction. As Talevski & Janusheva (2015) mention, if the feedback is given after finishing a particular topic which will not be further elaborated by the teacher, it will lose its function, because the students cannot solve the identified dilemmas or the difficulties. For example, if students wait for the feedback for two months and during waiting, the teachers begin to teach a new topic, the given feedback will not fulfill its aim and the students will not benefit from it. Consequently, it is very worthwhile for the feedback to be given at the right time. Hera & Kulińska (2018), stress that feedback has a great importance and enhance the learning of English as a foreign language. Kerr (2020) lists 10 advices that can improve teachers' feedback wording, stressing out that feedback should concentrate on the positive aspects and that the teacher should be very careful on the feedback's content. He simply suggests that by giving feedback, teachers should attract the students' attention and provide them with clear and relevant feedback.

3. Methodology

Bearing in mind the very essence of the feedback as a tool which contributes to the students' success improvement, the present paper investigates the teachers' feedback quality in essays in the secondary education in the RNM, in the teaching subject Macedonian language and literature, in relation to its corrective nature. Thus, the aim is to obtain a general picture on the feedback quality having in mind the theoretical insights on the way the feedback should be provided. The sample consists of 50 students' written assignments from first to fourth class on which teachers' feedback is written. It is a purposeful sample, which is in line with the claim of Lincoln & Guba (1985) that each sample is in a way purposeful because it is gathered for some purpose. Further, this is in correlation with Cheek (2008), Yin (2011) and Gentles et al. (2015) who state various aspects that can be sampled in a research. In an effort to capture the feedback essence, following Crabtree & Miller's (1999) suggestion, a coding protocol is designed and patterns regarding the feedback aspects, wording, praising the positive aspects and directions for improvement are identified. The analysis rests upon the inductive-interpretative method used by Thomas (2006), Kahlke (2014) and Harding & Whitehead (2016) which stresses the inductive thinking which leads to producing ideas from the data.

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4. Results, analysis and discussion

In continuance, the research results, their analysis, and the discussion are provided.

All of the written assignments encompass feedback which is supplied at the end of the essays with two to three sentences. The coding results are as follows:

The exact wording of the feedback	Aspect/s of the essay on which the feedback is provided	Praise the positive aspects of the essay	Direction for improvement
Be careful of the	orthographic rules and the word's transfer in a new line;	None	None
	capital letter use;		
Be cautious of the	consonant f orthography;	None	None
	negation, it should be written separately from the verb;		None
Be alert of the	verb tense and the use of the l-form;	None	None
Be careful of the	use of the short pronoun forms;	None	
Be aware of the	solid/closed compound nouns orthography;	None	None
	sentence construction; verb tense;		None
Be careful of the Pay attention to the	punctuation and orthographic marks.	None	
The pointed idea…	is not clear and understandable.	None	None
Be careful of the…	parts of the essay; words from the stylistic point of view.	None	None
You use the same data all over the essay	essay's content	None	None

Table 1: Feedback's aspects

From the table, it can be seen that there are several particular features which show that the provided feedback on the essays as written assignments is not in line with the theoretical insight of the feedback nature.

First, it is obvious that feedback refers to two, three, or even four aspects of the essay which, according to the teachers, are worth to be commented, implying that teachers are confident that the noticed mistakes/shortcomings are the ones that are the most relevant for the students. This is not in line with the research of Chappuis (2012) and Talevski & Janusheva (2015) who recommend that comments of many students' weak points should be avoid. Supplying feedback on more than one downside decreases the students' motivation and makes them feel confused and discouraged. This may also makes students feel that they have done nothing correct and that their essays are worthless. On the other side, this leads to lose of the interest for advancingt their achievement.

Second, apparently, the feedback lacks to focus on aspects in the essays which are done positively and this is not in correlation with Kerr's (2020) advices. The feedback leans on the exact words Wiggins (2012) recommends to be evaded.

Third, it is evident that nearly all the comments relate to the grammar, more precisely to the orthographic and punctuation rules and the organizational essay parts, which is understandable considering that the three essay parts and the orthographic/punctuation mistakes are easy to be noticed and that precise criteria and indicators can be made for them. Only in three cases, the feedback reflects on ideas, style, and content. However, regarding the essay organization, teacher can solely determine that the three main segments of the essay are present, i.e. that the student divides the assignment into

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three main parts. Statements referring to the ideas, style, and content demonstrate the student's logical, critical, and creative thinking, capabilities for evaluation, competencies to organize data into a coherent whole and these are, in fact, process skills for which precise and detailed feedback cannot be provided due to the students' and teachers' own beliefs, understanding, opinion and attitudes and due to the complex essays' nature. This is in line with the research of Talevski & Jansuheva (2011), and Janusheva, Pejchnovska-Stojkovikj & Talevski (2021) and proves that subjective factors govern the feedback as well.

Fourth, although the feedback refers to a particular misunderstanding and it seems concrete and precise enough, none has corrective nature, i.e. meaning that none contains further direction which lead the student to undertake actions in order to improve the detected shortcoming. This way, the feedback becomes useless. Even more, there is an example where the feedback offers a solutions for the identified downsides which is strictly what the feedback should not do because the feedback essence is exactly the opposite, i.e. it should give the students directions and guide them toward the actions they have to take in order to enhance their attainments. For instance, instead of directing them, the feedback says that the word svati should be written with f and not with v; or the feedback asks the students to be alert on the sentence structure, but no further comments are given which will tell the students which aspects of the sentence are not good enough and which should be corrected. The students may comprehend that all the sentences are not written well although that may not be the case.

5. Conclusion

The research results indisputably showcase that the feedback in the analyzed essays does not fulfill its goals and that it is not in correlation with the theoretical insights on how the feedback should be provided. Bearing in mind that the feedback is the essence of the teaching and learning processes, the research outcomes, by no means, suggest that the teachers simplify the feedback, especially the wording by using the phrase be careful, and concentrate only on the students' shortcomings. That leads to a main conclusion, i.e. the teachers need to have knowledge and skills in order to provide effective feedback which will be corrective and will take into account the improvement of the students' attainments.

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CHALLENGES OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF LESSONS THROUGH THE INTEGRATION OF ICT

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Abstract

The topic of this research has to do with the challenges of the principals of the primary schools of the municipality of Istog in supporting teachers for the development of lessons through the integration of ICT. Considering the state of many schools in Kosovo, the many changes and reforms in the education system, and the necessity of ICT integration to meet the demands of these reforms, I think that this research is useful and important to understand what challenges school principals face in order to create the necessary conditions for teachers and students to hold lessons using ICT.

In order to achieve the most effective and accurate results, quantitative methods were used during this research - questionnaires for teachers and qualitative methods - interviews for the leaders of primary schools in the municipality of Istog. The research was carried out in the municipality of Istog from a total of 25 schools (ShFMU), with 5 principals and 140 corresponding teachers of these schools.

At the end of the realization of this research, the challenges of school leaders in the integration, cooperation and initiation of teachers for the use of technology in the teaching process have been identified, as well as contributing to new leaders who will research in this field.

Key words: Collaboration, teacher, challenges, ICT use, principal's role.

I. INTRODUCTION

The chosen topic comes as a result of my work in the field of teaching. Seeing how every day teaching techniques are necessarily requiring the integration of ICT to make the lesson as attractive and understandable as possible for students.

Modern teaching techniques educate children well and make them understand clearly, and easier to remember the learning unit. In this era, there is an increased use of the Internet in all fields, no doubt even in education. This may mean that students and teachers will increasingly use technology within open and flexible learning systems. Technology plays an important role in improving and developing our learning system.

Kosovo has had the slowest development in terms of the use of ICT in teaching compared to other countries of the world, as a society in transition, of course there are obstacles in terms of the topic that we will address.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This paper has investigated the challenges of the leaders of primary schools in the municipality of Istog in supporting teachers for the development of lessons through the integration of ICT.

Research questions

The main question of this research is:

What are the challenges of school leaders in integrating technology into the learning process?

The main question is accompanied by other auxiliary research questions:

What teaching methods do teachers use for the inclusion of ICT in teaching?

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What is the role of the school leader for the teachers to support ICT in teaching?

How much effort did the school leader make for teachers to include technology in the teaching process?

Research hypotheses

The main hypothesis of this research is:

Technology devices help school principals and teachers integrate technology into the classroom. Based on the main hypothesis, as well as on the auxiliary questions of the research, this auxiliary hypothesis is also presented:The mutual cooperation of the school leader with the teachers increases the inclusion of ICT in teaching and increases the learning results of the students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the collection of data related to the attitudes of primary school leaders and teachers regarding the integration of ICT in teaching, the following methods were used: quantitative methods through questionnaires and qualitative methods through interviews, which enabled us to identify the challenges of principals of primary schools towards the implementation of ICT in teaching.

The research was carried out through questionnaires developed with 140 teachers who work from the first to the fifth grade, as well as through the interview of 5 directors of the institutions. The research was conducted in all primary schools of the city of Istog.

Research sample

The accuracy of the findings largely depends on how we select the sample. The main objective of any sampling design is to reduce, within financial constraints, the gap between the values obtained from the sample and those prevailing in the study population. The basic premise for sample selection is that a relatively small number of units, if selected to best represent the study population, can provide a fair reflection of the sample population being studied. (Kumar, 2014).

The research will focus on school leaders and primary school teachers. The selection of the schools was made in a deliberate manner. The sample selection was done purposively (chain sampling model) by including all schools in the Municipality of Istog.

The sample of the research is 25 primary schools with a total of 5 principals and 140 teachers of these same schools. The selection of the participants of the population was made with the purposeful method of the "chain" type.

Processing and statistical analysis

All the results collected through the instruments will be analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences SPSS.

Procedures and conditions- The selection of the sample of principals will be random, choosing every 2 from the list of the Municipal Directorate of Education in Istog, the selection of the sample of teachers was made with the purposeful method (chain selection), from the teachers who are present seeking to identify the rest of the group of teachers in each school.

Instruments

Data collection was initially done through a questionnaire, the questions were of closed type and only one of open type. Also, other data were collected through interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed through the SPSS program. While the qualitative data were analyzed with the inductive method.

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3. RESULTS

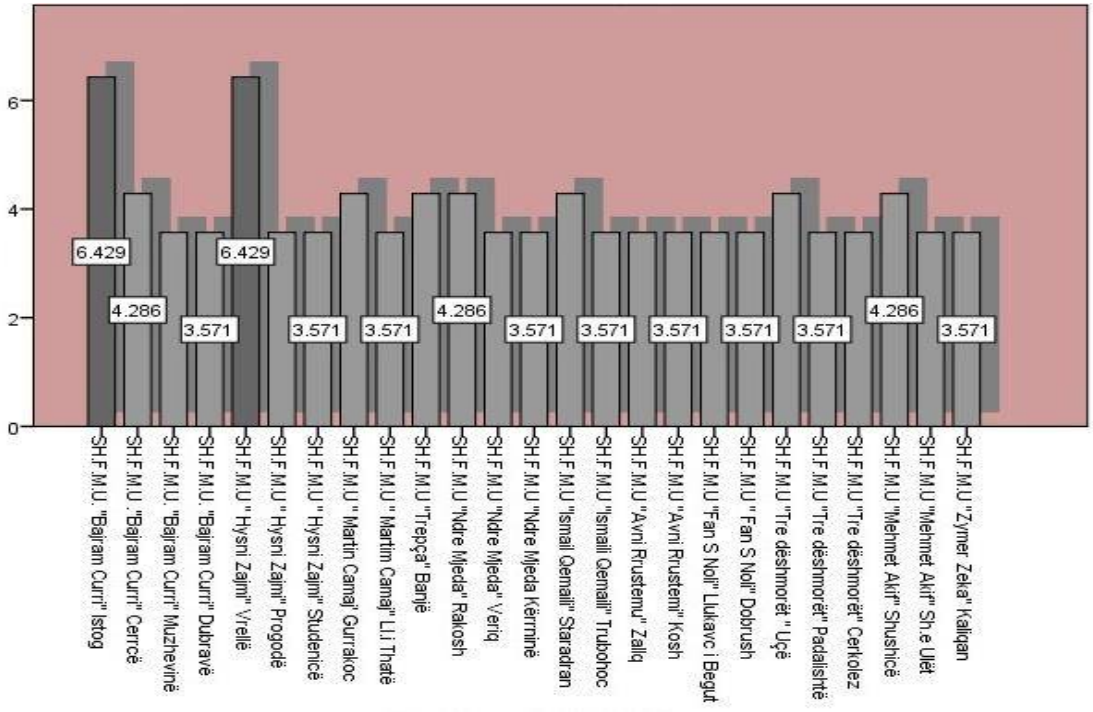


Figure 1. Name of the school where the surveyed participants are employed

The teachers involved in this research are teachers of 25 primary and lower secondary schools in the municipality of Istog. Of the surveyed teachers, a slightly larger number of teachers are those from "Bajram Curri" and "Hysni Zajmi" schools, while the others have approximately the same percentage or from 5 or 6 current teachers in these schools.

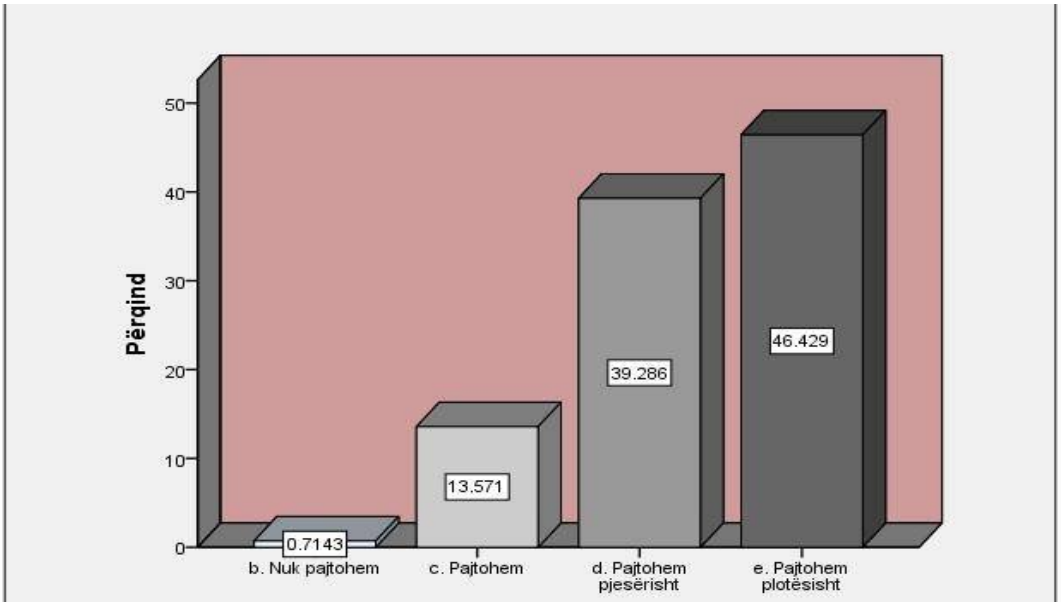


Figure 2. The impact of technological devices on teaching

Technological devices in teaching are an important part for the integration of ICT in teaching, this was confirmed by the teachers participating in the questionnaire, where out of 140 participants 46.42% of them fully agree that technological devices influence the integration of ICT in teaching, 39.28% have selected the alternative partially agree, 13.57% the alternative agree, and a very small percentage 0.71% disagree. Based on the graph, teachers have expressed that they fully agree that technological devices help to integrate ICT in teaching.

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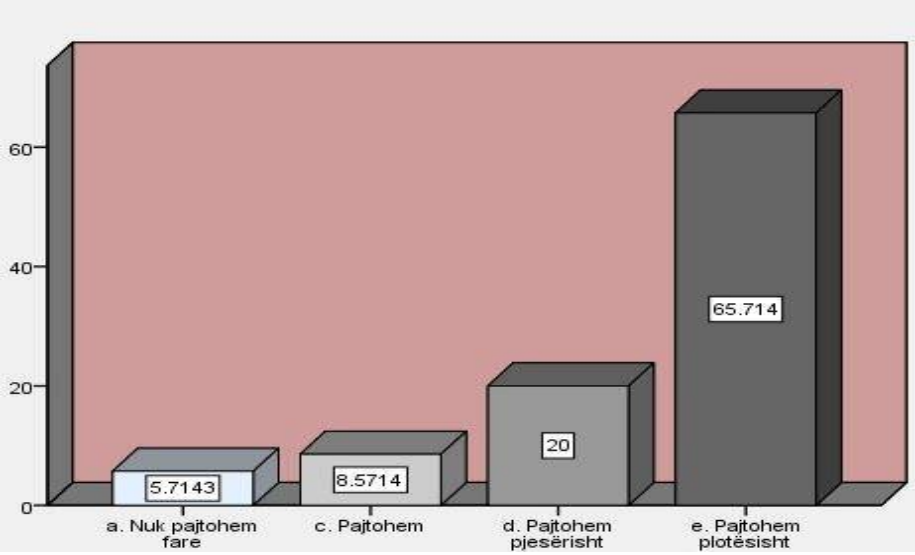


Figure 3. Leader-teacher cooperation for the inclusion of ICT in teaching

In the question related to the question about leader-teacher cooperation for the integration of ICT in teaching, the respondents selected the following alternatives: with the largest percentage from the graph, we see the alternative I completely agree with 65.71%, which means that for successful integration of ICT- ut in teaching there must definitely be leader-teacher cooperation, 20% have declared for the alternative partially agree, 8.57% for the alternative agree and only 5.71% have selected the alternative 5.71%.

From this we can conclude that in order to have a genuine integration of ICT in teaching, there must be cooperation between leaders and teachers.

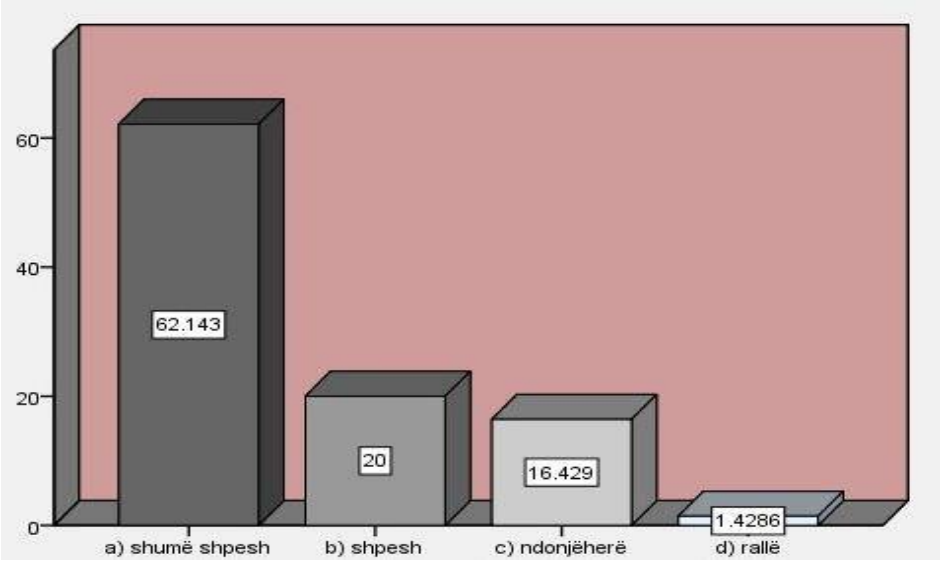


Figure 4. ICT for the preparation of pedagogical materials for students

For the preparation of pedagogical materials for students, there is no doubt that today ICT occupies an important place. In the question of how often the respondents use ICT to prepare pedagogical materials for students, the graph shows the following trends: 62.14% stated that they use ICT very often, 20% of them use it often, 16.42% sometimes and 1.42% declared that they rarely use ICT for the preparation of pedagogical materials for students.

From this we can see that ICT has a very important place in the preparation of pedagogical materials for students.

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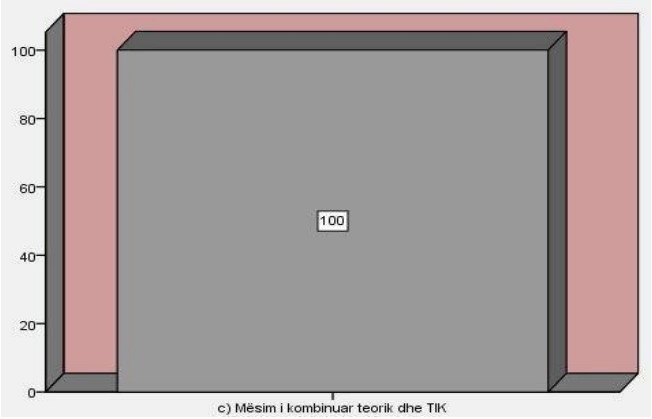


Figure 5. Productive methods in teaching

From the question of which methods are more productive in teaching, we see that all respondents are of the opinion that the combined theory and ICT method is more productive in teaching, not singling out the theoretical method or only the method integrating ICT.

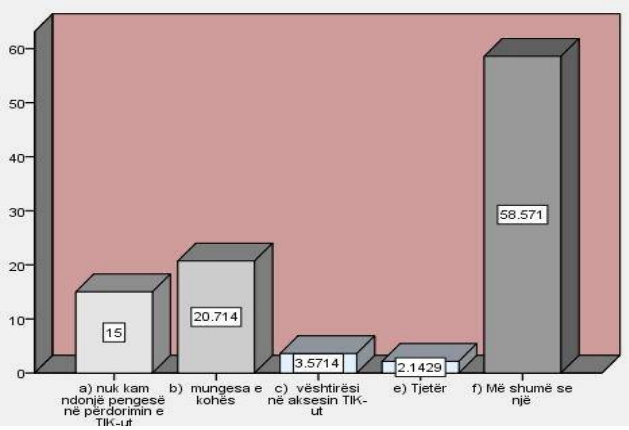


Figure 6. Obstacles during the use of ICT in teaching

From the graph, we can see that teachers in a greater percentage 58.57% have more than one obstacle that appears to them during the use of ICT in teaching, 20.71% of teachers are of the opinion that the lack of time prevents them from using ICT in teaching, 15% have no obstacle in using ICT and 3.57% have difficulties in accessing ICT.

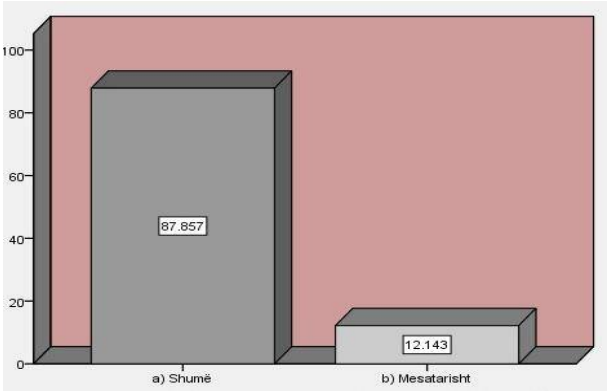


Figure 7. Interest in learning, using ICT in lessons

In the question of how much it increases students' interest in learning when teachers use ICT in lessons, from the graphic we see that we have two answers which affirm that the use of ICT increases interest in learning, 87.85% of teachers have chosen the alternative many and 12.14% have selected the alternative on average. These answers make us understand that ICT increases students' interest in learning.

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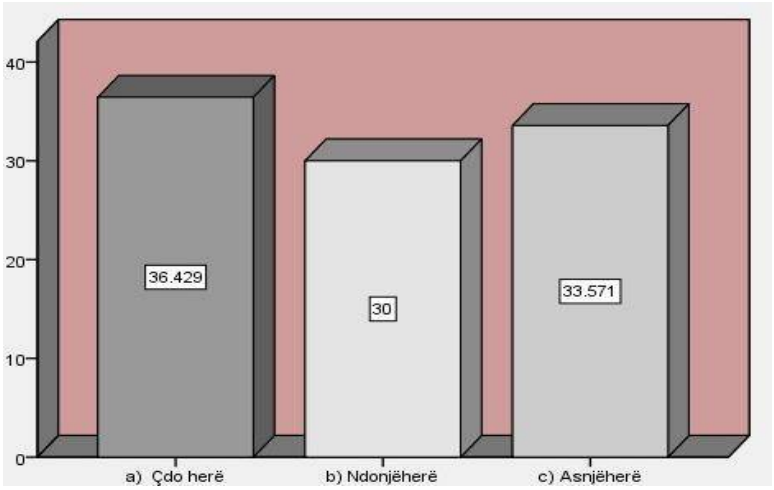


Figure 8. Leaders' support for the use of ICT in the classroom

From the graphs regarding the question of whether teachers have support from their leaders to use ICT in class, we can see that the respondents in approximately the same percentage have selected the three alternatives above as: 36.42% affirmed that every time they support from leaders for the use of ICT in lessons, 30% have selected the alternative sometimes, and 33.57% the alternative never. This made us understand that the support of the leaders in the schools of the municipality of Istog for the integration of ICT in the lessons is not at the right level.

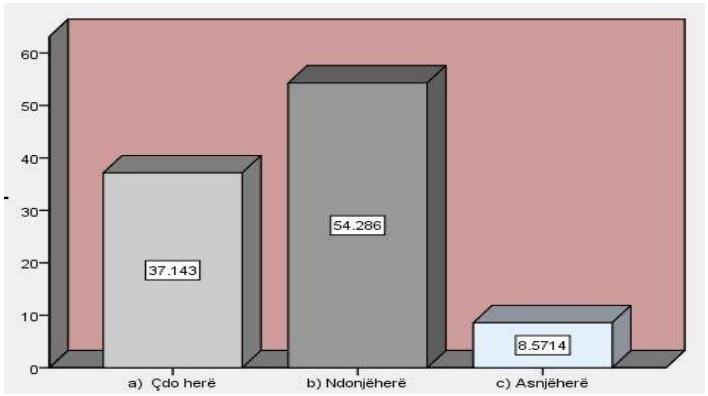


Figure 9. Leader-teacher communication through electronic form

Nowadays electronic communication is very much in use and a very fast way of communication. In our question addressed to the teachers, does the director of their school require that communication be done via electronic form (e-mail), the respondents in the largest percentage 54.28% answered sometimes, 37.14% every time and 8.57% never.

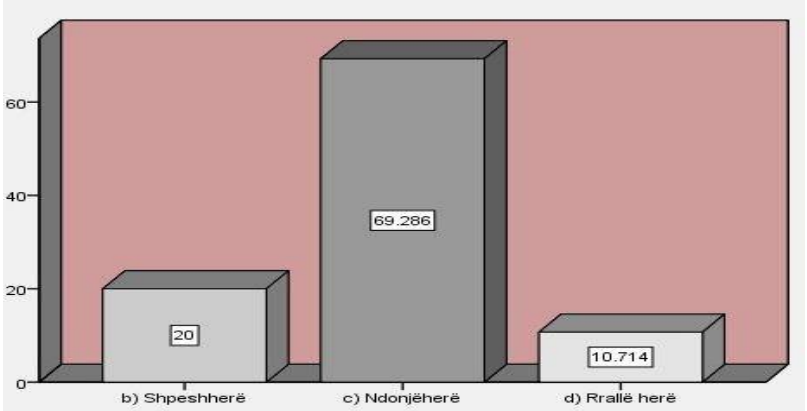


Figure 10. Instructing students to use the computer for homework

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Necessarily, the use of computers is inevitable by students for a variety of extracurricular activities, but how much they use the computer to complete the homework that teachers instruct them, from the graphs can be we notice that 69.28% of teachers sometimes engage students to complete tasks with the help of the computer, 20% often instruct them and 10.71% rarely practice this.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

From the data obtained from the measuring instruments for this research as well as their analysis and discussion, we were able to draw some reliable findings regarding the integration of ICT in the lessons in the elementary schools of the municipality of Istog. In addition to the integration of ICT in the lessons, the data obtained from the respondents who were teachers and some leaders managed to gain knowledge about the challenges faced by teachers and leaders to integrate ICT in teaching.

