ZMĚNY VZDĚLÁVACÍHO SYSTÉMU A KULTURNÍ ROZMANITOST V ČESKÉ REPUBLICE

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Abstrakt: Článek analyzuje vzájemnou propojenost mezi konceptem tzv. „travelling policy" a procesy vzájemného ovlivňování na centrální a lokální úrovni (tzv. top-down a bottom-up procesy) v zemi, která prochází transformací z komunistického režimu k otevřenějšímu systému. Tato propojenost a s ní související dilemata jsou analyzována na několika úrovních. Nejprve představíme koncept travelling policy a top-down a bottom-up přístup, a následně se zaměříme na situaci vzdělávacího systému okolo roku 1989 v České republice. Pomocí kvalitativního výzkumu představíme proces změny vzdělávacího systému i pohled učitelů na tuto změnu. V poslední části článku se zaměříme na kulturní rozmanitost v českém školství a podíváme se na to, jak se nastolené téma vyvíjelo v rámci reformy vzdělávacího systému.

Klíčová slova: travelling policy, vzdělávací změna, kulturní rozmanitost, transformace

TRAVELLING EDUCATIONAL CHANGE AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Abstract: This article analyses the interconnectedness of travelling policy and domestic top-down and bottom-up processes in the case of a country going through a transformation from a communist to a more open system. This interconnectedness and the dilemmas it poses will be examined in several steps. After a theoretical introduction to the concept of travelling policy and domestic bottom-up and top-down processes, we will introduce the initial situation of the educational system in the Czech Republic around 1989. We will then analyse the process of educational change, and we will describe how Czech teachers view this change by presenting the results of qualitative research among these teachers. Finally, we will concentrate on the diversity issue as one part of the process of educational change. A diversity aspect was chosen because on this issue we can demonstrate the influences of travelling policy on top and bottom developments.

Key words: travelling policy, educational change, cultural diversity, transformation

1 Introduction

International literature suggests that current educational changes in many countries of the western world, as well as in the developing world, are influenced not only by local top-down and bottom-up processes, but also by shifts in international educational debates (Hajisoteriou, 2010; Jakobi, 2005; Seddon, 2005; Silova, 2005; Wilkins et al., 2010). Travelling policy is a term often used for describing the situation in which international politics and agendas interact with local traditions and ideologies (Jones, Alexiadou, 2001; Ozga, Jones, 2006; Seddon, 2005). Bahry (2005, p. 61) defines travelling policy as "policies originating from outside local educational systems". These international influences interact with local developments. We can also describe the situation as a "local response to outside pressures" (Lawn, Lingard, 2002, p. 294). These processes of interaction between international and local developments are universal; however they retain specific features, in particular when large-scale political changes are underway, as for instance in post-totalitarian countries. Ideological uncertainty and the need to adapt quickly to international situations often leads to new concepts being only superficially implemented, which does not bring about real educational change that would infuse all parts of the system from curricula through to teacher training (Bahry, 2005; Seddon, 2005; Silova, 2005).

When we analyse the approach to educational change in a specific country, we see that it needs, as Fullan (1996, p. 3) argues, a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches. This raises the question as to how we can achieve some coherence between top-down and bottom-up, especially in the international context of travelling policies that influence local policy. Fullan (1996) suggests several approaches concerning domestic educational processes. In particular, he suggests formulating inspiring goals and visions and translating these into curricula and instructional frameworks, the development of technologies and assessment systems, and coherence in the system, which should also include social and economic aspects of change. However, change at the school level remains crucial for bringing about educational change. If teachers do not become agents of change themselves, then any changes will be very limited (Fullan, 1993). Fullan suggests two principles—reculturing and restructuring. Restructuring is a change in the schools' roles, structures and formal elements (Fullan, 2000). It does not constitute the reform, but creates better circumstances for it. Reculturing is then crucial according to Fullan (2000). Reculturing is a much more difficult process that demands the creation of a real professional community linked to

strong networking. A process that is not merely formal, but is a real bottom up change rooted in actual teaching.

Educational change is always inevitably linked to a concrete socio-political context (Goodson, 2005; Veugelers, 2007; Hargreaves, Fullan, 2009). The case we are presenting here is the transition in the Czech Republic from a totalitarian communist regime into a more open and western oriented society that introduced democracy. The collapse of the communist regime happened quite fast in 1989. That year also marks the beginning of efforts to make Czech society more open and democratic.

