

## THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITY STUDIES: ACOMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY PEDAGOGY STUDENTS\*

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*Abstract.* This paper presents and analyses the results of the empirical research basically intended to determine how students understand the main role of teachers and their own role and to find out what they consider as their significant learning experience during the studies. We were interested in whether their conceptions of teachers' and students' roles had changed during the studies and whether they had approached modern scientific concepts on active and constructive learning. The research was carried out during the winter semester of the 2012/13 academic year on the sample of first- and third-year students, enrolled at the first level of the pedagogy study programme at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade and pedagogy and andragogy at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana. The results from comparing the first and the third year have shown that third-year students demonstrate a shift to higher conceptions of students' and teachers' roles, which is more likely to lead to a deeper approach to learning. Modifications towards higher conceptions of students' and teachers' roles can thus indicate the quality of studies, since they clearly demonstrate that students are prepared to adopt a more responsible and autonomous role in their studies. In the efforts to achieve the high quality of university studies, the above-mentioned perspectives serve as pieces of information important for the reform of study programmes and introduction of changes in the study process.

*Key words:* the quality of university studies, comparative study, effective teaching, conceptions of student role, conceptions of teacher role, learning experiences.

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## *Introduction*

Over the past 30 years, numerous studies have dealt with the question of quality teaching in higher education. The cases of best practice have been researched and the questions of ensuring quality in higher education have been discussed, including how to prompt students to be active co-creators of the study process. Studies have focused on various aspects of teaching and learning, and approaches to improve teaching have been suggested. A variety of these studies have shown that good teaching in higher education is a concept with no universally accepted definition (Devlin & Samarawickrema, 2010). In this paper, however, we aim to highlight some aspects of quality in university teaching that will help us understand the role of students in evaluating the study process and their inclusion in the processes of ensuring high quality studies.

Based on a survey of different sources on effective teaching, various characteristics of effective university teaching can be singled out (Hativa *et al.*, 2001). Forest (2007: 350–351), for example, paraphrases Lee Shulman and points out that the goal of higher education should be to ensure that students are engaged and motivated, to help them acquire knowledge and develop understanding, to enable them to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding through performance and action, to encourage them to engage in critical reflection of the world and their place within it, to develop their ability to navigate the constraints and complexities of the world in formulating their own judgements and designs for action and to foster a lifelong commitment to critical examination and self-development. All the above-mentioned goals are mutually dependent and intertwined. To attain them means to encourage the cognitive as well as the affective and social development of an individual.

Trigwell (2008) emphasised: “The scholarship of teaching is about inquiry that has, as the main focus, the facilitation and improvement of student learning” (p. 9). The teacher’s fundamental role is thus to provide the conditions for students’ learning. This assumes that teachers cannot understand their role only from the point of view of teaching as the transmission of knowledge. This is the perspective needed for reflecting and regarding students as partners in the educational process.

We thus refer to the cognitive-constructivist theory that emphasises that students are the ones who find meaning and (re)construct their knowledge (Shuell, 1986; Simons, 1997; Vermunt, 1993). The frame of this paradigm advocates the dynamic nature of knowledge, its constant building and re-constructing. In his meta-study of papers on constructive learning, Simons (1997) lists six key features of constructive learning on which there is a high degree of consonance between different authors. Constructive learning is (1) an active process, in which students find out specific meanings with their own mental activity, (2) a constructive process, in which connecting information, theses and concepts is necessary to master complex study subject-matter, (3) a cumulative process, in which each learning derives from previous knowl-

edge or existing concepts, (4) a goal-oriented process, (5) a process in which learning goals are diagnosed or continue to be pursued, and (6) a reflective process. Naturally, we cannot expect students to exhibit the same amount and quality of mental activity in every moment; sometimes they dispose with insufficient previous knowledge, at times they have to concentrate on details, at other times they can let the learning process take place without a specific learning goal, etc. However, it is important that these crucial processes are present in the students' learning processes and that teachers are aware of their own significant role in successfully introducing constructive learning and in developing students' learning strategies.