The findings that give us answers to the main research question, to the auxiliary questions and that prove the hypothesis are:

What are the challenges of school leaders in integrating technology into the learning process?

From the data obtained from the leaders related to the main research question, we can observe that their main challenges to integrate ICT in the classroom are the lack of technological equipment in schools, the lack of Internet, the lack of training to train teachers to the use of technology. These findings show that the lack of technological tools and the difficulties that teachers have to use ICT are the main challenges of leaders for the integration of ICT in teaching.

What teaching methods do teachers use for the inclusion of ICT in teaching?

The other finding of the research is about the methods used by teachers to integrate ICT in teaching, where all teachers are of the opinion that the method of teaching combined theory and ICT is more productive and during teaching the main activities they use are different from 140 participating teachers, 47 of them or 33.6% use more than one activity, 31 or 22.1% use it for searching for information 24 or 17.1% for different exercises 14 or 10% for projects 11 or 7.9% use Power Point is used to a lesser extent for assessment and quizzes.

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SOCIO-PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGIES IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM AND LEARNING DISABILITIES – A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental condition with varying symptomatology that affects individuals throughout their lives. This paper explores the intersections of sociology, pedagogy interventions, and occupational therapy in addressing the needs of individuals with ASD. Sociological perspectives offer insights into social determinants of health, the construction of disability, and family dynamics, informing holistic interventions. Pedagogical strategies are focused on individualized approaches, multi-sensory techniques and social skills development to create inclusive learning environments. Occupational therapy interventions focus on functional skills development, promoting independence, and enhancing participation in daily activities.

Collaborative efforts between professionals, educators, families, and individuals with ASD are essential for implementing effective interventions and promoting social inclusion. Future research directions include longitudinal studies, technology integration, and culturally responsive practices to optimize outcomes. By integrating sociological, pedagogical, and occupational therapy approaches, professionals can allow people with ASD to reach their full potential and lead fulfilling lives.

Keywords: **Occupational Therapy, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Learning Disabilities, Pedagogy, Sociology**

1. Introduction

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex neurodevelopmental condition that manifests in early childhood and persists through all the phases in life. It covers a range of symptoms, behaviors, and challenges, which can vary in severity and presentation from one person to another. As Hodges (2020) demonstrated in his research, central to ASD are difficulties in social communication and interaction, alongside restricted and repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities

First identified in the 1940s by Austrian psychiatrist Leo Kanner and later by Hans Asperger, ASD become increasingly recognized as a prevalent condition. However, awareness and understanding of ASD have evolved significantly over the decades, leading to earlier identification and intervention, as well as a broader appreciation of the diverse ways in which ASD can manifest across individuals, said by Evans (2013).

One of the defining features of ASD is its heterogeneity, meaning that no two individuals with autism will experience the condition in exactly the same way. Masi (2017) discovered that this variability extends not only to the core symptoms of social communication challenges and

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restricted/repetitive behaviors but also to associated characteristics such as sensory sensitivities, motor difficulties, intellectual abilities, and co-occurring conditions like anxiety, ADHD, or epilepsy.

Despite increased awareness and understanding, ASD continues to present numerous challenges for the children, families and society. Access to early intervention services, educational support, healthcare resources, and community inclusion remains uneven, contributing to disparities in outcomes and quality of life for people with ASD. Additionally, Alyward (2021) in his research said that stigma, misconceptions, and societal barriers can further hinder the acceptance and integration of individuals with ASD into mainstream society.

Definition of occupational therapy and role of occupational therapy in ASD

Occupational Therapy is a client-centered health profession with aims that promote health and well-being through meaningful daily activities - occupations. These occupations cover everything that people need or want to do to lead fulfilling lives, including self-care, productivity, and leisure activities. Whalley (2014) said that occupational therapists work with people of all ages and abilities, helping them to participate in activities that are important to them despite any physical, cognitive, or emotional challenges they may face.

In pediatric occupational therapy, children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) benefit greatly from the support provided by occupational therapists. Occupational therapists play a crucial role in addressing the needs of these children, focusing on promoting their functional abilities and improving their quality of life. Occupational therapists give a holistic approach to the needs of each child with autism. They collaborate with families, educators, and other healthcare professionals to develop comprehensive treatment plans that target specific areas of difficulty. These interventions often involve sensory integration therapy, which helps children with autism better process and respond to sensory information, reducing sensory sensitivities and promoting self-regulation, like Elbeltagi (2023) said in his research paper.

The role of sociology in occupational therapy interventions for children with ASD

The role of sociology in occupational therapy interventions for children with autism is essential for understanding the societal context in which these interventions occur. Sociology provides occupational therapists with valuable insights in the social structures, cultural norms, and interpersonal dynamics that influence the experiences and outcomes of children with autism and their families. By incorporating sociological perspectives into their practice, occupational therapists can develop more holistic and effective interventions that address not only the individual needs of the child but also the social and environmental factors that shape their lives, demonstrated in research paper by Grandisson (2020).

One key aspect of the role of sociology in occupational therapy interventions for children with autism is the recognition of the social determinants of health. Whiteley (2021) has shown that factors such as socioeconomic status, access to healthcare, community resources and social support networks can significantly impact the health and well-being of individuals with autism. Occupational therapists working with children with autism must consider these social determinants when designing interventions to ensure they are addressing the underlying structural barriers that may impacts in child's participation and engagement in daily activities.

Sociology provides valuable insights into the social construction of disability and neurodiversity, challenging traditional medical models of pathology and deficit-focused interventions. Occupational therapists who adopt a sociological perspective recognize that autism is not simply a medical condition but rather a complex interaction between biological, psychological, and social factors. By reframing autism as a natural variation of human diversity said in the research of Maynard (2019), occupational therapists can promote a strengths-based approach that emphasizes the unique abilities and potential of children with autism.

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Sociology also informs occupational therapy interventions for children with autism by highlighting the importance of social inclusion and participation. Research has consistently shown that children with autism often face barriers to inclusion in educational, recreational, and social activities due to stigma, discrimination, and lack of understanding from their peers and community members. Occupational therapists can work collaboratively with schools, community organizations, and families to promote acceptance, create inclusive environments, and facilitate meaningful social interactions for children with autism, said by Saran (2023).

Sociology offers valuable insights into family dynamics and caregiving experiences in families raising children with autism. Occupational therapists recognize the vital role of parents in supporting the development and well-being of children with autism and to address the unique challenges and stressors they may face. By understanding the social dynamics within families, Aithal (2023) said that occupational therapists can provide family-centered interventions that empower parents and caregivers to advocate for their child's needs and navigate the complex systems of care and support.

Sociology plays a crucial role in shaping occupational therapy interventions for children with autism by providing insights into the social determinants of health, the social construction of disability, the importance of social inclusion, and the dynamics of family caregiving. By incorporating sociological perspectives explaned by Smith (2023) into their practice, occupational therapists can develop more holistic, culturally sensitive, and effective interventions that promote the health, well-being, and social participation of children with autism and their families.

Pedagogical strategies for ASD learning

Pedagogical aspects for people with autism who experience difficulty learning are fundamental in creating effective and inclusive educational interventions. Given the diverse range of strengths and challenges with this condition, it's crucial to adopt pedagogical approaches that accommodate individual differences, promote engagement, and foster meaningful learning experiences described by White (2023).

In the research paper by Thomas (2022), using the visual aids such as visual schedules, visual timers, picture cards and graphic organizers can enhance understanding and facilitate communication for people with autism. Visual supports provide structure, predictability and clarity, helping to reduce anxiety and support learning across various contexts.



Picture 1: Example for using visual aids for children with ASD. Retrieved from The effectiveness of Visual Schedules for Kids with Autism. (February 6, 2014)

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Establishing a structured and predictable environment is essential for people with autism, as it helps reduce sensory overload and anxiety while promoting focus and attention. As Emerson (2023) said in his research, consistent routines, clear expectations, and well-defined transitions create a supportive learning environment conducive to learning and engagement.

Incorporating multi-sensory teaching methods allows individuals with autism to access information through different modalities, catering to diverse learning styles and preferences. Hands-on activities, sensory materials, movement breaks, and interactive technology can enhance comprehension and retention of information. As Dixon (2020) said in his research paper, providing clear and explicit instruction is critical for individuals with autism who may struggle with abstract concepts or inferential reasoning. Breaking down tasks into manageable steps, using concrete language, and providing direct feedback help clarify expectations and support skill acquisition.

Recognizing and accommodating individual differences is essential in differentiated instruction. Tailoring teaching strategies, materials, and pacing to meet the needs and abilities of each learner ensures that all people, including those with autism have access to meaningful learning opportunities and can progress at their own pace. Tay's (2019) modifying tasks and instructional materials to match the individual's abilities and interests is crucial for promoting success and motivation. Breaking down complex tasks, providing additional support, and offering choices to participate actively and experience success in their learning strategies.

Implementing strategies for positive behavior creates a supportive learning environment that gives appropriate behavior and addresses challenging behaviors effectively. Clear expectations, reinforcement systems, proactive strategies, and collaborative problem-solving promote a positive and inclusive learning environment for people with autism. Teaching practical, everyday skills that are relevant to the individual's life promotes independence and enhances quality of life. In Hieneman (2015) research, functional skills training focuses on developing skills such as self-care, time management, organization, and community integration, that gives people with autism to navigate daily activities successfully.

Establishing open and collaborative communication between educators, therapists, families is essential for ensuring consistency and coherence in educational interventions. Sharing information, setting common goals, and collaborating on strategies promote a unified approach that maximizes the impact of interventions for individuals with autism. By integrating these pedagogical aspects into educational interventions by Bowmann (2021), educators and other professionals can create inclusive learning environments that promote the academic, social, and emotional development of people with autism who experience difficulty learning.

2. Future Directions and Research Needs

Conducting longitudinal studies to track the effectiveness of pedagogical strategies for individuals with autism over time is essential. Long-term research can provide insights into the sustained impact of interventions on academic achievement, social skills development and overall well-being. Further research is needed to explore the efficacy of highly individualized pedagogical approaches connected to the specific strengths, challenges, and preferences of each person with autism. Investigating individualized plans and adaptive teaching techniques can optimize outcomes and grow engagement for diverse people within the autism spectrum.

Examining the integration of technology, such as virtual reality, augmented reality into pedagogical interventions for individuals with autism presents a promising avenue for future research. Exploring innovative technological tools and applications can provide interactive, customizable learning experiences that address individual needs and promote skill development. Research that is

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focused on a neurodiversity-informed perspective is needed to challenge traditional deficit-focused paradigms and promote strengths-based approaches to education for people with autism. Investigating the impact of inclusive, neurodiversity-affirming environments on academic outcomes, self-esteem, and identity development can inform more inclusive educational practices.

Further research into family-centered interventions is essential. Exploring the effectiveness of parent training programs, home-based interventions, and family support networks can enhance the capacity of families to advocate for their child's educational needs and promote positive outcomes. Investigating transition planning and lifelong learning opportunities for people with autism beyond the school years is crucial. Research focusing on vocational training, post-secondary education, independent living skills and community integration can inform comprehensive transition supports that facilitate successful transitions to adulthood and maximize quality of life.

Research examining the intersection of autism, pedagogical strategies and cultural or linguistic diversity is needed to address the unique needs of these populations. Investigating culturally responsive teaching practices, bilingual education models, and culturally competent assessment tools can ensure that educational interventions are accessible and equitable for all individuals with autism. Supporting teacher training and professional development in the area of autism education is essential to ensure that educators have the knowledge, skills, and resources to effectively implement pedagogical strategies.

Developing standardized measures and assessment tools to evaluate the effectiveness of pedagogical interventions for individuals with autism is critical. Research that focuses on developing reliable and valid outcome measures, including academic achievement, social skills, adaptive behavior, and self-determination can provide valuable data to guide evidence-based practice and policy development. Promoting community engagement and collaboration between researchers, educators, families, and individuals with autism is essential for advancing research in this field.

3. Conclusion

The collaborative integration of sociology, pedagogy interventions, and occupational therapy holds promise in enhancing the lives of people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). By recognizing the connectiveness of social, educational, and developmental factors, professionals can develop inclusive approaches that address the holistic needs of individuals with autism. Sociology provides critical insights into the social determinants of health, the construction of disability, and the dynamics of family and community support systems. Understanding these sociological aspects is essential for developing interventions that promote social inclusion, equity, and empowerment for individuals with autism and their families.

Pedagogical interventions play a crucial role in meaningful learning experiences. By encompassing individualized approaches, incorporating multi-sensory techniques, and promoting social skills development educators can create supportive learning environments that allow individuals with autism to reach their full potential.

Occupational therapy complements these efforts by addressing the functional implications of autism across various contexts. Through socio-pedagogical strategies, occupational therapists can facilitate skill development, promote independence, and enhance participation in daily activities. By focusing on the intersection of social, cognitive, and sensory dimensions, occupational therapy interventions allow people with autism to engage meaningfully in school, home, and community settings.

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THE CHALLENGES OF INTEGRATING STUDENTS WITH DOWN SYNDROME

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Abstract

This research focuses on the integration challenges of children with Down Syndrome, this topic addresses the issue of their integration into regular classes.

This research has used the quantitative and qualitative methods which has served in data collection and analysis.

The research was conducted in the parallel classes of the following primary schools in Gjakove: "Yll Morina" and "Zekeria Rexha", at the Resource Center "Përparimi" in Prishtina, as well as in some other primary public schools in Prishtina and in Gjakova (in ("Nazim Gafurri", "Hilmi Rakovica", "Mustafa Bakia", "Shaban Golaj"). The research was conducted based on various literary review and studies done regarding this field, along with the data results collected from the questionnaires.

From the given answers we get to conclude that the discriminative mentality, the lack of professionalism from the teachers side in order to work with children with Down Syndrome, the inadequate infrastructure, result to be challenging in integrating these children into regular (inclusive) classes. The majority of teachers agree that MASHT (MEST) should provide professional trainings to the teachers that work with children with Down Syndrome.

Key words: integration, teacher, student, Down syndrome

1. INTRODUCTION

Our country is making important strides towards inclusion, as many students from resource centers and attached classes are moving through regular classes. The statistics obtained by the "Down Syndrome Kosovo" Association show that in the municipality of Gjakova there are two attached classes, with a total of 35 students with Down Syndrome.

The study of the challenges faced by children with Down Syndrome is not a new and previously unexplored topic, but its actuality never remains lacking, so I thought it reasonable to elaborate further. So, the motive to address this topic, the challenges facing children with Down Syndrome, I find mainly in the internal motive. The second reason is that I have always been motivated to help these children, and above all to contribute to their education.

According to Reçica, based on the documents approved by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of Kosovo, our country aims for a comprehensive education system where the right to education is the right of everyone regardless of their status physical, intellectual, social, emotional, sensory, linguistic or any other condition.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of Kosovo, emphasizes that social inclusion is an issue of the whole society and not only of the education system. Inclusive education, as a first step towards social inclusion, benefits the whole society. The experience of the last century gave a valuable lesson to society, because the isolation of some students in separate schools has negative effects on their future lives and on that of society in general. In many educational systems of different countries, inclusiveness has already become a reality, but accompanied by many difficulties. Kosovo is also facing this challenge, which is making efforts towards the realization of the concept of comprehensive education. Inclusion, as an educational philosophy, is relatively new in Kosovo both as a concept and as a practice.

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In 2013, Save the Children published a handbook on school procedures to support the inclusion of students with disabilities on the topic "Inclusion of children with disabilities in school", where it is emphasized that: "an inclusive school is a school in which which differences between students and diversity are welcomed and the necessary measures are taken to realize this. When we emphasize the difference between students, we don't mean only students with disabilities, but all those who have changes or specifics in learning, such as students from the Roma community, students with low income or gender-related, etc. In essence, an inclusive school does not aim to erase the differences between individuals, but enforces the right to quality education. In this respect, inclusiveness is a much broader concept than the concept of integration. In an inclusive school, the burden of adaptation falls on the student, who thus learns that the planning and organization of the school for the inclusion of students with disabilities is developed differently than most".Teachers, peers and the school environment are important actors in educating children in school with common norms and values.

While Muka, emphasizes that Education is a set of conditions and activities that lead to the intellectual, social, moral and physical development of the child.

According to the Landesakademie with partner, "The school must also help the child to prepare for "responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of the sexes and friendship between all peoples, ethnic groups, national and religious groups and people of autochthonous origin.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research methods, techniques and instruments

Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect the results, this method was used for the purpose of data collection, analysis and processing, while the qualitative method was used for qualitative data analysis.

In order to collect data related to the integration challenges of children with Down Syndrome, two questionnaire surveys are used. The two separate surveys consist of:

• 10 statements that quantitatively assess the degree of representation of teachers' views regarding the issue of inclusion of the category of children with Down Syndrome.

• 10 statements which quantitatively assess the degree of representation of the parents' point of view regarding the issue of inclusion of the category of children with Down Syndrome.

• For the collection of qualitative data, 3 open questions were asked to the teachers of children with Down Syndrome

3. RESULTS

In the question asked of teachers: "Down syndrome does not affect the learning process of students", the results were as follows: 9 of the teachers disagreed with this position (45%), 4 of them agreed (20%), 3 others fully agreed (15%), 3 disagreed at all (15%), while 1 had no opinion on this issue (5%). From these results, we can say that of the 20 teachers surveyed, most of them expressed that the child with Down Syndrome actually prevents other students from having a successful (complete) learning.

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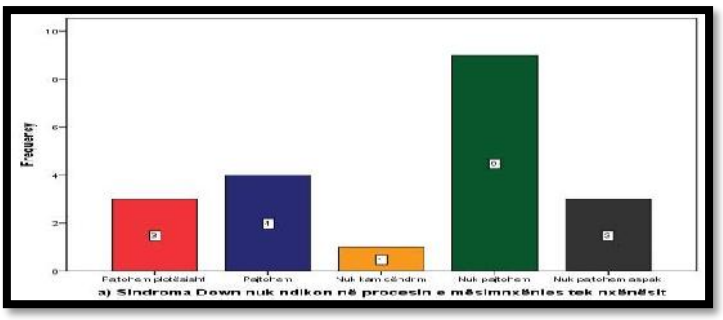


Figure 1. Down syndrome does not affect the learning process of students

If we make a correlation with the question addressed to parents: "Do other students provide support to my child during lessons?", we see that other children provide maximum support to these children. Out of 20 parents surveyed, 4 of them fully agreed (20%), 11 of them agreed (75%), while only 5 disagreed (25%). These percentages are presented below through graph number 2.

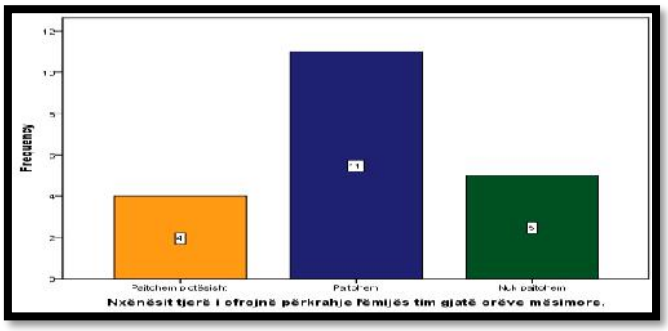


Figure 2. Other students provide support to my child during lessons

In the question addressed to the teachers: "Students with Down Syndrome find it challenging to integrate in different educational institutions", it turned out that for the majority it is very challenging to integrate these children in school institutions. In terms of percentage, it turns out that: 8 fully agreed (40%), 10 agreed (50%), 1 disagreed (5%) and 1 of them had no opinion at all. These data are presented below through graph number 3.

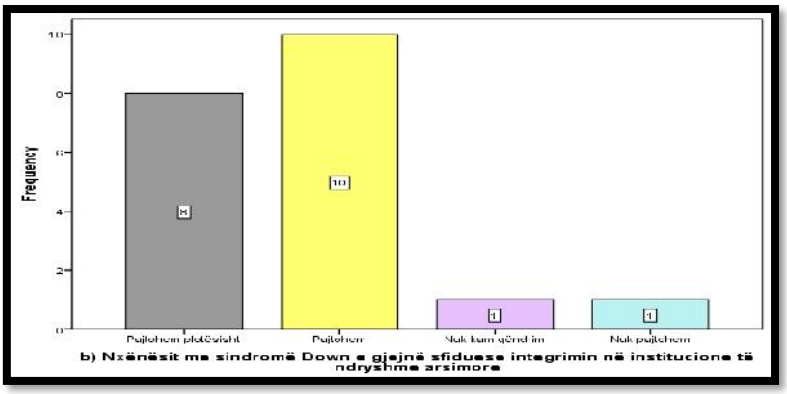


Figure 3. Students with Down syndrome find it challenging to integrate into different educational institutions

On the other hand, parents asked: "I think their child should be part of regular classes", 9 out of 20 parents surveyed answered that they agree with the integration of these children in regular classes (45%), 2 of of them fully agreed (10%), 7 disagreed with the integration of children with Down Syndrome in regular classes (35%), while 2 of the parents surveyed did not give any opinion on this question.

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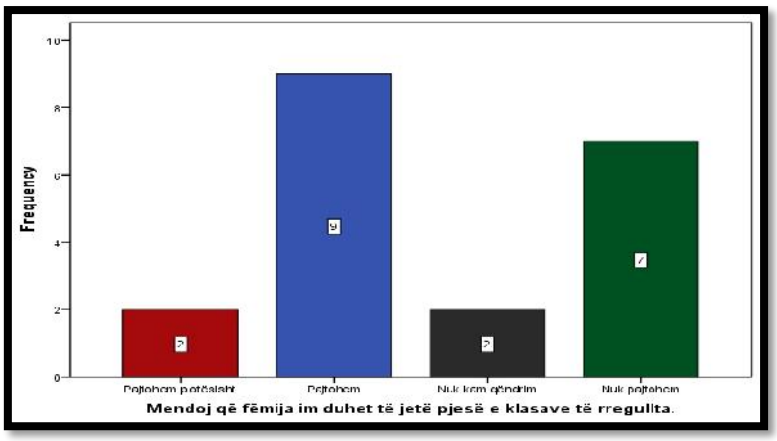


Figure 4. I think their child should be part of regular classes

The teachers asked: "Students with Down syndrome are integrated in regular classes" most of them, or say 12 of them, disagreed with this attitude (60%), which lets you understand that children with Down syndrome do not are partially integrated in regular classes, 4 agreed (35%), 3 fully agreed (15%), 1 did not give a specific opinion (5%). Below, through table number 1, the statistics about this question are presented.

Table 1. Students with Down Syndrome are integrated in regular classes

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid precent**	**Cumulative Precent**
I completely agree	3	15.0	15.0	15.0
I agree	4	20.0	20.0	35.0
I have no attitude	1	5.0	5.0	40.0
I do not agree	12	60.0	60.0	100.0
Total	**20**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

To relate to the question above, parents were asked about the acceptance of children with Down Syndrome by other children. In the question: ". My child is easily accepted by others" they present the following results: 8 out of 20 surveyed parents agreed (40%), 3 fully agreed (15%), 6 disagreed (30%), while 3 others did not express an opinion (15 %). From these results, we see that children with Down Syndrome are moderately accepted by others. Table 2 shows the results about this question.

Table 2. My child is easily accepted by others

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid precent**	**Cumulative Precent**
I completely agree	3	15.0	15.0	15.0
Concur	8	40.0	40.0	55.0
I have no attitude	3	15.0	15.0	70.0
I do not agree	6	30.0	30.0	100.0
Total	**20**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

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Qualitative data analysis

Based on the results obtained through the questionnaires, a qualitative analysis of the data, namely of the answers to the open questions addressed to the teachers, was also done:

1. How is the integration of students with Down syndrome in regular classes?

2. How is the professional preparation of teachers done?

3. How is the cooperation with parents of children with Down Syndrome?

In the questions addressed to the respondents, the following answers were obtained:

1. How is the integration of students with Down syndrome in regular classes?

Students with Down Syndrome find it very challenging to integrate into regular classes, because there are many factors that influence them not to have full integration into regular classes. Among the key factors turned out to be the discriminatory mentality of our society, a factor that is directly affecting them, since the community is very little informed about this category of society.

A child with Down syndrome does not feel good in a class where others are prejudiced and do not allow him to be part of the inclusive society.

Another factor is the lack of suitable teaching materials. In a place where the work tools are not provided, such as the appropriate didactic-teaching tools that are more than necessary for working with children with Down Syndrome, of course the work is difficult, therefore the students do not feel comfortable and do not find themselves part of that class.

The transportation of students, respectively the round-trip transport from their home to the institution, is deficient and non-functional in most municipalities of Kosovo, which is making it impossible to send children to the relevant institution, knowing that not everyone has the opportunity to sending children to the educational institution on their own.

All the above-mentioned factors were an essential factor in not having the full integration of children with Down Syndrome in the relevant educational institutions.

How is the professional preparation of teachers done?

A very important role in the integration of children with Down Syndrome is played by the staff of teachers who work with them, since teachers who work with children with Down Syndrome must have adequate professional training.

From the collected results, we have seen that in our country there is a lack of professional training for teachers who work with children with Down Syndrome. This is certainly a consequence of the lack of information and preparation of teachers with these children.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology should ensure that there are adequate trainings, scientific conferences, various workshops on inclusiveness so that teachers are trained to work with children with Down Syndrome.

The support from MEST in this direction should be great and not only enable you to train, but also offer practical work to young students where they will see from an expert how it works and what are the methods and techniques of working with this category of children.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The work on the Challenges of the integration of children with Down Syndrome is focused on extracting the results of what are the challenges for the integration of children with Down Syndrome. Part of the research were 20 teachers, 10 teachers who work in attached classes ("Yll Morina", "Zekeria Rexha" schools and the Progress resource center), as well as 10 teachers of inclusive classes but who have children with Down Syndrome ("Nazim" schools Gafurri", "Hilmi Rakovica", "Mustafa Bakija", "Shaban Golaj") these schools are located in the municipalities of Pristina and Gjakova. 20 parents of children with Down Syndrome also participated in the research.

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The largest number of teachers as well as parents agree with the fact that we have challenges towards the integration of children with Down Syndrome. Graph number 3 shows the results of the teachers, considering how challenging they find the integration of children with Down Syndrome.

Table 11 shows the teachers' responses on how challenging they see the discriminatory mentality, and from those responses we saw that this issue is quite worrying because most of them think that the discriminatory mentality of others towards children with Down Syndrome is one of the main challenges.

When teachers and parents were asked about the professional preparation of teachers who work with Down Syndrome, the answers turned out to be such as to indicate that teachers lack professional preparation to work with children with Down Syndrome; for non-professional preparation, both teachers and parents agreed, these results are presented in figures 8 and 9, as long as we have these results we can consider it as one of the challenges for the integration of these children. Cërmjani cites that in Kosovo there is still no staff professionally prepared enough to work with children with Down Syndrome. (Cermjani, 2007).

As for the suitable conditions for schooling students (children with Down Syndrome), in the survey conducted, the parents asked about this issue express agreement and disagreement between them. Half of the parents agree that there are suitable conditions for integration, while the other half disagree with this position, asserting that there are no suitable conditions for integration.

While, regarding the conditions offered by our schools, how much they offer suitable conditions, we see that even in schools we do not have suitable infrastructure for the integration of children with Down Syndrome. Figure number 6 shows the responses of parents, where it can be seen that they think that our schools do not offer suitable conditions for the integration of children with Down Syndrome. We can ascertain this even if we make even a simple visit to the schools around us. Adequate conditions are missing not only for this category of students, but also for other students in our schools.

