

The Context-Sensitive Processes of School-Family Partnership

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KLJUČNE BESEDE: partnerstvo med šolo in družino, procesno usmerjeno delo, kontekst, učitelji

POVZETEK – Konstruktivno sodelovanje med šolo in družino je pomemben dejavnik otrokovega razvoja in njegove uspešnosti v šoli. Starši in učitelji prepoznajo to sodelovanje kot pomembno, vendar raziskave pogosto kažejo nezadovoljstvo z ene ali druge strani. Namen članka je pojasniti temeljne koncepte znotraj partnerskega modela, ki prispevajo k učinkovitemu sodelovanju med šolo in družino. Omenjeni model predstavlja z vidika dveh temeljnih teoretičnih izhodišč: kontekstualizma in procesno usmerjenega dela. Predstaviva pregled teoretskih konceptov v povezavi s podatki, ki sva jih pridobili pri predmetih in usposabljanjih na temo procesnega sodelovanja med šolo in družino. Predstavljeni koncepti so: enakovreden odnos in predpogoji zanj, vloga otroka v procesu soustvarjanja, reflektirano ravnanje z močjo in vloga dialoga. V zaključkih predlagava, da naj prevladujejo instrumentalni pristop nadomesti bolj prožen in za kontekst občutljiv pristop tudi že na preddiplomski stopnji študijskih programov, ki izobražujejo študente za pedagoške poklice, in (posledično) v praksi.

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ABSTRACT – Constructive school-family collaboration is an important factor of a child's development and school achievement. Parents and teachers identify school-family collaboration as significant, but the research findings often show dissatisfaction on one or both sides. The aim of the paper is to explicate the main concepts that contribute to an efficient school-family collaboration within the partnership model. It is presented from the viewpoint of two basic theoretical foundations: contextualism and process-oriented collaboration. We present the overview of theoretical concepts linked to the empirical data which we obtained in the courses and trainings on the process of collaboration with parents and families. The presented concepts are: equal relationship and its preconditions, the role of the child in the co-creation process, reflective dealing with power and the role of dialogue. In the conclusions we suggest that the predominant instrumental approach should be replaced with a more flexible and context-sensitive approach already on the undergraduate level of educational study programmes and (consequently) in practice.

1 Introduction

“School-family partnership” is a concept in which at least three big spheres of everyday life interact, i.e. school, family and community (Epstein, 2011). Two and a half decades of research into the cooperation between school and family (ibid.) has shown the importance successful cooperation has in a child's development (Moorman Kim & Sheridan, 2015). During that time, different concepts and models of cooperation with parents emerged. In the paper we present the partnership from two basic dimensions: contextualism and process-oriented collaboration. Our perspective is based on Bronfenbrenner's theory which takes into account that within and among each of the ecological levels depicted one may conceive of bi-directional relationships existing

among the people populating the network (Lerner et al., 2002). According to the model, research must focus on relations (processes) among levels, and not on any one level *per se*. The family-school link is also an integral part of a set of interconnected systems that contribute to a child's development and his/her school achievement. Therefore, we have to understand this link as a dynamic and constantly changing process.

In the next sections, we present the overview of theoretical concepts which are connected to the empirical data that we obtained in the courses on the process of collaboration with parents and families. These concepts will be explicated through the most common challenges or themes that were reported by students or educators whom we have worked with over the past six years on the topic of collaboration with parents and families (workshops for school counsellors and preschool teachers, under- and postgraduate courses and trainings that we have taught at the Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana, between 2012 and 2018 – approximately 100 students a year).

2 Preconditions for Establishing Equal Relationships

One of the basic elements that are significantly linked to the way family and school collaborate are beliefs (Clarke, Sheridan & Woods, 2010), which reflect the wider social and cultural context of all parties involved (parents, children, teachers and school counsellors). Subjective beliefs are shaped by their experiences in the family, with institutions, etc., and influence the manner of entering into the collaboration, and affect it in a unique way. We are often not aware of them, at least not of their influence on our points of view and attitudes, and consequently on how we establish collaboration (Marentič Požarnik, 2018). They are most visible when they are concerned with the different cultural or social backgrounds of the participants (McWayne, 2015).

