





### **PROBLEMS** AND PERSPECTIVES **OF CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION**



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# PRIMARY SCHOOL AND PRESCHOOL TEACHER MOTIVATION FOR HORIZONTAL LEARNING: THE CHALLENGE AND PERSPECTIVE OF THE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES DEVELOPMENT<sup>1</sup>

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#### INTRODUCTION

Studies conducted in the field of education in our country and abroad, as well as numerous theoretical and empirical works, emphasize the importance of horizontal learning of primary school and preschool teachers. This complex phenomenon, which takes place through different types of organized and planned learning of primary school and preschool teachers who hold equal job posts in education, is most often approached by authors as development of professional learning communities (Džinović, 2011; Hofman & Dijkstra, 2010; Hord, 2004; Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace, & Thomas, 2006; Pavlović Breneselović, 2010; etc.). The key characteristics of the mentioned communities are: shared leadership, supportive atmosphere, joint vision, values and goals, mutual support and collaboration of

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their members. Referring to the above mentioned, the well-established dialogue that allows participants to build common meanings, values and knowledge during interaction is at the core of horizontal learning, thus creating a basis for understanding and improving educational practice. Knowledge is, therefore, built through group reflection (Korać, 2020), which allows for the pedagogical practice to be discussed and perceived from different perspectives, thus leading to new understanding, undertaking of measures, and bringing desired changes.

The relevant empirical research suggests that primary school and preschool teachers claim that horizontal learning helps them build self-confidence (Beara, 2009; Korać, 2018), strengthen professional identity (Vangrieken, Meredith, Packer, & Kyndt, 2017), increase motivation to continue reflecting on their practice (Simoncini, Lasen, & Rocco, 2014) and contribute to their professional development (Beara, 2009; Hofman & Dijkstra, 2010; Korać, 2020). The findings also suggest that horizontal learning ensures the acquisition and development of existing professional competencies (Bolam et al., 2005; Hord, 2004), leading to long-term changes in practice (Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2007) and contributing to the overall development of the school/preschool institution (Buttran & Farley Ripple, 2016; Given, Kub, LeeKeenan, Mardell, Redditt, & Twomblly, 2010; Korać, 2018; Korać, Kosanović, & Kostović, 2018, etc.).

In this regard, the regulatory framework for the education system in the Republic of Serbia defines certain measures that can foster the process of horizontal learning. Namely, the Rulebook on Continuing Professional Development and Acquisition of the Title of Teacher, Preschool Teacher and Professional Associate (Regulations on continuing professional development and acquiring the title of teachers, kindergarten teachers and expert associates, 2018) defines that teachers and preschool teachers are obliged to participate in professional development within their institutions that provides horizontal learning throughout the school year. This implies the obligation of employees to make a presentation at meetings of professional bodies after they have participated in in-service teacher training programs, including discussion and analysis with colleagues, the application of learning, analysis of the impact of professional development on child/student development; presenting and reviewing a book, article, didactic material, and research results including analysis and discussion; participating in study tours/expert visit to other institution; organizing a master class or a model lesson, teaching lesson; to attend all the above activities and

participate in their analysis; then, to participate in research that is conducted within the institution, educational projects in the institution, programs of national importance in the institution, examination programs, model center; planning and achieving professional development types within the institution in accordance with their needs.

However, despite the existence of the Rulebook that precisely regulates the institutional requirements and professional responsibilities of its employees for their professional development, the challenge remains how to implement what has been prescribed, due to the lack of institutional capacities. Current practice indicates that horizontal learning remains underrepresented within and between institutions. Research findings of numerous studies show that accredited inservice teacher training programs, although often criticized as "one size" trainings (Hoffman, Bernadette, & Dijkstra, 2009) that offer a set of solutions for everyone regardless of the contexts in which primary school and preschool teachers work, exist as dominant type of professional development (Dermanov, Dukić, Kosanović, & Soldatović, 2013; Marcer & Howe, 2012; Petrović, Kuzmanović, Jošić, & Jovanović, 2015; Stanković, Đerić, & Milin, 2013; etc.). In this way, the existing concept of professional development is more focused on the development of primary school and preschool teachers general competencies as individuals, without making links to particular individual and organizational needs and changes (Korać, 2018; Korać, Kosanović, & Kostović, 2018; Pavlović Breneselović & Krnjaja, 2012). Primary school and preschool teachers are perceived as individuals who introduce changes into their practice and within the institution based on their enthusiasm and personal decisions. In such a work context, isolated in their workspaces, without insight into how their colleagues implement educational activities, they are usually left to themselves to plan, implement and assess the quality of their work (Ševkušić & Stanković, 2012).

The above mentioned argument points to a wide range of dilemmas and questions that open up for researchers. The conducted research strives to answer questions related to the motivation of primary school and preschool teachers to participate in the process of horizontal learning. More precisely, the aim of the research is to determine how primary school and preschool teachers assess their personal motivation to participate in those types of in-service teacher training programs that include horizontal learning, as well as which factors, in their opinion, positively affect the motivation for participation.

#### **METHOD**

The sample of this study consisted of 110 preschool teachers from 27 preschool institutions, which count for 60 work units, 110 higher grades primary school teachers (subject teachers) from 31 schools, and 110 lower grades primary school teachers from 30 schools. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten preschool teachers, ten lower grades primary school teachers, and ten subject teachers employed in different institutions. We tended to limit the number of participants from one institution (not more than six), since our research deals with the issue of factors that affect the motivation of primary school and preschool teachers' horizontal learning.

