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Lidija Vujičić, Oliver Holz, Matjaž Duh,
Melissa Michielsen

Contributions to the Development of the Contemporary Paradigm of the Institutional Childhood

An Educational Perspective

LIT

Lidija Vujičić, Oliver Holz, Matjaž Duh,
Melissa Michielsen (Eds.)

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edited by

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CONTENTS/INHALTSVERZEICHNIS

PREFACE/VORWORT 9

REVIEWER'S NOTES 13

PAPERS SUBMITTED IN ENGLISH

Maria ALEKSANDROVICH, Poland
The Good Start Method Made a Good Start in Poland 40 Years Ago 21

Dunja ANĐIĆ, Croatia
Competences of Teachers and Students, and Information and Communication Technology in Teaching Nature and Science 31

Kathleen BEAUDOIN, United States & Darko LONČARIĆ, Croatia & Sanja SKOČIĆ MIHIĆ, Croatia
Classroom Size and Frequency of Challenging Behaviours in Relation to the Support that Teachers Need in Managing those Behaviours 43

Danijela BLANUŠA TROŠELJ & Linda FRKOVIĆ LENAC, Croatia
Men in the Preschool Teachers' Profession - Motives and Experiences at the Beginning of their Professional Development 55

Tomaž BRATINA, Slovenia
Recognizing the Internet Threats by the Students – Pre-Service Teachers 67

Mihaela BRUMEN & Fanika FRAS BERRO, Slovenia
Formative Assessment in Teaching Foreign Languages in the Slovenian Preschool 79

Matjaž DUH & Andreja BÜDEFELD, Slovenia
Relationship between Drawing and Spatial Abilities in Second Grade Primary School Students 91

Jerneja HERZOG, Slovenia
Methods of Implementing Contemporary Slovenian Art Practices in Basic School Art Syllabus – Emphasis on Ecology 103

Andreja KLJAJIČ & Matjaž DUH, Slovenia
Monitoring Pupils' Artistic Skills in Institutional Education 117

Kristijan KOVAČ & Miljenko STANIĆ, Croatia
From Picking Apples to Written Addition and Subtracting Multi-Digit Numbers in the First Grade of Primary School 129

Marinko LAZZARICH, Croatia
The Correlation in the Teaching of the Mother Tongue 143

Letricija LINARDIĆ, Melinda KOSTELAC & Nina LICUL, Croatia
Competencies for Creativity Development of Art Education Students 151

Jasminka MEZAK, Snježana BABIĆ &Marina ČIČIN-ŠAIN, Croatia
Background Knowledge of ICT of Students, Future Teachers and Educators, as Prerequisite for the Development of Innovative and Creative Use of ICT in the Educational Environment 161

Kristina POKASIĆ, Kristina CERGOL KOVAČEVIĆ & Borna NEMET, Croatia
Team Teaching in Practice 173

Renata SAM PALMIĆ, Croatia
Teachers' Distance from Traditional Music as Intercultural Question 185

Kristinka SELAKOVIĆ & Marija IVANOVIĆ, Serbia
Competencies of Students - Kindergarten Teachers for the Realization of Visual Arts and Music Activities in Preschool Institutions 197

Ida SOMOLANJI TOKIĆ, Croatia
Different Voices during Transition to School 211

Sanja ŠAMANIĆ & Vilko PETRIĆ, Croatia
Physical Training and Music: The Possibilities of Teaching by Integrating Motor Content and Music during Physical Education Activities .. 225

Ligita STRAMKALE, Latvia
Acquiring the Content of Music Subject in Primary School from the Pupils' Perspective 233

Sanja TATALOVIĆ VORKAPIĆ & Renata ČEPIĆ, Croatia
Future Teachers' Personality, Creative Learning, and Academic Success - How Much Does Their Relationship Matter in the Educational Context? 245

Zlata TOMLJENOVIĆ & Svetlana NOVAKOVIĆ, Croatia
Primary School Student Teachers' and Teachers' Satisfaction with Acquired Competences in Visual Arts Education 257

Biljana TRAJKOVSKI, Nina HORVAT & Zvonimir TOMAC, Croatia
Organizational Sets of Exercises with the Aim of Increasing Physiological Workload among Preschool Children 271

Milena VALENČIČ ZULJAN & Vanja R. KISWARDAY, Slovenia
Promoting Teacher Resiliency Through Strengthening Protective Factors - A new Paradigm in Teacher Education 285