In every political regime the education system is an important instrument for socialising citizens. When the political system changes, it is logical that the education system should also change, or at least react to the political changes. But how do teachers cope with these changes? What is the role of concepts from abroad in such a process? Which of the changes are initiated at the central level, and which of them are rooted on the bottom? These are the main questions we address in this article. Analysing educational change in the context of a society in transition from a totalitarian closed system to a more open one is a peculiar task, because the discrepancy between the starting conditions and the aspired goals may well be larger in this context, compared with societies whose political and social developments are slower and more continuous. Moreover, most of the changes that have taken place so far have emerged not only as a result of domestic debate, but travelling policies have also played a crucial role in putting new concepts and initiatives on the agenda in the name of "returning to Europe" (Sztompka, 1993, p. 86). These new concepts can however be implemented in various ways and they do not always achieve results comparable with those realised abroad, in their new context. In a transforming society the question is what the interconnectedness of travelling policies and domestic top-down and bottom-up processes looks like. What dilemmas does it raise and what must happen at both the political and educational levels in order for the intended change to be real and possible?

1.1   The Educational System in the Czech Republic before 1989

So as to better understand the present situation, we will first look briefly at the situation of the educational system before 1989. The main feature in that period was that all its parts were subordinated to a main goal, described by Kozakiewicz (1992, p. 4) as follows:

> *The goal of education was uniform: to create a good, socially minded*
> *citizen of a socialist society, who would also realize in his private life*
> *the values of a classless, egalitarian, and collective society.*

What did this pedagogical goal look like in detail? First, the state had total control over the types of school (Kozakiewicz, 1992). It was impossible to found a private or church school because the state was the only authority that could legally do so. The logical consequence of this is that the state had complete control over the content of education (Tomusk, 2001). The content to be taught was strictly prescribed by the state and teachers received methodological guidelines that they had to follow. The Czech School Inspectorate came to schools to assess this content and methodology. The state had absolute control over textbooks (Cerych, 1997; Kozakiewicz, 1992; Szebenyi, 1992). There was only one official publisher of textbooks and there was no choice. Schools always had one set of textbooks for every school year and for each subject. The permitted textbooks had to carry a special label, which only the Ministry of Education could issue. Last but not least, the state had control over the teachers (Ulc, 1978). Students of the pedagogical faculties were very carefully selected on the basis of their 'personal evaluation'. This 'personal evaluation' *[kádrový posudek]* accompanied every person from childhood onwards. A positive personal evaluation was necessary in order to gain permission to study and to obtain a good job. People who regularly went to church, or did not join the Pioneer organization, together with those who refused to take part in the May Day celebrations, and so on, were marked as being unreliable. These customary decisions had a vast influence on an individual's career and even on their salary (Šiklová, 2004; Ulc, 1978). Such an educational framework can clearly be defined as a top-down system with very strong controlling mechanisms at every level. Bottom-up processes could hardly exist, or were at least not structurally supported.

1.2   *Educational Change in the Czech Republic after 1989*

Because the educational system before 1989 was so strongly used as an ideological tool, the first changes to the system after 1989 came about relatively quickly. The first important amendment to the existing school act came in spring 1990. Thanks to this amendment, private and church schools could be founded. Later, the first more substantial changes were introduced at the curriculum level. Three optional educational programs were approved centrally and schools could choose which one they would implement.

Attempts to change the entire educational system came only after 2001, and in two steps. In 2001 a White Paper was published by the Ministry of

Education, which set out the basic direction of the planned changes and also presented a wider educational vision. The White Paper emerged as a result of political changes after 1989 that supported steps towards the foundation of a more democratic society and a closer relationship with the European Union, which is seen as a very important motivational factor for post-1989 educational change in the Czech Republic. The European Union is not presented in the White Paper as being the only reason for changing the educational system; on the other hand the rhetoric of "becoming international" is very strong. Moreover, the process of formulating White Paper was based on results of several previous domestic as well as international projects and evaluations (National, 2001, p. 7). In this sense travelling policy is very important, because most of the changes proposed in the White Paper and in other reform documents are consistently defended with the argument that this is what we see in western developed countries. In September 2004—fifteen years after the political changes of 1989—the new School Act based on this White Paper came into force. The whole educational system changed rapidly—in particular in terms of the curriculum, which became decentralised. Schools were given the freedom (and duty at the same time) to adapt centralised general standards by developing their own School Educational Programme.