Method. Combined research (a combined quantitative and qualitative approach) was applied, which enabled the overcoming of certain shortcomings of the quantitative and qualitative method (Matović, 2014), and allowing deeper understanding of a complex phenomenon such as the horizontal learning of primary school and preschool teachers.

Research instruments. For the purpose of conducting a quantitative part of the research, a questionnaire was prepared. In line with the research goal and its objectives the questionnaire covered the following issues: 1) what types of in-service teacher training programs that include horizontal learning have primary school and preschool teachers participated in over the last five years, and 2) how did they assess the level of personal motivation to participate in them. For the purposes of this study, data on social and job position and years of work experience of the research participants were gathered. In order to operationalize preparation of the instrument in line with the current regulations, types of inservice teacher training programs were taken from the mentioned Rulebook (Regulations on continuing professional development and acquiring the title of teachers, kindergarten teachers and expert associates, 2018).

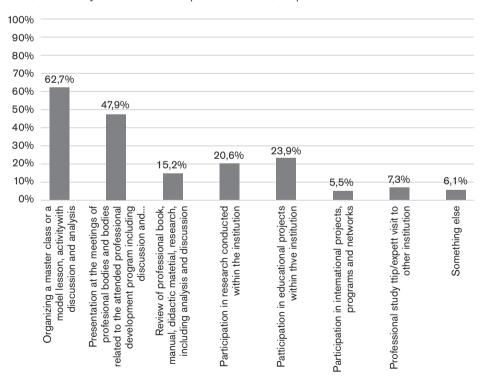
The qualitative part of the research was conducted through semi-structured interviews. The interviews contained several thematic areas. In this paper, we will focus on the factors that, in participants' opinion, increase the level of their personal motivation to participate in the process of horizontal learning.

Data analysis ANOVA and T-test were used as techniques to process the quantitative data. When it comes to the qualitative segment of data collection and processing, a qualitative thematic analysis was applied, which implies the identification

of dominant themes or concepts in the collected material (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Firstly, the consent of the participants was collected for interviews to be recorded and transcribed. Smaller units were isolated and coded in the transcribed material. In the next step, the codes, with the consensual consent of the researchers, are classified into more general topics (based on thematic similarity), relying on the gathered data rather than theoretical constructs that are predetermined.

#### RESULTS

The research focus was, first of all, to examine in which type of in-service teacher training programs that include horizontal learning, primary school and preschool teachers have most often participated. We asked the research respondents to circle up to three of the most common items from the list of 7 that was offered to them (defined by the Rulebook) presented in (Graph 1).



Graph 1. Participation of primary school and preschool teachers in various types of in-service teacher training programs that include horizontal learning

Furthermore, we were interested in the motivation of primary school and preschool teachers to participate in various types of in-service teacher training programs that include horizontal learning (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Motivation of primary school and preschool teachers to get involved in various types of in-service teacher training programs that include horizontal learning

Types of in-service teacher training programs	AS	SD
Organizing a master class or a model lesson, activity with discussion and analysis	2.91	.757
Presentation at meetings of professional bodies after participation in in-service teacher training programs, including discussion and analysis	2.56	.779
Review of professional book, manual, didactic material, Research, including analysis and discussion	2.64	.851
Participation in research conducted within the institution	2.30	.748
Participation in educational projects within the institution	2.61	.815
Participation in international projects, programs and networks	2.73	.778
Professional study tours/expert visit to other institution	2.93	.670

The findings indicate that primary school and preschool teachers are mostly motivated to participate in professional study tours/expert visits to other institution, followed by organizing a master class or a model lesson, an activity followed with discussion and analysis, and to participate in international projects. The lowest level of motivation was reported for participation in research conducted within the institution.

We were also interested in whether the motivation for participation in various types of in-service teacher training program which includes horizontal learning, is related to the job position of the research participants (Table 2).

Table 2. Opinion of primary school and preschool teachers on personal motivation for participation in various types of in-service teacher training programs that include horizontal learning in relation to the job position

Types of in-service teacher training programs		Primary school teacher		Subject teacher		Preschool teacher	
	AS	SD	AS	SD	AS	SD	
Organizing a master class or a model lesson, activity with discussion and analysis	3.04	.690	2.84	.773	2.86	.795	
Presentation at meetings of professional bodies and bodies after participation in inservice teacher training programs, including discussion and analysis	2.52	.674	2.31	.751	2.85	.815	
Review of professional book, manual, didactic material, research, including analysis and discussion	2.67	.847	2.35	.783	2.90	.834	
Participation in research conducted within the institution	2.59	.746	1.93	.646	2.35	.698	
Participation in educational projects within the institution	2.86	.772	2.09	.614	2.88	.787	
Participation in international projects, programs and networks	2.78	.850	2.65	.667	2.75	.804	
Professional study tours/expert visit to other institution	2.99	.760	2.84	.516	2.97	.760	

The findings indicate that there are statistically significant differences in the assessment of personal motivation to participate in the two types of in-service teacher training programs. Namely, the Tuckey post hoc test indicates that preschool teachers, when compared to lower grades primary school teachers and higher grades primary school teachers (subject teachers), are more motivated to attend in-service teacher training programs including discussion and analysis (F(16.079;8.039)=14.340, p=0.000). Additionally, the findings indicate that in all three groups of respondents there are statistically significant differences when it comes to participation in research conducted within the institution (F(24.891;12.445)=25.566, p=0.000). The most motivated for this type of inservice teacher training programs are lower grades primary school teachers, then preschool teachers, while subject teachers are the least motivated.