Višnja VEKIĆ-KLJAIĆ, Croatia
Interaction of Children in Different Age Groups and Co-Construction of the Curriculum – Action Research 301

Ester VIDOVIĆ & Jasminka MEZAK, Croatia
University Students´Attitudes towards the Use of Anglicisms in ICT - Implications for Policy and Practice 315

Nataša VLAH, Croatia
Theoretical Frame, some Current Obtained Data and Further Plans of the Project. The Risk Levels of Behavioral Problems of Children of Early Developmental Age and Professional Interventions 327

Lidija VUJIČIĆ & Petra PEJIĆ PAPAK, Croatia
Critical – Reflective Model in the Educational Process 339

Herbert ZOGLOWEK, Norway and Poland & Maria Aleksandrovich, Poland
Motor Learning in the "Zone of Proximal Development" 353

Tomaž ZUPANČIČ, Slovenia
How to Develop Early Childhood Art Education under the Conditions of Contemporary Art 365

TEAM TEACHING IN PRACTICE

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The aim of the present study was to showcase an example of team teaching (TT) in an EFL classroom and its perception by pre-service teachers and pupils. One English lesson was prepared and taught in a primary school in Croatia to a class of 10-year-old pupils (N=18) by a team of two teachers. A group of pre-service teachers (N=15) were asked to provide their opinions on TT based on their observations of the class. Moreover, we investigated the pupils' perspectives on TT by means of a questionnaire. The results show that TT is a welcome form of instruction; thus, we provide some possibilities of its application in the EFL classroom and portray potential acceptance of TT by its prospective future teacher and pupil users.

Key words: team teaching; English language classroom; primary education; lesson organization and dynamics

1 Definition and forms of TT

Team teaching (TT) is a form of instruction in which two or more teachers share responsibilities in preparing, teaching and reflecting on a lesson (Koschina, 2011, 2; Villa, Thousand & Nevin, 2008, 21).According to Koschina (2011, 9), there are four forms of TT which can be used in the English language classroom. The first one is individualisation, in which each teacher provides individual help to pupils. It is a common form of TT used when pupils work on their own; e.g. in writing activities. The second form, TT in groups, is used when, for example, pupils work on a project together. The third form of TT is TT in two classrooms, which can be used for activities such as role play. In this form of TT, each teacher works in one classroom

with one group of pupils. The fourth form is TT with the whole class, when both teachers remain in the front of the classroom and teach together. It can be used in teaching new vocabulary, presenting dialogues, etc. In this form of TT, the division of tasks between the teachers becomes most obvious, since they take turns to teach the class although both are active at all times.

2 Individualisation and differentiation

Good pedagogical practice urges teachers to recognise the needs of each pupil and to help them individually. Improved individualisation and differentiation are the main goals of TT. In order to achieve individualisation and build a good relationship with each pupil, the teacher needs to pay attention to every one of them in order to discover their individual characteristics and treat them accordingly (Dottrens1959 in Bognar & Matijević, 2005). Differentiation involves understanding that every pupil is unique; therefore, teachers have to be able to recognise each pupil's needs (Tomlinson, 2001, 2; Koschina, 2011, 14). Since these two terms, i.e., individualisation and differentiation, complement one another and are interdependent, they are mostly found together in literature (Karijašević, 2013, 72; Bezinović, Marušić & Ristić Dedić, 2012, 38).

3 Cooperation: The basis for common planning, teaching and reflection

Cooperation is one of the most important competences necessary for TT. The teaching profession is described as based on partnerships (European Commission, 2005, 3). Thus, it is only natural that teachers need to be able to work together. According to Johnson, Johnson, Holubec & Roy (1984) no other competence is more important than this as good cooperation is crucial for the functioning of the whole society (52). Since teachers should teach their pupils about cooperation, they alone should be cooperative, acting as role models and therefore accepting in-classroom help, assistance and professional support. As Johnson et al. (1984, 56) put it "Experts who can provide

support and assistance should be on-call to demonstrate, co-teach, problem-solve, and to provide help when it is needed and wanted." Good cooperation between the teachers is the basis for efficient planning, teaching and reflecting on a TT lesson.