On the curriculum level, the reform brought two essential changes. First, the results of the teaching and learning process should not only be assessed by the amount of cognitive information gained by students, as in previous curricula, but also in terms of broad competencies. Secondly, the curriculum for attaining these competencies was split into two levels. Level one covers educational areas, for example language and language communication, mathematics and its application, and the human being and society. Level two is comprised of so-called cross-curricular educational topics, such as social skills education, awareness of the European and global context, multicultural education, environmental education and media education (Framework, 2007). Cross-curricular topics penetrate all subjects and areas. Such a curricular process is known as the "infusion model" (Anderson, MacPhee, Govan, 2000). From the point of view of education change theory we can say that the Czech Republic has moved in the direction of weakening top-down processes and giving more room to bottom-up processes, at least at the curricular level. The 2004 School Act gave teachers the opportunity and duty to influence their own teaching. One of the most important features of any school reform is the challenging process of winning teachers' support for the reform. No matter how good the political ideas behind reforms are and how good the structural solutions are, "the burden of responsibility for

change and improvement in schools ultimately rests on the shoulders of teachers" (Fullan, Hargreaves, 1996, p. 13). We address their perspective in the next section.

1.3   Educational System Change from Teachers' Perspective

In the period 2005–2012, following the introduction of the reform, two large studies were carried out. The topic of the first was the implementation of multicultural education in Czech schools. This research was conducted between 2005–2008. Based on its results another study aimed at the transformation of the school culture was then conducted.

In this article we will use data from both these studies. We will start, however, by presenting the older data, as they are closer to the initial stage of school reform.

The first study was targeted at teachers from five upper secondary schools level in Prague—three of them were grammar schools *[gymnázia]* and two were secondary vocational schools *[střední odborné školy]*. The research was conducted in two stages. In the first stage, teachers were interviewed about their perspective on multicultural education and the whole reform. Based on the results, a new tool for multicultural education www.czechkid.cz was created and introduced to them, and in the later stages of the study, the teachers' ideas and practices connected with the use of this tool were researched (Moree, 2008). The qualitative exploratory research consisted of interviews with twenty teachers. There were 4 male teachers and 16 female teachers; 6 teachers were aged 20–30; 5 were aged 30–40, 5 were aged 40–50, and 4 teachers were aged 50–60. Most of the participating teachers were teachers of humanities subjects. The sample was created by a snow-ball method in each school. The teachers who participated perceived themselves, or were perceived by their colleagues, to have something to say about multicultural education. The specific research questions were:

- How would teachers describe the tasks of education in the context of contemporary society?
- What changes have teachers experienced in the context of the political changes of 1989 and the school reform of 2004?
- How do teachers evaluate these changes in the field of multicultural education?
- How do teachers cope with multicultural education in terms of their goals and methods?
- How has the teachers' role changed after 1989?

This study shows the teachers' initial experiences with the school reform. We will first have a look at the results, and then turn our attention to the multicultural aspect of teachers' present experience, which will serve as an example of how the link between the international level and domestic top and bottom levels can be seen in schools.

1.3.1   Teachers' reflections on societal change mirrored in their school environment

When teachers talk about changes in the education system, there are many indications that time perception among teachers is divided clearly into time before and after 1989. What kinds of differences between these two periods do teachers perceive? Younger teachers often say that society as a whole, as well as the school itself, is more open now than pre-1989. They say, for example, that it is easier now for children to meet someone from a different cultural background. The school's technical equipment is also much better, which gives teachers and students greater opportunities to make their education more interesting, and that it is easier to introduce new ideas.

In contrast with this general, positive perception of the period after 1989 some—especially older—teachers also feel negative aspects of the changes. When they compare the period before and after 1989, they talk in particular about changes to relations and the soft aspects of their lives. There is, according to them, not much time for friendships in the post-1989 society more generally, and particularly in schools, because everybody has to be in a hurry, everyone has too many opportunities to take advantage of, and less time for friends. One of the reasons for this situation is that the distances people travel to work are larger, since everyone wants to live outside the big cities. The consequence of this is also less time for relationships and more time spent hurrying from place to place.

Another aspect of difficulty for these teachers' personal and social relationships has been the loss of orientation of who is who. Traditional social structures and roles have been weakened. It takes much longer now until people can distinguish the real quality of the personality, behind all the tinsel which people usually see on first contact.

One further interesting theme emerges among the teachers' perspectives before and after 1989. The older teachers in particular display a tendency to defend how the schools were before 1989. They mention that they very often hear that schools were bad, which they consider to be a simplification. According to them, if teachers wanted to do a good job and teach well, in the pre-1989 system they were in fact allowed to do so and indeed did; therefore

in their opinion the quality of the education depended on the teachers more than on the system itself.