Table 3. Motivation of preschool and primary school teachers to participate in various types of horizontal learning in relation to work experience

	Work experience			
Types of in-service teacher training programs	0 to 2 years (N=22)	3 to 10 years (N=103)	11 to 20 years (N=104)	More than 21 years (N=101)
Organizing a master class or a model lesson, activity with discussion and analysis	10.8%	67.2%	68.2%	67.5%
Presentation at meetings of professional bodies after participation in in-service teacher training programs, including discussion and analysis	65.9%	41.9%	45.7%	49.2%
Review of professional book, manual, didactic material, research, including analysis and discussion	6.7%	11.3%	15.8%	21.3%
Participation in research conducted within the institution	23.8%	26.3%	24.2%	17.4%
Participation in educational projects within the institution	14.7%	27.5%	26.8%	18.3%
Participation in international projects, programs and networks	2.8%	3.1%	6.8%	5.3%
Professional study tours/expert visit to other institution	6.5%	10.2%	7.2%	8.9%
Other	19.2%	4.3%	3.6%	2.9%

Findings indicate a that presentation at meetings of professional bodies related to attended in-service teacher training programs including discussion and analysis is the only type of in-service teacher training program that did not show a statistically significant difference when it comes to years spent in service  $(\chi 2(3)=3.406, p>0.05)$ . There are statistically significant differences in all other types of professional development: a review of professional book, manual, didactic material, research, including analysis and discussion ( $\chi$ 2(3)=27.278, p<0.05); then, participation in research conducted within the institution ( $\chi$ 2(3)=24.768, p<0.05); participation in educational projects within the institution ( $\chi$ 2(3)=23.770, p<0.05); participation in international projects, programs and networks ( $\chi$ 2(3)=23.982, p<0.05), professional study tours/expert visit to other institution ( $\chi$ 2(3)=24.583, p<0.05), organizing a master class or a model lesson, activity with discussion and analysis ( $\chi$ 2(3)=24.972, p<0.05).

The given types of in-service teacher training program are mostly mentioned by those with 11 to 20 years of working experience, in a similar percentage by those with more than 21 years, 3 to 10 years of working experience, and the lowest percentage was for those with 0 to 2 years of working experience.

Statements obtained through interviews about factors that, in the opinion of preschool and primary school teachers, positively affect personal motivation to participate in the process of horizontal learning, are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Factors that positively affect personal motivation to participate in the process of horizontal learning

Areas	Response categories	Keys	F	
nternal motivational factors	Recognized benefits from the Horizontal learning: Professional level	Information gathering on proven examples of good practice.  Developing existing and acquiring new competencies.  Motivation for further professional development  Self-reflection, assessment of personal competencies.  Evaluating the work of a colleague and comparing it with personal work.  Opportunity to build common knowledge and values.  Help colleagues in their work.  Self-reflection, testing theory in practice and practice in theory.		
Internal m	Recognized Benefits from Horizontal learning: personal level	Greater self-confidence and confidence at work. Greater personal satisfaction. Job satisfaction and relaxing working environment.	10 2 2	
	Recognized benefits from Horizontal learning: Institutional level	Better cooperation and teamwork. Building closer relationships with colleagues. Improved productivity of the whole institution.	12 7 5	
External motivational factors	Supportive headmaster	Encouragement for professional development of employees by the headteacher/director (praise, emphasizing the commitment of employees; awards; investing resources in professional development; organizing various types of in-service teacher training that include horizontal learning, etc.)	15	
Extern	Professional training Obligation	Acquired level of mandatory hours of participation at in-service teacher training programs defined by the Rulebook	13	

The findings indicate that the dominant factor that positively influences the motivation for pursuing horizontal learning is the recognition of its benefits at: 1) professional level, 2) personal level and 3) institutional level. We have understood the mentioned categories of answers as intrinsic motivational factors. In the categories of answers, out of the mentioned three the strongest factor is the benefit at professional level through the collection of tried and tested ways of working and examples of the good practice of colleagues.

A supportive headteacher/director of the institution stands out as the dominant external motivator. The findings indicate that preschool and primary school teachers are particularly motivated when a headteacher/director recognizes the importance of professional development of their employees. This, in their opinion, contributes to their performance and willingness to make extra commitments. As an illustration, here are some of the answers:

The role of the headteacher is very important it means a lot.(...) When he acknowledges your commitment, pats you on the shoulder, shows respect for your work and hard work, for the results achieved it is invaluable. That's motivating. The headteacher creates an atmosphere where you enjoy working and learning and motivates others to learn. I worked in a school where staff with low performance were rewarded. Such an atmosphere is deadly for results. It is important for the headteacher to tell you: I appreciate what you have done! It is your job to improve professionally, to bring innovations to the educational work, but it is important to respect that, to praise the effort. (Subject teacher, 20 years of work experience)

I think that when one of the teachers has an idea, it is the headteacher who has to stand by him/her and provide support. The headteacher's role is very important. If he's willing, if he's supportive it means a lot. If he creates an environment favorable for horizontal learning, if he recognizes your achievements, praises you publicly, publishes achievements on the website, people are motivated and willing to work. (Primary school teacher, 29 years of work experience)

#### DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that preschool and primary school teachers are highly motivated to participate in study tours, then, to organize a master class or a model lesson, activities with discussion and analysis, and to participate in international projects. They are least motivated to participate in research conducted within the institution. The findings of Bear's research (2009) also indicate that most teachers express a willingness to be engaged in horizontal learning through study tours, that they are willing to exchange knowledge and experiences with colleagues from abroad, and that the most common reasons are: gaining new experiences and methodological approaches, personal reasons, getting acquainted with new trends in education and reforms of education systems, as well as comparing our education system with systems abroad.