Inaccurate beliefs often limit a teacher's actions and lead to a number of problems in communication and relationships. Many authors (e.g. Korthagen, 2009; Valenčič Zuljan, 2004) stress the importance of raising awareness about inaccurate beliefs, and develop various ways to devise different, reflected upon, and higher-quality methods, linked with professional identity development. The ability to reflect is necessary for developing collaborative relationships with families because it facilitates the change and growth of professionals, e.g. the awareness of experiences in their families projected onto their professional relationships.

Subjective beliefs determine how the professional will approach the collaboration. Slovenian research (e.g. Kalin et al., 2009; Turnšek, 2008; Turnšek, 2016) shows that most of the implicit, subjective beliefs held by teachers and students are still instrumental. We are convinced that the instrumental approach restricts collaboration. For example, when students ask about what office hours, parent-teacher meetings, etc. are supposed to look like, we cannot find a suitable response while searching for answers only in terms of instrumentally naming the activities. The question is limiting because it is based only on form – a predetermined form of collaboration that fails to see the uniqueness of each situation. Working with families creates its own, new, and unique context every time, which means that we must consider the context and rethink the parameters of the collaboration every time as well. The methods, techniques, and various

approaches should only serve as guidelines for how we act and should be used only if suitable within the context.

Opposite to the instrumental approach, the process-oriented approach delves into the expectations of everyone involved, which can change continuously and contribute to common meaningful and attainable collaboration goals for everyone involved (Clarke et al., 2010; Jensen & Jensen, 2011). If we understand collaboration as a process, in line with developmental contextualism (Lerner et al., 2002), goals change with the changing individual and the changing environment. The goals should be personally significant for all the participants. Therefore, an effective, comprehensive approach requires that all parties (including the child) are included in the process, and goals need to be updated and even redefined if necessary (Micucci, 2009).

Most research exposes the importance of the congruence of the teachers' and the parents' view of collaboration (e.g. D'Haem & Griswold, 2017; Dusi, 2012; Epstein, 2011; Moorman Kim & Sheridan, 2015). This is the most frequent challenge professionals face in practice. Minke, Sheridan, Moorman Kim, Hoon Ryoo and Koziol (2014) find that by exploring the consistency or congruence in the perceptions between members of the dyad, and understanding the ways in which congruence affects the child's outcomes, it may be possible to direct interventions more efficaciously. The research in Razpotnik, Turnšek, Rapuš Pavel and Poljšak Škraban (2015), dealing with collaboration with vulnerable families, also found that differences in views result in less effective approaches if these are not reflected on.

3 Equal Relationship and the Role of the Child in the Co-Creation Process

We understand the role of the child similar to Lerner et al. (2002, p. 320), who defined it as "a source of her or his own development; the child may play a major role in influencing the actions of his or her environment." Čačinovič Vogrinčič (2008) similarly defines the child's role as an active expert in experience, which is why it is imperative that children are equal participants in the processes that concern them. Čačinovič Vogrinčič (2013) highlights how necessary it is to make sure collaboration between adults does not exclude the child or threaten their autonomy or interests. In the process of collaboration, we might come to think we are speaking about the child's views and opinions, while we are actually talking about a parent's or a teacher's construct of the child's views (Šugman Bohinc, 2013). Jensen and Jensen (2011) emphasize the importance of the pedagogue's ability to "see" the individual child on their own terms, to attune their behaviour accordingly without giving up leadership or the ability to be authentic in their contact with the child.