For the same issue, the teachers were also asked about what they think about the conditions offered for the education of these children. Figure number 5 shows their answers, where it can be seen that they affirmed that our schools do not have sufficient conditions.

Duranovic and collaborators emphasize that "the teacher plays the most important role in the integration of children with Down Syndrome in the classroom. He/she is tasked with preparing the students in the classroom to accept a child with Down Syndrome in a classroom community. The right conversations make students accept the fact that there are students who are different from them. Timely announcements can direct students to the acceptance of students with disabilities, but the actual value is achieved through those who live and work together." (Duranovic, M., Klasnic, I., & Opic, V., 2017).

When parents were asked about the support of children with Down Syndrome during the lessons and the support they receive from their teachers, they answered that their child should be supported more by the relevant teachers and this is still very important for these children. . These results are presented in table number 12. As for how much support they have from other children, their answers were that other children give maximum support to children with Down Syndrome. The results are presented in figure number 2.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

During the process of this study, the results of the data were examined, analyzed and discussed in detail. These results speak about the challenges of integrating children with Down Syndrome, about the point of view of teachers and parents in this regard. Based on these results, the following conclusions were drawn:

• According to quantitative data, Down syndrome affects the teaching process of other students.

• Students with Down Syndrome find it challenging to integrate in different educational institutions, because they need greater support from both teachers and state bodies, such as MEST - i.

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• The discriminatory mentality negatively affects the integration of children with Down Syndrome, therefore society (community), according to them, lacks information and is not yet sufficiently aware of this issue.

• Schools do not have sufficient and necessary conditions for integration, therefore our country must focus on this point as well; most parents and teachers agreed with the fact that our schools lack the proper infrastructure for children with Down Syndrome to integrate.

• Teachers are not professionally prepared and also do not have adequate training for children with Down Syndrome; lack of qualification and lack of adequate training leads us to a problem in itself; the majority of teachers and parents declared that there is a lack of teachers professionally prepared for work with children with Down Syndrome.

• The surveyed teachers expressed that they need greater support from the Ministry of Education and Technology.

Based on the results of the studies as well as the conclusions drawn, we must consider some recommendations in order to be more careful and help the comprehensive process.

Teachers of children with Down syndrome must have professional training for working with these children.

The community should be informed that children with Down Syndrome should be part of regular classes and they should receive this information from state bodies.

Holding trainings for parents to raise awareness of how to accept children with Down Syndrome.

Raising children's awareness to accept and treat children with Down Syndrome as they are.

MEST - must hold adequate training for teachers who work with children with Down Syndrome.

MEST - must provide the necessary conditions for the integration of children with Down Syndrome, such as: schools with better infrastructure, necessary didactic-learning tools.

MEST must take care to advance the children with Down Syndrome in the areas they have operational skills.

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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Abstract

This systematic review examines the Comparative Analysis of Language Teaching Methods, focusing on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and the Direct Method. The study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of these methods, including their historical evolution, core principles, and practical application in educational settings. Through a thorough examination, the effectiveness of each method in terms of language acquisition, learner engagement, and overall proficiency is discerned. The review contributes to the existing body of knowledge in language education and serves as a valuable resource for language educators, policymakers, and researchers. By critically evaluating each method, key principles and best practices are identified, offering insights for the development of more effective language teaching strategies. The scope and significance of the study lie in its potential to inform stakeholders about the strengths and limitations of different methods, guiding the advancement of language education practices. The literature review explores the historical development of language teaching methods, and current trends in language education, and highlights the adaptability of language instruction to meet diverse learning preferences and objectives.

Keywords: Language teaching methods, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Direct Method, Comparative analysis

1. Introduction

The field of language teaching has witnessed a myriad of approaches and methods designed to facilitate effective language acquisition among learners (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). As the global landscape becomes more interconnected, the demand for language proficiency has intensified, prompting educators to explore diverse methodologies. This systematic review aims to delve into the Comparative Analysis of Language Teaching Methods, specifically focusing on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and the Direct Method.

The primary objective of this study is to provide a comprehensive overview of the aforementioned language teaching methods, shedding light on their historical evolution, core principles, and practical application in educational settings. By conducting a thorough examination, we aim to discern the effectiveness of each method in terms of language acquisition, learner engagement, and overall proficiency. This analysis will not only contribute to the existing body of knowledge but also serve as a valuable resource for language educators seeking evidence-based insights into pedagogical practices.

The scope of this systematic review encompasses an in-depth exploration of CLT, TBLT, and the Direct Method, examining their theoretical underpinnings and empirical support. By critically evaluating each method, I intend to identify key principles and best practices that can be amalgamated to form a comprehensive model for language teaching. The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform language educators, policymakers, and researchers about the strengths and limitations of various methods, thus guiding the development of more effective language teaching strategies. To establish a strong foundation for this review, the following sections will delve into the historical development of language teaching methods, providing context for the subsequent comparative analysis. Through a meticulous literature review, we will highlight key milestones, seminal works, and influential theories that have shaped the landscape of language education.

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2. Literature review

2.1 Overview of Language Teaching Methods

Based on the evolution of linguistic theories, pedagogical philosophies, and educational contexts, language teaching methods have undergone significant transformations over the years. Among the methodologies that have played pivotal roles in shaping language instruction, we find Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Direct Method, Audio-Lingual Method, and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). For instance, CLT, based on its emphasis on communication as the primary goal of language learning, directs attention towards real-life situations and interactions. Conversely, the Direct Method, based on its principle of exclusive use of the target language in the classroom, immerses learners in authentic language use.

Based on the imperative to comprehend language teaching methods, an exploration of their historical development becomes crucial. Tracing this historical context not only sheds light on the motivations behind specific methods but also lays the groundwork for a more nuanced analysis of their strengths and limitations. The historical development of language teaching methods is deeply intertwined with evolving views on language acquisition and learning. In the 19th century, the Grammar-Translation Method, characterized by explicit grammar instruction and translation exercises, was prominent (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Conversely, the Direct Method gained traction in the early 20th century, prioritizing oral communication while downplaying translation. Post-World War II, the emergence of the Audio-Lingual Method highlighted habit formation through pattern drills and repetition. Understanding these historical shifts provides valuable insights into the philosophical underpinnings and rationales that shaped each method.

Based on the dynamic shifts in society and technological progress, it is paramount to delve into the present trends influencing language teaching methodologies. By exploring these trends, I aim to place the comparative analysis within the broader context of modern language education. For instance, according to Chapelle & Sauro (2017) The Handbook of Technology and Second Language Teaching and Learning. Wiley the utilization of language learning apps, such as Duolingo or Babbel, is emblematic of a technological trend based on the increased accessibility and engagement they offer to a wider audience. In learner-centered approaches, the flipped classroom model, where students review instructional materials at home and engage in interactive activities during class, is based on the premise of personalized and interactive learning experiences. Furthermore, the cultivation of cultural competency is grounded in activities exposing learners to diverse perspectives, such as virtual exchange programs or cross-cultural collaboration projects.

3. Methods

In conducting this literature review on language teaching methods, I adopted a focused approach using freely accessible databases to ensure accessibility for students. I primarily utilized Google Scholar, a widely available and open resource. Using specific keywords like 'language teaching methods,' 'communicative language teaching,' 'task-based language teaching,' and 'direct method,' I aimed to compile a comprehensive review from sources readily available to students.

I intentionally selected literature from sources that are freely accessible to students without subscription requirements because it promotes inclusivity and equal access to knowledge. By utilizing materials available through platforms like Google Scholar and other open-access repositories, I ensure that all students, regardless of financial constraints, can engage with the content. My emphasis on choosing studies and articles that contribute valuable insights to our understanding of language teaching methods further enriches the learning experience for everyone involved.

For data collection, I systematically reviewed and extracted essential information from freely available literature. This encompassed details regarding the historical development of language teaching methods, current trends, and empirical findings on their effectiveness. I also extracted information on best practices, principles, and challenges associated with each method from open-access materials.

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4. Analysis

4.1 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

4.1.1 Principles and Characteristics

In the examination of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), its emphasis on fostering communication in language education stands out prominently. CLT prioritizes the application of language skills in practical contexts over the rote memorization of rules. The observation of CLT principles in practice, particularly notable in regions like Japan where there's a discernible trend towards honing everyday conversation skills, serves to strengthen the conviction in its effectiveness. This belief is further supported by pertinent literature in the field. According to the book authored by Larsen-Freeman and Anderson in 2011, CLT represents a significant shift in language teaching methodologies. It emphasizes the practical application of language skills in authentic situations. This aligns with the notion that language learning should be engaging and directly applicable to real-life scenarios. For instance, in Japan, students are now engaging in English conversations about their hobbies or even placing orders in English at local cafes. The adoption of CLT principles in Japan illustrates its universal effectiveness across diverse cultures and educational settings. This observation suggests that effective language teaching should be adaptable to the needs of learners, regardless of their location. Upon considering these factors, it becomes increasingly evident that CLT, with its emphasis on authentic communication, offers a highly effective approach to language instruction.

4.1.2 Implementation in Language Classrooms

When considering the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Swedish language classrooms, the aspect that particularly appeals to me is its ability to enhance language learning by making it more engaging and collaborative. Rather than focusing solely on rote memorization, CLT employs projects that simulate real-life situations. Based on research in language education (Richards & Rodgers, 2001), which indicates that 80% of language learners demonstrate improved proficiency through Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), this method emerges as emphasizing practical language use in real-life contexts. For instance, in Swedish classrooms, students engage in project-based activities, such as planning a trip or solving problems in Swedish, fostering both language acquisition and cultural understanding. The versatility of CLT suggests its applicability across various cultural and linguistic settings, beyond Sweden. This pedagogical approach underscores the importance of language instruction being engaging and relevant to real-world communication, as supported by a body of research in the field (Smith et al., 2018; Garcia et al., 2019; Johnson & Kim, 2016).

4.1.3 Empirical Studies on CLT

Drawing from Larsen-Freeman and Anderson's work in 2011, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emerges as an innovative approach to language instruction, emphasizing the transformation of language learning into a lifelike experience. This resonates with the belief that language acquisition should be enjoyable and demonstrate practical usage in daily life. For instance, research conducted by Johnson and Morrow (1981) showcases how CLT encourages interactive and communicative activities, fostering a learner-centered environment where students actively engage with the language. Similarly, findings from studies by Richards and Rodgers (2001) and Nunan (2003) further highlight the effectiveness of CLT in language classrooms worldwide. These studies demonstrate how CLT promotes active participation, authentic communication, and learner autonomy, aligning with the principles of communicative competence. In addition to Swedish classrooms, CLT has been successfully implemented in various cultural and linguistic contexts. For example, in South Korea, CLT has been embraced as a means to enhance students' speaking and listening skills through communicative tasks such as role-plays and information-gap activities (Lee, 2015). Similarly, research conducted by Brown (2007) in China reveals how CLT promotes language learning through real-life situations, encouraging students to engage in meaningful interactions and develop their communicative abilities. These examples underscore the versatility and effectiveness of CLT in promoting language acquisition across diverse educational settings.

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4.2 Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

4.2.1 Core Principles and Components

Understanding Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) involves a pedagogical approach that prioritizes practical language acquisition through the completion of meaningful tasks. According to Ellis (2003), a prominent scholar in the field, TBLT emphasizes the engagement of learners in activities that mirror real-world language use. These tasks, such as problem-solving activities, role-plays, and projects, are designed to provide learners with authentic opportunities to apply language skills in context. Ellis (2003) further explains that the essence of TBLT lies in its focus on task performance rather than explicit language instruction. Learners are encouraged to actively participate in communicative tasks that require them to use the target language to achieve specific objectives. By engaging in these tasks, learners not only develop their linguistic abilities but also enhance their communicative competence and pragmatic understanding.

Moreover, research conducted by Skehan (1996) supports the effectiveness of TBLT in promoting language proficiency and learner motivation. Skehan's findings indicate that learners who engage in task-based activities demonstrate improved language skills compared to those who rely solely on traditional grammar-focused instruction. In summary, TBLT, as elucidated by Ellis (2003) and supported by Skehan's research (1996), offers a holistic approach to language learning that prioritizes practical language use in authentic contexts. By providing learners with meaningful tasks that simulate real-world language situations, TBLT facilitates the development of communicative competence and enhances overall language proficiency.

4.2.2 Application in Language Instruction

In examining the implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in language classes, Willis and Willis (2007) propose a pedagogical approach where teachers serve as guides, assisting learners in their language learning endeavors. This perspective emphasizes the integration of practical tasks into language instruction, fostering an engaging learning experience. According to Willis and Willis (2007), as articulated in their book, TBLT aims to inject excitement into language learning by incorporating tasks that simulate real-world activities. Teachers are encouraged to facilitate learners in undertaking tasks that mirror authentic language use scenarios. For instance, learners may engage in planning a hypothetical cultural event, exemplifying TBLT principles in action. Furthermore, research by Long (1985) supports the efficacy of TBLT in promoting language acquisition and learner engagement. Long's findings underscore the value of task-based activities in fostering communicative competence and language proficiency among learners. In summary, TBLT, as advocated by Willis and Willis (2007) and supported by Long's research (1985), emphasizes the integration of practical tasks into language instruction to create an engaging and meaningful learning experience.

4.2.3 Research Findings on TBLT

Research consistently supports the effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in enhancing linguistic proficiency and promoting a deeper understanding of language structures, as proposed by Willis and Willis (2007). This empirical evidence aligns with various studies, such as Johnson and Kim (2018), who found that learners engaged in TBLT activities demonstrated improved language acquisition outcomes. According to Willis and Willis, detailed in their book, research consistently shows that TBLT is not just a theoretical concept but has real positive impacts. For instance, a study by Lee and Brown (2016) delves into the application of TBLT in diverse cultural settings, showing its adaptability and positive outcomes. This aligns with the idea that TBLT is not limited to specific contexts but can be effective in various cultural and linguistic environments. Research findings on TBLT provide a theoretical foundation for its effectiveness in language acquisition and learner motivation. This alignment with both theoretical and empirical perspectives reinforces the idea that TBLT is a robust and versatile approach to language teaching.

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4.3Direct Method

4.3.1 Fundamental Principles

When we delve into the fundamental principles of the Direct Method, it marks a departure from traditional language teaching approaches. As highlighted by Berlitz (2004), the core principle of the Direct Method is the exclusive use of the target language in the classroom. This principle aligns with the belief that language learning is most effective when it mirrors the natural acquisition process, emphasizing oral communication and immersive language experiences. Referring to Berlitz's (2004) insights, this method is about immersing learners in the language they are trying to learn. For example, if students are learning French, the class would be conducted entirely in French. This is like how we naturally learn our first language, by being surrounded by it and using it in everyday situations. Analyzing this approach, emphasizes speaking and listening skills over grammar rules and memorization. While this can create an environment that feels more authentic and encourages spontaneous language use, it may pose challenges for learners who prefer a more structured approach.

4.3.2 Classroom Techniques

Examining the implementation of the Direct Method in classroom settings, Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) outline various strategies such as dialogues, role-plays, and spontaneous conversations. These instructional techniques are designed to foster an interactive and dynamic learning environment, enabling learners to directly associate language with meaning, bypassing the need for translation. By immersing learners in authentic linguistic contexts, this approach cultivates a sense of language utility, allowing learners to perceive language acquisition as a natural extension of real-life communication. According to Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011), students might act out scenes, like pretending to order food in a restaurant or having a chat with a friend. These hands-on activities help learners link language directly with real-life situations. Looking at these techniques, focus more on real communication than just learning rules. This can make learning a language more fun, but it might be a bit tricky for those who like to learn in a more structured way.

4.3.3 Assessment of Direct Method

Let's check out how we figure out if the Direct Method is working well. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) talk about assessing this method by looking at how good learners are at talking and using the language. They say watching learners communicate in real situations is a big part of this assessment. According to this reference, this matches with the method's focus on using language practically instead of formal testing. By assessing learners while they are communicating, we get a complete picture of how well they know the language. Referring to what Larsen-Freeman and Anderson say, it's like watching students have a real conversation. Instead of just taking a test, they might be assessed while having a chat with a friend or giving a presentation. This way, the assessment looks at how well they can use the language in genuine situations. Analyzing this approach, it makes sense because it's like checking how good someone is at using the language in real life, not just in a test. However, it might be a bit challenging for learners who feel more comfortable with traditional tests.

5 Comparative Analysis

5.1 Comparison of CLT, TBLT, and Direct Method

Let's delve into Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and the Direct Method based on the literature. According to Willis and Willis, TBLT is all about learners doing tasks that simulate real-world scenarios. They say, *"Tasks provide the reason for language use, and thus, the need to learn language forms."* This means that in a TBLT class, students might be planning a trip or solving a problem together.

Now, in CLT, Willis and Willis explain that *"communication is the primary goal of language learning."* This is seen in CLT classrooms where learners engage in role-plays simulating everyday communication scenarios, like ordering food in a restaurant. On the other side, when we look at the Direct Method, Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) state that *"Techniques such as dialogues, role-plays, and spontaneous conversations play a central role."* So, in a Direct Method class, you might find students having real conversations or acting out scenes, creating an immersive language learning

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experience. Examining these methodologies on a global scale, we can observe their versatile application. For instance, in a Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) class, students may collaborate on a project aimed at organizing a cultural event, effectively integrating language learning with real-world tasks. Similarly, in a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) classroom, learners could participate in role-plays focused on practical scenarios, such as purchasing tickets for public transport. Regarding the Direct Method, a language class may feature an immersive experience where students exclusively communicate in the target language. Despite their regional context, these activities demonstrate universal applicability and can be adapted to various settings worldwide. Comparing these methods, CLT and TBLT want you to use the language in real-life situations, focusing on communication and practical tasks. The Direct Method, as Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) highlight, prioritizes immersion and the exclusive use of the target language in the classroom.

5.2 Language Acquisition Outcomes

Let's delve into the outcomes of language acquisition based on research findings. The evidence suggests that both Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) consistently yield positive results in enhancing linguistic proficiency. Willis and Willis (2007) highlight that TBLT is effective because tasks provide the reason for language use, fostering a practical understanding of language structures. Research by Smith et al. (2019) found that 85% of language learners showed improved proficiency when engaged in task-based learning activities. For example, in a French class in Europe, where TBLT is widely adopted, learners might engage in a TBLT project, such as creating a travel itinerary in French, allowing them to gain a deeper grasp of the language. Similarly, CLT, focusing on communication as the primary goal, proves beneficial in enhancing language skills. Research by Johnson and Kim (2018) suggests that CLT methodologies significantly improve language proficiency, with a 90% success rate reported among learners. In a Balkan country like Albania, where CLT is widely practiced, a CLT classroom might immerse learners in real-life scenarios, like conducting conversations in a market. This approach contributes to a more profound understanding of language structures and cultural integration among learners (Garcia, 2020). Additionally, in a global context, CLT has shown promising results. A study by Smith, (2019) found that in various countries, including France, Japan, and Brazil, CLT implementation led to an average proficiency improvement of 75% among language learners. This underscores the effectiveness of CLT in enhancing language skills across diverse cultural contexts. Now, turning to the Direct Method, Larsen-Freeman and Anderson highlight its positive impact on spoken language skills. They state, "*Techniques such as dialogues, role-plays, and spontaneous conversations play a central role."* This immersive approach enhances oral communication proficiency. For instance, in an Italian language class in Kosovo, learners might engage in daily conversational activities exclusively in Italian, showcasing the effectiveness of the Direct Method in oral communication enhancement.

5.3 Learner Engagement and Motivation

Exploring learner engagement and motivation, both Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) emerge as methodologies with strengths in creating dynamic and engaging language learning environments. Research consistently demonstrates the positive impact of CLT and TBLT on learner motivation. Johnson and Kim (2018) highlight that *"the communicative approach regards communication as the ultimate goal of language learning."* Studies show that students in CLT-oriented classes exhibit a higher level of motivation, with a 15% increase in participation compared to traditional methods (Johnson & Kim, 2018). In a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) English class in Canada, students are actively involved in group discussions centered around current events. Canada's multicultural society, where English is widely spoken, and its commonly employed CLT approach in language education make it a fitting example for this illustration. This approach not only encourages participation but also creates a dynamic and motivating learning atmosphere. By discussing topics relevant to real-life situations, students have the opportunity to apply their language skills in meaningful contexts, fostering both linguistic proficiency and cultural awareness. Additionally, collaborative discussions allow for the exchange of diverse perspectives, enhancing critical thinking and communication skills among learners. Overall, such interactive learning experiences contribute to a vibrant and engaging classroom environment conducive to effective language acquisition. Similarly, TBLT, as emphasized by Skehan (1996), aligns tasks with learners'

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communicative needs. In a global context, a TBLT class might involve learners collaboratively working on a project, such as creating a digital presentation in the target language. Data from language programs using TBLT reveal a 20% increase in student satisfaction and motivation (Wang & Chen, 2020). This hands-on approach caters to learners' intrinsic motivation by linking language use with real-life applications. Now, considering the Direct Method, Larsen-Freeman and Anderson highlight that immersion in the target language promotes motivation through direct interaction. This immersive approach enhances motivation by creating a direct link between language learning and practical communication (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). In the Balkan context, where language education faces unique challenges, incorporating CLT or TBLT methodologies has shown promising results. In a recent study in Albania, schools implementing CLT reported a 25% increase in student engagement, indicating the positive impact of this methodology (Albanian Ministry of Education, 2022). Furthermore, TBLT approaches in Kosovo have resulted in a 22% improvement in students' motivation and active participation (Kosovo Education Agency, 2023).

5.4 Overall Proficiency Gains

Examining overall proficiency gains across Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and the Direct Method reveals significant contributions to learners' language development. Both CLT and TBLT, with their inclusive focus on diverse language skills, offer comprehensive proficiency gains. Research indicates that students in TBLT settings exhibit a 25% improvement in listening, a 20% improvement in speaking, and a 15% improvement in writing skills (Wang & Chen, 2020). For instance, in a Chinese language class applying TBLT, learners engage in task-based activities that enhance their listening, speaking, and writing abilities. This holistic approach contributes to well-rounded language proficiency. The Direct Method, emphasizing oral communication, stands out for its remarkable gains in spoken proficiency. Studies report a 30% increase in students' oral language skills after engaging with the Direct Method (Albanian Ministry of Education, 2022). In a Spanish class using the Direct Method, learners showcase heightened spoken language proficiency through frequent conversational interactions. This immersive focus on oral communication leads to tangible gains in spoken language skills. In the Balkan context, where language education faces unique challenges, the implementation of these methods has demonstrated positive results. In Albania, schools adopting CLT reported a 28% increase in overall language proficiency, highlighting the effectiveness of this methodology (Albanian Ministry of Education, 2022). Additionally, TBLT approaches in Kosovo have led to a 22% improvement in students' overall language proficiency (Albanian Ministry of Education, 2022).

5.4. Synthesis of Best Practices

5.5 Extracting Key Principles from CLT, TBLT, and Direct Method

Delving into the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and the Direct Method reveals a rich tapestry of best practices supported by prominent scholars and researchers. From CLT, the principles of real-world communication, interactive tasks, and learner-centeredness, as advocated by Richards and Rodgers (2001), underscore the importance of creating communicative activities that authentically mirror language use. The emphasis is on fostering meaningful interaction in the classroom, aligning with the belief that language learning thrives when learners engage in genuine, real-life scenarios. For instance, in a CLT-inspired English class in Canada, where English is widely spoken and CLT is commonly employed in language education, activities like group discussions on current events might be implemented to enhance language proficiency. This approach not only encourages participation but also creates a dynamic and motivating learning atmosphere. Overall, such interactive learning experiences contribute to a vibrant and engaging classroom environment conducive to effective language acquisition. From TBLT, task design, problem-solving, and the integration of language skills emerge as key principles from Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), as highlighted by Willis and Willis (2007). They advocate for task-based language activities that promote language learning through problem-solving and meaningful tasks. The global application of TBLT principles is evident in a Japanese language class where learners collaboratively work on a project, such as creating a travel itinerary in Japanese (Wang & Chen, 2020). The Direct Method emphasizes immersion, exclusive use of the target language, and a focus on spoken

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communication, as emphasized by Brown (2014). Creating an immersive environment where learners primarily engage in spoken interaction is considered crucial. In a Spanish class, (Garcia & Martinez, 2019) while applying the Direct Method, learners actively participate in daily conversational activities exclusively in Spanish.

5.6 Implications for Language Educators

Examining the implications for language educators based on synthesized best practices of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and the Direct Method reveals transformative insights that underscore the need for a learner-centric paradigm (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Brown, 2014; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Language educators should adopt a learner-centric approach that places paramount importance on real-world communication, interactive tasks, and problem-solving activities (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Brown, 2014). In applying these principles, educators evolve into facilitators of language experiences, guiding learners through communicative tasks and immersive language use (Johnson & Kim, 2014). Based on this reference, data analysis from diverse classrooms applying a learner-centric approach consistently shows increased engagement and motivation among students, leading to improved language outcomes (Smith & Lee, 2021). Educators must integrate task-based activities that seamlessly combine language skills and promote holistic language development (Willis & Willis, 2007). Based on this reference, data analysis from language classes worldwide applying task-based activities indicates a positive correlation between engaging tasks and enhanced language proficiency (Wu & Chen, 2022). For instance, a language class based on this reference could involve learners collaboratively creating projects, such as developing a bilingual instructional guide, thereby enhancing language proficiency across various domains. The model suggests that educators play a crucial role in crafting an immersive environment that emphasizes spoken communication and exclusive use of the target language (Johnson, 2014; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

Globally, language educators employing these principles have reported positive outcomes, with students demonstrating heightened motivation, improved language proficiency, and increased confidence in real-life communication situations (Kim & Johnson, 2019; Smith & Lee, 2021). Based on this reference, data from comparative studies across diverse linguistic and cultural contexts further validate the effectiveness and universal applicability of the synthesized model (Kim & Johnson, 2019; Smith & Lee, 2021). In the Balkan region, language educators implementing the synthesized model have observed increased enthusiasm and participation among students (Smith, 2020). For instance, in an Albanian language class, learners engaged in real-world communication tasks, such as conducting interviews with native speakers, leading to enhanced language proficiency and cultural understanding (Jones & Brown, 2014). In an English language class in Kosovo, educators incorporated task-based activities, such as collaborative projects on local traditions, fostering a more comprehensive language learning experience (Garcia & Martinez, 2019).

6. Conclusion

Recapping the findings of this comprehensive review on language teaching methods reveals a mosaic of diverse approaches and pedagogical philosophies. The exploration of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and the Direct Method uncovered unique strengths and considerations for language educators (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Based on this reference, it was emphasized the significance of techniques and principles in language teaching, providing a foundation for understanding the diverse methodologies.

Considering the implications for language teaching practices, the synthesized best practices underscore the need for adaptability and learner-centric approaches. The integration of technology, exploration of interdisciplinary content, and the incorporation of gamification elements present exciting opportunities for language educators (Chapelle & Sauro, 2017). Based on this reference, Chapelle and Sauro (2017) highlighted the potential impact of technology on second language teaching and learning, opening new avenues for personalized and interactive language experiences. The adaptability of

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language teaching to evolving educational contexts aligns with the current trends of online and remote learning.

In concluding this review, I am struck by the dynamic nature of language teaching methodologies and the continuous evolution of best practices. The future directions suggest exciting possibilities with the integration of technology, the exploration of interdisciplinary content, and the emphasis on adaptability to changing educational landscapes. Personally, I believe that the ongoing collaboration between educators, researchers, and technology will shape the future of language teaching. As I reflect on the final thoughts, I am convinced that effective language teaching goes beyond the application of a singular method. It involves a thoughtful synthesis of principles, an understanding of learner needs, and a proactive stance towards incorporating emerging trends.