4 Classroom atmosphere

Classroom atmosphere is greatly affected by the relationship created between teachers and pupils (Matijević, 1998). Research on classroom atmosphere has uncovered its significance in terms of improving pupils' success and playing important part both in teaching and learning (Anđić, Pejić Papak & Vidulin-Orbanić, 2010, 68). Furthermore, according to Anđić et al., positive classroom atmosphere helps improve pupils' self-esteem, raises their satisfaction with their performance, helps them develop social and working skills and develops their feeling of acceptance within a group. Considering the fact that classroom atmosphere is mostly based on interactions between teachers and pupils, we can assume that collaboration between more members in the classroom (for example, more teachers and pupils) could prove to be even more favourable in creating positive classroom atmosphere.

5 The study

The aim of the present study was to investigate how TT would function as a form of instruction in English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom in primary education in Croatia. We prepared a TT lesson in EFL. Our study involved two participant groups, pre-service primary EFL teachers (who observed the class) and 10-year-old primary school pupils, grade 4 (who were taught). First, we focused on the pre-service teachers' opinions on the following elements of the TT lesson: division of tasks, individualisation, classroom atmosphere and success of the lesson. Second, we were interested in the pupils' opinions on the TT lesson.

The pre-service teachers – observers (N=15) were English language students of the final (fifth) year at one faculty of teacher education in Croatia. They had received training in EFL teaching methodology prior to the study. They were asked to complete observation sheets in which they were required to focus on what each teacher did during each activity and to note each time they noticed that one of the teachers provided individual help to a pupil. In addition to this, they were provided with open-ended questions enquiring about the following: division of tasks between the two teachers during the lesson, individualisation as a key feature of TT, classroom atmosphere and success of the lesson.

Since pupils are the focal point of each lesson and our pupils had not had any experience of participating in TT lessons before this study, we were highly interested in their opinions. They were provided with a smiley questionnaire in which three types of smileys (happy, so-so and sad) were offered as answers to four questions eliciting their opinions on the lesson. They were asked to explain their answers (the choice of one of the three smileys offered).The questionnaire was provided to the pupils after the TT lesson.

The TT lesson prepared for this study took place at one primary school in Croatia. Two teachers (T1 and T2), one of whom was an inexperienced teacher (T2), prepared, taught and reflected on the lesson together. The aim of the lesson was to revise some vocabulary items referring to locations and spatial prepositions the pupils had learned during their regular classes as well as to learn some new vocabulary related to locations and habits. The lesson was comprised of eight activities which focused on all four language skills – listening, writing, reading and speaking. The forms of TT used in the lesson were TT with the whole class (in five activities), TT in the groups (in two activities) and individualisation (in one activity).The activities used in the TT lesson are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Activities used in the TT lesson

	Activity	Activity objective and form of TT	Description
1	What do you see?	Revision of vocabulary; TT with the whole class	T1 shows pictures of the target vocabulary, puts them on the blackboard and asks the pupils to say what they can see in the pictures. T2 repeats the words and places the cards with the corresponding vocabulary under the pictures.
2	Guessing game	Revision of vocabulary; TT with the whole class	T1 tells the pupils to close their eyes. T2 removes three pictures and vocabulary cards from the blackboard. Pupils need to guess which pictures and words are missing.
3	Story	Introducing new vocabulary; TT with the whole class	T1 is reading a story, while T2 is acting it out. When T2 comes across a new word, he uses realia, pictures or sounds to present the new material and says that word out loud. Pupils are invited to repeat that word after him. T1 puts a vocabulary card next to the corresponding realia and pictures that the T2 has presented.
4	Finding the pairs	Practicing new vocabulary; TT in groups	Each group of pupils (4 groups) gets 32 cards (16 pictures and 16 vocabulary cards) containing the vocabulary that has been presented in Activity 3. They need to match the pictures with the words. T1 helps two groups and T2 helps the other two groups of pupils.
5	Total Physical Response activity	Revision of prepositions; TT with the whole class	T2 gives instructions (e.g. "Stand behind your chair!"). T1 goes around the pupils and helps them carry out the tasks.
6	Detective game	Writing the words under the pictures; TT in groups	Each group gets a handout with pictures of new vocabulary. The groups are provided with the instructions on where to find words describing the pictures (e.g. "You will find the next word under your table. Write it under the right picture on your handout."). Spatial prepositions revised in Activity 5 are used in the instructions. T1 helps two groups and T2 helps the other two groups.
7	Game with the ball	Practicing new vocabulary; TT with the	T2 throws a ball to one pupil. The pupil needs to answer a question connected to the story from Activity 3. After T2 asks one question, T1

		whole class	asks the other question and throws the ball to somebody else.
8	Handout	Discovering the end of the story; Individualisation	Each pupil receives a worksheet with scrambled sentences. Pupils need to put the words in the correct order to form the end of the story. T1 and T2 go around the pupils and help them individually.