We have found that of all the participants in a school-family collaboration, the child is still the one who is afforded the least power of participation despite the fact that the results of the collaboration will affect the child the most. An equal position of the child in the collaboration is possible when we follow the directions of the so-called co-creation process. Co-creation as a term characterizes shared interests and the possibilities to

create something that does not yet exist, where all parties collaborate as equals with a clear definition of each party's responsibilities (Čačinovič Vogrinčič, 2008). In line with the conditions for co-creating processes where each member is heard, Jensen (2009) pointed out that a relationship being equal means that the points of view, feelings, experiences, and self-understanding of all parties is considered equally important for establishing and developing that relationship. This is possible only when the relational values and relational competence of the professionals have been developed (ibid.). Satisfactory relationships enable a personal way of leading the process. As Jensen (2009) explains, "personal leading" means that the professional clearly expresses their impressions, expectations, wishes, etc., which helps their interlocutors become aware of their expectations and needs; this consequently encourages communication. Individuals are prepared to collaborate if they are invited into a dialogue that ensures their inclusion and a feeling of connectedness. Effective dialogue is based on the ability and desire of the adult to respond openly, sensitively, and inclusively to the inner reality and self-understanding of the person in the dialogue (ibid.).

The process-oriented approach allows us to develop equal relationships, which, according to Jensen and Jensen (2011), in turn create a space where parents are seen as engaged and productive dialogue partners. The importance of establishing an equal relationship with the parents is also affirmed by McWayne (2015, p. 118), who writes that "seeking to support non-hierarchical and reciprocal dialogue between parents and teachers is always necessary." In practice, professionals often perceive the parents as part of the problem (e.g. Bequedano-Lopez, Alexander & Hernandez, 2013), which is the consequence of the instrumental approach.

A Slovenian study, entitled *The Challenges and Guidelines for Quality Cooperation between Schools and Parents* (Kalin et al., 2009), found that the relational level was the biggest problem when it came to collaboration. This was pointed out by both teachers and parents, and was particularly noted by parents with a lower level of education and those whose children achieved lower academic results, whom the researchers also saw as being more passive when it came to collaboration. Furthermore, the views concerning mutual expectations showed that the most common type of relationship was one in which the parents were in an inferior position (most parents were critical of that, but some even considered it appropriate). These results are not surprising because the prevalent practice does not include the process-oriented aspect that makes developing a relationship possible. The prevalent approach makes it difficult to understand what is behind the passive attitude of certain parents or the needs of families from diverse cultural and social backgrounds; instead of establishing a dialogue with them, we categorize them, for example, as being passive. Based on this, we conclude the approach was not sufficiently culturally or socially sensitive.

One of the obstacles that stands in the way of being prepared to adopt the process-oriented approach is the fear of entering an equal relationship, as both students and teachers often see the relationship as an issue. Teachers are afraid that establishing a relationship weakens their position and that they lose authority. This is consistent with the findings of Dusi (2012) who states that the idea of parental involvement triggers the teachers' fears of losing their professional autonomy, their educational-didactic management and authority.

In the discussions with professionals, some of them argue for the standpoint that cooperation with parents can never be equal due to the professional status of the teachers as experts in the field of education and their professional autonomy. We disagree with this standpoint and argue for a clear definition of the positions in the dialogue and the responsibilities for it. Having an equal position means professionals and parents are included as human beings, and therefore both have the same competency to engage in the dialogue; they are also both working towards the same aim: to support the child in their development. In terms of responsibilities, the professional is responsible for the quality of the relationship (Jensen, 2009) and for leading the process, while both are responsible for their cooperation.

4 Awareness in Reflective Dealing with Power

Establishing an equal relationship opens up the question of power and responsibility of all involved (Juul & Jensen, 2009). In the school system, teachers are holders of authority; they have the institutional power over children and parents. Due to this position of power, it is always the responsibility of the professional (Dusi, 2012; Jensen & Jensen, 2011) to provide space for and ensure the realization of a partnership. Decades ago, Bronfenbrenner (1979) stated that most families are doing their best under the circumstances and that it is important for the professional to understand the families and their circumstances and try to affect, first and foremost, those circumstances that will make it possible for the families to change as well. Otherwise, parents often develop a tough attitude towards institutions and are afraid to show vulnerability.