All this considered, the role of subjective conceptions of learning and the conceptions of students' and teachers' roles that students have when entering the study process should not be neglected. Empirical studies have established that subjective conceptions of learning influence the quality of learning itself (Ferla *et al.*, 2009; Marton *et al.*, 1993; Ramsden, 1985; Šteh, 1998; Van Rossum & Schenk, 1984). A shift to higher conceptions of learning and students' and teachers' roles is desired, since such conceptions are more likely to lead to a deeper approach to learning. Devlin notes (Devlin, 2002, according to: Ferla *et al.*, 2009), for example, that students with a constructive learning conception strongly equate learning with seeking understanding and feel responsible for their learning outcomes, whereas students with a reproductive learning conception equate learning more with memorising knowledge, and tend to shift a greater part of the responsibility for their learning to teachers. Shifts towards higher students' conceptions of learning and students' and teachers' roles can thus indicate the quality of studies, since they clearly demonstrate that students are prepared to adopt a more responsible and autonomous role in their studies. Therefore, as Ferla *et al.* (2009) point out, it is not surprising that students' cognitions about learning are the key concept in a typical model of self-regulated learning. The aforementioned authors have focused in their research on finding out higher education students' models of learning (a complex set of interacting students' cognitions) and their impact on students' study strategies (e.g. the extent to which students adopt a self-regulated and meaning-oriented study strategy). Their key finding is that students' basic study strategy is primarily determined by their perceived control over learning: "Strong control over learning beliefs induces a deep-oriented and self-regulated study strategy, while weak control over learning beliefs encourages the adoption of a surface-oriented and non self-regulated study strategy (*ibid.*: 198)".

Moreover, the conceptions of learning and of students' and teachers' roles also serve as the central concepts of the pedagogy and andragogy subject-matter. Hence, we were interested in finding out whether these conceptions change during the studies and approach modern scientific concepts on active and constructive learning (Barr & Tagg, 1995; Driscoll, 1994; Shuell, 1986; Simons, 1997; Šteh, 2004; Vermunt, 1993). Valenčič Zuljan (2007: 38) emphasises: "If scientific models are to become a key component of students' conceptions and

professional competences, we need to encourage and enable students to become aware of their own conceptions, the potential lacks and conflicts in their conceptions and a need for change.” Ferla et al. (2009: 198) similarly believe that “any learning environment aimed at encouraging a deep-oriented and self-regulated study strategy will explicitly have to target student models of learning.” They suggest educational practitioners to develop learning environments which enhance students’ perceived control over their learning. Revealing students’ conceptions of their own and teacher’s role as well as analysing their significant learning experiences thus serves as feedback that is important to further renew the study programmes and introduce modifications in the study process in our efforts to reach higher quality university studies.

### *Purpose of the study*

In the comparative study entitled “Ensuring quality university study: the role and responsibility of students and teachers” that took place in 2012 and 2013 at the Department of Educational Sciences of the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, and at the Department of Pedagogy of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade<sup>1</sup>, we aimed to obtain feedback from students included in the renewed Bologna programmes on the structure and contents of the study programmes, learning and teaching forms and activities, achieved competences as well as their conceptions of the essence of learning, their own and teacher’s roles. In this paper we were particularly interested in finding out whether students assume a more responsible and independent role during their studies and what learning experiences are the most important for them. We will present our findings according to the following research questions:

- (1) How do first- and third-year students of pedagogy and andragogy in Ljubljana and pedagogy in Belgrade included in the renewed first-degree Bologna programmes understand teachers’ and students’ main roles?
- (2) In which form of organised faculty studies did the significant learning experience occur to the third-year pedagogy students?
- (3) Which changes did third-year pedagogy students notice in themselves following their significant learning experiences during their studies?
- (4) Do students in Ljubljana and Belgrade differ in their answers to the above-mentioned questions?

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<sup>1</sup> At the first level, the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana offers a uniform three-year study programme of pedagogy and andragogy, while the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Belgrade offers two separate four-year programmes – Pedagogy and Andragogy – already at the first level. Further on, when presenting results and comparisons, only students of pedagogy will be mentioned, although in Ljubljana students of the pedagogy and andragogy programme were included in the study.

