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Editorial : Learning and work

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EDITORIAL

LEARNING AND WORK

We dedicate this single-topic *Studia paedagogica* issue to revealing the diverse relationships between learning and work. We are doing this fully aware that the relationship between learning and work has become somewhat more complicated in the world of today. We try to depict this complexity with one of the most ambiguous drawing of all times: the Necker cube, which is on the cover of the current issue. This simple drawing can either be interpreted to have its lower-left or upper-right square as its front side. And even though the cube stays the same, we can decide how we want to interpret it. A career comprising the separated phases of preparation for life, work, then relaxation (in that order) has become the exception. Learning and working are two social processes that combine at various phases of life and interconnect over the course of the lives of people living in the 21st century.

The diversity of what we call work, from manual labour to intellectual work, from individual work to teamwork, from routine work to creative work, from work not requiring qualifications to work with high added knowledge value, means that we have dedicated this issue to a variety of discourses on learning and work. Learning and work encounter each other in discussions on vocational education and training where vocation is a reference point on the one hand, and in discussions on professional development which refer to professions on the other.

All of these discourses and theories, however, are linked by one key question: What do people know and where and how do they learn it? There is no easy answer to this apparently simple question. When we try to provide one, we work with diverse theories, we study diverse learning environments, and we apply a diverse range of research designs. It is to this diversity of efforts to understand the relationship between learning and work that we have given space in the following papers.

We first include papers which accentuate theoretical interpretation, although they are exemplified through empirical data in at least one case. This issue of our journal opens with a theoretical study. In his paper, Theo

van Dellen argues that learning and work are not two separate processes. He shows what this insight implies at a theoretical and practical level using transformative learning theory. His arguments provide support for greater application of educational expertise within the working environment, among other conclusions. In the subsequent paper, Hanna Toivainen and Liubov Vetoshkina frame their research within another influential theory, specifically cultural-historical activity theory. Their findings within the innovative technology environment are in a certain respect evidence for the conclusions of the previous paper. In their research, learning, work, innovation, and the operation of an organization form an organic whole within the innovative technology environment. In the next paper, Yanmin Zhao and James Ko submit a conceptual framework for linking workplace learning theories and the professional development of vocational education teachers. This paper mainly works from Illeris's synthetic (or eclectic) theoretical model for workplace learning. In a way, this paper thus completes a series of theoretical excursions in the first three papers of this issue of *Studia paedagogica*.

The issue continues with papers which share an emphasis on empirical data. Katarína Millová and Marek Blatný bring a new dimension to our discussion on learning and work. In their conception, work operates as an independent variable, while successful psychosocial development represents a dependent variable. Their findings show that work mainly influences generativity, and less so stability. We perceive this type of psychological research finding as a new challenge for educational research and theory. The team of Alexandra Oliveira Doroftei, Sofia Marques da Silva, and Helena C. Araújo answer the question of whether on-the-job learning may improve the social image of initial vocational education and training in Portugal. To do so, they interpret how young apprentices describe their experience of on-the-job training. Petr Hladý and Stanislav Ježek turn their attention to the role of parents in the career choices of their children as adolescents. In their research, which we would recommend be noted as an example of good practice in quantitative research design, they demonstrate the important role of mothers in the career choice process for their children, among other findings.

As is customary here at *Studia paedagogica*, we have not neglected emerging researchers. It is worth reminding readers that inclusion in this section does not mean any kind of allowances are made for the authors, but rather that maximum attention is paid to the young researchers by the editorial board and editors. In his paper, Malte Gregorzewski describes his research into innovative approaches towards learning through work and vice versa within a Berliner school. In his case, teachers are the subject of learning and work is the content of learning and an innovative process. Educators are the subject focused on in a paper by Ezra Anthony Howard. This paper demonstrates

that a specific professional group within education, certified TEFL teachers, is a group which has few true foundation stones on which they can build their expertise and which builds its identity above all through practice. The final paper included in the Emerging Researchers section has a somewhat looser link to this issue's topic. Natasha Ziebell and David Clarke focus on science and mathematics and investigate curriculum transformation into classroom practice. This paper was chosen for publication based on the recommendation of the Emerging Researchers' Group of the European Educational Research Association.

A somewhat unusual inclusion in this issue of *Studia paedagogica*, and also a genre of paper which is not particularly common, is a Research Memorandum. This Organizational Education Research Memorandum was created by Network 32 – Organizational Education of the European Educational Research Association. This relatively young network of researchers, set up in 2016, declare their subject of interest and clarify the approaches which are relevant in investigating supra-individual learning processes within organizations. We hope that by publishing this memorandum we can support this area of research within the wide community of educational researchers. This memorandum fits perfectly within the focus of this issue.

Petr Novotný and Karen Evans
Editors