Understanding collaboration as a process is thus always contextualized. Dusi (2012) writes that a decontextualized understanding of processes and the transformation of social problems into individual or educational problems reduces the parents and children to the objects of an intervention. Based on an analysis of working with vulnerable families, Razpotnik, Turnšek, Rapuš Pavel and Poljšak Škraban (2016) come to similar conclusions. This is more often the case in the instrumental approach where not all participants have a chance to express their viewpoints. Instead of creating new, flexible approaches of working with these families and revealing systemic social injustice, individualization pathologizes the families, frequently ones that are facing poverty, are of a different race, or are immigrants (Bequedano-Lopez et al., 2013). The individualization of systemic inequalities and injustices, and the resulting pathologizing manifests as tension in the school-family collaboration. Unresolved tension in the collaboration with families is often the consequence of an unequal distribution of resources and structures of power (ibid.).

5 The Role of Dialogue in Flexible Responses

Dusi's (2012) and Jensen and Jensen's (2011) concept of promoting dialogue is a suitable point of view for fully understanding the complexity of everyday reality in the classroom. "Promoting dialogue with parents does not mean merely looking for con-

sensus; it means allowing for confrontation, reflecting on various points of view and creating a dialogue with perspectives that are often in contrast.” (Dusi, 2012, p. 15). Therefore, an open dialogue is accompanied by insecurity and discomfort because this kind of dialogue is not necessarily predictable (Jensen & Jensen, 2011). Not knowing where the conversation may lead us is often experienced as a threat. Good dialogue is equal, although the participants are not in equal roles, and is not meant to reveal a truth that already existed, but to create a new truth (ibid.).

The glue that holds everything together in the collaboration is the language used, as many authors emphasize (e.g. Clarke et al., 2010; Verbnik Dobnikar, 2002). The essence is the manner of communication and not just the content, thereby signalling an important shift from what needs to be said to how it needs to be said in order to be comprehended. Beside the language aspect, Čačinovič Vogrinčič (2013) also notes the importance of leading the conversation from talking about problems to talking about solutions that are based on the strengths perspectives of those involved.

The language used by the professionals shows the constructs or preconceived notions they have when establishing cooperation with the family. By being process-oriented, we are able to give ourselves the space for changing, and for changing our language and actions as well. Personal and professional development (Jensen, 2009; Korthagen, 2009) is an ongoing process in which we examine, acknowledge, and engage the patterns of thought and behaviour that impede and obstruct our way to fulfilling our professional commitment and potential in relation to others (Jensen, 2009), which are also important aspects of the processual approach to collaborating with families. Reflection is an important element of professional and personal development and needs to be trained systematically (Korthagen, 2009). This was also confirmed by findings in the research conducted among Slovenian teachers and head teachers (Erčulj & Škodnik, 2013). Klobučar, Ajdukovič and Šincek (2011) stress not only the importance of a professional’s development, but also the development of the institution, with supervision playing an important role; both would merit some consideration in the Slovenian education system as well. The current lack of a system of supervision represents an untapped resource for empowering the teaching staff.

6 Conclusion

The context-sensitive and process-oriented approach offers some new aspects of collaboration. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), it focuses on the processes on each level of the system and among them (micro, mezzo, exo, macro, and chrono) and allows us to consider the historical and cultural diversity of families, which requires new forms of collaboration. In our view, this approach makes it possible to reach diverse families more easily because an entire spectrum of variability and its dynamic nature are taken into account. Hence, it does not favour any of the existing family forms and family functioning.