## Method

The research used the descriptive and causal non-experimental method. The descriptive method was used to describe the characteristics of the population or the phenomenon being studied, with the causal non-experimental method was used to explore causal relationships between variables without involvement of experimental manipulation (Sagadin, 1993).

*Sample.* The study involved first- and third-year students of pedagogy and andragogy at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana, and first- and third-year students of pedagogy at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade in the 2012/13 academic year<sup>2</sup>. The sample at the University of Ljubljana included 78 first-year students and 54 third-year students, while the sample at the University of Belgrade included 57 first-year students and 56 third-year students.

*Data collection.* Data collection took place in the winter semester of the 2012/13 academic year, namely during lectures at various courses, attended by first- and third-year students. The survey was anonymous, students filled in written questionnaires and one of the researchers was always present at the survey taking.

*Instruments.* Two questionnaires about studies were designed for the purpose of our research, one for first-year and the other for third-year students of pedagogy (and andragogy) at the Universities of Ljubljana and Belgrade. Most questions in the questionnaires were identical, except that the questionnaire for first-year students omitted questions related to their views of the level of development of professional competences, the role of practical training, the description of their positive experience during the studies and the influence of that experience. In addition to the survey questions, the questionnaires for first- and third-year students also contained scales of attitudes. Most questions were closed-ended.

*Data analysis.* The collected data were processed and presented at the level of descriptive and inference statistics. To verify hypotheses, the  $\chi^2$ -test was used (alternatively, Kullback's test was used when the conditions for the  $\chi^2$ -test were not fulfilled) to test the hypothesis of independence, while the t-test was used for independent samples. Some ordinal variables (multilevel scales) were treated as interval variables with the assumption that the differences between levels were similar. Such method of processing variables refers only to the calculation procedure and by no means to the interpretation of the acquired results (Kožuš, 2013: 54–55). Statistical processing was performed with the SPSS software package, version 20.0.

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<sup>2</sup> At the first level, the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana offers a uniform three-year study programme of pedagogy and andragogy, while the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Belgrade offers two separate four-year programmes – Pedagogy and Andragogy – already at the first level. Further on, when presenting results and comparisons, only students of pedagogy will be mentioned, although in Ljubljana students of the pedagogy and andragogy programme were included in the study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Conceptions of teacher and student roles*

To obtain an insight into how students understand the key role of the teacher and their own role, we asked them to select between various descriptions of a “good” faculty teacher and student’s role in studying. These descriptions were based on a classification of teaching conceptions or personal theories of teaching as identified by Fox (1983) for higher education teachers. Both roles – of teachers and of students – were defined within the frame of these conceptions. At a lower level the author distinguishes between the conception of teaching as a transfer of knowledge and as shaping students, while at a higher level the author distinguishes between the conception of teaching as a journey around the subject area and teaching as fostering personal growth. The key dividing line between both lower and both higher teaching conceptions lies in a more active and responsible role of students, since it is only within the frame of higher conceptions that they may be seen as partners in the educational process, essentially contributing to the results of learning. In designing the descriptions of the main teacher and student roles we took account of the descriptions given by students themselves in previous empirical studies, carried out on the sample of pedagogy and andragogy students of the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana (cf. Kalin & Šteh, 2007, 2013; Šteh & Kalin, 2006, 2008) and the sample of primary education student teachers (Valenčič Zuljan, 2007). On this basis, the following descriptions giving the characteristics of “good” teachers were given, corresponding to the four teaching conceptions according to Fox (1983):<sup>3</sup>

- (1) The teacher delivers in a clear, illustrative and interesting manner. If there is anything we don’t understand, the teacher is ready to explain it again. The explanation is often made more vivid with real-life cases and additional material is prepared by the teacher.
- (2) The teacher helps us understand and master the subject-matter. The teacher teaches us to tackle solving certain practical problems, how to prepare good summaries, how to write good seminar papers.
- (3) The teacher encourages us to think critically and leads us in casting light on the treated subject-matter from new perspectives. The teacher encourages independent revealing, forming conclusions and constructing knowledge.
- (4) The teacher encourages us to develop, as much as possible, our potentials and to become independent and responsible students. The teacher helps us to instil sense in our own experiences.