If we compare the findings regarding the participation of preschool and primary school teachers in various types of professional development that involve horizontal learning and their motivation for it, it is noticeable that they are most motivated to participate in study tours and international projects, and that they were, in their opinion, least involved in those. Similarly, the findings of numerous studies indicate that institutions choose types and programs of professional development that provide more points to employees at a more affordable price, rather than those based on teachers needs and results of self-assessments and professional development plans (Breneselović & Krnjaja, 2012; Stanković, Đerić, & Milin, 2013). The findings raise the question of the criteria for choosing the type of professional development to which schools/preschool institutions refer, inform, and/or organize for employees. The above mentioned indicates that better management is needed to enable the participation of those who are interested in the process of professional development planning, which is the responsibility of headteacher/director, but also falls under the domain of the Professional Development Team.

Only in the case of one type of professional development, such as organizing a master class or a model lesson or an activity with discussion and analysis, is there high motivation and a degree of participation of preschool and primary school teachers. In addition to the mentioned above, the findings indicate that motivation to participate in research within the institution is low and that they also rarely participate in it. On the other hand, numerous studies show that practitioners

recognize the benefits of participating in research, both personally, professionally, and at the level of the entire institution. Research provides them with an opportunity to take an active role in making changes to improve practice (Krnjaja & Pavlović Breneselović, 2011), developing and improving existing professional competencies, greater confidence in work and encouragement to work together within the team, better understanding of the values of others, improving organizational climate, and establishing better cooperation (Korać, 2019). As a key reason for lack of participation in research, educators cite insufficient training for their implementation, especially for the design of research instruments, organization and interpretation of the gathered data. The findings of other research indicate that the existing concept of professional development in the Republic of Serbia is not stimulating enough for preschool and primary school teachers to conduct research of their practice, but also that students, future preschool and primary school teachers, do not have enough opportunities to get sufficient knowledge and skills to conduct research activities (Krnjaja & Pavlović Breneselović, 2011; Korać, 2018, Radulović, 2011, according to: Korać, 2019, 2020). This raises an important question as to whether the low motivation and low engagement of preschool and primary school teachers in research is actually a consequence of lack of their competences to conduct them.

Furthermore, when it comes to the motivation of preschool and primary school teachers to participate in various types of in-service teacher training that include horizontal learning, in relation to their work experience, statistically significant differences were not found only in participation in presentations at meetings of professional bodies. The given data can be the result of the requirement given by the Rulebook on Professional Development, which prescribes an obligation for preschool and primary school teachers to apply the acquired knowledge, skills in practice and present them to other colleagues within the institution after mastering in-service teacher training programs. All other types of professional training are cited in the highest percentage by those with 11 to 20 years of experience, in a similar percentage by those with more than 21 years, 3 to 10 years of experience, and in the lowest percentage by those with 0 to 2 years of experience. The findings can be interpreted in the context of various theories of professional development that suggest that, although each teacher has a unique career path, we can single out individual stages of career development that are common. The authors most often state that at the beginning of their careers

teachers are more focused on their subject (because professional knowledge is a source of security), on getting connected with their colleagues, on how to adopt organizational rules and norms, they learn from mistakes, and most often feel that initial education did not sufficiently equip them with knowledge and skills for the job. At this stage, they are often under pressure from colleagues, because it does not suit many to have a young enthusiastic person in the work environment, which indirectly questions colleagues' own working methods (according to: Simić, 2015). Only in the later stages of career development, do they become more involved in school activities, cooperate with colleagues, and shift more and more focus from "personal" to "collective". In addition, one of the reasons may be that, due to lack of professional experience, they are less often invited to get involved in professional development activities organized at the level of the institution. The process of horizontal learning is insufficiently recognized as an opportunity for senior colleagues to learn from the younger, an opportunity to learn about one's own practice, awareness of personal implicit pedagogies, reexamining established ways of working, exchanging different perspectives, and building solutions that overcome individual perceptions of practice (Korać, 2020). Moreover, the findings can be related to the findings of the research by Marušić and Pejatović (2013), which indicate that the age of teachers is statistically significantly correlated with factor scores which express the frequency of participation in group types of professional development (class visits, work on school projects, thematic discussions, and training through the work of teachers' councils and assets). Senior teachers more often participate in-group types of in-service training in their field.

When it comes to factors that positively affect the motivation to engage in the process of horizontal learning, the findings indicate that preschool and primary school teachers are most motivated when the benefits of this learning are recognized at the professional level. However, within this category, the most commonly stated benefit is recognition of the fact that through this learning process colleagues have tried and tested different teaching strategies, examples of good practice. There are significantly fewer answers that indicate that the phenomenon of horizontal learning is understood as a complex process of building up the knowledge, or building relationships among colleagues, participants in the learning process, or as an equal exchange, or mutual understanding and group context building. This indicates that horizontal learning is more often placed in the context of learning how something is done, while there is no awareness of why something is done in a certain way (Korać, 2020).

Furthermore, the research findings show that preschool and primary school teachers recognize the importance of the headteacher/director's role, but also the relationships that are built within the team, relevant to the motivation to engage in the process of horizontal learning. This puts the headteacher/directore of the institution in the position of one whose leadership influences the creation of an environment supportive for horizontal learning (Buttran & Farley Ripple, 2016; Halverson, 2003). Namely, s/he, from a leading position, is largely responsible for providing a stimulating environment that enables horizontal learning, and affects motivation of employees to initiate and implement changes into practice.

#### CONCLUSION

Based on the presented research findings, we can conclude that the motivation of preschool and primary school teachers to participate in some of the types of professional development that involve horizontal learning varies in relation to the type of professional development. The findings indicate that preschool and primary school teachers are mostly motivated to participate in study tours, while they show little motivation to participate in research within the institution.