The paradigm of the process-oriented approach leads us to answer the question of how we do our work rather than what we do. In order to achieve that, we need to describe what each party involved is doing instead of characterizing or labelling all parties

(persons) involved; therefore, we have to be careful about the language we use. We are compelled to provide the possibility to comprehend changes in a timeline, including an understanding of the developmental nature of all persons involved. The person who is responsible for leading a process is the professional, whereas the responsibility to cooperate on an equal level lies on all sides. The professional creates the space for each participant to have a chance to express their views and share them, instead of implementing different schemas of work. When working in a process-oriented way, we co-create new solutions, ideas, and outcomes together, instead of just informing, organizing, and working one-way. This is the case when the instrumental approach is implemented. The teachers or other professional workers in school often come up with ideas or organize activities, etc. which is a one-way offer of services or a set of demands imposed by schools on families (Klemenčič Rozman, 2017). In the process-oriented approach it is rather the opposite: the professionals ask and listen to what the children and parents in each classroom are dealing with, what their needs and conditions are, and how all of them (including the teacher) can learn from each other. To sum up, the process-oriented approach of the school-family partnership primarily focuses on how the process unfolds in an ongoing partnership when activities and relationships are a function of the process itself.

The process-oriented approach, where an important element is building and maintaining relationships between equal participants, is often criticized as having the elements of a therapy. We would argue against this as the process-oriented approach, along with the equal position of all participants, also requires assigning responsibility to everyone, formulating common goals, finding solutions, and respecting the autonomy of the subsystems. Collaborating does not mean losing autonomy because autonomy does not mean the inability to collaborate. Last but not least, a process-oriented and context-sensitive school-family partnership does not focus on (psycho)therapeutic work but focuses on the agreement of all participants with the aim of the child's well-being in the school system.

In order to develop and establish a process-based understanding of family-institution collaboration, a comprehensive shift of the pedagogical process into a context-based, processual-response orientation is required beforehand. Unfortunately, the instrumental approach is still predominant on all levels of education in Slovenia; it is the simplest and easy to prepare for, but at the same time it has the highest probability of unsatisfactory results. Studying and training for the process-oriented approach requires experiential process learning.

We conclude that the paradigm of the context-sensitive process-oriented approach needs to be developed among teachers and school counsellors in order to empower professionals in an important area of their work, i.e. collaborating with families. Fear of the latter is highly correlated to a lack of education in this area from university courses onwards. In a study conducted in Slovenia (Rizman Herga & Šrot, 2013), a large percentage of teachers (especially younger teachers) expressed the need for additional training on cooperating with parents. At this point in time, Bogdan Zupančič and Krajncan (2019) stress the role of the development of relational and general social-emotional competency. It would help if university courses for pedagogues and school counsellors put more focus on it and included the required courses on this subject. Education in this area is developing, but it is nowhere near where it needs to be. We aim at creating a

model that would be as inclusive, culturally and socially sensitive, and empowering as possible with the notion that it would change dynamically according to context.

Dr. Mija Marija Klemenčič Rozman, dr. Olga Poljšak Škraban

Kontekstualno občutljivi procesi partnerstva med šolo in družino

Partnerstvo med družino in šolo je koncept, znotraj katerega se prepletajo in sovpivajo vsaj tri velike sfere vsakdanjega življenja, tj. šole, družine in skupnosti (Epstein, 2011). Dve desetletji in pol raziskovanja tega pojava je pokazalo pomen uspešnega sodelovanja za otrokov razvoj (Moorman Kim in Sheridan, 2015). V tem času so se porajali različni koncepti in iz njih nastali modeli sodelovanja. V prispevku predstavljava partnerstvo z vidika dveh temeljnih teoretičnih izhodišč: kontekstualizma in procesno usmerjenega sodelovanja. Najino razumevanje sloni na Bronfenbrennerjevi teoriji, iz katere sledi, da se morajo raziskave osredinjati na odnose (proces) med posameznimi ravni sistema in ne na posamezne ravni per se.

Prispevek nudi pregled posameznih teoretičnih konceptov, povezanih z empiričnimi podatki, ki sva jih avtorici v obdobju med letoma 2012–2018 pridobili od slušateljev pri izvajanju predmetov na Pedagoški fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani in strokovnih delavk na drugih strokovnih usposabljanjih o procesih sodelovanja med šolo in družino (približno 100 študentov v študijskem letu). Koncepti so predstavljeni skozi najpogosteje artikulirane izzive ali teme, izpostavljene na omenjenih oblikah izobraževanj in usposabljanj.