According to the above-mentioned classification, the following descriptions of the main role of students in their studies were formed:

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<sup>3</sup> The descriptions of “good” teachers and students’ roles are provided in the summarised form below.

- (1) Students have to fulfil all their study obligations, regularly attend lectures, exercises and seminars and benefit from all such activities as much as possible.
- (2) Students have to regularly attend lectures, exercises and seminars, and actively participate in them. They study the subject-matter and try to understand it.
- (3) Students have to ask themselves and their teachers questions, and they have to be critical towards the subject-matters discussed. Students are responsible for their knowledge.
- (4) Students also have to be prepared for certain personality changes by working a lot on themselves and by forming their professional identity.

*Table 1: An overview of the selected descriptions of a “good” teacher in first- and third-year pedagogy students of the University of Belgrade and the University of Ljubljana*

Teacher's role <sup>4</sup>	University of Belgrade				University of Ljubljana			
	first year		third year		first year		third year	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. The teacher delivers in a clear, illustrative and interesting manner.	21	<b>37,5</b>	11	19,6	31	<b>40,8</b>	13	24,1
2. The teacher helps us to understand and master the subject-matter.	3	5,4	5	8,9	13	17,1	6	11,1
3. The teacher encourages us to think critically and leads us in casting light on the discussed subject-matter from new perspectives.	12	21,4	16	28,6	10	13,2	14	25,9
4. The teacher encourages us to develop, as much as possible, our potentials and to become independent and responsible students.	20	<b>35,7</b>	24	<b>42,9</b>	22	28,9	21	<b>38,9</b>
Total	56	100,0	56	100,0	76	100,0	54	100,0

<sup>4</sup> In the questionnaire, the descriptions of a “good” teacher were listed in no particular order, unlike the present table, where the bottom-up approach is used.

It is noteworthy that among first-year students of the University of Belgrade and the University of Ljubljana there are no statistically significant differences in the conceptions of the key teacher's role ( $\chi^2=5,547$ ;  $n=132$ ;  $df=3$ ;  $p=,136$ ). Students of both universities most often selected as a model of a "good" teacher – the teacher who delivers in a clear and interesting manner, is an expert in his/her subject area and is clear about what will be required at the exam. These results are consistent with the findings of Valenčič Zuljan (2007), referring to first-year students of the Faculty of Education enrolled in the primary education teacher's programme, that an even higher percentage of them note the conception of the teacher as a transmitter of knowledge (71%) and that it is teacher's duty to help students to understand (15%). It is evident that these students as future teachers shift the responsibility for the efficiency of the learning process to the teachers.

Compared to Belgrade students, the first-year students from Ljubljana selected lower level conceptions of teacher's role (57,9% : 42,9%) to a greater extent, and also attributed to teachers the dominant role in the study process. In their views, a "good" teacher is the one who delivers well, motivates them and ensures that the subject-matter is mastered. This may be expected considering the insecurity of first-year students, who are still accustoming themselves to the study arrangements and requirements, although we assume that university students have had some positive experiences with schooling as they decided to study at the university. It should be added that among first-year students in Belgrade there is a slightly greater percentage of students (35,7%) who selected a teacher who encourages them to develop as much as possible their potentials and become independent and responsible students, i.e. a teacher who is also oriented towards encouraging their personal growth, as a model "good" teacher.

Our conclusion is that during the studies, some students change their conception of teacher's role. The differences between first- and third-year students in their view of a model "good" teacher have not proved to be statistically significant either in Belgrade students ( $2\hat{I}=4,621$ ;  $n=112$ ;  $df=3$ ;  $p=,207$ ) or in Ljubljana students ( $\chi^2=7,113$ ;  $n=130$ ;  $df=3$ ;  $p=,068$ ). However, certain tendencies in the desired direction are discernible. Among third-year students, the number of those whose views of a "good" teacher corresponded to higher level teaching conceptions increased both in Belgrade (71,5%) and Ljubljana (64,8%). Namely, since the former and the latter to a greater extent selected a teacher who encourages their personal growth, it can be concluded and expected that students are gradually becoming more prepared for independent development of their own potentials.