6 Results and discussion

We present the results of the pre-service teachers' observations (according to the elements we asked them to focus on), as well as the information we got from the pupils' questionnaires.

6.1 Division of tasks

Due to the fact that TT depends on the cooperation between the teachers, we were interested in the participants' observations on how the teachers split their tasks and took turns during teaching. On the basis of the pre-service teachers' observation of the division of tasks in the lesson and the percentage of T1 and T2's talking time, we may conclude that both teachers were equally active on the overall. According to the TT expert interviewed by Pokasić (2016, p. 49), the division of tasks is achieved on the basis of mutual agreement between the teachers when planning the lesson. They split the tasks according to their strengths, interests and competences. When we asked the pre-service teachers whether the division of tasks between T1 and T2 was equal, most of them answered positively (N=10), while some of them thought that T1 had the leading role in the lesson (N=5). Their observations of the percentage of each teacher's talking time in each of the activities are provided in Table 2. Although teacher-talking time may be used to present teacher activity during the lesson, one needs to bear in mind that lack of teacher-talking time does not mean that a teacher was inactive as they might have performed other teaching tasks (see Table 1).

Table 2: Comparison of T1-talking time and T2-talking time per activity (the missing percentages – up to 100 %-pertain to pupil-talking time)

Activity	T1-talking time (%)	T2-talking time (%)
1	50.66 %	22.66 %
2	10.86 %	60.66 %
3	67 %	24.8 %
4	67.66 %	9.2 %
5	0.86 %	95 %
6	31.66 %	24 %
7	35 %	40.33 %
8	56.78 %	20.71 %
Average T-talking time overall (%)	**40.06 %**	**37.17 %**

6.2 Individualisation

Some pre-service teachers (N=7) recognised and pointed out individualisation as one of the positive aspects of the lesson. When we asked them whether they thought the pupils had been confused because of the fact that they had two teachers teach them at the same time, all of them answered negatively (N=15). Accordingly, they believed that pupils liked the fact that they had two teachers teach one lesson (N=6), and that they enjoyed the lesson and quickly adapted to it (N=9). Moreover, the pre-service teachers pointed out that the pupils were relaxed, cooperated well while listening to both teachers' instructions and were not distracted by TT. That confirms the view that any potential pupils' confusion about having two teachers in the same class can be avoided if they are informed about TT before the lesson (Pokasić & Cergol Kovačević forthcoming b), as they were in this study. Moreover, the results show that individualisation was most obvious in activities 4, 6 (group work) and 8 (individual work). During activities 4 and 6 T1 helped the pupils 11.73 times on average, while at the same time T2 provided help 11.2 times. In activity 8, while pupils worked individually, T1 helped them 6.4 times, while T2 did so 6.53 times. We can conclude that pupils would have been left without help on a great number of occasions if there had not been for the second teacher in the classroom. A great strength of TT is the obvious fact that teachers can double the help

the pupils get when taught by only one teacher. The fact that more individual help is provided in TT can be very useful when dealing with pupils with special needs. Cvikić (2012, 117) highlights the significance of accepting pupils who come from different backgrounds (for example migrants) into a regular school system and the importance of working with them individually. Cvikić relates experiences of teachers who work with such pupils and stresses the importance of support they get from their colleague teachers. Since TT involves both the individual approach to pupils and cooperation between the teachers, we believe that it would be a useful form of instruction in such cases.

6.3 Classroom atmosphere and lesson success

The pre-service teachers agreed that classroom atmosphere was dynamic (N=7), good and positive (N=7), that the class was interesting (N=4) and that the pupils actively participated in it (N=4). These advantages were not connected exclusively to TT, but were more related to the activities carried out in the lesson and the personalities of the two teachers. However, some participants told us that the positive atmosphere was achieved because the teachers were well prepared for the lesson, they were both actively involved in the teaching and took turns in presenting the activities. Moreover, they told us that the different approach to teaching, i.e. TT, also contributed to positive classroom atmosphere. They particularly recognised the drama part (Activity 3) as one of the reasons for this. This activity would not have been easy to achieve if there had been only one teacher in the classroom. Activity 3 was pointed out as one of the main positive aspects of the lesson(N=10).The participants (N=6) also stressed the teachers' thorough preparation for the lesson and the fact that TT was something new in the classroom (N=3). No negative comments related to TT were provided. When we asked pre-service teachers whether they would like to use TT in the future, most of them answered positively (N=12). The others told us that they had already used it (N=2), while one pre-service teacher did not provide an answer to this question. TT is used during school practice in some EFL methodology courses the pre-service teachers take; however, it is