In addition to the above, there are statistically significant differences in relation to the working experience and the job position of participants and their motivation to participate. Teachers at the beginning of their careers are less motivated to engage in those types of professional development that involve horizontal learning. Having analyzed the mentioned findings while taking into account career development theories, and bearing in mind that the introductory period of teachers' employment is an important phase of their professional development, we believe that it is important that, especially during the introductory period of employment, the focus should be directed on strengthening their social and working relations with colleagues within the institution, joint research, and changing practices. Relying on the theoretical framework and findings of the qualitative part of the research which indicate that the process of horizontal learning provides an opportunity to reconsider existing understandings of the quality of practice (personal and collective) in a given context, we can conclude

that there is a need for joint review and change of institutional culture patterns of behavior that hinder the equal exchange of all members of the staff.

Furthermore, findings indicate that preschool teachers, when compared to the lower grades primary school teachers, have expressed the higher level of motivation for presenting at meetings of professional bodies and bodies after they have participated in in-service teacher training programs, including discussion and analysis. Although all three groups of respondents in general have a low level of motivation to participate in research activities within the institution, the highest levels of motivation for this type of professional development is reported among lower grades primary school teachers, then among preschool teachers, and finally, the least motivated are higher grades primary school teachers (subject teachers). Results reveal a possible influence of their initial education and participation in inservice training programs. Namely, various studies show that preschool and primary school teachers show high appreciation for participation in research activities within the institution, but as a main result of lack of participation in those activities they report lack of sufficient training, particularly for drafting methodology, research instrument design, and data analysis. Having this in mind, results that indicate a low level of motivation of preschool and primary school teachers to conduct research can shred light on their level of competences and raise a question of the reform needs in regards to their initial education and participation in in-service teacher training programs. Namely, in order to have active and competent teachers who participate in horizontal learning, it is necessary that their initial education and inservice teacher training should be based on approaches that integrate theory and practice and foster collaboration and inquiry-based learning. Teaching activities, as studies show, should be organised in a manner that enhances students' proactive attitudes, self-reflection, inquiry-based learning, readiness for teamwork and fosters dialogue, creativity and problem-solving skills (Korać, Kosanović, & Kostović, 2018; Radulović, 2011). In-service teacher training should be focused on capacity building of teachers to conduct research of their practice, organized as collaborative actions and established partnerships (Korać, 2018).

The strongest motivational factor for preschool and primary school teachers to get involved in the horizontal learning is benefit recognized at the professional level. However, the most commonly stated benefit is to gather information on proven practices and examples of good practice. This opens the question of how teachers and educators understand the phenomenon of horizontal learning and what meanings they attach to it. Relying on the theoretical framework, we believe that there is a need to raise awareness about the importance of this learning process by practitioners. Horizontal learning relies on a dialogue as the basis for knowledge construction in a given context, underpinned by processes of building relationships, self-reflection, identifying and exploration of both our own practices and theoretical background, as well as building new theoretical approaches.

Relying on the mentioned research findings, we believe that the important conditions to trigger motivation for the process of horizontal learning are the following: recognition of learning benefits by participants; belief that what is being learned will be relevant to their professional work; developing necessary competencies and empowering participants to take an active role in the learning process; a supportive headteacher/director, a sense that learning and professional development are highly valued both in the institution and society. It is therefore necessary to build a discourse of a professional learning community in which employees have a sense of connection and belonging, where there are common agreed values, visions and development goals. In this kind of discourse all members will have space to express their views, the right to make mistakes, and the right to assume individual or joint responsibility for the outcomes of their joint actions in the course of working toward the same end goal.

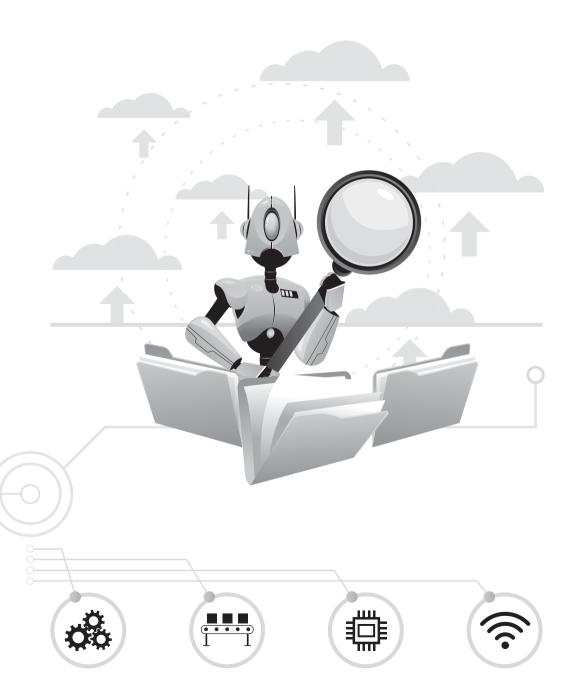
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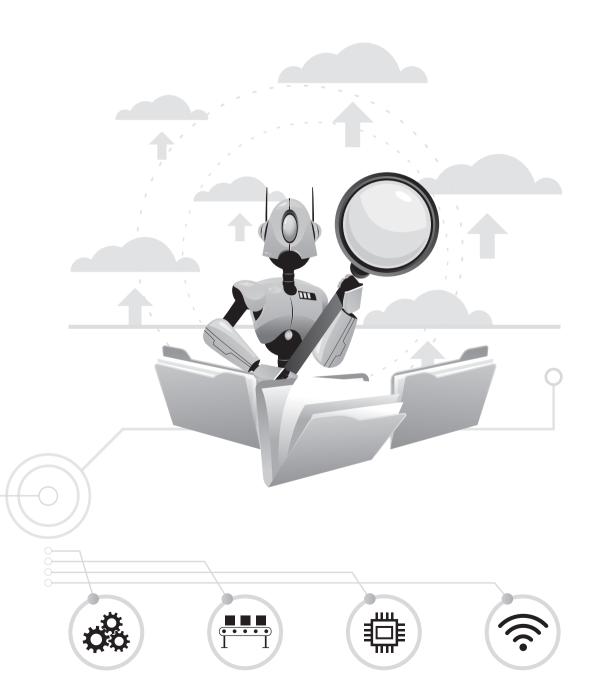
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#### **AUTHORS' INDEX**