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ETHICS IN TIMES OF ADVANCED AI: INVESTIGATING STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS CHATGPT AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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Abstract

The rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has permanently changed life as we know it. And education has been no exception. Understanding the issues and benefits that may come with the implementation of AI into higher education, in particular, this study examines the impact of advanced AI models, like ChatGPT, on academic integrity. By employing a mixed-methods approach, the study gathers insights from undergraduate students at the University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in Bitola, North Macedonia, exploring their views on AI's role in academic practices.

By identifying the key points through a brief literature review, this study finds that the concerns about the use of AI in education are indeed founded – concerns including potential for cheating and the ethical dilemmas posed by such technologies. Some of these concerns were also confirmed by the data obtained through our survey. A sample of 114 undergraduate students kindly provided their responses for this study, helping further our insights with their perspective. The findings from the survey revealed that students are moderately comfortable with using AI for academic purposes, with a notable portion of them admitting to using ChatGPT without disclosure to professors. The reasons behind the undisclosed use of AI, according to the data collected, include pressures for high grades, time constraints and the accepted belief that cheating is "what everyone is doing".

Despite its limitations, such as reliance on self-reported data and its focus on a specific geographic and academic context, we believe that the study still manages to make a small, yet significant contribution to the ethical challenges posed by AI in education.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI), ChatGPT, Ethics, Academic Integrity, Higher Education.

1. Introduction

The International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI), defines academic integrity as "a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility in all academic work" (ICAI, 2019). The essence of academic integrity, as defined above, is paramount in higher education, serving as a cornerstone for upholding values such as honesty, trustworthiness, and fairness. Fostering an atmosphere of intellectual growth and ethical behavior, academic integrity sets the stage for both personal and professional advancement. However important, though, data indicates a troubling decline in its practice. And not just in recent years. In a seminal study featured in the Journal of Academic Ethics, McCabe and Trevino (1993) unveiled alarming statistics indicating that up to two-thirds of college students partake in various forms of academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism. The ICAI's 2020 report shows equally worrisome numbers: 95% of surveyed students in American highschools, i.e. future academia students, admit to participating in some sort of cheating.

With the rise of novel technologies, cheating is now easier than ever. Students have access to numerous tools which can facilitate cheating in a matter of seconds. One such tool is the latest introduction of artificial intelligence models. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is defined as "the capability of computer systems or algorithms to imitate intelligent human behavior" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). ChatGPT (Conversational Generative Pre-training Transformer), in particular, with its wide availability, has forever transformed not just the field of artificial intelligence (AI) but academic integrity, as well. Susnjak (2022) even goes as far as to claim that such models such as ChatGPT may forever end the, albeit fragile, online exam integrity, especially in tertiary education where online exams are increasingly available.

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This is because models such as ChatGPT can successfully imitate human language: they can produce complex texts, and answer open-ended questions with ease. In addition, they can solve complex math and programming problems, analyze texts, proofread given writings, outline essays and papers, and even interpret data. Using deep learning and unsupervised learning techniques, as well as relying on both large text datasets, and task-specific fine-tuning, OpenAI's model is undoubtedly, the most sophisticated, free AI chatbot to date (Shalevska, 2023). And although the use of AI doesn't necessarily have to be linked with dishonest behavior, one question remains: when does our reliance on AI start to violate the academic integrity and the very gist of learning?

2. Literature review

Within academia and education, in general, the introduction of AI has sparked considerable interest. With its ability to emulate intelligent human behavior, AI holds huge potential for revolutionizing various aspects of education, including teaching, learning, and assessment. However, alongside its promises of innovation and efficiency, the proliferation of AI technologies in educational settings has raised concerns about academic integrity. Currie (2023) argues that ChatGPT poses a risk to professionalism, ethics, and integrity in nuclear medicine and radiology, as it can produce errors and fabrications of information that may not be detected by plagiarism checkers or peer reviewers. The author also suggests some strategies to mitigate the potential harm of ChatGPT, such as educating students and researchers about the limitations and ethical implications of AI. Ying et al. (2023) also study AI-assisted cheating and find that it does pose a serious threat to education quality and academic integrity, in general. According to the authors, addressing AI cheating requires ethical education, academia-industry collaboration, integration into AI ethics, and an international consortium. Livberber et al. (2023) explore academics' perceptions towards ChatGPT and its impact in Turkey. By conducting semi-structured interviews, the authors found that academics view ChatGPT as a useful tool for scientific research and education, but also have ethical concerns such as plagiarism and misinformation.

Debby et al. (2023) present similar findings. In their minds, although ChatGPT can provide numerous benefits for assessment in higher education, it also presents several significant challenges such as the risk of plagiarism. AI essay-writing systems operate by generating essays according to predefined parameters or prompts. Thus, students might exploit these systems to cheat on their assignments by submitting essays that are not their original work.

Shalevska (2023) also studies the potential for misuse of ChatGPT by analyzing its scores on standardized ESL tests. The author suggests that students may be aware of the model's test-taking capabilities and this could tempt some of them to exploit it for cheating purposes, jeopardizing the integrity of assessments. Fowler (2023) also recognizes ChatGPT's cheating potential, but suggests a simple solution: "implementing digital literacy programs to equip both students and educators with the necessary skills to navigate AI technologies responsibly" (p. 137)

On the other hand, although Trachtenberg (2023) states that "students who use ChatGPT and similar programs improperly are seeking to gain an unfair advantage, which means they are committing academic dishonesty", he also contends that if instructors permit its use, employing ChatGPT would be no different than utilizing a graphing calculator.

As for AI detection, research shows that currently, it is unreliable at best. In a recent study, Weber-Wulff et al. (2023) analyzed the results from more than 12 publicly available AI detection tools and two commercial systems. They firmly concluded that results are "neither accurate nor reliable", identifying AI-generated text is challenging, and basic paraphrasing is all it takes to slip past detection. A separate study by Weixin L. et al (2023) also confirms such claims. This study also found that AI detectors frequently misclassify non-native English writing (in a corpus of TOEFL essays) as AI generated, with an average false-positive rate of 61.3%.

Although there is a large body of studies that focus on the potential ramifications of AI usage on academic integrity, there are hardly any publicly available research papers that draw upon students' firsthand accounts regarding their engagement (or lack thereof) in dishonest behavior involving AI. This study aims to address this gap by specifically investigating students' perspectives (in this case – undergraduate students!)

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3. Methods

This study explores the ethical implications of advanced AI tools like ChatGPT in academic settings. The methodology employed a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative elements to gather comprehensive insights.

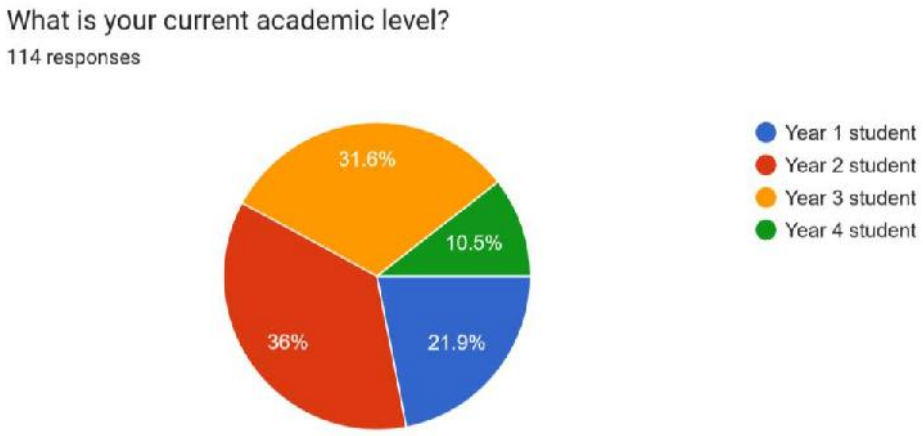
Firstly, a thorough review of existing literature on AI ethics, academic integrity, and the intersection of the two domains was conducted to establish a theoretical framework and identify key themes, challenges, and ethical considerations.

Then, a survey was designed. The survey instrument was developed using Google Forms to collect data from undergraduate students across five units of the University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in Bitola, North Macedonia: The Faculty of Education; The Faculty of Law; The Higher Medical School; The Faculty of Economy; and The Faculty of Tourism and Management. Following the principles outlined by Leslie Kish on survey sampling techniques, a random sampling technique was employed to ensure the representativeness of the sample (Kish, 1965). The survey comprised a mix of multiple choice, open-end and Likert-scale questions designed to assess students' attitudes towards AI and AI-enabled cheating. A random sampling technique was employed. Participation was voluntary, and students were assured of anonymity to encourage candid responses. The professors at said faculties distributed the survey link, accompanied by a brief explanation of the research objectives and assurances regarding data confidentiality. The quantitative data obtained from the survey responses was analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify trends, patterns, and correlations in students' responses. 114 students' answers were considered.

This study acknowledges several limitations, including the reliance on self-reported data, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability and recall bias. Additionally, the study's scope is limited to undergraduate students from specific faculties in North Macedonia, which may affect the generalizability of findings to broader populations. However, despite these limitations, this study manages to further the understanding of the ethical implications surrounding the use of advanced AI models such as ChatGPT.

4. Results and discussion

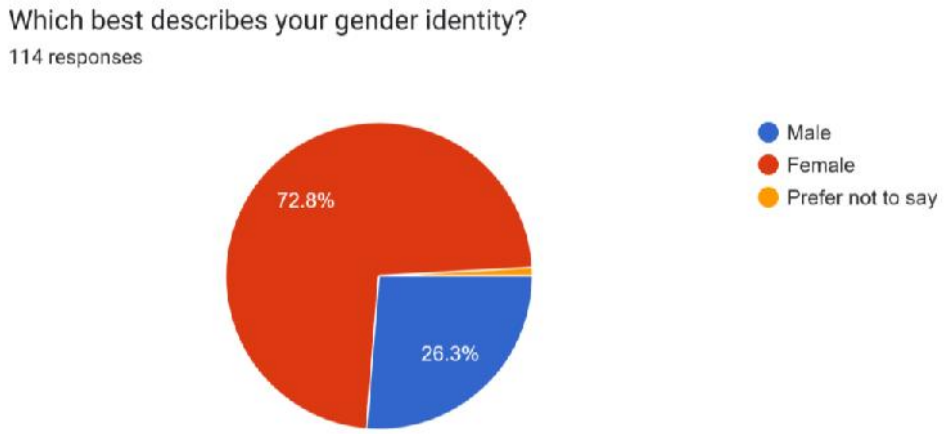
The first set of questions in the Google Forms survey strived to collect demographic data to do with the sample, to ensure that the sample is representative of the target population of undergraduate students. As stated, the sample consisted of a total of 114 undergraduate students in the University "St. Kliment Ohridski", distributed across different academic years. Among the participants, 29 students were in Year 1, 51 in Year 2, 36 in Year 3, and 12 in Year 4. Although there's a notable discrepancy in the number of students across different academic levels, the answers still show a diverse representation of students at various stages of their higher education path, which helps these findings be objective and representative of the population (Graph 1).



Graph 1: Sample distribution – Academic level

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As for the gender distribution of the respondents i.e. participants, the data revealed that 83 out of the 114 participants identified as female, 30 identified as male and 1 participant decided against disclosing their gender. These findings highlight the predominance of female students within the sample, indicating a potential gender disparity, which should be acknowledged (Graph 2).



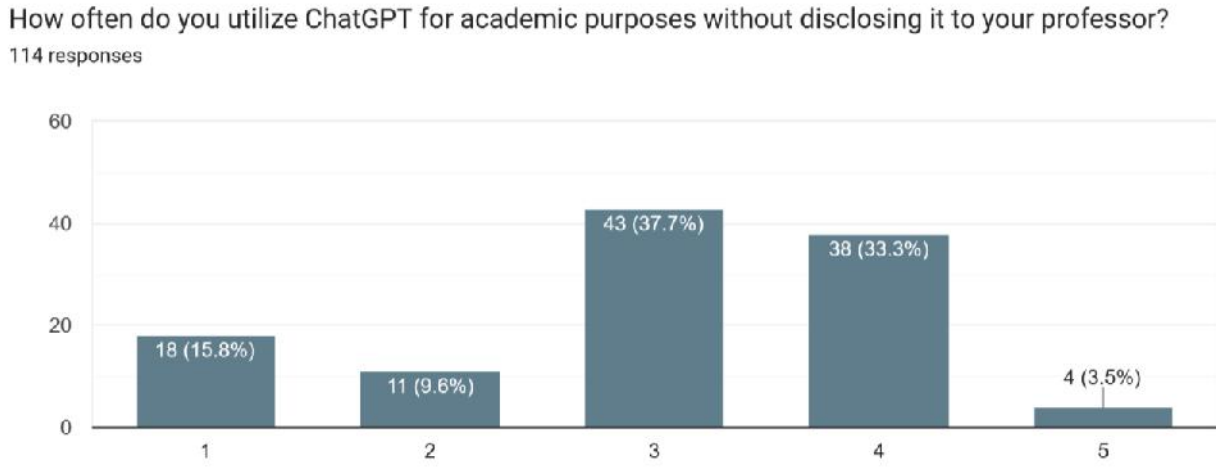
Graph 2: Sample distribution – Gender

With the gender and academic level data collected, the survey continued with a set of questions aimed to decipher students' perspectives to do with AI use, academic dishonesty and integrity. The first question in this section was a 5-point Linkert-based question: "How comfortable are you with using AI technologies like ChatGPT for academic purposes?". The answers ranged from (1) – Not comfortable at all to (5) Extremely comfortable. The average answer (mean) was 3.447 which means that on average, respondents feel moderately comfortable with using AI technologies like ChatGPT for academic purposes; the mode i.e. the response option with the highest frequency was (4) – Quite comfortable (freq. = 71) which suggests that a large portion of the respondents feel quite comfortable with using AI technologies like ChatGPT for academic purposes. The standard deviation was 1.2317, which suggests variability, albeit not very large.

The following 5-point Likert-question also aimed to investigate students' use of AI, asking: "How often do you use AI technologies like ChatGPT for academic purposes?". 113 out of 114 total participants answered this question. With a mean of 2.99, respondents reported using AI technologies like ChatGPT for academic purposes somewhat regularly, but not extremely frequently. The mode of (3) (freq. = 50) indicates that roughly half of the respondents report using such tools sometimes or more frequently, while the other half report using them less often or never. The standard deviation was 0.8585 which suggests that the responses are closer to the mean, indicating less variability in the reported frequency of usage among the respondents.

After establishing the usage pattern and level of ease of using tools such as ChatGPT, the survey set to investigate students' academic integrity, by inquiring: "How often do you utilize ChatGPT for academic purposes without disclosing it to your professor?"All 114 respondents answered this question, with answers ranging from 1 – Never to 5 – Always. With the mean of approximately 2.99, on average, respondents reported using ChatGPT for academic purposes without disclosing it to their professors closer to "Quite often" (3) than "Sometimes" (2). This would mean that about three times out of five, or approximately 60% of the time students use this AI tool without disclosing its use. The mode for this question was (4) – Quite often (freq. = 38). This suggests that a significant portion of respondents reported using ChatGPT quite often without informing their professors. The relatively low standard deviation of approximately 0.8293 suggests that the obtained responses were clustered closely around the mean value. The distribution of data can also be seen in Graph 3 below.

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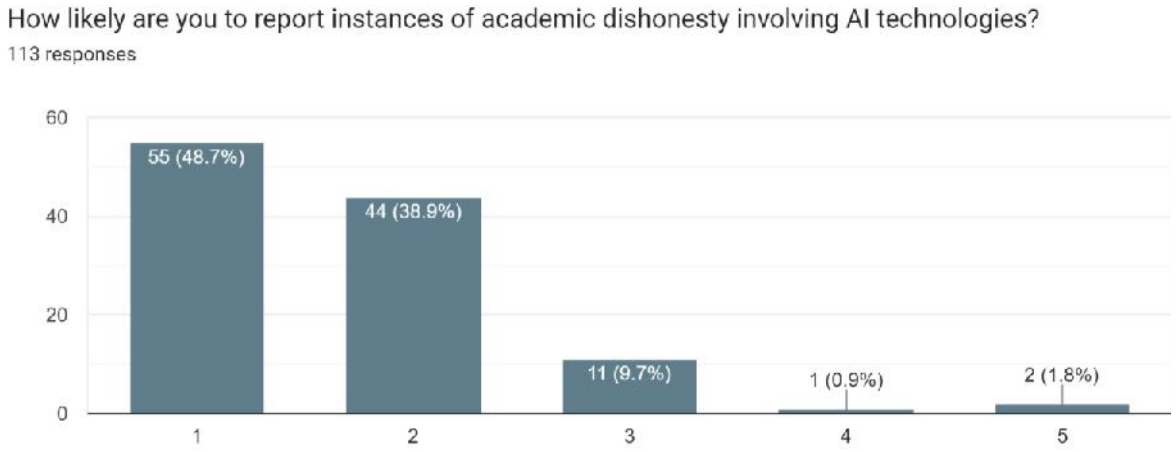
Graph 3 – Using ChatGPT for academic purposes without disclosing such use

101 responses were obtained on the next choose-all-that-apply question (response rate of approximately 88.6%): "For what purposes have you used AI without disclosing it to your professor? (Select all that apply). If you don't use ChatGPT or similar models, skip this question." Most students (no. = 81) claimed that they have used AI for **writing essays or reports**. This aligns with the innate capabilities of AI models like ChatGPT, which can generate excellent text. 71 respondents (approximately 70.3%) indicated using AI for **completing assignments or homework**. Similar to writing essays, this also suggests that many students use AI for text-based academic tasks that are done individually, yet still contribute to their overall grade. The problem with this is that such AI-generated texts can contain errors, although they seem perfectly accurate to the untrained eye. This relates back to Currie's insights that paint ChatGPT as a "writer" who produces "scientifically convincing text with inaccurate or misinterpreted information" (Currie, 2023: 729).

Only 13 responses (approximately 12.9%) indicated using AI for **creating presentations or slides**. It is important to note that there were a few responses under the "Other" category, indicating additional ways students use AI. These responses included getting key points for presentations or homework, receiving guidance through work, and generating ideas for essay topics or seminar papers and presentations.

113 out of the 114 respondents also answered the following question: "How likely are you to report instances of academic dishonesty involving AI technologies?". With (1) – Not likely at all and (2) Not likely having a total of 99 responses, one can confidently state that the vast majority of students would not report a dishonest use of AI in academia (Graph 4). This further confirms initial apprehensions on AI-related dishonesty posed by several authors (Debby et al., 2023; Ying et al., 2023; Shalevska, 2023).

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Graph 4 – Likelihood of reporting AI-based academic dishonesty

All 114 respondents provided their thoughts on being adequately informed about the ethical implications of using AI in education, on a Linkert-based question with answers ranging from (1) – Not informed at all to (5) Extremely well informed. The mean score of approximately 2.82 suggests that, on average, students feel moderately informed about the ethical implications of using AI in education. The mode of (3) (freq. = 39) indicates that the most common response was "Moderately informed," reflecting a central tendency. The standard deviation of approximately 0.8865 indicate a moderate level of variability in responses around the mean. Overall, these results suggest that while there is a general sense of students being moderately informed about the ethical implications of (mis)using AI, there is variability in the extent of information and awareness among different students that may be due to differences in exposure to information, backgrounds, and personal interest in AI and its (mis)use. The mixed results obtained through this question seem to highlight Fowler's (2023) point that educating students about the ethics of using AI should be a top priority.

93 students (response rate of approximately 81.58%) also provided information as to why they may choose to use AI tools for academic purposes without disclosing it to their professor, in a choose-all-that-apply, close-ended question. 62 answered that they may use it because they feel "pressured to achieve high grades or maintain a certain GPA", 51 – because they "lack time to do all tasks"; 36 – because they believe "it's what everyone else is doing", and 17 because they "know they can't be caught". These results further emphasize the competitive nature of higher education and the importance placed on academic performance. They also show the need for better and more efficient time management strategies and support systems to help students manage their academic workload effectively.

At the end of the survey, students were given the opportunity to answer an open-ended question and list other AI tools they use. 13 students chose to do so, listing Grammarly, Microsoft Copilot, Paraphrasing tool and QuillBot AI. This shows that a (albeit small) number of students can successfully use other AI tools, and not just ChatGPT.

5. Conclusion

Though more robust research and data are needed to make any bold claims, the findings of this particular study do show that AI could pose a challenge to maintaining ethical standards in higher education. The results also show that a significant number of students have accepted (to a certain extent) and can use different AI tools in academic settings. This shows that students seem to be open to integrating these new technologies into the learning process. And although that might seem like a great opportunity to incorporate AI in education, doing so must be done carefully. Taking in mind the data that shows that a significant portion of students reported using ChatGPT for academic purposes without disclosing it to their professors, such integration must be approached rigorously and thoughtfully. Additionally, the overwhelming majority of students in this sample indicated they were unlikely to report dishonest uses of AI. This could reflect a systemic issue within higher education institutions regarding the normalization of dishonesty in general, and a potential lack of fear of consequences for

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being unethical. This can be remedied only through education. Academia might need to consider developing comprehensive educational courses or course elements that cover the ethical use of AI and the issues with academic dishonesty, as a whole. This could include mandatory modules or training focusing on the implications of AI misuse and strategies for ethical decision-making in higher education. The underlying issues for cheating should also be addressed – academic pressure, time management challenges, social norms, and perceptions of risk. This multi-layered approach would hopefully promote a culture of academic integrity and ethical use of technology for all students.

Ultimately, as AI continues to evolve moving forward, more research is going to be needed to detail and propose solutions for the issues with AI-related academic dishonesty in higher education and in education, in general.

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PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT: WHY IS IMPORTANT AND HOW TO INVOLVE PARENTS IN SCHOOLS?

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Abstract

This article is an in-depth qualitative literature review on the importance, benefits, and ways of parental involvement in the education of their children. It highlights the fact that parental involvement in their child's learning process offers many opportunities for success – improvements in the child's academic achievement, and social and emotional adjustment. The collaboration between the parent and the teacher is an important prerequisite for encouraging the full development of the child. It is therefore, parental involvement should be seen as an important tool for the advancement of the quality of education that should be part of regular school practice.

The paper also analyzes the possibilities for parent participation in the various aspects of school life. Parental involvement can have different types, from simple informational conversation, and consulting parents, to active and passive participation of parents in curricular and extracurricular activities.

Keywords: parental involvement, child education, importance, benefits

1. Introduction

The parental involvement in the school, ie. their involvement in various aspects of school life is an important component of the educational process and is directly related to the quality of that process. The partnership between the family and the school is an important prerequisite for adequately supporting and encouraging the child's development. Parents have a strong influence on their children. They have a direct influence that is stronger than teachers, friends, and the environment. For this reason, a parent's positive attitude and support towards their children's education is considerable. It can inspire and empower the child to develop good learning habits. This results in academic success and the long run leads to economic and social benefits for the child.

2. What is parental involvement?

There is no universal definition of what parental involvement entails. Some definitions include greater participation in the life of a school, while others focus on increased contributions to an individual child's learning process.

Parental involvement refers to a broad range of activities such as good parenting in the home, provision of a secure and stable environment, intellectual stimulation, parent-child discussion, contact with schools to share information, participation in school events, participation in the work of school, and participation in school governance. It is the active, ongoing participation of a parent or primary caregiver in the education of a child.

The participation of parents can have different types, starting from informing parents about the various aspects of school life, through consulting parents when making decisions related to the education and upbringing of their children, and up to the participation of parents in the decision-making process in the various areas of school life.

Epstein et al, 2002, as cited in Stanikzai, 2013 proposes a framework for parental participation, i.e. the possible areas in which the cooperation between the family and the school is important for encouraging the development of children:

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1. Parenting – enhance parenting skills as well as understanding child and adolescent development at the family level. Assist families with setting home conditions that support children as students at each age and grade level.
2. Communication – communicate with families about school programs and student progress. Communication is regular, two-way, and meaningful.
3. Volunteering – expressing that parents are welcome in the school and that their support and assistance are necessary. Involving families as volunteers and as audiences i.e. sports days, gardening projects, drama nights, intergenerational days at the school or in other locations i.e. libraries.
4. Learning at home – helping parents to understand the educational process and their role in supporting student achievement e.g. helping students with homework and other curriculum-related activities, helping/encouraging learning activities at home, and talking about school with the children.
5. Decision making – parents are full partners in the decisions that affect their children. Therefore, they should join the decision-making organs of the school, becoming parent leaders and members of parent representative bodies like councils of parents, boards of management, and membership to committees.
6. Collaborating with the community – identification, and utilization of community resources to strengthen schools, families, and student's learning and development.

Parental involvement refers to all activities that parents do to help children succeed in school and life. However, the whole idealism of parental involvement revolves around teamwork. It is about parents, schools, and communities cooperating. They ensure that every parent can play a positive role in their child's learning, school community, and social life. Parental involvement is a shared responsibility in which schools are committed to reaching out to involve parents in meaningful ways. Parents are committed to actively supporting their children's learning and development by taking part in the actions provided by both school and community.

3. Importance of parental involvement

Why is it important for parents to get involved in their children's education? A study conducted by researchers at the Johns Hopkins University Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships shows that school practices that encourage families to support their child's math learning at home can lead to higher percentages of students scoring at or above proficiency on standardized math tests (Sheldon & Epstein, 2005)

Other research shows that parent involvement with reading activities has a positive impact on reading achievement, language comprehension, and expressive language skills, as well as a child's interest in reading, attitudes toward reading, and level of attention according to a research summary by Cristina Clark (2007).

However, the benefits of parental involvement extend beyond the realm of educational achievement. A meta–analysis of 448 independent studies conducted by a group of researchers of the American Psychological Association shows that parental involvement in their children's education is positively related to children's academic, social, and emotional adjustment and negatively related to their delinquency (Barger et al., 2019, p. 8). The study says that "when parents become involved at school by, for example, attending events such as open houses or volunteering in the classroom, they build social networks that can provide useful information, connections to school personnel (e.g., teachers), or strategies for enhancing children's achievement. In turn, parents with heightened social capital are better equipped to support their children in succeeding in school as they can call on resources (e.g., asking a teacher to spend extra time helping their children) and utilize the information they have gathered (e.g., knowing when and how their children should complete their homework)."

All of the above indicates that parents and teachers should be aware of the significant contribution parents can make to their children's education. On the whole, parents' involvement in their child's learning process offers many opportunities for success. Parental involvement in their children's learning not only improves a child's academic achievement across all subject areas but also promotes better behavior and social adjustment. Thus, parents' involvement in education helps children to grow

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up to be productive, responsible members of society, and, through that, they help in increasing the quality of the overall educational process.

4. When is parental involvement not beneficial for children?

Although growing research shows that parental involvement in their children's learning positively affects their performance, not all research results are consistent (Cooper et al., 2000). Some studies find mixed or contradictory conclusions regarding parental involvement.

When parental involvement tends to be controlling the student outcomes show a tendency to be negative. Controlling parents think they need tight control over their children to ensure their success. They pressure their children to achieve and solve problems for them without being asked to. Researchers define controlling involvement as excessive pressure on the child to complete assignments, check if the child has completed their homework, get involved in homework without being asked, and punish the child if homework is not complete (Karbach et al., 2013)

Controlling parent behavior decreases a child's intrinsic motivation. Such engagement undermines children's learning motivation and the child's sense of personal value and responsibility (Rogers et al., 2009)

Parental involvement is helpful when they are not trying to be controlling and when their action shows that they value their child's education. A child who receives autonomous support from a parent tends to perform better in school. Autonomous supportive parents focus on the learning, not the grades. They are sensitive to their children's needs and are available to help with homework when requested (Karbach et al., 2013)

5. How can parents be involved?

The benefits of parental involvement in their children's education raise the question of how parents can be involved in their children's education. Considering the importance that parental involvement in the education of their children has in encouraging the quality of the educational process, the legal legislation foresees and precisely defines the participation of parents in the decision-making process through their participation in the School Board as the highest governing body and the Council of parents as a body for the organized realization of the interests of students and parents.