This defence of the previous school system also prevails when it comes to the question about educational change and school reform. Some teachers understand this question to be an implicit allegation that there is something wrong in schools.

> *Someone tried to introduce the school reform to us saying that we should imagine the whole country as well as the education system as a broken car. But I do not think that the education system is like a broken car. It works. It is a car that drives, it needs some small repairs, but it is not broken. And some of them present it like this—that the school system is wrong and now we will have the reform and everything will be all right—that is nonsense, of course. (32-year-old female teacher of Citizenship and English Language)*

Teachers say that they very often hear that the school system is wrong, while at the same time they believe this cannot be true, because they constantly fight for improvements to many aspects of their teaching, and as a result they do not feel their efforts are appreciated. Both older and younger teachers agree on this.

Younger teachers stress much more strongly the fact that the entire principle of teaching should change. In this context an interdisciplinary approach and the interconnectedness of different educational areas would be very important.

When young teachers talk about changes, they also point to tensions between themselves and their older colleagues. They say that in their perception, there has been no real change until now, and they can still only hope for it.

The younger respondents did not, however say that the older teachers should be removed. They do, however, perceive that it is not possible to expect any fundamental changes to their old teaching styles.

> *It is a generational issue ... 95 % of old teachers teach in the same way all the time, they just add the European Union or something like that, but the core, the structure of the lessons is all the same. (26-year-old male teacher of Geography)*

This is another opinion frequently heard from the young teachers. On the one hand they can understand why the older generations of teachers work as

they do, yet their experience has shown that even when their older colleagues are open for learning and discussion, the two generations still live and work in two different worlds. This is not due to an unwillingness on the part of older teachers, but simply to very different life and professional experiences. On the other hand, the younger teachers say that they are trying to do things in a different way, which means looking for new teaching strategies, because they also had limited possibilities to learn the craft from their own teachers.

> *Teachers who are 40, 50 years old—not all of them, but most of them—always insist on literary history in the sense of history. And real literature is far away, because they actually teach biographies of writers. And as for novels, they just teach students to enumerate them, they do not care about the text. And then there is some point of rupture. I can see it only from my individual perspective—but then the younger ones start to be more concentrated on the text. (27-year-old male teacher of History and Czech)*

1.3.2   School Reform as a Part of Social and Political Change

In the perception of change, the school reform we studied appears to be a negative symbol of systemic change. Teachers talk about increasing administrative pressure from the Ministry of Education—the consequence is a lack of time for real practical preparation. Instead of preparing new teaching methods and contents, teachers feel under pressure to fulfil administrative requirements that are a by-product of the reform.

> *I would say that it is good to give schools more freedom, but on the other hand the schools have already been liberated and they are using this advantage. But what shall we do about the school education programme itself—write it all down into these 150 pages-long document, control the processes, adjust all procedures—it grows into an enormous administrative elaboration. And I only see how I am stressed—I have to make the curriculum plan, add this and that, classify the students—and where is teaching? Because then I will not be able to think about which project I could do with my students in the afternoon, I will not have the capacity and freedom to do it—or at least not for the next 2, 3 or 4 years. (32-year-old female teacher of English Language)*

The teachers' reaction to this situation is very similar at all the schools investigated. Teachers are busy fulfilling their formal and administrative

requirements and are not able to concentrate on the content of their lessons any more. And so the biggest danger of the reform is its formalism. Many teachers use an old Czech saying for describing the way the reform is implemented–so as 'to steer the middle course' *[aby se vlk nažral a koza zůstala celá].* What are the reasons for this approach? Relative to the power hierarchy in society, the teachers suggest possible reasons on many levels. Some of them have the feeling that decisions from the Ministry of Education are being made by people who have not been in schools for a very long time and consequently are unfamiliar with the contemporary classroom. Others say that the goals of the education system and its reform are not clear.

Regarding the changing curriculum content, many teachers mention that they are not qualified to teach cross-curricular themes. Regarding educational change, they mention that they have not been trained to implement school reforms and therefore if the Ministry of Education wants them to implement changes, they must first train the teachers to do so. The teachers also argue that even the state officials themselves do not know how this should be done:

> *They (the School Inspectorate) are more helpless than teachers: what should they check? They will come to see us, they will have a look at students' exercise books and they will leave again. How could they check the social skills of students? They do not know how to do that. (27-year-old female teacher of Citizenship)*

An important aspect of discussions about the educational reform is that most of these critical voices belong to young and innovative teachers. They do not in fact argue much against the reform in theory, as they agree that changes in the education system are necessary. However, these teachers are pessimistic about the gap between the formal requirements which the present reform creates, and any real positive change in their daily work. For example the preparation of school educational programmes under the new reforms does not encourage a discussion process in their school, but is reduced to administrative fulfilment of requirements stipulated from the top. This instrumental implementation will, according to these teachers, not help to really change the system.