A	Astratova - 950, 969
Abazi - 354, 357, 362	Astratova - 259, 262 Atman - 354
Abbott - 375	Avalos - 63
Abd-el-Khalick - 362	Avramović Z 95
Abel - 339	Avramović I 135
Aczél - 77	Avramovic 1 133
Adams - 142	Ayas - 38
	Ayas - 30
Agreem 346	В
Agyeman - 346	_
Aizer - 375	Baggaley - 238
Ajzen - 339, 346	Bahar - 355, 373
Akerson - 38	Bain - 201
Aleahmad - 175	Bajaj - 299
Alexander - 375	Bakken - 77
Alexandrova - 261	Bales - 380
Alkaff - 353	Ball - 210
Allen - 49	Ballantyne - 343
Allman - 174	Banarjee - 277
Almeida - 65	Bandura - 274, 287
Almendarez - 27	Banzragch - 238
Ames - 297	Banjari - 203
Ananiev - 319, 321, 325	Barcelona - 108
Anderson D.M 389	Barke - 361
Anderson J 236	Barman - 36
Anderson W.L 203	Barnett - 54, 55
Andryukhina - 259	Barnhart - 213
Antić - 36, 37, 48, 53	Barraza - 353, 362
Antonio - 176	Barron - 64, 65
Arabatzis - 361	Barrows - 56
Arba'at - 360	Barthes - 74
Archer - 297	Bartlett - 210
Arnold - 135	Bašić - 375
Arnon - 343	Batrinca - 212, 222
Arthur - 396	Baumann - 119
Ash - 119	Bazić - 10

Beara - 142, 151	Blumenfeld - 56, 57, 62, 65, 297
Beavers - 174	Blyth - 407, 409, 410, 411, 412
Beers - 131	Bodenhorn - 353
Beijaard - 64	Bodur - 173, 174, 175, 176, 177
Belacchi - 119	Boekaerts - 274
Belawati - 238	Boeve - 361
Beletzan - 78	Bogan - 352
Benelli - 119, 120, 122, 129, 135	Bogner - 343, 353
Benson - 396, 397, 398, 405, 406, 407,	Boisvert - 297
409, 410, 411, 413	Bolam - 141, 142
Beręsewicz - 213	Bond - 211, 237
Berg - 352	Bonsignore - 175
Bergdahl - 211, 212, 236, 237, 243	Booth - 74
Berger - 65	Bordeleau - 297
Berglund - 396	Borisov - 320, 323
Berk - 380	Borko - 64, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177
Berman - 131	Borkowski - 273, 274
Bernadette - 143	Bornstein - 131
Betzer - 57	Borzone - 131
Biesta - 75, 92	Bostrom - 361
Biggs - 296, 311	Bouffard - 297
Binder - 119	Bouillet - 386
Bishop A 119	Boujaoude - 362
Bishop K 352	Bowen - 54
Bizzell - 76	Box - 54
Bjerk - 377	Boyes - 38
Black - 65	Bracken - 353
Blagdanić - 36, 48, 49, 53	Bracy - 377, 380
Blaikie - 361	Bradshaw - 387
Blake - 346	Braten - 310
Blazar - 160	Braun A 210
Blieck - 361	Braun V 145
Blomberg - 380, 389	Bredl - 212
Blommaert - 212	Breit - 173
Bloom - 131	Bridgstock - 289

Castro - 38, 40, 47

Catalano - 375, 396

Brinkworth - 388 Celinska - 377 Bromley - 109 Cestnik - 81 Brow - 260 Chalikias - 361 Brown - 203, 327 Chan - 298, 299, 362 Brownell - 119 Chen - 174 Browning - 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29 Chena - 56 Bruce - 57 Cherdakli - 253 Buchanan - 57 Chia - 55, 66 Bukvić - 124, 406, 407, 411 Chin - 55, 66 Bulatović - 275 Choy - 56 Bullis - 389 Christensen - 135 Bulunuz - 38 Chu - 353 Burke - 76 Churchill - 173 Burns - 110 Clark - 61 Bushina - 338 Clarke - 145, 387 Coates - 203 Bushway - 374, 375, 380 Buško - 275, 286, 288 Cochran-Smith - 200 Code - 274 Butenko - 338 Butler - 274 Cohen - 26 Butterworth - 95 Consiglio - 213 Buttran - 142, 154 Conzemius - 32 Copas - 175 C. Č Coppola - 352 Caena - 196 Crouse - 297, 299 Cafaro - 342 Culen - 353 Cain - 119 Cunningham - 289, 352 Calvert - 299 Cutri - 174 Cancino - 121 Cvetek - 200, 201, 202 Carlson - 119 Czerniak - 65 Čekić-Marković - 390 Carmi - 343 Carpenter - 175, 177, 212 Čolić - 122 Carr - 352, 375 D, Đ, Dž Casotti - 54