Let us look at what students say of their own key role. Table 2 shows that the greatest percentage of first-year students both in Belgrade (42,1%) and Ljubljana (35,9%) are of the opinion that student's most important role is to regularly attend lectures, seminars and exercises and to actively participate and understand the subject-matter. The same percentage of students at

the University of Ljubljana (35,9%) are of the opinion that their role is more autonomous and responsible since they consider themselves responsible for their knowledge: they have to tackle specific themes with self-initiative and independence, they have to pose questions to themselves and teachers, as well as to be critical towards the treated subject matter. There were 31,6% of such students at the University of Belgrade.

*Table 2: Representation of the selected descriptions of the principal role in the studies of first- and third-year pedagogy students of the University of Belgrade and University of Ljubljana*

Student's role <sup>5</sup>	University of Belgrade				University of Ljubljana			
	first year		third year		first year		third year	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Students have to fulfil all their study obligations, regularly attend lectures, exercises and seminars and benefit from them as much as possible.	9	15,8	3	5,4	12	15,4	5	9,3
2. Students have to regularly attend lectures, exercises and seminars, and actively participate in them.	24	<b>42,1</b>	10	17,9	28	<b>35,9</b>	6	11,1
3. Students are responsible for their knowledge; they have to ask themselves and teachers questions, and be critical towards the subject-matter discussed.	18	31,6	28	<b>50,0</b>	28	<b>35,9</b>	33	61,1
4. Students also have to be prepared for certain personality changes by working a lot on themselves and by forming their professional identity.	6	10,5	15	26,8	10	12,8	10	18,5
Total	57	100,0	56	100,0	78	100,0	54	100,0

There were statistically significant differences in understanding the significant student's role in both first- and third-year students of the Universities of

<sup>5</sup> In the questionnaire, the descriptions of a "good" teacher were listed in no particular order, unlike the present table, where the bottom-up approach is used.

Belgrade and Ljubljana (Belgrade:  $\chi^2=14,788$ ;  $n=113$ ;  $df=3$ ;  $p=,002$ ; Ljubljana:  $\chi^2=13,614$ ;  $n=132$ ;  $df=3$ ;  $p=,003$ ). A pleasing fact is that there is a turning point in the third year at both Belgrade and Ljubljana universities: one half of Belgrade students and 61,1% of Ljubljana students emphasised the more autonomous and responsible role of students in acquiring knowledge. In the third year there is an increased percentage of students who are ready for personal growth (26,8% of students from Belgrade University and 18,5% of students from Ljubljana University). In this context, we are wondering about the role of the studies and its demands and the role of other factors such as personal maturity, life experiences, etc. As teachers we should certainly keep asking ourselves about the way to develop learning environments which enhance students' perceived control over their learning (Ferla *et al.*, 2009). We can also extract many important guidelines from what students themselves tell us about their important learning experiences.

### *Significant learning experiences*

We were also interested in the types of positive learning experiences from the time of studies that significantly influenced third-year students in their opinions. We wanted to explore the study form in which this experience occurred and the aspects of changes that students had detected based on that experience. Some answers were offered to the respondents based on students' answers to an open-ended question from prior studies in this area (Kalin & Šteh, 2007, 2013; Šteh & Kalin, 2008, 2012).

First-year students were not asked this question as we considered that after the first year of studies they might find it difficult to answer the question on significant learning experiences and to recognise the characteristics of changes in their views, the mastered knowledge, the development of competences and similar. Students' answers to the question where the significant learning experiences took place are given in Table 3.

There were statistically significant differences between the students of the Universities of Belgrade and Ljubljana in reference to their answers where the important learning experience took place. To compare answers given by Belgrade and Ljubljana students, the answers regarding "practical training" and "organised visits to institutions" were combined into one category, while all other answers were categorised as "other". The differences between the answers of pedagogy (and andragogy) students from Belgrade and Ljubljana proved to be statistically significant ( $\chi^2= 22,76$ ;  $n=110$ ;  $df=3$ ;  $p=,000$ ).