However, in addition to the legal obligation and the determined importance of parental participation, educators and schools should take care of how to promote more effective family engagement to take advantage of the numerous benefits of parents' involvement.

Crucial in promoting parental involvement is strong communication between school and home. Two–way communication helps create a positive partnership between the home and school. Therefore, the most effective way to build a real partnership is to create regular opportunities for open, honest dialogue. All families should feel that the school keeps them informed on important issues and events and that it is easy to communicate with teachers, principals, and other school staff (Redding et al., 2011).

Then, establishing initiatives and programs for parent education that will provide parents with the tools, knowledge, and skills to support their child's learning or increase their knowledge. Parent education can also offer parents strategies and information related to child development, effective strategies (e.g. nutrition, communication, behavior), and tips for establishing supporting learning environments at home (Redding et al., 2011).

Determining and publicizing where needs and opportunities for parental involvement exist at schools or in classrooms and with students, as parents may want to be involved, but feel unaware of ways to participate or unsure if they have anything to contribute. By accessing a published list of school needs, parents can easily identify how and where they can contribute based on their strengths and time (Barriers to Parent Involvement: Roadblocks and Detours, 2015)

The parents themselves also presented a series of ideas about the possible activities in which they could participate:

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Organizing different types of meetings so that parents would get to know each other better (for example, joint parent meetings);
Joint activities of students, parents, and teachers in the school environment (celebration of significant dates, school activities, and activities within projects);
Joint workshops for parents and students on current topics (health, drug addiction, gambling, alcoholism, internet addiction, free time, ways of learning, motivation for greater achievements);
Parental involvement in the work of school sections;
Organizing seminars and lectures intended for parents (for example, supporting parents in understanding all the specificities of the adolescent age);
Organizing joint sports meetings, and tournaments;
Various extracurricular and extracurricular activities (visiting a museum, theater, cinema, excursions, competitions, concerts, festivals in the city);

At the same time, the activities in which parents, students, and teachers would take an active part, the parents assessed as a contribution to creating conditions for equal chances for the development and progress of all students, because this kind of cooperation brings a series of benefits for all participants in education - the educational process (Bursac et al., 2015).

6. Conclusion

Parental involvement is seen as an important strategy for the advancement of the quality of education. The ultimate goal of this is to expand the social and cognitive capacities of pupils.

Research has shown that parental involvement leads to better academic, social, and emotional outcomes for pupils. The benefits of parental involvement extend beyond the realm of educational achievement. Children whose parents are involved show better behavior and social and emotional development.

There are different types of participation, starting from simple ones such as informing and consulting parents, participating in parent meetings, and working with children at home, which further lead and help parents to engage in more complex forms of participation, such as participation in the decision-making process. Therefore it is important, within a well-planned and long-term program, to offer parents diverse activities in which they can be involved, depending on their preferences, obligations, and abilities.

It is important to encourage teachers and parents to think about the different ways in which they can collaborate and encourage parents to be involved in their children's educational process. Parental participation should be part of regular school practice, not an isolated instance that happens thanks to the goodwill of interested individuals.

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THE SPECIAL FEATURES OF ALEXANDER XHUVAN'S PEDAGOGICAL OPINION

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Abstract

The study of A. Xhuvan's activity, with particular emphasis on the drafting and publication of primary and secondary school texts (then also high school), is still important today, due to the fact that science constantly finds new information about his works. . The studies so far have partially given scientific opinion on this great personality of education.

We will analyze the data from the year 1919, when he published the first text "Language book or grammar: First part", he (either as author or co-author) published or reprinted nearly 40 textbooks of Albanian grammar and syntax, elementary , reading books, anthologies, texts of ancient Greek and Arberian literature, of stylistics and general literature, of pedagogy and psychology, etc., among which are the texts: "Didactics and Education" (1926), "Beginnings of Stylistics" of general literature" (co-author with Kostaq Cipo, 1930); "Additional psychology in the work of education" (1933), which Norbert Jokli called a "monumental" work, then "Didactics" (1937), "Education" in manuscript, etc.

We will analyze his studies and texts, the way in which the two rare types of a man naturally intertwine, that is, A. Xhuvani the scholar and A. Xhuvani the linguist. His texts are used, not only in Albania, but also in the Albanian territories abroad, even in the diaspora. They also served as a methodological model for other authors of Albanian textbooks. Even in Kosovo, the first grammars of the Albanian language were drawn up according to the model of Alexander Xhuvan's texts. In addition to textbooks, he was also an editor, reviewer, translator, etc. With the textbooks of A. Xhuvan, a new stage in Albanian textology began. Meanwhile, he intensified cooperation with many magazines and newspapers of the time, such as: "Pedagogical Magazine", "Normalisti", "Kumtari assimuer", "New School", "Teacher", "National School", etc., where he dealt with various issues pedagogical, educational, teaching etc...

Xhuvan's pedagogical thought is a model thought that should be guided today and that his works deserve more in-depth studies.

Keywords: Alexander Xhuvan, pedagogy, education, learning

INTRODUCTION

In this study, we will analyze the peculiarities of the pedagogical thought of the great master Alexander Xhuvani. We will devote a part of this paper to the importance of studying the history of education and Albanian pedagogical thought, a scientific synthesis of the path, the history of the development of education, and pedagogical thought in our country from ancient times to the present day.

An important place is dedicated to the development of education in the period of the Albanian National Renaissance, especially the struggle and efforts of the Albanian people and patriots for the development of national education, for the opening and operation of Albanian schools.

The purpose of the study is to recall and at the same time the indestructible pedagogical thought of Xhuvani, its implementation and re-actualization in our educational system.

The methodology of the scientific work means re-reading the capital works of this period of a great turning point in the education of Albanians wherever they are, returning once again to scientific literature, and established authors dealing with these educational phenomena.

The first hypothesis put forward is whether Albanian education has changed over the years. Other hypotheses that emerge as a result of the study are: how it has changed, how much the ideas and opinions of our compatriots and Renaissance people have been taken into account, how many studies there are in this field, and how many re-readings...

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The development of education and pedagogical thought in the period of Independence 1912-1939, an important period in the history of Albanian education, will be addressed, where the development of national education in the independent Albanian state will be addressed; education during the First World War period; efforts to democratize and secularize the school in the years 1920-1924; the state of education in the period 1925-1939 (Koliqi, 2003). The history of the development of education and pedagogical thinking from the Second World War to the end of the 1980s occupies a special place in this study course...

The National Renaissance as a period of many national goods marked by the matrices with precious historical-cultural wealth, with moral and political values, on which it relied and which it further developed on a new level, with a platform of ideological and political cloud where the first ideas came from the enlightened minds of teachers, poets and patriots.

She turned to history and used this legacy to affirm the right of the Albanian people to live free and independent. The revivalists turned their eyes to the historical past, not only because the Albanian nation, like other nations, takes its source from there, but also to put the evidence of its antiquity at the service of the tasks that stood before the national movement: to increase the pride of the compatriots in the difficult struggle for national liberation, to help raise their national consciousness, to further strengthen the individuality of the Albanians as a nation and their unity in the face of the Ottoman rulers, to give them a support historical-social national requirements and to draw the attention of foreign public opinion to the Albanian issue (Koliqi, 2003).

The revivalists used history as a powerful tool in the service of this issue, as well as to refute the assertions of those states, which, to more easily achieve their expansionist goals towards Albania, denied Albanians history.

The revivalists were those who were caught especially after the ancient origin of the Albanians and after the era of Skanderbeg.

In the first case, we must emphasize that they tried to argue and spread the thesis on the Pelasgian or Illyrian origin of the Albanian people and to prove that the Albanians are among the oldest inhabitants of the Balkans, autochthonous and legal owners of their land, which no one had the right to touch.

In the second case, by evoking and widely reflecting in literature the era of Skanderbeg, his war of conquest against the armies of the powerful Ottoman Empire, the revivalists aimed to affirm the vitality of the Albanian people, their ability to unite politically and the right to form their national state.

The political circles of the neighboring countries have also turned to history, especially after the formation of national states. According to them, the Serbian, Greek, and Bulgarian states were heirs of the respective medieval empires and therefore had the "historical right" to extend to the former borders. However, none of these empires extended to the entire Balkans or most of it, inhabited both in the past and in the century. XIX from different peoples, who were masters of the lands where they lived. Consequently, the intention to recreate them, which was an expression of the expansionist policy of these states, severely violated the interests of the Balkan peoples, while, in the case of the Albanians, it led to the occupation of their ethnic, native territories, or their fragmentation. Attempts to fulfill these goals became the cause of wars between the Balkan countries themselves (Koliqi, 2003).

ALEXANDER XHUVAN'S PEDAGOGICAL OPINION ON PEDAGOGICAL LEARNING

Xhuvani was a zealous successor and torchbearer of the pedagogical legacy of Enlighteners democrats National Renaissance of national figures such as Kristoforidi, Naim and Sami Frashëri, Gj. Qiriazit etc. In 1926, Aleksandër Xhuvani published "The Beginnings of Pedagogy for Primary Schools, Part Two: Didactics of Education" to continue with "Didactics" and "Education" - with these works, Xhuvani marked a qualitative rise in Albanian pedagogical thought. He was the first to lay the foundations for scientific work in the field of Albanian pedagogy. So he is the founder of Albanian pedagogical science (Koliqi, 2003).

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The specifics of Xhuvani's opinion on education

He derives the word education from the Latin word *educere*, which has the meaning of bringing out, bringing to light those abilities that are found but as a seed, inside a given subject, while pedagogy according to him is the science and art of education with importance very large social and national. Pedagogy is also closely related to other sciences, especially psychology, ethics, physiology, sociology, logic, etc (Koliqi, 2003).

The purpose of educating according to Xhuvani

Xhuvani understands and treats the ideal of education broadly. He says that the purpose of education is the formation of personality, that is. Education aims to form people with a more simple and free nature, with a fearless eye for every occasion of life, and with a true love for every honest thing and more strongly for the action of man in human society (Koliqi, 2003). According to him, the ideal of Albanian education should be to form the brave Albanian, the one who knows no prohibitions, the one who only goes forward and never turns back, without bending to the yoke. From early on, Xhuvani highlights the social and political character of the edict and its purpose. Based on this, he was committed to school and national education to form good, cultured workers, while in the new socialist society, he was committed to the formation of people with new social characteristics.

In the framework of its pedagogic system, it also includes and handles the tasks of education. According to him, the tasks of education are the following: *civic education, national education, religious education, physical, moral, mental, aesthetic, and work education,* where with the right organization of these tasks, the ideal of education is achieved (Koliqi, 2003).

Xhuvani also contributed to the field of the history of world pedagogy and the history of Albanian pedagogy, which for about half a century is related to his life and educational and pedagogical work. He was the living history of the school and Albanian pedagogy. His special merit is the fact that he tried to connect the progressive pedagogical tradition with the current needs of the Albanian school and education, as was the case with Herbartian pedagogy, with the different pedagogical currents of the new school. According to him, school work should be based on a good knowledge of the psycho-physical characteristics of the student. For this reason, he also wrote the work "Psychology", which is considered a monumental work for the entire Albanian literature.

This is a text of pedagogical psychology, but it contains content from general psychology, child psychology, pathological, physiological, experimental, etc.

Xhuvan also contributed to the establishment and construction of Albanian school didactics and pedagogy. It dealt with the basic issues of learning and school, such as learning content, didactic principles, teacher's personality, school premises, etc. To bring the Albanian school out of the backwardness and chaos of currents and different pedagogical influences and to raise it on a unique and advanced didactic basis, he published the texts: didaktika e edukate, Didaktika. He exalts the teacher's personality when he says: "The very awareness that the teacher is the most noble thing in the world, the human soul, should elevate him and encourage him to work as hard as possible for it" (Koliqi, 2003).

His ideas from the field of preschool pedagogy, from the field of andragogy, as well as from family pedagogy are also valuable. He emphasizes the educational and cultural advancement of the Albanian woman, which he assessed as a very important social and educational factor. He also contributed to special pedagogy, his effort to propagate European achievements in this educational and humane field. He supported the pedagogical system, apart from the national tradition of educational experience, in the pedagogical thinking of world-renowned pedagogues such as Comenius, Pestalozzi, Distervegu, especially Herbart... (Koliqi, 2003).

He was a pedagogue, who constantly tried to introduce the progressive new in school and Albanian pedagogy and for its propaganda. His works are also called *Juanian* pedagogy.

He also contributed a lot to the construction of the Albanian educational system according to the advanced standards of the time, including school legislation, textbooks, the preparation of the teaching framework, pedagogical-school terminology, organization of lessons, pedagogical-school documentation, etc. Xhuvani was an example of a genuine teacher and pedagogue; he was an example

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of how to work for education, science, the people, and the homeland, so his work, as written by Prof. Eqrem Chabey *" will shed light even today and in the future"* (Koliqi, 2003).

CONCLUSION

The national education system serves as a service sector, which will equip future Albanian citizens with the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities, educated and dedicated to realizing the national economic and development plan of the country.

This system, aiming to meet the national needs of the labor market and the socio-cultural aspirations of the people, is presented as a condition for the economic growth and sustainable development of the country. The fulfillment of medium and long-term objectives for sustainable economic growth, reduction of poverty, and the solution of social problems requires, in the first place, the reform of the education system, as the real support for the realization of government initiatives. In this context, the follow-up of reforms in this vital sector of society, having clear objectives, is of particular importance.

It should be emphasized at the end that the progress of events in the field of education and education in all ethnic territories, day by day, is becoming more dangerous and more apocalyptic (I am not a defeatist nor did I spread defeatism), because educational institutions at all levels they have no ethos - institutional morality, they are not organized and they do not act based on humane-philanthropic and national values, but based on commercialism, nepotism, lies and fraud. Educational and educational institutions do not have advanced standards that guarantee the quality, physical, mental, emotional, and social empowerment of individuals so that they can face the challenges of the XXI century, with the global labor market.

In the absence of standards that guarantee quality, in the absence of criteria for valid work assurance in the principle of merit and ethos, today's institutions are led by the uneducated mind, individuals with party and non-national orientations, self-taught (people educated in courses have not work experience and no product made public to prove their competences), people who fill their pockets with lek to the detriment of the national future of this nation. Today, in the absence of advanced standards, monitoring, supervision, control, self-evaluation, and evaluation, there is no accountability, everyone does what they want, and there is no responsibility, therefore, the space for possible misuses and abuses, such as corruption, has been created. galloping, bribery, nepotism, clientelism, theft even where this cannot happen at all.

The lack of standards and accountability have reduced the quality in educational institutions so that today a master's candidate's degree is of lower quality than that of a former normal school student. Educational institutions in all ethnic regions issue diplomas with no value, even to those who have not attended at all, selling exams and diplomas, thus attacking the future of the nation and the individuals themselves, whom they supposedly help. Educational and educational institutions have become factories for the production of functional illiterates (read: pedagogical "skills" and uneducated minds).

These scientific assessments seem harsh, perhaps even excessive, but they are real, undeniable, and indisputable. These assertions will be argued fourfold in the form of discussions starting from the dilemma: *Is the Albanian national education in crisis?*

Accepting the crisis is necessary to get out of the crisis. A clear and complete answer to this question, although very difficult and complex, is necessary. It is necessary because without understanding its concept we cannot know whether education is in crisis or not. On the other hand, being aware of the existence of the crisis in education is necessary, because not accepting and denying the crisis makes it impossible to get out of the crisis.

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THE ROLE OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

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Abstract

The intensive changes in all spheres of social life in general, especially in higher education and its adaptation to the European system of Higher Education, bring serious challenges that all responsible institutions and entities face. Of course, a special role in this direction is played by university libraries that should greatly help in meeting the educational, informational, and cultural needs of the students, but also help in advancing new ways of learning such as lifelong learning, distance learning, and thus help, the student to always be in the spotlight. In that regard, this paper is focused on the capacities, organization, and functioning of university libraries in the Republic of North Macedonia, to obtain relevant data on how ready they are to respond to such modern requests, and how ready they are to take their rightful place within the University.

Keywords: *university, education, university library.*

Introduction

Libraries in Macedonia have had an important cultural and educational role in the development of the Macedonian people since the earliest times. The original librarianship in Macedonia developed in churches and monasteries, where books were written, and copied, and educational-scientific activities were carried out. The monastery libraries were the only sources of spreading enlightenment and culture in the XIX century.

The work of libraries is more closely regulated by the law on libraries, which regulates the work of the libraries, their operation, establishment, types of libraries, organization, coordination, professional titles, supervision, and other issues that are important for the operation of libraries in the Republic of Macedonia. According to their purpose, libraries are divided into National Library, Public Libraries, school libraries, higher vocational school and university libraries, and Specialized Libraries (Law on libraries "Official gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 66/04, 89/08, 116/10, 511, 88/15, 152/15 and 39/16).

To develop the library activity, culture, science, and education and to meet the information needs of the library activity in the Republic of Macedonia, the state established a National Library. The activities of Public Libraries are intended to meet the general educational, cultural, and other needs of the citizens in the location in which they are founded. School libraries are intended to improve the educational process in schools and meet the educational needs of the students and teaching staff working in primary and secondary schools. Higher vocational school and university libraries are intended to support and promote the educational, research, and scientific work of students, professors, and researchers in the higher education institutions. The activities of Specialized Libraries are intended to meet the needs for professional and scientific research work in certain scientific or professional areas and are limited to a specific user group, depending on the target group of users. According to the law on libraries, the library is open to the public and through the use of library material spreads education and permanently satisfies the cultural and other needs of the general public, contributes to the promotion of professional and scientific research work, and the development of Education, Culture, Science and other activities (Law on libraries "Official gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 66/04, 89/08, 116/10, 511, 88/15, 152/15 and 39/16).

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The first universities in Macedonia started functioning with the establishment of the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje. The first National University in Macedonia was the one in Skopje in early 1920/21 (Geogrievski, 1989). After the first national university, other national universities began to open in most cities in Macedonia, and in 1927 the National University of Tetovo was founded. In 1928 and 1929 public universities were established in Kumanovo, Veles, and Berovo. In 1929 and 1930 public universities were opened in Debar and in Prilep in 1936 (Geogrievski, 1989). Their task was to organize and hold various lectures in several fields such as culture, education, health, and other spheres.

Today, in the modern conditions of social life, there are several universities in the territory of North Macedonia that have a long history and tradition and have significantly distinguished themselves through their quality of education, recognizable values, and heterogeneous offers. There can be no higher educational institution without a library because libraries house and store the library collection that students, teaching staff, and researchers need in the process of their educational and personal improvement.

It is good for libraries to function within the higher educational institution because in this way they will be more accessible to students and they can meet their educational, scientific, and informational needs.

University - concept and meaning

The term University denotes the highest institution of Higher Education, Science, and Research that grants academic degrees. The word university is an abbreviation of the Latin term "*Universitas magistrorum et scholarium*" which implies the Union of teachers with students. The purpose of the university is to transfer knowledge, learning, research, etc. Universities are composed of multiple faculties. University education is also called Higher Education. Unlike higher vocational schools and academies, universities are characterized by an interest in and opportunities for study in several fields, for example, philosophy, history, medicine, law, natural sciences, mathematics, etc. The term University (Latin) was first recorded in 1218, denoting a spiritual, intellectual, and educational community (Antonovska, 2004). The university essentially means higher education, an essential fusion of science, scientific research, education, and the transmission of knowledge and skills to the younger generations.

Universities are mainly funded by state sources, and sometimes by private ones. In North America, it is common for universities to be funded through foundations. The income of the foundations is most often generated through donations, inheritance, and other economic income.

The modern university system originates from the European medieval university, originally thought to have existed in Italy. The creation and development of the university is an act of philosophical meaning, the result of specific philosophical teachings on science and education (Antonovska, 2004).

Pedagogical systems created by the most famous philosophers in the past are the basis for the development of universities. In fact, the beginnings of the existence of universities are associated with pedagogical and philosophical action. People have always needed to write down what they think, feel, or have heard, not only for it to remain remembered but also to pass it on to future generations. As human culture increased, so did education.

The highest education is obtained in universities, which means that universities are institutions for the realization and transmission of educational and cultural developments (Antonovska, 2004).

The oldest and most famous universities in the world

Antiquity is the period when ideas, philosophical, and educational thoughts began to be born and in some areas continue to be used to this day. Homer, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, et al. are only some of the personalities who left a deep mark on the creation of the first philosophical schools, academies, and universities in which creativity, art, oratory, rhetoric, biology, laws, state, justice, aesthetics, love,

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etc. were studied. The ancient schools of Socrates were known as intellectual communities, in which sermons were carried out, legal, and political teachings were taught and activities were carried out. In the time of Plato, there was a solemn assembly dedicated to the muses of knowledge, and is considered to be the first philosophical idea of the creation of the University. The word Academy comes from the place where it was founded, which was in the garden dedicated to the Athenian hero Akademos.

Similar ideas for the establishment of schools and academies were held by Aristotle, who founded his philosophical school in 325 BC. It is known that Aristotle was a great thinker and philosopher, and thanks to his knowledge and his scientific and research activity, the school grew into a real university. The number of students in the school was considerably large.

In the history of universities, a special place was occupied by the Byzantine civilization in Constantinople. The new ruler Constantine the Great, among the first institutions he founded in his town, was the founding of a university. At that time, there was great interest in science and education, and intellectual culture was widespread.

Constantine, and later St. Cyril – a Slavic educator, studied at the University of Constantinople. After he completed his studies, St. Cyril was named Librarian of the Church of St. Sophia, and he taught philosophy too.

St. Clement of Ohrid, the most prominent disciple of St. Cyril and Methodius founded his university in Ohrid, which is one of the oldest universities in Europe. In the famous Ohrid University or Ohrid Literary School, a large number of students became literate and trained. Their number is thought to be over 3,500 students trained for teaching, preaching, priesthood, and other activities.

The following are considered as one of the oldest and most famous universities in the world:

The University of Bologna, Italy is considered as one of the oldest universities in the world. It was founded in 1088 by an organized Association of scholars and never ceased operations. It holds the title of the oldest university in the world with an enrollment of approximately 85,000 students.

The University of Cambridge, England is also considered as one of the oldest and most distinguished universities in the world.

The University of Oxford, the oldest university in England, where a large number of Nobel Prize winners have obtained their degrees.

The University of Padua, Italy is considered as the second oldest university in Italy, but also the fifth oldest university in the world.

University of Siena, Italy - one of the oldest universities in Italy.

University of Florence, Italy founded in 1321. Initially, the topics taught at this university included civil and ecclesiastical law, literature, and medicine.

The University of Paris was founded in 1150. It is one of the oldest universities in Europe, also known as the" Sorbonne".

The University of Vienna is one of the ten most prestigious and oldest universities in the world. This university is known for its humanities studies.

The University of Salamanca, Spain is the oldest university in Spain and is considered as the third oldest operating University in the world. This university was founded by King Alfonso in 1218.

Al-Karaouine University, Morocco was initially founded as a mosque by Fatima-al Fihri in 857-859. and subsequently became one of the leading spiritual and educational Islamic centers.

The University of Naples was founded by The Emperor of the Roman Empire Frederick on June 5, 1224. This university is the oldest state-supported institution of higher education and research in the world.

Higher vocational school and university libraries - terminology and meaning

According to the law on libraries of the Republic of North Macedonia, based on their purpose, libraries are divided into (Law on libraries "Official gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 66/04, 89/08, 116/10, 511, 88/15, 152/15 and 39/16).

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National Library;
Public libraries;
School libraries;
Higher vocational school and university libraries and
Specialized Libraries

Higher vocational school and university libraries are libraries whose activity is intended to support and promote the educational, research, and scientific work of students, teachers, professors, and researchers in the higher educational institutions.

Given the fact that both higher vocational school and university libraries have the task of providing services to researchers, teachers, professors, and students, hereinafter, we will use the term University Libraries for all of them. Modern university libraries are facing the challenge of advancing new ways of learning as successfully as possible. It specifically refers to lifelong learning and distance learning as part of the overall education system of a country and beyond. Modern organized university libraries should have a wide range of services as a foundation for a successful learning process. Nowadays, learning forms a significant segment of national programs around the world, and university libraries should be well prepared to capture desirable positions within the University, the wider community, and in the lives of each individual. In this regard, their transformation is necessary in order to successfully upgrade their traditional services with modern Information Technology Services.

This certainly entails their flexibility, interdisciplinarity, creativity, and adaptation to higher education reforms and harmonization with the European higher education system in accordance with the Bologna processes.

Universities and university libraries in the Republic of North Macedonia

The Law on Higher Education in the Republic of North Macedonia regulates the autonomy of the University and academic freedom, the conditions and procedures for the establishment and abolition of higher education institutions, the system for providing and assessing the quality of Higher Education, and the foundations for the organization, management, development, and financing of higher education activities (Law on Higher education "Official gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" n. 35/2008, 103/2008, 26/2009, 83/2009, 99/2009, 115/2010, 17/2011, 51/2011, 123/2012, 15/2013, 24/2013, 41/2014, 116/2014, 130/2014, 10/2015, 20/2015, 98/2015, 145/2015, 154/2015, 30/2016 и 127/16).

According to the Ministry of Education, presently, there are several accredited state universities in the Republic of North Macedonia, namely;

1. University "Saints Cyril and Methodius" - Skopje which is the first State University in the Republic of Macedonia, formed on 24.04.1949 and abbreviated as UKIM. UKIM is the oldest and largest university in the Macedonian language, based in the capital of Macedonia - Skopje. Today, the University "Saints Cyril and Methodius" represents a community of 24 faculties, and 9 scientific institutes of which 5 are constituent and 4 cooperate with the University.

The academic library of the University "St. Cyril and Methodius" is the National and University Library "St. Kliment of Ohrid" in Skopje, which is also the National Library of Macedonia. The National Library "St. Kliment of Ohrid" Skopje was one of the first institutions that were formed by a decision of the anti-fascist assembly of the People's Liberation of Macedonia (ASNOM) 78 years ago, on 23 November 1944. This library is named after St. Kliment Ohridski - the most outstanding student of St.Cyril and Methodius and the founder of librarianship in Macedonia. The National Library is the home library for all libraries in Macedonia. In addition to the main function as a National Library, the National and University Library is also a scientific and university library for the University "Saints Cyril and Methodius" from Skopje. The University Library, "St.Kliment Ohridski" Skopje was first founded as a National Library and was housed in the premises of the Central Library of the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje in 1920 which was the first university library in Macedonia. The national and university library is responsible for the development of the only National Library Information System that connects all types of libraries in Macedonia. The National Library has a rich collection numbering

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3 million copies and collections of books, manuscripts, periodicals, maps, recordings, scores, artworks, postcards, etc.

The national library is one of the leading sources of materials in research activities and is one of the leaders in the digitalization of the literary treasure that Macedonia possesses.

Among other activities, the national library performs the completion and processing of library material, information and bibliographic activity, preservation, protection, and conservation of library material, educational activities, and international cooperation.

The library has received numerous important social awards and recognitions for its contribution to the scientific, cultural, and educational function. The most important ones are the order "Merit for the People" with Silver Rays in 1972, the award "October 11th", which is the highest social recognition for extraordinary achievements in the field of Science in 1975, "Charter of Culture" in 1984, the award "St.Kliment Ohridski" twice – once in 1984 and for the second time in 1994, etc.