Dainville - 76

Danisch - 76

Darling-Hammond - 63, 64, 65 Dubrovina - 259, 267 Daudi - 352 Duell - 297, 299 Dülmer - 339 Day - 25, 375 De Brabander - 297 Duncan - 278, 279 Deci - 259 Dutcher - 342, 347 Dede - 173, 174, 176 Dweck - 169, 287, 296, 297 De Houwer - 131 Dziubani - 203 de Jong - 211 Dzobelova - 259 De Laet - 387 Derić - 58, 59, 63, 64, 143, 151 De La Paz - 57 Đermanov - 143 De Lisi - 135 Đević - 64, 164 Đorđev - 107 DeLisi - 377 Delserieys - 38 Đorđević - 106 Denicolo - 159 Đukić - 143 Denny - 387 Džinović - 63, 64, 141, 160, 164 Dent - 274, 275, 276 F De Temple - 121 Dewey - 29, 52 Faster - 298 Dickson - 197 Eccles - 259, 388 Dierkhising - 389 Edwards S.I. - 57 Dietz - 336, 339, 340 Edwards O.W. - 398 Dignath - 274 Efremov - 252 Dijkstra - 141, 142, 143 Elliot - 290 Dimitrijević - 97 Elliott - 375, 377 Dimitriou - 344 Enger - 352 Dimopoulos - 353 English - 64, 99, 122 Entwisle - 375 Dochy - 56 Entwistle - 295, 311 Dong - 212 Dowler - 274 Erdogan - 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 360, Doyle - 375 361, 363, 373 Draganić-Gajić - 376 Erickson - 174 Erylmaz - 40, 47 Dragićević - 97, 108, 109 Driscoll - 297

F

Fagan - 377

DuBois - 174, 175, 176, 177

Dubovicki - 203

Faherty - 237	Gariglietti - 299
Farley - 387	Garrison - 353
Farley Ripple - 142, 154	Geier - 57
Farrington - 375, 388	Gelman - 95
Fauning - 132	Gendenjamts - 238
Feather - 336	Georgopoulos - 344
Fenning - 375	Geyer - 203
Fernandez-Ramirez - 203	Ghazali - 339
Ferry - 76	Gijbels - 55, 56
Fien - 343	Gillis - 131
Filippatou - 57	Gini - 119
Finley - 342	Given - 142
Fischer - 175, 176	Glassett - 175
Fishbein - 339, 346	Gojkov - 53
Fishman - 69, 174, 175	Goldkind - 389
Fitzgerald - 336	Goldman - 353
Fontanieu - 361	Goldstein - 168
Forde - 197	Golinkoff - 190
Fors - 237	Golley - 353
Fox B 173	Golub - 262
Fox R.A 296	Gonzales - 174
Fragkiadaki - 38	Gonzalez - 121
Fraser - 55	Gonzalez Cabanah - 296, 297
Freelon - 222	Gorard - 110
Friedman - 134	Gordeeva - 261, 262, 264, 265
Fullan - 67, 160	Gottfredson - 375, 377, 388, 389
Furlong - 387	Gouveia - 78
	Govaris - 57
G	Govekar Okoliš - 204
Gabler - 78	Grant - 61, 160
Galichin - 321, 323	Green - 160
Galyardt - 175	Greenhalgh - 177
Gao - 296	Gregory - 259
Garb - 343, 353	Greiml-Fuhrmann - 203
Garcia - 274, 275, 288	Grey - 342

Grigorovitch - 38 Heckhausen J. - 261, 323 Griller Clark - 389 Hee - 353 Gromkova - 318, 325 Henny - 31 Groot - 375 Henriksen - 126, 134 Gruber - 203 Hernandez-Ramos - 57 Grue - 77 Herriman - 119 Guagnano - 339 Hershberger - 43 Gudmundsdottir - 211, 212 Herz - 389 Gunstone - 48 Herzberg - 76 Gunter - 387 Hewitt - 377 Hill - 203 Guskey - 160, 163 Hillman - 212 Н Hines - 354, 361, 362, 363 Hadwin - 274 Hirsch - 389 Hakes - 119 Hirschfield - 377, 391 Halverson - 154 Hirschi - 323 Hansen - 175 Hirsh-Pasek - 190 Hjalmarsson - 375 Hansson - 38 Hargadon - 175 Hodges - 211, 212, 237 Hargreaves - 61, 67 Hofer - 297, 298 Harlan - 57 Hoff - 120 Harlen - 54, 55 Hoffman - 143 Harlow - 380 Hofman - 141, 142 Harris J.M. - 62 Hofstede - 338 Harris P.R. - 361 Hogan - 160 Hart - 361 Holmberg - 237 Hartman - 203 Holmes-Henderson - 77 Harvey - 61, 63, 260 Holzer - 362 Hasani - 357, 360 Hord - 141, 142 Hathaway - 211, 212 Horsey - 375 Hattie - 311 Houle - 54 Havel - 389 Howe - 143 Hawkins - 375, 396 Hoyle - 297 Hebib - 177 Hsu - 38, 353 Heckhausen H. - 324 Hu - 174