Prvi izstopajoči koncept so subjektivna prepričanja, ki predstavljajo predpogoj za osnovanje enakopravnega partnerstva. Najbolj opazna postanejo pri soočenju z drugim kulturnim ali socialnim ozadjem udeleženih (McWayne, 2015). Določajo, kako bodo strokovnjaki pristopili k sodelovanju. Slovenske raziskave (Kalin in sod., 2009; Turnšek, 2008; Turnšek, 2016) kažejo, da je večina implicitnih, subjektivnih prepričanj učiteljev in študentov še vedno instrumentalno naravnanih. Osredinjajo se na to, kaj početi, in ne na to, kako ravnati pri strokovnem delovanju. Instrumentalna usmerjenost na formo oz. shemo delovanja ne zmore zaobjeti kompleksnosti vsakokrat novega in edinstvenega konteksta. Forme, sheme, metode in tehnike so lahko zgolj smernice za ravnanje, ki jih je smotrno izvajati zgolj v primeru, če so konstruktivne znotraj posameznega konteksta.

Če razumemo sodelovanje kot proces, se skladno z razvojnim kontekstualizmom (Lerner in sod., 2002) cilji sodelovanja spreminjajo s spreminjajočim se posameznikom in spreminjajočim se okoljem. Cilji sodelovanja naj bi bili za vse udeležene osebno pomembni (Jensen in Jensen, 2011) in naj bi se jih v procesu sodelovanja posodabljal in ponovno opredeljevalo, v kolikor se to izkaže za potrebno (Micucci, 2009). Večina raziskav prikazuje pomen skladnosti med pogledi učiteljev in staršev na sodelovanje (npr. D'Haem & Griswold, 2017; Dusi, 2012; Epstein, 2011; Moorman Kim & Sheridan, 2015) za uspešne izide.

Čeprav sodelovanje med šolo in družino najbolj zadeva otroka, je temu dodeljena najmanjša participatorna vloga, na kar opozarja Čačinovič Vogrinčič (2013), ko opredeljuje otroka kot eksperta iz izkušenj in izpostavlja, da sodelovanje med odraslimi ne sme izključevati otroka ali ogroziti njegove avtonomije in interesov. V procesih sodelovanja

se lahko zgodi, da mislimo, da govorimo o otrokovih pogledih in mnenjih, a dejansko govorimo o konstruktih staršev ali učiteljev o otrokovih pogledih (Šugman Bohinc, 2013). Enakopravni položaj otroka v procesu sodelovanja se vzpostavi, ko sledimo smernicam t. i. procesa soustvarjanja, kjer nastaja izid, pri katerem vsi udeleženi sodelujejo enakovpravno z jasno opredeljenimi odgovornostmi vsake strani (Čačinovič Vogrinčič, 2008). Jensen (2009) izpostavlja, da se enakopravni odnos vzpostavi šele takrat, ko so pogledi, občutja, izkušnje in samorazumevanje vseh udeleženih enako pomembni.

Slovenska študija Izzivi in smernice kakovostnega sodelovanja med šolo in starši (Kalin in sod., 2009) je pokazala, da je ravno odnosna raven največji problem pri sodelovanju. Učitelji tudi na usposabljanjih izražajo strah, da bo vzpostavljanje odnosa oslabilo njihovo pozicijo in bodo tako izgubili avtoriteto. Podobno ugotavlja Dusi (2012), da ideja vključenosti staršev naslavlja strahove učiteljev, da bodo izgubili strokovno avtonomijo, svoj izobraževalno-didaktični menedžment in avtoriteto.