We can conclude that teachers do not view as successful the present top-down attempts to implement reforms on the education system. There are several reasons for this. Some of the teachers think that starting reform processes fifteen years after the crucial political changes was simply too late. Even those who say that the educational system needs some changes

agree that a reform that only results in formal administrative requirements is simply wrong, and that today's schools need something different.

Results of this research are important for better understanding of present situation from one reason. Although the data show teachers' initial perception of implementation of school reform and thus are relatively old, they give some picture about general atmosphere, in which new topics like multicultural education or inclusion were introduced. The question is how far was teachers' opinion about these topics influenced by their generally negative attitude towards the way how the reform was implemented (Moree, 2008).

2 Dilemmas in Coping with Cultural Diversity

As multicultural education was the main framework of the research conducted, we will concentrate on diversity issues in this part of the article. We will take an example of diversity issues and we will analyse the interconnectedness between top and bottom, travelling policy and its local implementation.

Diversity issues became an important part of the school reform as a reaction to the political changes and international developments related to integration in Europe and in the Czech Republic after 1989. Without opening the country up and approaching the European Union, they would not have become so important. Diversity issues are mirrored in the school environment in several ways. In order to analyse the concrete situation for today's teachers we have chosen two cases. First, we will analyse the integration of immigrant children through an example involving Czech as a second language. Second, we will discuss inclusion using the example of Roma children attending special schools. Special schools *[zvláštní školy]* were schools for mentally handicapped children. Children who did not seem capable of completing elementary school were simply placed in these Special schools. In the case of Roma children, their limited ability to speak proper Czech (which was a second language for some of them) and some cultural differences combined with low social status were not taken into consideration, and therefore even mentally healthy children were put into these special schools. At present the system has changed somewhat and there are so-called Practical schools *[praktické školy]* for children with learning disabilities, who are not able to cope with the pace of a mainstream school. However, the opportunities on the job market for those who have attended these schools are very limited.

2.1 Integrating Immigrant Children

The first version of the new school act of 2004 divided pupils into two categories. Those in the first category were granted free admission to all educational services. These were children with Czech citizenship, citizens of the European Union countries, and so-called residents, people who had been living legally in the Czech Republic for longer than five years. The second category was composed of children who did not have equal admission rights to so-called special services, which included, for example, classes for Czech as a second language, catering facilities or participation in some leisure time and non-formal educational activities. Foreigners from non-EU countries could only attend the basic minimum in primary, secondary and higher education, and could not use any additional services. These measures caused a paradoxical situation for teachers: the reform impressed upon them a new duty to implement multicultural education into their teaching, yet at the same time they could not take all the children in their classes to the school canteen, e. g.

The paragraph on special services was changed in 2007 in response to pressure from a number of NGOs, who prepared legal analysis showing that the law was in violation of international treaties, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

However, the main segregation problem relating to Czech as a second language remained. A side-effect of the new school act was that immigrant children from non-EU countries are not able to attend so-called "Language preparation classes", the aim of which is to give children a basic knowledge of the Czech language. However, the majority of immigrant students who attend Czech schools are from non-EU member states, including the former Soviet Union, Vietnam, and China. If a specific school wants to support their pupils to learn the Czech language, the director or teachers have to apply for extra funds by means of complex administrative procedures and without any certainty that their application would be successful. As a result, many schools face serious problems with students who attend their classes but do not speak Czech. Meanwhile, in those same classes, teachers are expected to implement multicultural education. In relation to these problems we frequently see teachers who call for structural changes to the system in order to cope with diversity issues, but their attempts are not successful.

2.2 Special Schools and Roma Pupils

In 2009 the Ministry of Education conducted research (Vzdělanostní, 2009) that showed that in a country with a 2–3 % Roma population, 26 % of

students in special schools were of Roma origin. This situation was nothing new. Similar figures were found before 1989, when Roma children were placed into special schools, without any investigation, 28 times more often than children from the ethnic majority (Barša, 1999). Charta 77 (1978, p. 7) showed that about 17 % of Roma aged between 15 and 29 were illiterate; 50 % only completed the first five grades of elementary school, and only 15 % completed basic schooling.