*Table 3: Answers to the question where the significant learning experiences took place given by third-year students of pedagogy at the University of Belgrade and the University of Ljubljana*

Significant learning experience	University of Belgrade		University of Ljubljana	
	f	f%	f	f%
At lectures	19	33,9	10	18,5
At exercises and seminars	8	14,3	5	9,3
At practical training	2	3,6	34	63,0
At organised visits to institutions	10	17,9	1	1,9
During independent study of literature	1	1,8	2	3,7
In group work with colleagues at projects, seminars, etc.	11	19,6	1	1,9
At consultations or consultation hours	1	1,8	/	/
Other	4	7,1	1	1,9
Total	56	100,0	54	100,0

The answer most often given by the students of the Ljubljana University was that their practical training was the significant learning experience (63%), followed by lectures (18,5%). This was the answer most frequently selected by Belgrade students (33,9%), followed by learning experiences that happened in group work with colleagues at projects, seminars, etc. – 19,6%, and during organised visits to institutions – 17,9%. Each of the last two answers was selected only once by the students of the University of Ljubljana. Exercises and seminars would be expected to represent an important learning situation that enables students to challenge their existing subjective theories, test themselves in various new situations, and personally consider pedagogic issues. However, students' answers imply that exercises and seminars have less power – this answer was more frequently selected by Belgrade students (14,3%), while only 9,3% of Ljubljana students opted for this answer. This poses the question of the concept and scope of exercises and seminars or their contents, goals and realisation. Notably, it was mostly students of the University of Belgrade who experienced the most important learning experience at lectures (33,9% of answers), which can encourage a more responsible and high quality performance of lectures. The differences in answers between Belgrade and

Ljubljana students to some extent reflect the differences in the way the study programme is conceived at each university. For example, at the University of Belgrade, practical training takes place as late as during the summer semester of the third year (which was after the survey was conducted), and hence the answers did not refer to practical training.

We were further interested in the influence of these significant learning experiences students recognised in themselves. Various answers were offered, among which they could select no more than three that were most relevant to them.

*Table 4: The percentage of answers given by third-year students of pedagogy at the University of Belgrade and the University of Ljubljana about what changed due to the significant learning experience at the time of their studies*

Recognised changes originating from the significant learning experience	University of Belgrade		University of Ljubljana	
	f	f%*	f	f%*
Recognising the usefulness of theory in solving actual practical problems	16	28,6	19	35,2
Acquiring new experiences through actual work	16	28,6	18	33,3
Testing oneself in actual situations	15	26,8	20	37,0
Developing various competences important for professional work	17	30,4	19	35,2
Getting to know what is necessary for good preparation for teaching and carrying out a lesson (a workshop, etc.)	7	12,5	6	11,1
Acquiring experience of one-to-one work with pupils	2	3,6	11	20,4
Learning with others and from others in group discussions	11	19,6	1	1,9
Viewing contents from different perspectives	12	21,4	9	16,7
Deepening theoretical knowledge	5	8,9	3	5,6
Changing one's views and attitudes	13	23,2	11	20,4

Increased motivation for studies	27	48,2	13	24,1
Recognising the usefulness of studies	7	12,5	11	20,4
Getting to know a pedagogue's/adult educator's work in practice	10	17,9	13	24,1
Other	1	1,8	0	0,0

Note. f%\* – the percentage of answers in reference to the number of students who answered this question; each student could select a maximum of three described changes (University of Belgrade: n= 56; University of Ljubljana: n=54).

Students of the University of Belgrade most often pointed out that the important learning experience during their studies encouraged their motivation for study (48,2%). This was followed by the answer that the development of competences relevant for professional work was important (30,4%), while next came the equally frequent selection of two aspects – one was recognising usefulness of theory in solving actual problems and the other acquiring new experiences through work (26,6% each). The students of the University of Ljubljana most often selected the answer that the important study experience was testing themselves in actual situations (37%). It was followed by a balanced choice of two answers: first, that they acquired knowledge on the usefulness of theory in solving actual problems, and second, that they developed competences important for their professional work (each selected by 35,2% of students). The answers students gave to this question were strongly related to the place where the important learning experience occurred. Among Ljubljana students it very often happened during their practical training, where they had the opportunity to work and test themselves in some typical situations in which pedagogues or adult educators work. A considerable gap and statistically significant differences between the answers of Ljubljana and Belgrade students are noticeable in some items, such as: acquiring experience of individual work with pupils, learning with others and from others in group discussions and increased motivation for studies. Acquiring experiences in individual work was strongly emphasised by students of the University of Ljubljana (20,4%); among Belgrade students the prevailing choices were learning with others in group discussions (19,6%) and increased motivation for their studies (48,2%). The answers of Belgrade students can be understood in the context of answers to the question where the important learning experience took place, in which they strongly referred to the importance of lectures, group work with colleagues on projects and during seminars as well as visits to educational institutions. All these work methods evidently reflected in increased motivation for studies among Belgrade students. Previous findings on student-student relationships in the study process have acknowledged that active learning in groups, peer relationships and social skills are important in engaging a learner. Moran and Gonyea (Moran & Gonyea, 2003, according