Avtorici zagovarjajo stališče, da so tovrstni strahovi odveč in da je za omogočanje enakopravnega odnosa nujno potrebno jasno opredeliti pozicijo udeleženih v dialogu in odgovornosti zanj. Imeti enakopravno pozicijo pomeni, da smo strokovnjaki in starši vključeni kot človeška bitja in imamo zato enake kompetence za udeležnost v dialogu; oboji tudi delujemo z istim namenom – podpreti otroka in njegov razvoj. Če pa govorimo o odgovornostih, pa je strokovnjak odgovoren za kakovost odnosa (Jensen, 2009) in za vodenje procesa, medtem ko sta obe strani odgovorni za sodelovanje.

Vzpostavljanje enakopravnega položaja odpira vprašanje moči in odgovornosti vseh udeleženih (Juul in Jensen, 2009). V šolskem sistemu imajo učitelji institucionalno moč nad otroki in starši. Zaradi te pozicije moči je vedno odgovornost strokovnjaka (Dusi, 2012; Jensen in Jensen, 2011), da omogoča prostor in zagotavlja udeležanje partnerstva. Gre torej za zavedanje pomena reflektirajočega ravnanja z močjo. Že pred desetletji je Bronfenbrenner (1979) navedel, da je pomembno, da se strokovnjak zaveda, da v danih okoliščinah večina družin deluje najboljše kakor lahko in da je potrebno vplivati na te okoliščine, kar bo omogočilo spremembe v družini oz. v njenem delovanju.

Razumevanje partnerstva kot procesa je torej vedno kontekstualno. Dusi (2012) meni, da de-kontekstualizirano razumevanje procesa in spreminjanje socialnih problemov v individualne ali izobraževalne probleme zreducira starše in otroke na objekt intervencij. To je še toliko bolj verjetno pri instrumentalnem pristopu, kjer nimajo vsi udeleženi možnosti izraziti svojih pogledov. Namesto ustvarjanja novih, prožnih pristopov pri sodelovanju s temi družinami in razkrivanja socialne nepravilnosti individualiziranje patologizira družine, najpogosteje te, ki se soočajo z revščino, so druge rase ali so priseljeni (Bequedano-Lopez in sod., 2013). Individualizacija sistemskih neenakosti in nepravilnosti in iz tega izhajajoče patologiziranje se izkazuje v napetostih v sodelovanju med šolo in družino (prav tam).

Kompleksnost življenjskih okoliščin vpliva tudi na kompleksnost vsakodnevnega življenja v razredu. Da bi tega zmogli v polnosti razumeti, nam služi koncept promoviranja dialoga (Dusi, 2012; Jensen in Jensen, 2011), pri čemer promoviranje dialoga ne pomeni "iskanja konsenza, temveč dovoljuje konfrontacijo, reflektira različna gledišča in ustvarja dialog s pogledi, ki so si pogosto v nasprotju" (Dusi, 2012, str. 15). Zato odprt dialog vedno spremljata negotovost in nelagodje, saj take vrste dialog ni nujno predvidljiv (Jensen in Jensen, 2011). Zanj je bistveno, da sogovorniki zmorejo preobrat od

osredinjenosti na vsebino k osredinjenosti na način komunikacije, tj. ne zgolj kaj govorimo, temveč kako govorimo, da bo druga stran zmogla razumeti sporočilo. Poleg vidika jezika Čačinovič Vogrinčič (2013) izpostavlja tudi pomen vodenja pogovora, in sicer od govora o problemih h govoru o rešitvah, ki temelji na perspektivi moči udeleženih.

Jezik, ki ga strokovnjaki uporabljajo, kaže konstrukte ali predsodke, ki jih imajo do vzpostavljanja sodelovanja z družino. Procesna usmerjenost omogoča prostor za strokovnjakovo spreminjanje; za spreminjanje rabe jezika in delovanja. Spreminjanje pa je gonilo osebnega in strokovnega razvoja (Jensen, 2009) in je po svoji naravi proces, ki nima končne točke.