used only at micro level, while working with small groups of pupils (Pokasić & Cergol Kovačević forthcoming b) and never with the whole class as was the case in the present study. The most frequent reason why pre-service teachers would like to use TT is that they find it useful to both teachers and pupils (N=4). Moreover, there is a high level of individualisation (N=3), the lessons are fun and interesting (N=3) and more dynamic (N=2). The other reasons the participants provided were related to new, challenging and different ways of organising a lesson (N=2), the fact that there is no pressure on one teacher to carry out the whole lesson alone (N=2) and the fact that two teachers can come up with more creative ideas for the class (N=2). Besides, TT is found to be a more enjoyable and productive way to learn, the flow of the lesson is better, and class time is better used. In order for a TT lesson to be successful, the communication between the teachers needs to be flawless. When we asked the pre-service teachers to comment on the communication between the TT teachers, they told us that it was good (N=4), great (N=3) and that teachers were cooperative (N=3). They also thought that teachers had prepared well (N=10) and that they were well synchronised (N=3). The participants noted that the communication between the teachers was smooth, positive, relaxed and natural and that they complemented each other. We point out the answer of one pre-service teacher who wrote that it felt like the class was taught by only one teacher who has super powers.

6.4 Pupils' opinions

In the first question, in which pupils needed to select a smiley which represented their opinion on the lesson, most of them selected the "happy" smiley, showing that they liked the lesson (N=17), while only one pupil selected the "so-so" smiley. Most of them wrote that they liked the lesson because it was fun (N=14). One pupil answered that it was educational (N=1), while one said that the activities were good (N=1).Furthermore, when we asked them if they liked having more teachers in the same class, all of them answered positively. Two pupils covered the essence of TT in answering why they liked having two teachers teach the same class: "Because it is difficult for one teacher,

so the other one can help." and "Because one teacher helps out, while the other one teaches." Hence, they recognized that in TT teachers provide support to each other. We believe that such kind of cooperation could prove valuable to induction teachers, since good cooperation between a mentor and a young teacher is crucial for achieving shared goals (Slavić & Matić, 2016, 251). On the other hand, when we asked them whether there was something that they did not like in the lesson with more teachers, all of them answered negatively. Additionally, we were also interested in whether they would like to be taught by more teachers more often, how many teachers they would like to have and in which subjects. All of them wrote that they would like to have more teachers more regularly, mostly two of them (N=13) and especially in English (N=5), Science (N=4) and Croatian (N=2). Other mentioned answers were Arts, Mathematics and ICT. Interestingly, some of them answered that they would like to be taught by more teachers in all of their subjects (N=6).

7 Conclusion

The reported satisfaction of pupils, teachers and pre-service teachers with the usage of TT in the English language classroom leads us to the conclusion that TT is a form of instruction which could be useful to all the parties included in the educational process, since it offers a high level of individualisation and differentiation and boosts classroom atmosphere. Moreover, we hope to have shown that TT can work well in practice and that it can be a welcome form of instruction, not only in the EFL classroom, but also in teaching other subjects. Thus, we suggest that the possibility of a systematic application of TT in Croatian education system be considered.

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Enhancing the quality of children's lives remains a national and international priority. Improving early childhood education was, is and continues to be an important subject in institutions of higher education.

This publication presents 32 diverse contributions. Nevertheless, the contributions share a common base: They are all linked to the development of the contemporary paradigm of institutional childhood.

Die Verbesserung der Lebensqualität von Kindern und Jugendlichen ist auch 2017 ein nationales und internationales Anliegen. Die frühkindliche Bildung und Erziehung war, ist und bleibt ein wichtiges Thema an Bildungseinrichtungen im Hochschul- und Universitätswesen.

Diese Publikation beinhaltet 32 Beiträge, die bei aller Vielfalt eines gemeinsam haben: Alle nehmen Bezug auf die Entwicklung des gegenwärtigen Paradigmas der institutionellen Kindheit.

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