to: Zepke & Leach, 2010: 7) found that among student-teacher interaction, the quality of student effort and peer interaction, the last one had the strongest predictive capacity for students' perception of engagement and outcomes. Umbach and Wawrzynski (2005) reported a positive relationship between active and collaborative learning techniques and student gains. Increasing the use of active and collaborative experiences contributed to student engagement (Lambert *et al.*, 2007); student's levels of co-operative learning, the levels of cognitive challenge and the development of personal skills were also highly correlated (Ahlfeldt, Mehta & Sellnow, 2005, according to: Zepke & Leach, 2010).

### *Conclusion*

This research has shown that third-year students of both the University of Belgrade and Ljubljana demonstrate shifts toward higher conceptions of teacher's role. Compared to the first-year students of both universities who most often selected as a model "good" teacher the teacher who delivers well (37,5% and 40,8%), 28,6% of Belgrade and 25,9% of Ljubljana third-year students opted for a teacher who encourages critical thinking and leads them in discovering the subject area. Moreover, 42,9% of Belgrade and 38,9% of Ljubljana third-year students selected a teacher who encourages them to be more independent and responsible as well as to continue their personal growth. Even more pronounced is the shift to higher conceptions in understanding their own role, since there are statistically significant differences in the conceptions of student's role between both Belgrade and Ljubljana first- and third-year students. While first-year students mostly pointed out that their duty was predominantly to fulfil their study obligations, to attend lectures, exercises and seminars and to actively participate in them, the majority of third-year students already emphasised a more responsible and autonomous role. There are various determinants influencing this choice – from gaining personal maturity, life experiences, the study itself, etc. Students' answers regarding their significant learning experiences during their studies indicate that they were to a certain degree influenced by the contents of studies, their concept and opportunities to learn from colleagues, teachers and mentors at practical training. The findings have confirmed the thesis that it is worthwhile to orient our efforts towards planning and forming learning situations that will enable students to be actively and responsibly included in the study process. As pointed out by Devlin and Samarawickrema (2010), the answers to the question how to conceive such a learning situation as to encourage the quality learning of students, along with the specific learning objectives, students themselves and all other circumstances, need to be searched for again and again.

However, the importance of the role of students' feedback in ensuring high quality university studies has again become evident, since it reveals both strong and weak points of study programmes and their implementation, while

indicating guidelines for introducing changes to the study process. This paper has presented only a small portion of the results obtained in the comparative study, and yet even this has shown that the challenge in Ljubljana may be to organise quality discussion and particular forms of participative learning more frequently, while in Belgrade the challenge may be to integrate more opportunities for students to test themselves and show their knowledge in practical situations in the first two years of the studies already. It is particularly important that students in both Ljubljana and Belgrade are offered adequate support in connecting theory and practice, as this allows them to add meaning to their studies, work through their misconceptions and develop an in-depth understanding of the contents in the areas of pedagogy and andragogy as well as to independently solve topical issues and problems encountered in this subject area. Together with efforts oriented towards developing professional competences of students, the key issue is the way the university teachers should work and co-operate with students to ensure that they develop into professionals, capable of further learning and growth in responsibility towards all with whom they will work and co-operate during their professional career. According to Mearns, Meyer and Bharadway (Mearns *et al.*, 2007, according to: Zepke & Leach, 2010), if the teacher is perceived to be approachable, well-prepared and sensitive to students' needs, students are more committed to work harder, get more out of the session and are more willing to express their own opinion. Students are more likely to engage in the study process if they are supported by teachers who establish inviting environments, demand high standards, challenge, and make themselves freely available to students to discuss academic progress. The present study was focused on researching the views of students at both universities that conceived study programmes somewhat differently, both however giving a comparable level of education or the professional title. In order to obtain a more comprehensive view of the question of students' and teachers' roles and responsibilities in the university studies, we would also have to study the subjective theories of university teachers that serve as an important factor of ensuring quality teaching through the working method and through establishing such learning situations in which students become co-designers of the study process and to a greater extent assume their own share of responsibility for its results.