Če strnemo, kontekstualno občutljiv in procesno usmerjen pristop ponuja nekatere nove vidike sodelovanja. Po Bronfenbrennerju postavlja v ospredje procese na vsaki ravni sistema in med njimi (mikro-, mezo-, ekso-, makro- in krono-) in nam dovoljuje premislek o zgodovinskih in kulturnih raznolikostih družin. Avtorici meniva, da tak pristop omogoča lažji dostop do raznolikih družin, ker upošteva celoten spekter raznolikosti in njene dinamične narave, vendar pa ne protežira nobene od obstoječih družinskih oblik ali oblik družinskega delovanja.

Paradigma procesno usmerjenega pristopa vodi do odgovora na vprašanje, kako delujemo, namesto kaj počnemo. Pri tem pristopu soustvarjamo nove rešitve, ideje in izide skupaj in ne samo zgolj informiramo, organiziramo in enosmerno delujemo. Slednje je značilno za instrumentalni pristop. Procesno usmerjen pristop, kjer je pomemben element grajenje in vzdrževanje odnosov med enakopravnimi člani (ki pa nimajo enakih vlog!), je pogosto deležen kritike v smislu, da ima elemente terapije in kot tak zato ne sodi v šolo. Avtorici se ne strinjava s tem, saj ta pristop ob upoštevanju enakopravnih pozicij vseh udeleženih zahteva dogovor o odgovornostih vsakega udeleženega, formuliranje skupnih ciljev, iskanje rešitev in spoštovanje avtonomije podsistemov. Enakovredno sodelovanje ne pomeni izgube avtonomije strokovnjaka, česar jih je pogosto strah, saj tudi avtonomija ne pomeni nezmožnosti sodelovanja. Gre torej bolj za drugače razporejeno moč sodelujočih. Nenazadnje, procesno usmerjeno in kontekstualno občutljivo sodelovanje med šolo in družino se usmerja na udejanjanje dogovorov udeleženih v dobrobit otrokovega delovanja v šolskem sistemu.

Pogoj, da se lahko vzpostavi in razvija procesno usmerjeno razumevanje sodelovanja med družino in institucijo, je celovit obrat pedagoškega procesa v usmerjenost, ki temelji na upoštevanju vsakokratnega konteksta in procesnega odzivanja. Na žalost je instrumentalni pristop še vedno prevladujoč pristop na vseh ravneh izobraževanja v Sloveniji. Res je, da je najbolj preprost in se nanj zlahka pripravimo (se naučimo tehnik, metod), a hkrati najbolj verjetno vodi do nezadovoljivih rezultatov. Izobraževanje in usposabljanje za procesno usmerjen pristop terja izkustveno učenje o procesu delovanja.

Strah strokovnjakov pred sodelovanjem z družino je v močni zvezi z umanjkanjem izobraževanja na tem področju vse od univerze dalje. V pomoč bi bilo, če bi univerzitetni študijski programi za (bodoče) strokovnjake, delujoče na pedagoškem strokovnem polju (učitelji, šolska svetovalna služba), temu posvečali več pozornosti in ponujali obvezne predmete o tej tematiki. Izobraževanje na tem področju se spreminja, a ni niti blizu temu, kjer bi moralo biti. Stremiva k razvoju takega modela sodelovanja, ki bi bil kar najbolj vključujoč, kulturno in socialno občutljiv in bi v največji možni meri spod-

bujal opolnomočenje udeleženih ob upoštevanju dejstva, da se tudi ta model dinamično spreminja glede na kontekst.

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Mija Marija Klemenčič Rozman, PhD (1979), Assistant Professor for Social Pedagogy at University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education.

Address: Kardeljeva ploščad 16, 1000 Ljubljana; Telephone: (+386) 01 589 22 00

E-mail: mija-marija.klemencic@pef.uni-lj.si

Olga Poljšak Škraban, PhD (1957), Assistant Professor for Developmental Psychology at University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education.

Address: Kardeljeva ploščad 16, 1000 Ljubljana; Telephone: (+386) 01 589 22 00

E-mail: olga.poljsak-skraban@pef.uni-lj.si