In spite of these alarming numbers, an interesting aspect of the situation from the perspective of educational change is the debate among teachers and the arguments they use. This topic was not extensively discussed in society until 2007, when the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg (2007) decided a case concerning discrimination based on ethnic origin of the right to equal access to education, in 'Case D. H. and others against the Czech Republic'. In this case a group of past pupils of special schools during the 1990s complained that they had been put in special schools for mentally handicapped children not as a consequence of any real mental handicap, but because of their ethnic background. This decision negatively influenced their further career opportunities and consequently their later lives.

The recent debate about the number of Roma pupils in special schools was initiated by this event in combination with international discussion on inclusion as a new aspect of coping with children with special educational needs. As a result of international pressure, the Ministry of Education took two types of action: firstly, it started to analyse the situation of children with special educational needs by means of two surveys (Svoboda et al., 2009; Vzdělanostní, 2009); secondly, it insisted to the standard schools that only children with a real mental handicap should be send to special schools[1]

However, teachers react very strongly to this requirement. According to some schools and teachers, Roma children from socially weak backgrounds have special needs that cannot be accommodated in mainstream schools, and this is their reason for sending these children to special schools for the mentally handicapped. The consequence is that the Roma community has limited opportunities to enhance their status in society by means of better education. (Svoboda et al., 2009; Nikolai, 2010), and this situation leads to ethnic segregation (Ludvík, 2003; Nikolai, 2010).

The studies that were carried out mapped the situation and showed, among other results, that there is a lot of variation among schools. There are schools that actively look for ways to include all children, including those from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, and there are schools that try to

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[1]See e. g. the letter of Minister of Education of January 2010 `http://www.msmt.cz/minister-stvo/dopis-ministryne-skolam-u-prilezitosti-zapisu-do-l-trid` [7. 2. 2010].

avoid drawing attention to any possibly "difficult" students (Svoboda et al., 2009).

In this debate, importantly, everybody agrees that there are children who are somehow different and are not able to follow the fast pace of education in mainstream schools. These children need an individual approach that takes their previous experience, ability and cultural background into consideration. The Ministry of Education, in response to international pressure, has declared that these children should be integrated into mainstream schools and has put pressure on schools not to segregate Roma students. Without the Strasbourg verdict this would not have happened.

The arguments used in both examples demonstrate the current dilemmas relating between top and bottom in Czech education. These dilemmas are sometimes heightened by international pressure, but sometimes they come from bottom without any response on the top. In the case of immigrant children, some schools try to integrate immigrant children and do not receive any financial or personal support from the Ministry of Education. Bottom-up changes are not supported from the top. In the case of special schools was international pressure a strong push factor for changing top strategies. As a consequence of this Ministry of Education tries to let schools include Roma children into mainstream education, however, many schools do not accept this pressure. The reasons are various, as the present researches show: the idea that mainstream education is only for mainstream students, the lack of structural support for any extra activity, the inability to change the system and the lack of professional knowledge. However, analysing the real reasons why integration of these students is so difficult would be an interesting topic for further and more extended research among teachers. In both cases, the exclusiveness or inclusiveness of the school environment depends on individuals and is not given by structures and policies.

3 Multicultural education in an exclusive school environment

Multicultural education as a new cross-curricula topic was introduced into a situation that was not sufficiently prepared for new ways of looking at diversity issues in schools. Without structural support that would open space for the welcoming of diversity (such as language preparation classes for foreign pupils), the quality of the implementation of multicultural education was left entirely dependent on particular teachers' beliefs, attitudes and wishes.

In this section we look at teachers' ways of bringing multicultural education into their daily practice. Teachers were asked about several aspects of their work: their educational aims, their methods and their personal experiences, which together lead them to implement multicultural education in the way they do. Teachers were interviewed twice—at the beginning and in the end of the research in years 2006–2007. Observations of lessons where teachers implemented some aspects of multicultural education based usually on project www.czechkid.cz were conducted in the period between the first and the second interview. The data were analysed by qualitative categorisation (Moree, 2008).

The results of the research show significant differences among teachers. Therefore we were able to create a typology of teachers based on these results (Moree, 2008; Moree, Klaassen,Veugelers, 2010).

The teacher typology was created according to structural aspects, such as the frequency of working with multicultural education. However, the analysis showed that particular teachers' types also have specific life experiences, use a congruent set of methods and interpret multicultural education in a specific way. Below, we introduce the three types of teachers from the perspective of their practical work with multicultural education in the classroom.