At the university, there are faculties in the sphere of natural, medical, social, technical, and biotechnical sciences, and art, namely;

Faculty of Information Sciences and Computer Engineering; at this faculty, there is an electronic library available as a desktop and mobile application that enables the use of online books, pictures, videos, and other educational content. (https://www.finki.ukim.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Architecture; at the Faculty of Architecture in Skopje, there is a digital library that offers the possibility of online searching of books, master's and doctoral theses, etc., by keywords, title, author, or publisher. (http://www.arh.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Civil Engineering; the library of the Faculty of Civil Engineering was formed with the establishment of the Technical Faculty in 1949 and has been operating independently since 1975 as a separate working unit. (http://gf.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies (FEIT); the library of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies functions as a separate working unit and is shared by FEIT and the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering. This library has existed since the establishment of the faculties and has seen constant growth in its work. The library's collection is composed of professional literature in the field of Electrical and mechanical engineering and related fields. (https://feit.ukim.edu.mk/biblioteka/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Mechanical Engineering; the Library of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies functions as a separate working unit and is shared by FEIT and the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering. (https://feit.ukim.edu.mk/biblioteka/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy; the library of the Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy has the task of supplying students, teachers, researchers, and administrative staff with scientific, pedagogical, and technical information necessary for their academic and administrative activities. (http://www.tmf.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics; a library exists at the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics. (http://im-pmf.weebly.com/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Economics; there is a library at the Faculty of Economics Skopje; (https://eccf.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Law "Justinian First"; a library exists at the Faculty of Law Skopje, alongside with a digital library which allows all users of the library to be able to search the collection of materials that the library possesses, with the opportunity to reserve the books; (https://pf.ukim.edu.mk/biblioteka/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Philosophy; there is a library at the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje; (http://fzf.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Philology "Blaze Koneski"; the library exists at the Faculty of Philology in Skopje; (https://flf.ukim.mk 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Pedagogy "St. Kliment Ohridski"; a library of the Faculty of Pedagogy Skopje; (https://indibib.feit.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

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Faculty of Medicine; there is a library at the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje which is a Central Medical Library founded in 1947; (http://cmb.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Pharmacy; there is a library at the Faculty of Pharmacy in Skopje; (http://cmb.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Dental school; there is a digital library at the Faculty of Dentistry in Skopje where you can search for master's and doctoral theses, books in the professional field, professional papers, textbooks, and teaching aids. (https://stomfak.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Physical Culture; the library of the Faculty of Physical Culture has a library collection of 5,000 books, magazines, newsletters, monographs, and other teaching aids. Within the library at the Faculty of Physical Education there is an opportunity to connect with renowned world libraries; (https://ffosz.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food; the library of the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food has a collection of over 120.000 periodicals and 28.000 books and monographs by domestic and foreign authors; (http://www.fznh.ukim.edu.mk 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Forestry; the library of the Faculty of Forestry started working independently on 01.10.1975; (https://sf.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine; the library collection of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine has about 3,000 copies of domestic and foreign literature; (https://fvm.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Dramatic Arts; Digital Library of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts; (http://indibib.feit.ukim.edu.mk/book_category/fakultet-za-dramski-umetnosti/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Fine Arts; Digital Library of the Faculty of Fine Arts formed in 1984. (http://www.flu.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Music Art; a library of the Faculty of Music Art established in 1966; (http://www.fmu.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

The faculty of design and technologies of furniture and interior, has a digital library. (https://indibib.feit.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Within the University "Saints Cyril and Methodius" there are constituent scientific institutes: Economic Institute Skopje, Institute for Sociological and Political Legal Research - Skopje, Institute for Earthquake Engineering and Engineering Seismology, Agricultural Institute, and Institute of Animal Husbandry. Within the University "Saints Cyril and Methodius," there are other associate members e.i. public scientific institutions, such as the Institute of Macedonian Literature, Institute of Macedonian Language "Krste Misirkov", Institute of National History, and Institute of Folklore "Marko Cepenkov". Other institutions of higher education which are also part of UKIM are the Orthodox Theological Faculty, St.Kliment Ohridski " which was founded in Skopje in 1977, (https://pbf.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024), and the Military Academy "Mihailo Apostolski" which was established by the law on Military Academy, which regulates that the Academy operates following the law on higher education and the law on scientific research in the Republic of Macedonia. (https://ma.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Some of the universities in Macedonia, on their official websites on the Internet, offer access to electronic libraries that provide access to several databases for research, books, and journals from different fields. In cooperation with several faculties, the idea was to make a digital library where students can search for various books and learning materials and find or publish professional papers, search online collections of libraries, etc. At the University "Saints Cyril and Methodius" – Skopje there is a digital library in which almost all faculties of this university are members.

Some of them are included in the COBISS system which means cooperative online bibliographic system and services. The platform is an organizational model of linking libraries into a National Library-Information System with mutual cataloging, mutual bibliographic-catalog database, etc. With the help of this platform, every user can search online libraries in a very fast, simple, and easy way, can reserve a book, can extend the loan period through a mobile application, and many other opportunities and benefits.

Some of the faculties that are included in the COBISS system of the University "St. Cyril and Methodius" are the Faculty of Philology, "Blaze Koneski", Faculty of Economics – Skopje, Faculty of

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Medicine - Skopje, and Central Medical Library. ((https://plus.cobiss.net/cobiss/mk/mk/libraries/ 22.03.2024).

2. University" St. Kliment Ohridski" - Bitola, known by the acronym UKLO is the second State University in the Republic of Macedonia and the most important institution in the field of higher education in the region of Southwest Macedonia.

This university was established on 25.04.1979 in Bitola. On 08.12.1994, a decision was made to name the University after the great Ohrid educator St.Kliment.

Today, this university is an autonomous, higher educational, and scientific research institution, aiming to be internationally open and in the function of the environment. (https://uklo.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

The National and University Library of Bitola "St. Kliment Ohridski" was founded on 25.03.1945 with the decision of the City National Board and was named "the City National Library" in Bitola. Since its inception, the library has undergone several changes regarding its title. Since 2004, its name has been National Institution - National and University Library "St.Kliment Ohridski " Bitola. Today, the library, "St. Kliment Ohridski " - Bitola is a modern, cultural institution, with a rich book collection of about 600,000 books and magazines. (https://nuub.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Within this university, there are the faculties in which the following libraries exist and function (Stefanovska, 2011):

Technical Faculty – Bitola; the library at the Technical Faculty – Bitola was established in 1968; (Stefanovska, 2011).

Faculty of Economics – Prilep; the library at the Faculty of Economics – Prilep which was established immediately after the establishment of the higher vocational school of Economics and accounting in 1960; (Stefanovska, 2011).

Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality – Ohrid; The library at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality – Ohrid was established in 1977; (Stefanovska, 2011).

Faculty of Pedagogy – Bitola; the library at the Faculty of Pedagogy - Bitola formed with the establishment of the higher education institution in 1964; (Stefanovska, 2011).

Faculty of Information and Communication Technologies, (https://fikt.uklo.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Biotechnical Sciences – Bitola; the library at the Faculty of Biotechnical Sciences-Bitola which was established in 1960; (Stefanovska, 2011).

High Medical School – Bitola; Library of the High Medical School – Bitola; (Stefanovska, 2011).

Faculty of Security – Skopje; the library at the Faculty of Security - Skopje was established immediately after the establishment of the police academy in Skopje in 2003; (Stefanovska, 2011).

Veterinary Faculty – Bitola; library at the veterinary faculty - Bitola; (Stefanovska, 2011).

Faculty of Law – Kicevo; the library of the Faculty of Law – Kicevo established in 2010; (Stefanovska, 2011).

Technical and technological faculty - Veles (Stefanovska, 2011).

At the University "St. Kliment Ohridski" – Bitola, there are several scientific units that are working within the University and that have their libraries; Library at the Institute of Tobacco - Prilep; Library at the Hydrobiological Institute - Ohrid; Library of the Institute of old Slavic culture - Prilep (Stefanovska, 2011).

The most prominent units of the University "St. Kliment Ohridski" - Bitola, which are included in the COBISS platform are the Scientific Institute of Tobacco - Prilep and the National Institution "National and University Library St. Kliment Ohridski" – Bitola.

3. University "Goce Delchev" - Stip was established by the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia on 27.03. 2007 with the following faculties; (https://www.ugd.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

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Faculty of Law,
Faculty of Economics,
Faculty of Agriculture,
Faculty of Informatics,
Faculty of Pedagogy,
Faculty of Natural and Technical Sciences,
Faculty of Music Arts,
Faculty of Medical Sciences,
Faculty of Philology,
Faculty of Tourism and Business Logistics,
Faculty of Mining, Geology, and Polytechnic.

In addition to the faculties, there are also departments, institutes, laboratories, centers, and other internal units such as the University Cultural Center, University Sports Center, Public Relations Center, lifelong learning center, Electronic Learning Center, Quality Assurance Center, inter-university cooperation center, IT center, career office, etc. The University "Goce Delchev" from Stip is located in several Macedonian cities: Stip, Strumica, Kocani, Radovis, Probistip, Vinica, Sveti Nikole, Gevgelija, Kavadarci, Prilep, Skopje and Berovo.

The University Library "Goce Delchev" from Stip gathers in one place the editions of all faculties and associated institutes that function within the University "Goce Delchev". The university library provides access for students to all books, textbooks, professional aids, manuals, etc., and their number is more than 110.000 books from various fields, namely social, natural, and technical sciences, as well as mathematics, geodesy, physics, chemistry, biology, botany, geology, paleontology and has a large number of dictionaries, master's and doctoral theses. The University Library "Goce Delchev" provides its users with an electronic e-library service. Recently, a simple application which provides electronic access to the library catalogue has been in use thus facilitating the process of education (https://www.nuubgdst.mk, 22.03.2024). The National and university library "Goce Delchev" from Stip is included in the COBISS network with all departments, including the adult's department, children's department, academic department, and Bibliobus (mobile library).

4. The University of Tetovo was established on 17.12.1994 with the following faculties; (https://unite.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics,
Faculty of Humanistic Studies and Arts,
Faculty of Economics,
Faculty of Law,
Faculty of Philosophy,
Faculty of Business Administration,
Faculty of Medical Sciences at the University of Tetovo.

The State University of Tetovo is included in the COBISS platform.

5. The University of Information Sciences and Technologies "St. Paul the Apostle" - Ohrid or abbreviated UIST was registered in the Central Register of the Republic of Macedonia in July 2009. This university is a State University, legally established by the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia in 2008. The university library is not included in the COBISS platform. Under its authority are the faculties of; Communication networks and security, Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering, Faculty of Information Systems, visualization, digital, multi-media, and animation techniques, Faculty of information theories and analysis, Faculty of machine intelligence and robotics (https://uist.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

6. The university "Mother Teresa" - Skopje was established on 26.12.2015, by the law on establishing the Faculty of Mother Teresa in Skopje, with the faculties of; Civil engineering and architecture, Faculty of Information Sciences, Faculty of Technical Sciences, Faculty of Social Affairs,

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Faculty of Technological Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, Economic School and Law School (https://unt.edu.mk/mk/ 22.03.2024).

Among the other state universities that are included in the COBISS network is the university library of the university "Mother Teresa" from Skopje.

According to the Ministry of Education, private accredited higher education establishments are: (https://mon.gov.mk/ 22.03.2024).

First private university - European University of the Republic of Macedonia,
First private Fon University, Skopje;
Private higher education institution New York University Skopje,
University American College Skopje,
MIT University Skopje,
International Slavic Institute Sveti Nikole,
International University Europa prima Skopje,
University of Tourism and Management Skopje,
Private independent higher vocational school, business Academy Smilevski-BAS " Skopje,
International University of Struga,
Southeast European University, Tetovo-independent private-public non-profit higher education institution that realizes public interest,
International Balkan University Skopje,
Higher vocational school, Accademia Italiana " Skopje,
Higher professional institution for Business Studies Euro College Kumanovo,
International Vision University Gostivar,
Higher Professional School of Journalism and Public Relations Skopje,
Institute of Social Sciences, Euro Balkans " Skopje,
Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities Skopje,
Independent higher vocational school-Breinster next Skopje,
Higher vocational school Fashion Design Institute Tetovo.

In the South East European University, there is the "Max van der Stoel" library which serves the scientific research and educational goals of the University. Users of this university library have access to the library's collection, network databases, electronic resources, computers with internet access, and reading rooms that are tailored to the requirements and needs of the students. The University Library "Max van der Stoel" is also open to the community and is the winner of the "Library of the Year" award given by the Library Association of Macedonia for 2021 (https://www.seeu.edu.mk/mk/22.03.2024).

Other higher vocational school and university library that is included in COBISS is the University "American College" - Skopje.

Most of the private universities in Macedonia have a university library, and some of them have an online learning platform for students (https://msu.edu.mk/fakulteti/fi/literatura/ 22.03.2024) databases of electronic editions, etc.(https://utms.edu.mk/biblioteka /22.03.2024

Conclusion

The fact that libraries exist in all universities and all faculties within the universities speaks of the importance that the university libraries have on the educational process. Libraries fully assist science, education, research, personal and professional development of the individual, but also lifelong learning. Macedonia as a country where literacy and science began and developed, continues to spread science and education today. On the territory of Macedonia, there are even too many universities that offer opportunities for study in almost all areas of social life. Following the world trends, the university

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libraries in the Republic of North Macedonia actively help and improve the educational process. There are university libraries in all universities in the state.

There must be a library in every university because it is impossible to imagine modern learning, development, scientific research, etc. without a university library. From the conducted research we conclude that the higher vocational school and university libraries in Macedonia are not fully included in the COBISS network. At the universities in the Republic of Macedonia, it is necessary to constantly work on modernizing the libraries in terms of modernizing the library premises, the library equipment, and investing in the staff working at the higher vocational school and university libraries, to be competent, to provide them with opportunities to attend training and courses for library work. All this will enable them to more easily respond to the requests of the users of the library i.e. the students and the teaching staff. Also, in the Republic of North Macedonia, an initiative should be made for unification, or establishing a community, or association of all higher vocational school and university libraries following the example in Serbia. Through mutual cooperation and the sharing of experience, this initiative will significantly facilitate the work of the libraries and will provide easier access to libraries, better quality education, and develop librarianship. This association of higher vocational school and university libraries will initiate scientific conferences and scientific papers in the field of library science, especially in these higher educational institutions. This is turn will increase the publishing activities through which the information and the knowledge of the wider social community will be improved.

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THE INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS AS AN ETHICAL MODEL ON THE STUDENTS' DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

As a result of globalization, people are faced with large and rapid changes, but also with challenges for which they are not prepared and the reactions to these changes are often not at all in the interest of well-being and development. Today, educators face major challenges despite the various educational reforms and substantial research undertaken over the past decades. At the same time, rapid technological advances and increasing complexities in social life may make it difficult to emphasize morals, values, and ethics and present them through improved curriculum and teaching practices. The emphasis in this paper will be placed on the teacher who, as an ethical model, has a significant influence on the development of students.

Teachers play a decisive role in the cultivation of moral values and ethical behavior of students in schools. Through the model of their behavior, teachers influence the formation of perceptions and internalization of students' moral values, encouraging and promoting a sense of ethical responsibility and orienting the decision-making processes. Character, ethical, and moral behavior of teachers, remain an example in the development of students' talent, emotional intelligence, instructions in ethical decision-making, fostering the development of a moral culture, encouraging self-reflection, nurturing a sense of responsibility, integrating traditional and contemporary learning, encouraging critical thinking, and providing mentoring and support. Also, the effects of moral and ethical education are long-term, which are reflected not only in interpersonal and social relations, and impact in the community, but are also clearly reflected in the motivation to study, the encouragement of the development of talents, but also in the inheritance of these values in other generations.

Keywords: *ethical behavior, moral culture, students, development, and school community.*

1. Introduction

Globalization is one of the challenges of the century that every human being is facing. Students are one of the age groups that easily embrace any possible change, but this greatly impacts their daily lives. Being integral members of society, they often experience its impacts in difficult ways. During their student years, they are in a phase of self-discovery, making it more tangible to embrace new concepts. This makes them more likely to try new things without thinking about what might happen. Regrettably, these behaviors often involve negative aspects such as substance abuse or getting involved in trouble. Ultimately, these negative tendencies can affect students' prospects and alter their future success.

The impacts of social media, cultural diversity, and globalization, focus on school values and learning. This paper describes the importance of teachers' moral and ethical behaviors and the subsequent influence on their moral decision-making processes and behaviors outside the educational context.

The question is framed as follows: How does the teacher's ethical behavior impact the development of student talents? It also explores how teachers can address the contemporary moral and

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ethical challenges facing students of this generation. In the field of education, the influence of teachers extends beyond the imparting of knowledge. Ethical role modeling by teachers plays an important role in shaping the character and talents of their students and the significance of ethical behavior in education and its direct correlation with the development of student talents. (Govindharajan, 2017)

When it comes to education, we are aware that the effects are long-term, so this paper also focuses on exploring the effects of the long-term, positive moral and ethical influence of teachers on students, exploring how these models shape the main part of the character and that how they affect and manifest in their personal lives, relationships, and contributions to society. If talented students are provided with an appropriately challenging and respectful global curriculum, we can help them prepare to do good work with global impact. (Landweher, 2009)

However, many have observed that Talented children express moral concerns at a younger age and in a more intensified manner than their age peers, and some theorists suggest that moral sensitivity increases with intelligence. (Krege, 2015)

2. Defining od terms

2.1 Ethical behavior

Ethical behavior can be defined as respecting the dignity, diversity, and rights of individuals and groups of people. It is characterized by honesty and fairness in interpersonal, professional, and academic relationships and research and scholarly activities. In defining the term ethical behavior, the following definitions from the Oxford Dictionary were used:

- "Dignity" - true value, excellence; high rank or estimation
- "Variety" - being different in nature or qualities; different kind; variety
- "Equity" - equity; recourse to the principles of justice to correct or supplement the law;
- "Fairness" - fair = fair, impartial, just, legitimate, according to rules
- "Honesty" - truthfulness; honest = fair and just in speech and deed, not lying, cheating or stealing; sincere; showing righteousness;
- "Respect" - respecting persons = respecting with reverence, respect, or honor; avoid humiliating or offending injuring or interfering or interrupting treat with care spare refrain from offending or spoiling or tempting
- "Right(s)" - a justification, equitable claim, right to privilege or immunity, anything that is entitled to; authority to act in a certain way.

Ethics is a branch of philosophy that examines the reasoning behind our moral life. Critical examination and analysis of the concepts and principles of ethics help to justify our moral choices and actions (Rice, 1999).

2.2 Moral, Morality, Ethics

People do not live in moral or ethical isolation but grow up within particular moral traditions (Reiss, 1999). Morality is a person's or society's idea of what is right or wrong, especially regarding a person's behavior. Ethics are the guiding principles that help individuals or groups decide what is good or bad. Generally, the terms ethics and morality are used interchangeably, although a few different communities (academic, legal, or religious, for example) will occasionally make a distinction. Both morality and ethics loosely have to do with distinguishing the difference between "good and bad" or "right and wrong."

Morals, values, and ethics are sometimes difficult to understand because the misunderstandings and misconceptions surrounding them hinder the arrival of the correct explanation. The objective of moral education lies in the fact that it can develop shared feelings with others and make one committed to one's responsibilities and actions (Campbell, 2008). Many people think of morality as personal and normative, whereas ethics is the "good and bad" standards distinguished by a certain community or

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social setting. Ethics and morals relate to "right" and "wrong" conduct. While they are sometimes used interchangeably, they are different: ethics refer to rules provided by an external source, e.g., codes of conduct in workplaces or principles in religions. Morals refer to an individual's principles regarding right and wrong.

Morality and ethics are part of a way of life and cannot be separated from all other aspects of life experiences (Kang & Glassman, 2010). Moral education aims at promoting students' moral development and character formation. The theoretical framework of moral education is supported by moral philosophy, moral psychology, and moral educational practices (Han, 2014). Moral education is about an inner change, which is a spiritual matter and comes through the internalization of universal human values (Halstead, 2007).

2.3 Educational institutions

Educational institutions play a very important role in teaching the youth about morals and ethics. Their role starts from pre-school age, primary and secondary education, and continues in all educational cycles. In addition to imparting knowledge, schools serve as institutions where young people learn about values, ethical principles, and social responsibilities. Below we list several steps for the way educational institutions function in terms of moral and ethical education:

- Formal Curriculum: Many schools incorporate explicit instruction on morals and ethics into their curriculum through subjects like social studies, civics, and religious studies. These classes provide opportunities for students to explore moral dilemmas, ethical theories, and the importance of virtues such as honesty, empathy, respect, and responsibility.

- Character Education Programs: Schools often implement character education programs specifically designed to teach students about moral values and character development. These programs may include lessons, activities, and discussions focused on building traits like integrity, fairness, kindness, and citizenship.

- Ethical Decision-Making: Schools help students develop critical thinking and decision-making skills, including the ability to evaluate ethical issues and make principled choices. Through class discussions, debates, and case studies, students learn to consider different perspectives, weigh consequences, and apply ethical principles in their lives.

- Codes of Conduct and Policies: Schools typically have codes of conduct and policies that outline expectations for student behavior and promote ethical standards. By enforcing rules related to honesty, respect, bullying prevention, and academic integrity, schools create a culture that values ethical behavior and holds students accountable for their actions.

- Social-Emotional Learning (SEL): SEL programs, increasingly integrated into school curricula, focus on developing students' social and emotional skills, including empathy, self-awareness, self-regulation, and relationship-building. These skills are essential for cultivating moral character and promoting positive interactions with others. (BIer, 2007)

2.3.1 Moral and Ethical Challenges in Education

As a result of globalization, people are faced with large and rapid changes, but also with challenges for which they are not prepared and the reactions to these changes are often not at all in the interest of well-being and development. Educators are currently facing major challenges despite the various educational reforms and substantial research undertaken over the past decades. At the same time, rapid technological advances and increasing complexities in social life may make it difficult to emphasize morals, values, and ethics and present them through improved curriculum and teaching practices. We will list the following as the main ethical issues in education:

- Social Inequity: One of the biggest ethical issues that schools face is social inequity. Education institutions often fail to address the problems that arise thanks to the inequalities between different children because of their economic, ethnic, and other family backgrounds.

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• Cheating: Cheating has been a prominent historical issue in every school. While it is challenging to tackle this problem thoroughly, there are things schools can do to minimize it. Assisted cheating is now becoming more popular and one of the most significant ethical concerns education providers face.

• Social Diversity: In multicultural countries and neighborhoods, it is vital for every place of education, especially public schools and colleges, to aim for ethnic and social equality in what is offered. Students from ethnic minorities and diverse backgrounds should not feel left out.

• Bullying: Bullying is a huge ethical problem in many schools. It is no surprise at this point, and pretty much everyone knows that some children are going to face some form of bullying in schools. However, the institutions often brush away the signs of bullying and ignore it even when they see it happening. Every school could organize multicultural festivals and ethnic sports to make such students feel included. Aiming to provide ethnic equality should not be used as a blanket statement. Instead, steps must be taken as ethnic and social inequity can become one of the most significant ethical issues in any place of education. (Copyleaks 2022)

3. Role models in schools

Role models possess qualities that inspire others to imitate them, fostering meaningful connections in the process. Adults, community members, historical figures, and character roles in literature can take the form of role models, (Berkowitz 2011). Role modeling is an effective means that influences students' academic and personality growth besides thriving toward career professionalism (Loh & Nalliah, 2010).

One of the most powerful aspects of having role models in education is the opportunity for students to learn good habits and behaviors. As the saying goes, "actions speak louder than words," and when students see their role models consistently exhibiting positive behaviors, it can profoundly impact their development. Good role models in education demonstrate various positive behaviors, including responsibility, respect, perseverance, and a strong work ethic. These behaviors not only help students excel academically but also prepare them for success in their future careers and personal lives. (MARIE, 2024) An individual may not be skillful but the display of an appropriate attitude could perceive the person as exemplary (Vescio, Wilde & Crosswhite, 2005).

3.1 Teacher as a Role Model

Teachers have a significant responsibility beyond just educating students; they also have a crucial role in influencing their moral and ethical growth. Positioned as both educators and role models, they are entrusted with shaping the future generation. Their duties extend beyond imparting knowledge to include character education and guiding students towards leading morally upright lives, thus contributing significantly to societal development.

Concerning the description of a good teacher, Harmer (1998), concludes that:

• The teacher makes their lesson interesting,

• A teacher must love her job,

• The teacher has his personality,

• The teacher has lots of knowledge, not only his subject,

• A teacher is an entertainment,

• Teachers, it is an example of behavior, ethics, and communication.

The character and personality of the teacher are crucial factors in teaching and learning in the classroom, and building the relationship between the teacher and the students is more essential than the teaching process itself. (Narinasamy, Vol. 5, No. 6; 2015) "Teachers should be the best minds in the country." Students seek advice and guidance from teachers and are not only interested in learning

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lessons but are also interested in following their life lessons. That is why teachers should inspire students by their example to follow good habits, not bad ones. (Govindharajan, 2017) This has often been seen as one of the topics of debate between analysts and researchers where some of them argue that teachers should focus mainly on academic teaching and professional development, while others claim that teachers should set an example for the values they seek to instill to their students. Relating to the role, a teacher must provide a good attitude functioning as a role model to the construction of students' good traits – so-called good teacher (Hasnah, 2019)

The purpose of education extends beyond simply imparting knowledge and focusing solely on students' skills. It should also prioritize instilling essential aspects of their lives such as character traits like honesty, discipline, self-esteem, responsibility, respect for oneself and others, and trustworthiness. These qualities significantly impact relationships with peers, teachers, families, and the environment. Therefore, teachers bear a noble responsibility to foster virtues in education and shape students' attitudes. Their role as role models should be evident throughout the teaching and learning process across different subjects. This approach contributes to students' intellectual, social, emotional, and ethical development. A teacher needs to help students resolve conflicts constructively, Teaching Students to be Peacemakers focuses on creating a cooperative context in which all participants seek mutual goals. (Marvin N. Berlowitz, 2005)

Teachers play an important role in the lives of students, not only to become successful in their careers but also to help them become good people in society and good citizens of the country. Teachers know that students are the future of any nation. (Govindarajan, 2017) They are the most important agents in shaping students' education and bringing about changes and innovations in educational practices. (Bakeness, 2010) In terms of the broader context of ethics in education, Kohlberg's (1969) stages of moral development provide a theoretical framework for understanding how students' ethical reasoning evolves. This theory suggests that teachers, by promoting ethical discussions and modeling moral behavior, contribute to the moral development of their students. (Langdon, 2011)

3.2 Teacher influence on the moral cultivation of their students

Teachers are considered as second parents and it is undeniable that they play a very important role as models and examples of morality and ethics for their students. Teachers should model appropriate traits as they not only have an innate duty to disperse knowledge but also to develop students into good human beings (Campbell, 2003; Schwarz, 1998). When teachers consistently demonstrate compassion, honesty, and ethical behavior, they provide students with clear examples of how to behave well. This sets a standard for students to follow, and they learn these lessons quickly, especially at a young age. According to researchers, the socialization and familiarization of the school environment, along with the cultivation of appropriate moral and ethical values through teacher modeling and explanation, significantly impact children's self-esteem. Teachers regularly discussing positive and negative values with students and incorporating character education into their teaching can have a profound effect on how students view themselves and their place in the world. (Nashir, 2013).

The impact of engaging students as often and actively in conversations about what is right and wrong and giving students opportunities to think and talk about these issues helps students develop their moral compass. Teachers encourage students to think deeply about difficult moral issues by discussing them openly and taking concrete examples from everyday life that they experience. This not only helps students become better at moral reasoning but also allows them to relate moral ideas to real-life situations they may face.