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УЛОГА И ОДГОВОРНОСТ УНИВЕРЗИТЕТСКИХ НАСТАВНИКА  
И СТУДЕНАТА: КОМПАРАТИВНА АНАЛИЗА СТАВОВА  
СТУДЕНАТА ПЕДАГОГИЈЕ

*Анстракт*

У раду су представљени и анализирани резултати емпиријског истраживања чији је циљ да се утврди како студенти схватају улогу наставника и сопствену улогу и шта сматрају значајном ситуацијом у којој се одвијало учење током студија. Интересовало нас је да ли се њихово схватање о улози наставника и студената променило током студија и да ли се приближило савременим научним схватањима о активном и конструктивном учењу. Истраживање је спроведено током зимског семестра школске 2012/13. године на узорку студената прве и треће године који похађају први ниво студија педагогије на Филозофском факултету у Београду и студија педагогије и андрагогије на Филозофском факултету у Љубљани. Поређење прве и треће године показало је да код студената треће године постоји помак ка напреднијем схватању улоге студената и наставника, за које је вероватније да ће довести до дубљег приступа учењу. Промене усмерене ка формирању напреднијих схватања о улози студената и наставника могу да буду индикатор квалитета студија будући да јасно показују да су студенти спремни за одговорнију и независнију улогу током студирања. У светлу напора да се постигне високог квалитет универзитетског образовања, поменуће перспективе представљају важне информације за реформу студијских програма и увођење промена у процесу студирања.

*Кључне речи:* квалитет универзитетског образовања, компаративна студија, ефективна настава, схватање улоге студената, схватање улоге наставника, ситуација у којој се одвија учење.

Барбара Штех, Яна Калин и Ясна Мажгон  
РОЛЬ И ОТВЕТСТВЕННОСТЬ ВУЗОВСКИХ ПРЕПОДАВАТЕЛЕЙ  
И СТУДЕНОВ: СРАВНИТЕЛЬНЫЙ АНАЛИЗ  
МНЕНИЙ СТУДЕНТОВ ПЕДАГОГИКИ

*Резюме*

В работе предлагаются и анализируются результаты эмпирического исследования, проведенного с целью выявить, как студенты понимают роль преподавателя и собственную роль и что именно они считают важной ситуацией, в которой происходила учебная деятельность в ходе вузовского обучения. Нас интересовало, изменилось ли их понимание роли преподавателя и студента в ходе вузовского обучения. Исследование было проведено в течение первого семестра 2012/13. г., причем корпус испытуемых составили студенты первого и третьего курсов основного обучения на Отделении педагогики Философского факультета в Белграде и на Отделении педагогики и андрагогии на Философском факультете в Любляне. Сравнение первого и третьего курсов показало, что у студентов третьего курса существует сдвиг к более прогрессивному пониманию роли студентов и преподавателей, которые, по всей вероятности, приведут к более углубленному подходу к учебной деятельности. Сдвиги, проявляющиеся в формировании более развитых понятий и представлений о роли студентов и преподавателей могут быть индикаторами качества обучения, поскольку они ясно показывают, что у студентов есть готовность к более ответственной и более независимой роли в обучении. В свете усилий к обеспечению высокого качества вузовского образования, вышеупомянутые перспективы дают важную информацию для реформы программ и введение инноваций в вузовское обучение.

*Ключевые слова:* качество высшего образования, сопоставительное исследование, эффективное преподавание, понимание роли студента, понимание роли преподавателя, ситуация, в которой проходит обучение.