3.1   Missionaries

Multicultural missionaries belong to the youngest teaching generation—aged 27 to 32. They have had some concrete *multicultural experience* from their lives, and they are willing to talk about it. Their answers to the question about multicultural educational practice were usually very concrete and, in comparison with other questions in the study, also relatively long. In most cases (except one) their experience was much deeper than simply meeting a foreigner somewhere; their intercultural encounter was an existential experience that changed their life perspective–and they very often described it in these terms. The experience brought them to question their own life stories and broaden their perspective relative to concrete situations.

From the *content* point of view, for missionaries, multicultural education means preparing students for living in the globalised world irrespective of whether they have foreigners in their classes. They live in a globalised world where the basic ability to cope with diversity is a key skill for any citizen.

In their *aims*, they stress the importance of inclusivity and anti-stereo-typing, however they are afraid to work with the concept of pedagogical goals, which they know from modern western literature. They prefer to hold open discussions with their pupils. The main fear underlying this behaviour

seems to be a fear of dogmatisation. The younger teachers do not want their students to experience what they themselves experienced at school, which means that, for them, transmitting any dogma in the form of conclusions following a discussion would be manipulative. Their main aim is to show different perspectives, and not to come to conclusions.

Missionaries associate multicultural education with new teaching methods like discussion, guided discussions, working in small groups or role-play. They see frontal teaching as insufficient for coping with diversity issues.

3.2 Servicemen

Multicultural servicemen also belong to the younger *age* category—the youngest is 26 and the oldest 32 (the situation in secondary vocational schools is different in that the youngest there is 25 and the oldest is 53). This group is much more heterogeneous in every aspect of teachers' lives and practice observed in the study.

Their answers regarding *multicultural experience* were also relatively diverse compared with missionaries. There were in fact three sub-types. Some do not have any personal experience, but the topic attracts them from the perspective of their own professional growth—they are interested in the topic or in the new methods that they can learn through it. Other teachers mentioned their own experience of living in a different country or experience with people coming from different cultural backgrounds, which surprised them and often also led to changes in their points of view. Lastly, we spoke to one teacher who had experienced being marginalised as a Christian in Czech society. He had also had a positive personal experience with the Roma minority, which was rather exceptional in the context of the study as a whole.

From a *content* point of view, this type of teacher views multicultural education as one possible aspect of their teaching, but it is a rather marginal issue in their lives. Nevertheless, they see multicultural education as an important issue, and one that is to some extent related to their idea of good teaching. Their interpretation of the content remains localised, without any broader view of the globalised world.

Teachers in this category see multicultural education as a kind of superstructure, above their obligatory curricular topics. That is why they associate experiencing different perspectives with the level of pedagogical*goals*. They perceive the existing curriculum to be primarily information-conveying, and they would like to implement multicultural education as a formative tool.

As for pedagogical*methods*, we find much less variety in this category. These teachers generally use the frontal teaching technique, combined with

a few more interactive ones. They say that they know this is not what they should do, and they are not very happy about it. On the other hand, they feel that they do not have enough time to use interactive methods, because these are more time-consuming.

3.3   Officers

Multicultural officers belong to the older *age* group—the youngest is 42 and the oldest 55, which means they are of the normalization generation. Teachers in this group do not have deep personal *multicultural experiences*. They think about multiculturalism on a very general level but they are satisfied with the feeling that they are tolerant. They have not experienced any significant cultural differences, and as a result they cannot imagine these in practice.

When we talk to these teachers about multicultural experiences, in comparison with the two previous categories, we observe some development from very personal experiences towards general ideas and convictions. It seems that teachers in this category view being open to other people as a normal kind of behaviour. The pedagogical consequence of this perception is that multicultural education does not necessarily need any special place in the education system, because it is a natural part of all education in any case.

Multicultural officers were the first group of teachers who talked in this context about the Roma minority in the Czech Republic. We understand this to be a consequence of the fact that most of these teachers' expressions concerning their multicultural experience were very general. Three of the four teachers in this category mentioned that they had had some brief personal contact with Roma, with which they were able to cope. The fact that they do not have anything obvious against the Roma people makes them multicultural teachers, in their opinion.