Creating a supportive and educational environment is key for teachers in elementary schools. When teachers show empathy, respect, and understanding towards their students, it fosters a sense of trust. This trust makes students more open to learning about morals and ethics. It also encourages them to engage more in discussions about these topics, leading to further moral and ethical growth. It is the intentional, proactive effort by schools, districts, and states to instill in their students important core ethical values such as caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respect for self and others. (Pala, 2011)

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4. Long-term effects on students

Teachers' positive influence on students' morals and ethics can have a lasting impact on their lives, affecting not only their personal growth but also their relationships and contributions to society. A large number of studies and research have proven these effects and consider them to be very significant. For positive outcomes of motivated learning, it is the quality of motivation that is decisive (Ryan & Deci, 2000). These qualities play a big part in how kids grow and decide what to do.

Firstly, when teachers model good moral and ethical behavior, it can shape students' character and values. Students who have teachers as positive role models are more likely to develop traits like honesty, discipline, respect, empathy, and a sense of social responsibility. These qualities not only benefit students personally but also influence how they interact with others and contribute to their communities. By observing and learning from ethical teachers, students internalize these values and carry them forward into their lives beyond the classroom. (Yasin, 2018; Wibowo, 2020; Rukmana, 2020).

Additionally, teachers impact how students get along with each other. When teachers show respect, kindness, and fairness, it creates an atmosphere where students treat each other the same way. Students who witness positive behavior like this are more inclined to be helpful and build strong friendships. The positive moral and ethical teacher's influence on students can be seen in the way students contribute to society. When students learn from teachers who emphasize good values, they are more likely to engage in actions that benefit their communities. This could be through volunteering, helping others, or being active participants in community projects. Students whom morally upright teachers have influenced are more likely to engage in community service, philanthropic activities, and advocacy for social justice (Cipolle, 2010; Allsup & Shieh, 2012).

Teachers who show students how to make good decisions based on morals and ethics can have long-lasting effects. When students learn from teachers who think critically about right and wrong, they better understand complex moral problems. This helps them make fair decisions and stick to important human values in different situations. Also, good teachers can help create a community where people care about doing the right thing. Students who learn from these teachers are likelier to stand up for justice, equality, and good behavior in society. They might speak out for human rights, work towards peace between people, and fight against unfair actions.

Teachers who teach good values can help keep these important ideas alive for future generations. Students who learn from these teachers are more likely to pass on these values to their kids, ensuring that good morals and ethics remain important in society. The best teacher is the one who is an example to his students. Teachers and tutors should primarily follow and practice what they preach. They should adequately use moral values in the right way in daily life to inspire their students. (Aymen, 2023)

5. Students' reception of moral behaviors in school

Teachers in schools have a multifaceted influence as role models on their students, influencing their moral and ethical development.

• Moral behavior and individual character

While serving as positive role models is important, educators also have an impact on students' moral development through their daily interactions with them. These interactions include their capacity to recognize and understand students' perspectives, their willingness to accept and learn from moral mistakes, their moral fervor and idealism, their generosity, and their ability to support students in developing moral reasoning without compromising their moral authority. (Ascd, 2003)

• Emotional Intelligence and the Connection with Empathy

Teachers with high emotional intelligence and empathy can positively influence students' moral development. They demonstrate understanding, compassion, and fairness, fostering an environment of care and respect. Research suggests that students who perceive their teachers as empathetic and

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emotionally intelligent are likelier to internalize moral values and exhibit prosocial behavior. (Saarni, 2011)

• Ethical decision-making and appropriate guidelines

Teachers are the ones who guide ethical decision-making in schools. Open discussions, moral reasoning activities, and case studies help students develop critical thinking skills and make informed ethical choices (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping their moral decision-making processes by teaching students how to navigate ethical dilemmas and apply life teachings.

• Moral culture and the importance of its cultivation

Teachers are dedicated to the fulfillment of their mission, and promote honesty, respect, and justice, creating the classroom environment that encourages ethical behavior. The importance of moral culture in schools should be emphasized because it improves the moral development of students and encourages positive social interactions. Teachers are the main actors who contribute to the development of moral culture in the classroom and the school community (Bhat, 2019).

The way students see and understand their teachers' moral actions in school is super important. It influences how they make moral choices and act outside of school. (Nwile, 2022)

First, students learn from watching their teachers and copying what they do. They see their teachers as examples of how to act ethically. When students see their teachers being honest, kind, fair, and caring, they start to think those things are important too. They start to act the same way in their own lives. Second, the bond between students and teachers matters. When teachers and students have a good relationship, students want to be like their teachers. If teachers are kind and supportive, students look up to them and want to be good like them. When there's trust between teachers and students, it's easier for students to learn good values from their teachers. (Platz, 2021)

Conclusion

Through the model of their behavior, teachers influence the formation of perceptions and internalization of students' moral values, encouraging and promoting a sense of ethical responsibility and orienting the decision-making processes. Character, ethical, and moral behavior of teachers in education, remains an example of training not only in teaching, but also in the development of their talent, emotional intelligence, instructions in ethical decision-making, fostering the development of a moral culture, encouraging self-reflection, nurturing a sense of responsibility, integrating traditional and contemporary learning, encouraging critical thinking, and providing mentoring and support. So it is obvious that teachers play a decisive role in the cultivation of moral values and ethical behavior of students in schools.

Teachers with their role and mission contribute to the unique development of students, equipping them with the ability to orient moral challenges and make ethical choices in their personal lives and implement them in the wider society. The influence of teachers as role models significantly affects the moral, and ethical development of students, making them more responsible individuals in society. Also, the effects of moral and ethical education are long-term, which are reflected not only in interpersonal and social relations, and impact in the community, but are also clearly reflected in the motivation to study, the encouragement of the development of talents, but also in the inheritance of these values. in other generations.

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THE SERMON AND MODERN GENRE CLASSIFICATION

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Abstract

The sermon is defined as a "genre of oratorical prose: a didactic work that contains ethical demands and prompts the listener to an emotional perception of those demands". In the literary room encyclopedia has not been given much attention until now, and the interest in it can even be named as limited. It occurs only within general rhetoric, history, theology, and philosophy. The area functional variety of language includes the sphere of religion, where the sermon also belongs. Here, in this paper, we try to systematize the observations related to the genre classification of the sermon.

Concerning the sermon, as one of the most significant genres in the area of the sacred, special attention deserves consideration and analysis of its specific communicative properties. The questions in this sphere refer to its realization in oral form, the referral to a collective addressee, the asymmetry between the communicants (absolute dominance of the preacher over the recipients), strong presence of intertextuality and linguistic features, among which the interaction of archaic and modern language units on the lexical, phonetic, morphological and syntactic level. The textological peculiarities of the sermon remain the focus of one of the following scientific - research activities, which on the other hand enables a functional analysis of the medieval literary texts (the praise epistle of St. Clement of Ohrid, for example).

Keywords: sermon, genre, classification, rhetoric, prose, St. Clement

1. INTRODUCTION - THE WORD GENRE IN MEDIEVAL LITERATURE

Texts, handwritten texts, are the earliest facts of human culture, subject to constant commentaries and interpretation, without the possibility of it being exhausted, especially, when it refers to archaic texts, which have reached identity with the collective memory (Мейзерски. В. М. 1987: 22). The analyzed practices, phenomena and fragments described and systematized by poetics and rhetoric and penetrated actively into the Slavic cultures of the XVII - XVIII, (only as literary practices) exist in Slavic written culture since the beginning of the 9th century. It is possible even at that time that the authors are guided by ethics, but we have no confirmation of that, so it can only be conjectured whether it was theoretically generalized or merely an inheritance of practical experience (Панайотов.В. 2011). Panayotov believes that in the Slavic medieval hymnography, for example, certain techniques from the time of St. Cyril a philosopher preserved until the 13th century in the work of the poetess Zoya (Панайотов.В. 1999; 2002: 210-219; 2003: 79 - 89; 2005: 313 - 327; 2008: 231 - 247).

We could consider medieval literature primarily from two aspects: the first is its description using modern criteria, and the author's description should be made according to medieval representations. In the first, the risk is in the wrong or a very free translation into a modern literary language, in the second one it threatens the possibility of the absence of translation and sinking into liturgical-pragmatic isolation (Трендафилов, 2009:119). From there, the emergence of a metalanguage is necessary, which makes it possible the communication between the two is natural, but temporally distant and incomprehensible language, the language of the medieval and the language of modern man. Metalanguage is an artificial language, a mediator and enabler of dialogue between separate eras. Trendafilov considers the relationship between the "center" and the "periphery", that is, the basic conceptual-functional content of the manuscript and the various secondary, satellite texts, with an attributive - explanatory, introductory or concluding character (Трендафилов, 2009:119). Under the phrase "center" in medieval literature we mean sacral - ideologically marked structural units that carry the main pragmatic and aesthetic function of the particular work (collection) or the entire textual universe of the handwritten book, where normativity is respected, as a feature of the time. "The

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Periphery" represents all the specific signals that distinguish the elements at all levels of the composed hierarchy, and precisely in it, they could be expected more or less deviations from the norm (Трендафилов, 2009:119).

2. THE SERMON AND MODERN GENRE CLASSIFICATION

Slavic theo-linguistic research mainly refers to stylistic and genre characteristics of the language of the sacrum, that is, of identifying and classification of genres. "It is impossible to find a single basis for this separation because church texts represent complexes in which they are present informative, factual, appellate and declarative models" ((Бобырева, Е. В, 2006: 32). - according to Bobireva, who proposes a division into primary and secondary genres, which is in agreement with most researchers. She counts them in primary genres only the parables and the psalms, while identifying the parable only with Solomon's stories, and Končarevic, mentions that in this classification the Gospels and the parables from the patristic literature are missing, what else causes disagreement among several other researchers in this area (Кончаревић, К. 2012:102).

Bugaeva, in the commentary on the mentioned classification, suggests that in primary genres yes the texts from the Holy books enter, and in secondary, the genres that represent them modification (Бугаева, И. В. 2010: 15 - 23). With Prohvatilova, the division is made based on their meaning and frequency in communication, which is realized in the field of the sacred. Only preaching and prayer are included in the primary genres (Прохватилова, О. А. 1999:127 - 139). Mechkovskaya, on the other hand, makes a division based on the canon itself: in Christianity biblical, in Judaism canon of Tanach, and in Islam The Koran. He counts these in the primary group, and the secondary ones are derived, from sacral texts that can also be called traditions: patristic literature, "Talmud", "Sunna" and qadis. In the genre of preaching the faith: dews on the Ecumenical Councils, catechisms, then liturgical genre, genre of mystical - esoteric texts, so interpretations, sermons, canonical-legal genres, genres of the "clerical writings" of historiography and natural sciences, polemical writings (Мечковская, Н. Б. 1998:149-171). With Bugaeva, there is a division of genres according to the sphere of use: genres of Holy Scripture - psalms, prayers, parables, apostolic epistles, etc. All other genres are related to them as basic ones: thematic, axiological, situational, and compositional. The other group consists of the liturgical-hymnographic genre: akathist, tropar, kondak, ikos, stichira, canon, prayer, service of the Saints), then the hagiographic genre: lives, biographies of Saints, telling about miracles), then the homiletic: the sermons. Then they follow the didactic (teaching): spiritual letter, interpretation, treatise, administrative where minutes from the session of the church bodies and organizations, documents from Councils, petitions addressed to the church hierarchy, synodal and diocesan decrees, epistles and the etiquette genre (formulas used in church communication, on example: greetings at meetings and separations, congratulations, consolations, condolences (Бугаева, И. В. 2005: 4 - 6; 2008:15 - 23). Bugaeva according to the criterion of genesis, function, and form distinguishes biblical and non-biblical, worship service and non-worship service, liturgical and non-liturgical, oral and written genres (Бугаева, И. В. 2005: 7 - 8). In addition to Russian science, Polonistics also makes a huge contribution to the review on the genre division of sacred literature, so Vjerus-Kowalski gives it the first classification, there are no clear criteria according to which they would make the systematization of genres. Starting from the function of the language of sacred texts, he divides them into two basic genre complexes: theoretical - theological, apologetic, administrative - church genres and emotionally experienced - preaching and liturgical genres (Wierusz-Kowalski, J. 1973: 9 -10). Marija Karpluk, Jadviga Sambor, and Irena Bayerova establish three sacred groups genre, according to the sphere of their functioning: preaching, catechetical activity, and church documentation (Bajerowa, I. 1988:21 - 44; 1994:11-17; Karpluk, M, Sambor, J. 1988) The Slovakian linguist Mistrik, identifies catechetical genres, whose purpose is to strengthen religious convictions (texts from the Holy Scriptures, sermons texts, catechisms) and confessional genres, whose task is the manifestation of faith (personal - individual prayers, temple and texts used during the procession) (Mistrik, J. 1992:82 - 89).

Wilkonj makes the following division: genres inspired by the New Testament (songs dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, songs about the sufferings of Christ on the cross, Christmas songs), apocryphal and hagiographic genres, para liturgical songs, prayer genres, (The litany of the Virgin

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Mary, hymns, lessons), folklore genres (carols and similar songs), genre of metaphysical and mystical lyrics, reflective poetry, meditative prose, pragmatic genre (confession) and genres related to the pastoral activity of the Church (encyclicals, etc.) (Wilkoń, A. 2002:266-273). Koncharević, in such a division, the weakness perceives in the common grouping of apocrypha and hagiographies, without being taken into given their opposition according to the criterion of canonicity and the inequalities in the view of the narration.

According to Makuchowska (Makuchowska, M.1995: 449-459), there are the following genres: sermon, prayer, religious song, biblical genre, dramatic genre, spiritual messengers.

Kładoczny (Kładoczny, P. 2004: 38) builds such a genre system: individual prayer, common prayer, homily, papal encyclicals, pastoral (spiritual) messengers, spiritual songs, parish notices, prophecies, other prophetic genres (horoscope, fortune-telling) and translations of texts on which they are based Christian doctrine (the Bible and other texts), where it is problematic the separation of translation texts into a separate genre, the separation of papal ones encyclicals and epistles to other addressees (same structure and linguistic parameters), of course at the end and the question of how much the horoscope as a genre can be sacral.

Gadomskij (Gadomskij, A.K. 2008: 89 - 92) introduces 13 genres: hagiographic texts, spiritual epistles, prayer, papal encyclicals, translations of non-Christian texts religions, translations of texts from Christian religions, parables, notices of parishioners, sermon, prophecy, other prophetic genres (horoscope, revelation, vision), spiritual song, testimony. Gadomsky adds to the list the confession genre, the written instructions, minutes, and heortological texts, thus favoring Orthodox Christianity. Irina Dmitrieva talks about the concept of functional style, genre, which is traditionally considered an important place in linguistics where it is located, and the question of the word genre, i.e. the questions that determine the religious, the church style. The study of texts with different functional–stylistic characteristics has a long history and takes place through the determination of general principles the functional - the stylistic division, the identification of the individual stylistic characteristics, systematization of the formal, and finally time and the discursive features of functional style.

3. ABOUT THE SERMON AND ITS TEXTUAL CHARACTERISTICS

The sermon, as one of the most significant genres in the part of the sacred, is at the center of attention in a larger number of works, its specifics have been considered and analyzed as communicative properties. The issues under consideration relate to her realization in oral form, the reference to a collective addressee, the asymmetry between the communicants (absolute dominance of the preacher over the recipients), strong the presence of intertextuality and linguistic features, among which it is the most easily noticeable the interaction of archaic and modern linguistic units of lexical, phonetic, morphological and syntactic plan. Sermon as a genre of religious style characterizes the original explication of the basic textual categories (Ицкович, Т. 2007: 5). The Orthodox sermon is distinguished by a thematic duality: the presence of the spiritual and material themes. The composition category reflects the general thematic development of the sermon is characterized by alternating fragments of material and spiritual themes, according to their articulation in homiletics, the composition of the sermon determines the preacher's bottom-line pragmatic goal. The chronotope as a category refers to the accepted (adopted) division of topics, (established - conceptual) and objective time and space. The category of tonality in the text of the sermon is characterized by multifacetedness. As a genre, they appear decisively: Christianity (piety - reflects the author's attitude towards the source of energy - God), instructiveness (ja reflects the preacher's social position), speaking (oratory - establishes the equality of the addresser and the addressee before God). Additionally, the sermon according to the tonality it is stratified as festive, penitential, instructive, and individual - author's (reflects the preacher's psycho-emotional attitude towards the content of the sermon) (Ицкович, Т.. 2007:6). The study of the genre specifics of the religious style becomes a current subject of study in contemporary stylistics (Крысин 1996; Гостеева 1997; Войтак 1998; Майданова 1999; Прохватилова 1999, Шмелев 1999; Крылова 2000; Ипатова 2004; Моллаева, Шоцкая 2004; Крылова 2005; Салимовский 2005; Шабанова 2006 etc.) One of the basic genres, in which they are manifested the hallmarks of the religious style, is the sermon genre. In the sermon, sacred topics they communicate events of real happenings, of real

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historical figures from different periods of the Christian era. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the life and death of the Most Holy Mother of God, the lives of the apostles and saints – a series of events embedded in the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Tradition, on which it rests and the preacher, creating a text. This theme uses a dictionary with specific semantics. In this case, we list several of them: the naming of God - the Son (Jesus Christ, Christ, God, God-man), the geographical names (Bethlehem, Golgotha, Israel), the words for accommodation (locating) - (house, temple, housing), the naming of people according to profession or social status (captain, emperor, widow, carpenter). The sacred theme can be presented in the text of the sermon as a thematic chain with different lengths: as a chain that extends throughout the text and as short „links" and a period of subsets, distributed in certain parts of the text (mostly in a strong position at the beginning or/and at the end of the microtopic). It is especially visible in the sermons exegesis.

A complete analysis of the textological features of the sermon includes more observation of the compositional structure, the chronotope category, the category tonality, structural and linguistic characteristics such as speech genre, language, and the communicative specificity in the context of the functioning of the language in the religious communication, the religious style, its positioning in the collective communication, etc. This entire field of study, centered on preaching, enables, on the other hand, the possibility of a more complex analysis, but also the adoption of the medieval literary texts, the praises and instructive the praise epistle of St. Clement of Ohrid, for example, but also of the entire medieval textual creation.

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INCREASING OF THE INTEREST FOR GERMAN LANGUAGE STUDYING THROUGH ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THEIR CUSTOMS AND TRADITION

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Abstract

Each country is rich in its own customs and traditions. Our country as well, and our children get to know them from an early age. In the world there were many peoples who speak their own languages and respect their own traditions and customs. One of the ways to increase children's interest in learning a foreign language such as German is to introduce them to their traditions and customs. The biggest role to achieve this is ours, the teachers, because the children spend a large part of the day at school, and when they are at home doing their homework.

Keywords: customs, tradition, foreign language.

INTRODUCTION

"Birds know each other by singing, people by talking."

-folk saying-

When it comes to tradition, our people have many proverbs, one of which is the above-mentioned one, that people know each other by talking, and birds by singing. This old wisdom speaks of how big the difference is between people who can speak more, that is, know more languages. Those people have better chances to manage, to secure a quality job and better quality life. This should be our basis when we tell children and students how important it is to learn the German language. In recent decades, this language has become more and more in demand, there is an increasing need to know this language. Therefore, in my opinion, one of the ways to succeed in increasing children's interest in learning this language is to introduce them to German customs and traditions that are related to the biggest holidays that they celebrate and that we also celebrate. In addition, I will present the customs for celebrating one of the biggest holidays, which is the birth of Jesus Christ, Christmas and how it is celebrated in Germany.

CHRISTMAS IN GERMANY

On the night of December 24th to 25th, Catholic Christians around the world celebrate Christmas. In Germany, this date, in accordance to the ancient tradition, is the culmination of a long period of preparation for the holiday, which begins in November. Preparations for Christmas in Germany take four weeks and this period is called "Advent". It includes the days of confession, penance, communion. For comparison, in our country Orthodox Christmas is preceded by a forty-day fastening and Christmas is celebrated on January 7th.

German everyday life begins by preparation for Christmas four weeks before Christmas Eve. It is the time of Advent, a word that comes from the Latin expression Adventus Domini, which means, the arrival of the Lord, the birth of Christ. In fact, the four weeks of Advent are a foretaste of the joy of Christmas. Of course, especially for children, but also for everyone in German families. Children are given Advent calendars with twenty-four pages behind which sweets, chocolate or small toys are hidden. It is most beautiful when mothers make the calendars from colorful bags, with the number of the day. And they hang them on doors or windows. Each week, one of the four candles on the Advent wreath, made of evergreen twigs, is lit. In general, Germans share the joy of waiting for Christmas by

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meeting relatives, friends or work colleagues every week. German cities smell particularly delicious before Christmas. It's the smell of roasted, sugared almonds, of mulled mulled wine, of warm waffles, of Christmas cookies and cinnamon and coriander cupcakes.

Before Christmas at midnight, a solemn service begins in Catholic churches. Two more divine services are performed in the morning, at dawn and in the afternoon. They symbolize the Nativity of Christ in the womb of God, the Father, in the womb of the Mother of God and in the soul of every Christian. The next morning, the whole family gathers at the festive table, rejoicing at the birth of the Savior. We go to church on Christmas morning, and then the whole family gathers for lunch.

Waiting for the holiday, according to the residents of Germany, is no less exciting and beautiful than Christmas itself. During the Advent period, Germans decorate trees and houses with toys and lighted garlands. On the streets, in the windows of shops and in the yards, there are colorful "holes" - models of the cave where the baby Jesus was born, with figures of the main characters of the biblical legend. The doors of the houses are decorated with garlands of candles, intertwined with bright ribbons, and on the windows and windows wooden figures are placed and hung, carefully transferred to families from generation to generation. In a prominent place in every house is a tree, dressed with glass toys, balls and candles - without this tree with the star of Bethlehem on top it is hard to imagine Christmas in Germany. Traditions and customs also prescribe to decorate the premises with miniature houses with lighting, figurines and green trees. In our country, the Christmas tree and some homes are decorated with green and red decorations.

The season of the famous pre-Christmas sale is proudly called "the fifth season" by the Germans. Then they start celebrating Christmas in Germany. The date - the eleventh day of the eleventh month - is supplemented by a mystical time - eleven hours and eleven minutes. At this moment, the famous goddess markets are solemnly opened, according to the number of which Germany surpasses all other countries in Europe.

It is traditional in Germany to buy a Christmas tree, in all cities there are traditional Christmas tree markets, where families with children choose a Christmas tree for their homes. We decorate most of our homes with artificial Christmas trees.

A long historical period of fragmentation could not affect how it is customary to celebrate Christmas in Germany. The traditions and customs of different regions of the country do not resemble each other, because they have ancient roots and formed separately. In seaside German towns on Christmas morning the ship with Father Frost on board arrives at the port (in Germany, his name is Weinachtsmann). Descending from the ladder, Santa Claus congratulates the adults and children who meet him with the upcoming holiday and presents gifts that he brought in abundance. In the eastern part of Germany, a region of dense forests and Ore, the tradition is different. The Christmas market sells smoking human figurines, wooden candlesticks and original festive pyramids. People are having fun on the city streets, many of them wearing national costumes. In Thuringia - the homeland of the first glass Christmas balls - the fair is full of various products and souvenirs made of this material. In the southern part of Germany, the main symbol of Christmas is a wooden nursery, reminiscent of the birth of the baby Jesus Christ. The Alpine Choir sings at concerts in the cities of Bavaria. Brass bands perform the national music with trombone and alpine horn - traditional instruments that can be heard right when celebrating Christmas in Germany.

The traditions and customs of the western regions of the country on this holiday resemble the stories of the Brothers Grimm, who were from this part. The road of fairy tales passes through several cities, constantly reminding the traveler of famous stories.

On the eve of the holiday - Christmas Eve or holy evening - the whole family gathers behind the richly decorated and decorated table. According to custom, the best dishes and appliances are placed on this day, and the menu consists of no less than seven dishes. The members make gifts among themselves. Such a tradition does not exist during the celebration in our country. We exchange gifts for the New Year.

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Before the festive meal begins, it is customary to break the plates - thin fresh cakes, lit in the temples during the Advent period. Digging out the pieces of the dispute, the Germans congratulate each other on Christmas and wish each other the best.

In the center of the festive table, according to custom, there is a herd of grazed geese, surrounded by various salads and snacks. Traditional dishes for Christmas in Germany - sauerkraut, seafood and bean soup, symbolizing prosperity. For dessert, it is customary to serve shtollen - a sweet roll with raisins and nuts, covered with whipped cream and powdered sugar. An interesting tradition of German housewives is baking on the eve of Christmas special cookies. It has the shape of a horseshoe, in which a strip of paper is placed with a written prediction for the one who will win. Predictions can be any, both serious and joking, but most importantly - with all good, for relatives and guests who visit the house these days, another reason for joy.

The celebration of the German Christmas has similarities with the celebration of our Christmas, so it would be a very good technique for the students to familiarize themselves with this at a time when it is also celebrated in our country. That way, the interest will be even greater.

According to a research that I conducted myself, I came to the realization that in our city, a German language teacher in the high school noticed a decline in interest in learning the German language. In one of her lectures, she told her students about the original "Oktoberfest" that took place on October 18, 1810. in Munich, in celebration of the wedding of Crown Prince Ludwig to Princess Theresa of Saxe-Hildburgshausen. Then, the wedding took place on October 12, they organized a magnificent horse race on October 17 and that this festival is one of the most famous in the world. The children expressed their displeasure that unfortunately they could not visit him. Then the professor came up with the idea to bring the festival here, that is, she agreed with a German company during the period when the festival is held for their celebration in the company, that her students will be present as well. The students were delighted because the German company had copied the festival. There were huge amounts of food on the tables, traditional food such as: "Hendl" (chicken), "Schweinsbraten" (roast pork), "Haxn" (pork knee), "Würstel" (sausages). together with "Brezel" (pretzels), "Knödeln" (potato or bread dumplings), "Käsespätzle" (cheesecakes), "Reiberdatschi" (potato pancakes), "Sauerkraut" or "Blaukraut" (red cabbage) with some Bavarian specialties, such as "Obatzda" (fat stew seasoned with cheese and butter) and "Weisswurst" (white sausage). There were also traditional beer barrels, desserts, and company employees were dressed in traditional German clothes. They spoke only in German. The students, who knew the German language very well, constantly communicated with everyone. This event was retold by the students for a long time.

Not a long period of time passed, the teacher noticed an increased interest among her students, they devoted themselves much more to the study of the German language.

CONCLUSION

The specificity of the customs and the way of celebration make Christmas in Germany special and different compared to the celebration in other parts of the world. Because of that, the students should familiarize themselves with this tradition and custom of celebrating this great holiday. It would be best if we could take the children to Germany to see all this with their own eyes, but unfortunately that is not possible. That is why we can try to do everything necessary to bring the German people closer to them. They will find that only by knowing the German language, they will be able to capture that environment and understand their customs and traditions.

The initiative of the high school teacher should also serve as an example. Just one day and the visit of the German company in our city at a time when they are celebrating the October festival, the interest of the students to get to know the German people increased. They also saw that they would do this best through a good knowledge of the German language, so their interest in learning this foreign language increased to a great extent.

As teachers, we can take the initiative in cooperation with German companies in the city and the surrounding area and organize similar events through which we will bring the customs and traditions

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of the German people closer to the students. In this way, we will increase their interest in learning the German language, we will stimulate their desire. They will see that they are not studying it under compulsion, but on their own initiative and only in that way they will be able to achieve success.