Teachers in this category do not see any link between multicultural education and the *contents* of what they teach. In other words, we can say that they do not see the multicultural dimension of their subjects. Comparing this with other categories, we can see that the teacher's personality and motivation for multicultural education is more important than the subject they teach. What is valid for goals is also valid for *methods* for this category of teachers. These teachers do not associate multicultural education with any special method; one teacher even associates special methods with a special subject, which shows a deep misunderstanding of the entire multicultural education concept as it was planned in the reform. The other teachers simply use their

standard methods, which are usually frontal teaching, combined with some individual student work (Moree, Klaassen, Veugelers, 2010).

4 Conclusions

The analysis we have set out above shows several issues linked to the concept of travelling policy and its influence on the situation in Czech schools. There are quite a few aspects of teachers' lives that are influenced by the existence of travelling policy. The whole idea of de-centralisation of the education system, its harmonisation with western standards, and the fact that multicultural education has become an obligatory part of the curriculum are the results of travelling policy and domestic top-down and bottom-up processes. The case of inclusion of Roma pupils is even more interesting from this perspective. The Strasbourg Court decision was a crucial push factor in this case.

However, what we can see on the top-down and bottom-up level is that teachers believe the top structures to be incompetent when it comes to preparing a situation into which they could apply these new ideas. School reform causes more administrative pressure then real qualitative change, and results in multicultural education having to be implemented in a situation of segregated schools, with pupils and students who do not have access to the structural possibilities or equal opportunities through which they could easily learn Czech as second language. The formal harmonisation of domestic policies with international travelling policies creates an environment that may at times cause more dilemmas than visions.

In all these points it seems that travelling policies translated into top-down and bottom-up domestic processes create more dilemmas than reconciliation. We can even say that these three processes create a kind of system, where all parts are interconnected and influence each other. We can see this in particular in the implementation of cultural diversity issues into the Czech educational system. When we analyse the situation of immigrant children and their limited possibilities for learning the Czech language, we discover schools and teachers who know that structural support for learning languages exists in other countries (www.inkluzivniskola.cz) and who call for structural top-down changes, which never arrive.

In the case of Roma students sent to special schools the dynamics are the opposite. Top-down structures are under international pressure as represented by the Strasbourg verdict. The educational system must include these children. The schools also feel this pressure, but a significant number of both schools and teachers are opposed to it. Many of them believe that children with special needs should be sent to special schools, to provide them with

special services (Svoboda et. al, 2009; Moree, 2013). To those teachers, these children do not belong in mainstream schools, which do not have the proper tools to enable them to integrate. Moreover, even those schools that do try to follow the requirements of the Ministry of Education, and do implement an inclusive school environment, say that they do not receive any structural support for this. In their eyes, the Ministry of Education only proclaims the need for change, but does not create the necessary circumstances for it to take place.

Real change, in both cases, lies in the hands of individual local teachers. They can adopt some influences from international trends, and they may implement these influences, but they do not feel that they are receiving any support for this from the central system. Without structural support, real change and the positive implementation of multicultural issues lie in hands of missionary teachers, who invest extra time and energy based on their motivation from strong personal experiences. And so we can identify a typical feature of educational change in post-totalitarian countries, in which travelling policies influence educational top-down change, but this does not bring real change (Silova, 2005). However locally, and bottom-up, travelling policy very often does bring some change because a "local agency has its own needs and interests" (Silova, 2005, p. 57). These three aspects influencing change are parts of an interconnected system, in which each part influences the others.

These processes of educational change are powerful because there is a forceful motivation to increase the international competitiveness of the whole country, its individuals and professionals. The consequence of this is that travelling policy has a very strong influence. It is interesting to observe that top and bottom differ in their application of travelling policy impulses to strategies for coping with, for example, cultural diversity issues. Finally, we have shown that this complex increases a sense of polarisation and atomisation, instead of opening up the debate about what real change to the educational system could look like.

What can be done to reconcile the systemic triangle travelling policy—top--down—bottom-up in the Czech case? Formulating a vision is one of the crucial steps, as we saw in Fullan's suggestions, and this is not visible in the educational reform attempts in the Czech Republic so far. Vision and critical dialogue, based on concrete knowledge and understanding of outside influences, must be contextualised into the concrete local environment. The educational vision should be clearly translated into the whole school system and not only into parts of it. At the moment, formal curricula are isolated from the classroom reality, and at the same time new topics like multicultural

education are not being clearly introduced to teachers. The educational system in the Czech Republic has been partially restructured but it seems that this was not enough. School reform requires a reconciliation of the real situation in schools with a restructuring at the system level. Teachers' roles should be radically changed. Teachers should become agents of reform and not servants of the system. Their work should be appreciated and their opinions and real experiences should be taken seriously.

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Dedication

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