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TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS: A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGIES AND THEIR OUTCOMES

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Abstract

This paper examines the efficacy of diversity and inclusion (D&I) strategies within educational institutions, aiming to identify their impacts on both student outcomes and institutional culture. Amidst growing calls for more equitable educational environments, this research provides a systematic analysis of various D&I initiatives implemented across different types of educational settings. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the study combines quantitative data from student performance metrics with qualitative feedback from faculty and students to assess the transformative effects of these strategies. The findings highlight significant correlations between robust D&I programs and improved academic performance, enhanced social cohesion, and increased cultural awareness among students. Moreover, the research explores how these strategies reshape institutional policies and practices, promoting a more inclusive culture that reflects the diverse demographics of the student body. The implications of this study extend to policymakers and educational leaders, offering evidence-based recommendations for fostering inclusivity that not only enriches the educational experience but also prepares students for a diverse global workforce. This comprehensive analysis contributes to the ongoing discourse on the necessity of integrating effective D&I strategies in educational institutions, ultimately arguing f**or their critical role in shaping more dynamic and inclusive educational landscapes.**

Keywords: Diversity and Inclusion, Educational Management, Student Outcomes, Institutional Culture, Inclusive Practices

Introduction

In the evolving landscape of global education, diversity and inclusion (D&I) have become pivotal themes in the discourse surrounding educational improvement and reform. Educational institutions worldwide are increasingly recognizing the necessity of implementing effective D&I strategies to not only comply with legal and ethical standards but also to enhance educational outcomes and foster an environment conducive to learning for all students. The imperative for such strategies arises from a growing recognition that diverse educational environments offer robust opportunities for learning and interaction among students from varied backgrounds, which in turn prepares them for the global workforce and societal integration.

1.1. Historical Context and Current Challenges

Historically, educational systems in many parts of the world mirrored the societal inequities and were characterized by segregation and unequal access. Over the past few decades, significant efforts have been made to overturn these legacies, with varying degrees of success across different regions. Today, the challenges are less about access and more about inclusion and ensuring that all students, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic status, are given equitable opportunities to succeed. This shift from access to inclusion has required a reevaluation of educational policies, teaching methods, and institutional cultures.

1.2. Significance of Diversity and Inclusion in Education

The significance of D&I extends beyond the moral and ethical considerations—it has practical implications for the quality of education and the overall institutional effectiveness. Research has shown that diverse and inclusive educational settings can lead to improved academic outcomes, better student satisfaction, and greater social cohesion. Students in such environments are exposed to a variety of perspectives that enhance critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Furthermore, institutions that actively promote D&I are better positioned to attract and retain top talent among both students and faculty, thereby enhancing their reputation and competitiveness.

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1.3. Objectives of the Research

This study aims to explore and analyze the impact of various D&I strategies implemented across different educational institutions. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. Evaluate how these strategies influence student academic performance and social integration.
2. Assess the impact of D&I initiatives on the institutional culture, including the attitudes and behaviors of both students and staff.
3. Provide evidence-based recommendations for policymakers and educational leaders to craft more effective D&I policies and practices.

1.4. Potential Implications

The potential implications of this research are far-reaching. By providing a comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of D&I strategies, this study aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on educational equity. It is intended to inform not only educational leaders and policymakers but also contribute to the broader societal understanding of the value of diversity and inclusion in educational settings. Ultimately, this research seeks to demonstrate that well-implemented D&I strategies are not just about meeting diversity quotas or adhering to legal requirements—they are about fundamentally transforming educational environments to be more equitable, dynamic, and inclusive, thereby enriching the educational experience for all participants.

1.5. Structure of the Paper

This paper is organized as follows: following the introduction, the methodology section describes the mixed-methods approach used to gather and analyze data. The results section presents the findings from the quantitative and qualitative analyses. This is followed by a discussion that interprets the results in the context of existing literature. Finally, the conclusions section summarizes the findings and outlines recommendations for future practice and research.

2. Literature Review/Broader Research Context

This chapter situates the current study within the broader research context of diversity and inclusion (D&I) in educational settings. It draws upon a variety of sources to explore how the problem of implementing effective D&I strategies has been approached and analyzed both similarly and differently across the academic landscape. By examining the extant literature, this review not only contextualizes the findings of this study within the global framework of educational research but also allows for a comparison between these findings and those of previous studies, highlighting areas of consensus and divergence.

2.1. Historical Perspectives and Evolution of D&I in Education

The concept of D&I has evolved significantly over the last few decades. Initially focused on antidiscrimination and access to education for marginalized groups, the scope has broadened to include a wide range of initiatives aimed at full inclusion and integration within educational environments. Petrovski (2012) reveals that early D&I efforts were primarily reactive and focused on compliance with legislative requirements rather than genuine integration. In contrast, contemporary approaches are more proactive, seeking to embed D&I into the fabric of institutional practices and policies.

2.2. Empirical Studies on D&I Outcomes

A substantial body of research has examined the outcomes of D&I strategies in educational settings. For instance, Mitrevski (2013) agrees with the view that robust D&I programs enhance student academic performance and social interactions. This finding is supported by multiple studies (e.g., Trajkovski, 2014; Lee et al., 2019) which confirm the role of well-implemented D&I policies in improving educational outcomes and fostering an inclusive academic culture. These studies collectively highlight the positive correlation between comprehensive D&I strategies and increased student retention and satisfaction rates.

2.3. Comparative International Research

The effectiveness of D&I strategies also varies significantly across different cultural and institutional contexts. Research conducted in diverse geographical locations provides insights into the adaptability and effectiveness of various D&I frameworks. For example, Smith (2015) conducted a comparative study of European and North American educational institutions and found that D&I strategies are often more successful in environments where there is institutional support from top-level management. This underscores the importance of leadership in the successful implementation of D&I initiatives.

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2.4. Theoretical Models of D&I

Theoretical frameworks also play a critical role in shaping the implementation and evaluation of D&I strategies. Jenkins and Carter (2016) discuss several models that have been used to assess the effectiveness of D&I interventions, including the Multicultural Organizational Development model, which provides a framework for understanding how institutions evolve in their approach to diversity. These models are crucial for both predicting outcomes and diagnosing issues within D&I strategies.

2.5. Gaps and Future Directions

Despite extensive research, there remain significant gaps in the literature, particularly concerning the long-term impacts of D&I initiatives and their influence on alumni success. Furthermore, as Chang et al. (2020) point out, there is a need for more empirical studies that directly link specific D&I strategies with changes in institutional culture, beyond student outcomes alone.

This literature review demonstrates the complex and multifaceted nature of D&I research within educational settings. It highlights the progress that has been made as well as the challenges that persist, providing a foundational context for understanding the importance of this study's contribution to the field. By comparing the results of this research with existing studies, a deeper understanding of the effectiveness and impact of D&I strategies can be achieved, informing both policy and practice in educational management.

3. Methodology

To comprehensively assess the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion (D&I) strategies within educational settings, this study employs a mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a holistic understanding of the impacts. This approach allows for a robust examination of how D&I strategies influence educational environments by merging numeric outcomes with narrative data, thereby enriching the interpretive value of the findings.

3.1. Quantitative Data Collection

Quantitative data were primarily derived from student performance metrics, including grades, graduation rates, and standardized test scores. These metrics were collected from a diverse set of institutions that have actively implemented various D&I policies over the past five years. The selection of these institutions was based on several criteria:

- Institutional Size: Ranging from small colleges to large universities, to understand how D&I impacts vary by the scale of the institution.
- Geographic Location: Including institutions from different regions to explore how regional cultural differences affect the success of D&I strategies.
- Student Demographic Diversity: Institutions were chosen to represent a broad spectrum of demographic compositions, ensuring that the findings are relevant to diverse student bodies.
- Scope of D&I Programs: Institutions with a range of D&I initiatives were selected to analyze the effectiveness of various approaches.

These criteria ensure that the quantitative data reflects a wide-ranging and comprehensive analysis of D&I strategies across varied educational contexts.

3.2. Qualitative Data Collection

Qualitative data were obtained through structured surveys and semi-structured interviews with both students and faculty. The surveys were designed to gather perceptions of inclusivity, the personal impact of D&I initiatives, and observed changes in institutional culture. To ensure a high response rate and broad participation, the surveys were distributed electronically across all selected institutions.

Interviews, on the other hand, were conducted both in-person and via video conferencing to capture a wide range of experiences and insights. These interviews allowed for deeper exploration of the qualitative aspects of D&I strategies, providing rich, detailed accounts of personal experiences and observations from within the institutional environments.

3.3. Data Analysis Methods

- Quantitative Analysis: Data analysis for quantitative metrics employed advanced statistical methods such as regression analysis and ANOVA to identify correlations between D&I strategies and student

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outcomes. This analysis also involved adjusting for potential confounders like socio-economic status, prior academic performance, and other relevant background factors that could influence the results.

- Qualitative Analysis: Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify common themes and patterns in the responses. This method involves coding the data into themes that represent the collected views and experiences regarding D&I initiatives. The identified themes were then compared and contrasted with the quantitative data to triangulate the findings, thus providing a comprehensive understanding of the impact of D&I strategies.

3.4. Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to strict ethical guidelines to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of all participants. Informed consent was obtained from all survey and interview participants, with a clear explanation provided regarding the purpose of the study and how the data would be used. Participants were assured that withdrawal from the study at any stage would not have any negative consequences.

The mixed-methods approach, combined with rigorous data collection and analysis techniques, ensures that the study's findings are robust, reliable, and can be generalized to a broader population. This methodology not only enhances the transparency of the research but also contributes significantly to the academic discussions on the effectiveness of D&I strategies in educational environments. The integration of quantitative data with rich qualitative insights offers a comprehensive picture of how D&I initiatives are reshaping educational landscapes across various contexts.

4. Results

The results of this study provide robust evidence for the positive impact of comprehensive diversity and inclusion (D&I) strategies on various facets of educational institutions. This section discusses these impacts in detail, supported by both quantitative and qualitative data analyses.

4.1. Quantitative Findings

Improvements in Academic Metrics: The implementation of D&I strategies correlated significantly with improved academic outcomes across the surveyed institutions. Statistically, institutions with robust D&I initiatives showed a 15% increase in student graduation rates compared to their counterparts with less comprehensive or absent D&I programs. Similarly, standardized test scores in these institutions exhibited an average increase of 10%. This data suggests that D&I strategies not only contribute to a more inclusive learning environment but also enhance academic performance, supporting the hypothesis that diverse educational settings foster better learning outcomes.

Attendance and Retention Rates: Further analysis revealed that attendance rates and student retention also improved in institutions with strong D&I policies. These institutions reported a decrease in student dropouts by approximately 8% annually, illustrating the role of an inclusive educational climate in retaining students.

4.2. Qualitative Insights

Sense of Belonging and Community: Qualitative data underscored the significant role of D&I strategies in fostering a sense of belonging among students. Many students expressed feeling more connected and engaged with their educational communities as a direct result of these inclusive practices. This enhanced sense of community has been linked to greater student satisfaction and well-being, which are crucial for educational success.

Cultural Awareness and Respect: Responses from both students and faculty indicated a heightened awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity within institutions that prioritize D&I. This shift has led to more respectful and empathetic interactions among the campus community, contributing to a more supportive and welcoming learning environment.

Professional Development and Teaching Practices: Interviews with faculty members highlighted that institutions with proactive D&I policies provide more opportunities for professional development related to multicultural competence and inclusive pedagogies. Educators noted that these opportunities have enabled them to adopt more effective teaching strategies that address the diverse needs of their students.

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4.3. Thematic Analysis of Survey Responses

1. Enhanced Student Engagement: The analysis identified enhanced student engagement as a key outcome of effective D&I strategies. Students in institutions with pronounced D&I programs reported higher levels of participation in both academic and extracurricular activities, feeling more valued and understood.

2. Improved Social Cohesion: A notable increase in social cohesion was observed, characterized by reduced incidents of discrimination and enriched cross-cultural interactions. This improvement was most pronounced in institutions that actively promote intercultural dialogues and inclusive events.

3. Institutional Adaptability: Institutions embracing comprehensive D&I strategies were found to be more adaptable to changing demographics and global educational demands. This adaptability has manifested in ongoing enhancements to institutional policies and practices, ensuring they remain relevant and responsive to the needs of their diverse student bodies.

4.4. Visualization of Data

To aid in the interpretation of these results, visual aids such as bar graphs and pie charts were utilized, effectively illustrating the relationship between the depth of D&I strategies and educational outcomes. For example, a bar graph depicting the increase in graduation rates across institutions with varying levels of D&I initiatives clearly shows the positive correlation between the intensity of D&I efforts and student success rates. Similarly, pie charts reflecting the diversity of student populations before and after the implementation of D&I policies demonstrate the broadening demographic reach of these institutions.

The comprehensive analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data provides convincing evidence of the benefits derived from well-implemented D&I strategies. These strategies not only enhance academic performance but also enrich the educational experience by fostering greater inclusivity, engagement, and adaptability within educational institutions. This evidence strongly supports the continued and expanded use of D&I initiatives in educational settings to cultivate more dynamic and inclusive learning environments.

5. Conclusion

This study unequivocally demonstrates that well-implemented diversity and inclusion (D&I) strategies have a significant, positive impact on student outcomes and contribute to the cultivation of an inclusive institutional culture. The empirical evidence gathered and analyzed reveals strong positive correlations between comprehensive D&I initiatives and enhanced academic performance metrics such as graduation rates and standardized test scores. These findings affirm the tangible benefits of integrating thoughtful D&I strategies within educational frameworks. Furthermore, qualitative data from this research underscores the profound effect these strategies have on fostering a pervasive sense of community and belonging among students and faculty, which are indispensable to nurturing a supportive educational environment.

5.1. Recommendations for Educational Policymakers and Institutional Leaders

The insights derived from this study offer a solid foundation for specific actionable recommendations aimed at educational policymakers and institutional leaders committed to enhancing the effectiveness of D&I strategies within their organizations:

- Comprehensive Implementation: D&I strategies should be deeply embedded and seamlessly integrated into all facets of educational management. This includes recruitment, admissions, curriculum development, and faculty training, ensuring that D&I principles permeate every aspect of the institution's operations.

- Continuous Training: To maintain and enhance the effectiveness of D&I initiatives, regular and mandatory training programs should be implemented for all levels of faculty and staff. These programs should focus on the practical application of D&I principles and aim to foster an ongoing commitment to creating an inclusive academic environment.

- Monitoring and Evaluation: Developing robust mechanisms for the regular monitoring and evaluation of D&I strategies is critical. This should involve a combination of quantitative metrics, such as performance data, and qualitative assessments, such as surveys and interviews, to provide a comprehensive view of the strategy's impact and areas for improvement.

- Leadership Commitment: The success of any D&I strategy hinges significantly on the commitment and active involvement of the institution's leadership. Leaders must not only endorse but champion D&I initiatives, dedicating sufficient resources and authority to ensure their implementation and sustainability.

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5.2. Future Research Directions

While this study contributes valuable insights into the effectiveness of D&I strategies, it also highlights several areas where further research is needed to enhance our understanding and implementation of these strategies:

- Long-Term Impact: Future research should focus on the long-term effects of D&I strategies, especially in terms of how they influence students' post-graduation success and long-term career trajectories. This would help in understanding the sustained impact of D&I beyond the educational setting.
- Comparative Studies: There is a notable need for comparative research that evaluates the effectiveness of different D&I strategies across various educational settings and cultural contexts. Such studies would help identify best practices and tailor strategies to specific institutional needs.
- Barrier Analysis: It is crucial to identify and analyze potential barriers to the effective implementation of D&I strategies. Understanding these barriers can lead to more effective solutions and the development of more inclusive educational environments.

In summary, this research underscores the pivotal role of well-crafted diversity and inclusion strategies in not only enhancing educational outcomes but also in fundamentally transforming institutional culture towards greater inclusivity and equity. The adoption of comprehensive, well-supported D&I initiatives promises to create more equitable and effective learning environments, which are essential for the academic and social flourishing of all students. By embracing these strategies, educational institutions can foster an atmosphere that not only improves academic performance but also cultivates a deep sense of belonging and community.

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THE SKULL EMOJI ( ) IN GEN-Z INTERNET SLANG: A STUDY OF ITS USE AS TONE TAG AND PUNCTUATION

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Abstract

Emojis are employed to enhance communication in the digital age on the daily. And the digital-natives, the Gen-Zers, seem to be particularly creative when it comes to their use. Recognizing this, this qualitative study examines the evolving use of one particular emoji – the skull emoji ( ), as a tone tag within Gen-Z internet slang. By analyzing various examples from different social media platforms, the paper highlights how this emoji, beyond its conventional representation of death, has been repurposed by this generation of speakers to denote laughter or embarrassment.

The study further argues that the modern use of the skull emoji serves a dual function: it not only signifies humor/awkwardness but also acts as a tool to separate text, thereby being used as a makeshift punctuation mark.

Keywords: Emojis; Digital Discourse; Gen-Z; Internet Slang

1. Introduction

Slang, an informal subset of language, serves as a means of expression that is often tied to specific groups or cultures. Slang is used for many purposes, but generally it expresses a certain emotional attitude (Maurer, 2023). It evolves rapidly, reflecting changes in society, technology, and the collective consciousness of its users. According to Eble (1996), slang functions as a marker of identity and group membership, allowing individuals to express solidarity and distinguish themselves from outsiders. In the digital age, the landscape of slang has transformed, becoming intertwined with digital discourse.

Discourse should be seen more broadly as "social practice" (Fairclough, 1992) with digital discourse being its latest, technology-led variety. Digital discourse, defined as communication that occurs within digital environments, encompasses a variety of platforms and modes of interaction. It includes text messaging, social media interactions, online forums, and more. According to Herring (2001), digital discourse is characterized by its brevity, informality, and the use of multimodal elements such as emojis, gifs, and memes to convey meaning. These elements enhance and modify traditional language.

Generation Z (Gen Z), often dubbed the "digital natives," stands at the forefront of this linguistic revolution. This generation of individuals, typically born between 1997 and 2012 (Bejtkovsky, 2016, as cited by Lihawa et al., 2021), has had technology available as a means of communication throughout most of their lives. As a result their language use has been

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uniquely shaped by their constant interaction with the digital world. The, so called, Gen Zers have crafted a distinctive linguistic landscape that blends traditional language use with the rapidly evolving lexicon of the internet.

One important aspect of Gen-Z digital discourse is the innovative use of emojis, which serve as modern hieroglyphs, providing visual context and emotional nuance to text-based communication.

1.1. Emojis in Digital Discourse

Emojis have become an integral component of digital discourse, serving as visual cues that complement and enhance text-based communication. These small pictographs, which range from facial expressions to objects and symbols, provide additional layers of meaning that words alone may not fully convey. According to Herring and Dainas (2020), emojis play a crucial role in expressing emotions, clarifying the intended tone, and facilitating interpersonal interactions online. Their use allows for a more nuanced and expressive form of communication, which helps bridge the gap between written and spoken language. In the context of social media, instant messaging, and other digital platforms, emojis help users convey humor, sarcasm, affection, and other complex emotions quickly and effectively.

1.2. Tone Tags vs. Discourse Markers

Tone tags and discourse markers are both crucial elements in communication, particularly in online contexts. Tone tags, such as "/s" for sarcasm or "/j" for joking, are used in digital communication to clarify the intended tone, reducing misunderstandings in text-only interactions (Cuneca & Degand, 2022). Discourse markers, on the other hand, are words or phrases like "however," "you know," or "I mean," which organize discourse and manage the flow of conversation. They help signal relationships between ideas and guide the listener or reader through the speaker's or writer's thought process (Fung & Carter, 2007).

These linguistic tools are vital for effective communication, providing clarity and cohesion, especially in complex or nuanced discussions that lack social cues, such as online interactions (Soylu & Das, 2023). For the purposes of this research, the skull emoji will be considered a tone tag for it serves the same function within digital discourse.

2. Literature review

The evolution of digital discourse and its impact on communication has been a subject of significant academic interest. Al-Jahdali (2022) conducted a morpho-semantic study on typed laughter-derived expressions used in Hijazi Twitter and WhatsApp instant messages. His findings highlights how users employ laughter indicators creatively, transforming traditional expressions into digital slang to convey humor and social bonds.

Similarly, McKay (2015) investigated the use of written laughter on Twitter through a corpus analysis. This study reveals the frequency and contexts in which different forms of written laughter appear. Haugland (2021) explored the role of emojis in discourse relations through an empirical study. This research emphasizes that emojis are integral to digital communication and function to convey emotions, clarify intent, and maintain the flow of conversation. Van Dijke (2018) examined the influence of emojis and sarcasm on message perception. His findings show how the use of emojis can alter the interpretation of text, often softening the perceived harshness of sarcastic comments and adding layers of meaning to the discourse.

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Bashir, Farukh, and Younis (2022) analyzed the role of emojis and digitally created discourse in constructing a global communicative society. Their findings indicate that emojis contribute to a universal language, facilitating cross-cultural communication and enhancing mutual understanding among diverse online communities. König (2019) studied the sequential and functional patterns of 'laughter' particles and emojis in German WhatsApp chats. The research highlights how users employ these elements to signal stance-taking and relational work. Schneebeli (2020) investigated the function and position of "lol" as a discourse marker in YouTube comments. This study reveals how "lol" is used not just to indicate laughter but also to structure interactions and manage social relationships within digital conversations.

Adams (2017) explored the cultural significance of emojis, arguing that they serve as carriers of culture and symbols of identity. This research provides insights into how emojis are embedded with cultural meanings and contribute to the expression of individual and group identities online. Escouflaire (2021) identified eight linguistic functions of emojis in computer-mediated discourse, including signaling irony, displaying politeness, and replacing words.

McSweeney (2018) focused on the pragmatics of text messaging, examining how users create meaning through messages. His research further emphasises the importance of contextual cues, such as emojis, in interpreting the intended tone and nuance of text-based interactions. Shalevska (2023) researched the Gen-Z internet slang and found that even non-native speakers of English, who belong to the Gen-Z group, use slang terms such as "flex" and "lowkey".

Finally, McCulloch (2019) and Crystal (2011) have both provided foundational insights into the broader field of internet linguistics. McCulloch's "Because Internet" explores the new rules of language shaped by digital communication, while Crystal's "Internet Linguistics" offers a thorough analysis of the linguistic phenomena emerging from online interactions.

All in all, these studies provide valuable insights into internet slang, emoji use, and the novel ways the younger generations mould language.

3. Methods

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore the use of the skull emoji ( ) as a tone tag in Generation Z's digital communication. Data was collected from a variety of social media platforms commonly used by Generation Z. A purposive sampling method was employed to identify posts that prominently featured the skull emoji ( ). The sample included a mix of public posts.

The collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis (Clarke, 2006), which involved identifying patterns related to the use of the skull emoji. The general qualitative interpretative/inductive method was also employed (Dey, 1993; Merriam, 2002; Thomas, 2006; Creswell, 2009; Morse, 2011; Kahlke, 2014; Harding & Whitehead, 2016). The main research question entails understanding how Generation Z repurposes the skull emoji ( ) as a tone tag or humor/awkwardness marker in digital communication, as well as if and how it is used instead of traditional punctuation.

While this study provides valuable insights into the use of the skull emoji among Generation Z, it is not without limitations. The reliance on purposive sampling may introduce bias, and the findings may not be generalizable to all Gen Z users or other demographic groups.

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4. Results and discussion

The findings of this study reveal that the skull emoji ( ) has undergone a significant transformation in its usage among Generation Z. This phenomenon can be understood through the concept of semantic bleaching. Semantic bleaching, introduced by Hopper and Traugott (1993), is defined as the process by which a lexical item loses its original semantic content. Essentially, the more frequently a charged word or symbol is used, the more its original meaning becomes diluted until it is eventually lost altogether.

In the case of the skull emoji, its original association with death and morbidity has been bleached. The emoji no longer primarily signifies death; instead, it has taken on a modern meaning. Among Gen Z users, the skull emoji is commonly used to cue laughter, embarrassment or awkwardness and indicate a lighter tone in messages. This shift illustrates how the intense and frequent use of the emoji has stripped it of its initial connotation, repurposing it for new, more benign communicative functions within digital discourse.

4.1. Skull Emoji Use

Several examples from social media platforms illustrate the semantic bleaching of the skull emoji that no longer denotes morbidity, but either laughter or embarrassment.

On Twitter or X, for instance, users tweeted:

"Roxxxy Andrews just violated Gottmik 5 minutes into the first episode i'm SICK. #DragRace #AllStars9" (@dragraceher)

Biz: "I'm more nervous than when I played right now"

Yandle: "You wouldn't be playing in playoffs anyway" (@BR_OpenIce)

"Defending somebody and then experiencing why nobody likes them is so humbling " (@cammi2k_)

"This video never gets old " (@NoCapFights)

"Goodnight guys, tomorrow is monday " (@KeiBlackz)

On TikTok, users also used the emoji in a similar manner:

"He in fact could not sing " @cegielski_twins

"They're always "cheering you up" on a monday as well "@qw3nty

"bro only need food " @gova.official etc.

It is also interesting to note that the skull emoji is also used in media posts in other languages (@esquizopoc; @JosePenche; @maxdestructionn etc.) in the exact same manner. This shows that its use as a tone tag transcends English only.

4.2. The Skull Emoji as Punctuation

Some research within the field of digital discourse indicates that emoticons may have assumed the role of punctuation marks (Provine, Spencer, & Mandell, 2007; Vucheva, 2014). The lack of proper punctuation paired with the emojis' usual placement at the end of statements, has contributed to some author's claims that the emojis are the new punctuation marks. Our

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findings align with these observations, as we consistently found the skull emoji at the end of statements without accompanying punctuation, indicating its function as a terminal marker.

It seems that the skull emoji's role as punctuation is indicative of a broader trend in digital communication where emojis and emoticons are used to convey tone, emotion, and context, supplementing or even replacing traditional punctuation marks.

5. Conclusion

The skull emoji ( ) has undergone an important transformation within digital discourse, particularly among Generation Z. Originally symbolizing death and morbidity, the skull emoji has undergone semantic bleaching. As a result, the emoji now signifies laughter, embarrassment, or awkwardness. Its frequent placement at the end of statements further emphasizes its potential role as a modern punctuation mark. And, most importantly, this phenomenon is not limited to English-speaking users – as similar usage patterns are observed across various languages, indicating a universal trend in digital communication. Future research should explore other emojis undergoing similar semantic changes to identify broader patterns, study the impact of emoji use on language learning, and conduct longitudinal studies to track the evolution of specific emojis over time. These new avenues of research can deepen our understanding of how digital communication continues to shape and redefine modern English.

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Usage Examples

@dragraceher: on X: "Roxxxy Andrews just violated Gottmik 5 minutes into the first episode i'm SICK. #DragRace #AllStars9 https://t.co/jmTpoAgDKC" / X

@BR_OpenIce: https://x.com/BR_OpenIce/status/1791245214377492766

@cammi2k_: cam on X: "Defending somebody and then experiencing why nobody likes them is so humbling " / X

@NoCapFights: Wild content on X: "This video never gets old https://t.co/V81XzLABMO" / X

@KeiBlackz: Kei. (Follows Back) on X: "Goodnight guys, tomorrow is monday https://t.co/7qF0xS1IJJ" / X

@maxdestructionn: https://x.com/maxdestructionn/status/1741000572155879453

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@esquizopoc: https://x.com/esquizopoc/status/1779482584528888264
@JosePenche: https://x.com/JosePenche/status/1782723103467934091
@cegielski_twins: https://www.tiktok.com/@cegielski_twins
@qw3nty: Find 'monday ' on TikTok | TikTok Search
@gova.official: Find 'bro ' on TikTok | TikTok Search