Huberman - 160, 163	Jakšić I 298		
Huddleston - 175	Jamieson-Noel - 274		
Huei-Min - 352	Jank - 84		
Hugenford - 343	Jansen - 274		
Huizinga - 377	Janjić - 97		
Hungerford - 353, 354, 361, 362, 363	Jass Ketelhut - 173		
Hunniger - 212	Javornik Krečič - 205		
Hunt - 28	Jenkins - 119		
Hutter - 297, 299	Jenlink - 63		
	Jensen - 56, 212		
1	Jenson - 387, 388		
Idrizi - 357	Jerotijević - 390		
lermakov - 237	Jianping - 335		
lgbokwe - 353	Joaguin - 325		
llić M 36	Johansson - 382		
llić P 104	John - 30, 37, 40, 43, 46, 138		
Ilić Z 375, 376	Johnson - 174, 342		
Ilyin - 322, 323, 325	Johnston - 323		
Impedovo - 38 Jokić - 54, 55, 65, 30			
Inglehart - 338, 339, 345	Joksimović - 289		
Inhelder - 127	Jones - 134		
lpek - 38	Jonuzi - 357		
Ismaili - 354, 357, 358, 362	Jošić - 143		
Ivanov - 237	Jovanović - 143, 390		
lvić - 53, 124	Joyce - 161, 170		
lvković - 97			
	K		
J	Kaldahl - 76		
Jack - 387	Kaldi - 57		
Jackson L.W 27, 28	Kalof - 339		
Jackson M 202, 206	Kaltakci - 40, 47		
Jacobs - 173, 174, 175, 176, 177	Kame'enui - 119		
Jagaiah - 131	Kampeza - 38		
Jahng - 176	Kandil İngeç - 37		
Jakšić M 289	Kanfer - 324		

Kanselaar - 297 Kokhan - 237
Karabenick - 274 Kokotsaki - 65
Karaçalli - 57 Kollmuss - 346
Karimzadegan - 353 Kolodner - 53
Karlberg - 213 Kolokoltsev - 237

Karyanto - 360, 361 Konstantinović-Vilić - 377

Kašić - 119, 131 Kooij - 324 Kayalvizhi - 66 Kopnina - 342

Kearns - 131 Korać - 142, 143, 152, 153, 154, 155

 Keles - 353
 Korolkov - 254

 Kelly - 71, 176
 Korshunova - 259

 Kett - 380
 Kortenkamp - 361

 Khawaja - 362
 Korthagen - 160

Khoshaba - 260 Korur - 57

Kilpatrick - 53 Kosanović - 142, 143, 155

Kim - 135 Kostić - 130 Kimmons - 174, 212 Kostova - 353

King - 32, 173, 203 Kostović - 142, 143, 155 Kinnucan-Welsch - 63 Kovačević - 108, 112, 131

 Kirby - 296
 Kövecses - 108

 Kiseleva - 262
 Kraft - 160

 Kitsantas - 64, 290
 Kraig - 318, 320

 Kızılaslan - 356, 373
 Kraicik - 56, 61, 63, 65

Kjeldsen - 77 Krajicik - 67

Klafki - 84 Kranželić-Tavra - 375 Knabb - 54 Kranjčec - 204

Knaflič - 97 Krasny - 174, 175, 177

Knoll - 52, 62 Kraynik - 237

Knutsson - 237 Krishnakumari - 361 Kock - 76 Kristal - 108, 111

Kocsis - 353 Krnjaja - 53, 143, 151, 152

 Kodžopeljić - 122, 136
 Kromrey - 352

 Koehler - 177
 Kruger - 35, 40

Koellner - 173, 174, 175, 176, 177 Krutka - 175, 177, 212

Koenka - 274, 275, 276 Kub - 142

Kubek - 375, 389, 391 Lee - 325, 353 Kubitskey - 174 LeeKeenan - 149 Kudinov - 261, 323 Leeming - 353 Kuhlemeier - 360, 361, 363 Le Fevre - 63 Kumar - 277 Leffert - 397, 399, 407, 410 Kundačina - 362 Le Hebel - 361 Kurland - 120, 121, 128, 129 Lehtonen - 213 Kutu - 356 Leontiev - 260, 261, 262 Kuzmanović - 143, 286 Levinson - 210 Lewis - 55 Kwan - 57 Kyndt - 142 Li - 119 Kyriakopoulos - 361 Liang J.C. - 38 Liang S.W. - 343 1 Lim - 380 Ladewski - 61 Lin - 296 Lagerweij - 360, 361, 363 Lindstrand - 38 Lithoxoidou - 344, 345 Lagutkina - 236 Lai - 343 Liu - 174, 175, 177 Lajović - 160 Lochner - 375, 389 Lam - 56 Lockee - 211, 237 Lammers - 203 Lodewijks - 297 Loeber - 374 Lang - 382 Lonczak - 396 Lantz-Andersson - 212 Larina - 236 Lončarić - 286 Larouche - 297 Longobardi - 131 Larrabee - 36 Lopatina - 252 Lasen - 149 Lorion - 413 Laurie - 203 Losch - 160 Lavrič - 200, 202 Louws - 174, 176, 177 Law - 298, 299 Loyens - 56, 57 Lawy - 75, 92 Lozanov-Crvenković - 173 Lu - 260 Lay - 174, 176 Lazarević - 116, 118, 119, 122, 134 Lubovsky - 259, 267 Lebedeva - 338 Lucangeli - 119 Lečić-Toševski - 376 Luloff - 342

Lundin - 212	Mates - 325		
Ljung-Djarf - 38	Matijević - 53, 57		
	Matović - 144		
M	McBeth - 353		
MacGregor - 203	McCall - 174		
MacLachlan - 353	McCloskey - 173		
Maddi - 260, 262, 263, 265, 266	McGhee-Bidlack - 126, 129		
Magajna - 205	McGinnis - 168		
Maguin - 374	McGregor - 134, 290		
Maguire - 210	McKeachie - 275, 278		
Makki - 362	McLaughlin - 63		
Maksić - 106, 110	Mc Mahon - 197		
Malinić - 63, 64, 386	McMahon - 141		
Mancl - 352	McManus - 296		
Mancosu - 213	Meece - 297		
Mann - 380	Mee Hee - 353		
Mannes - 397, 398, 409, 411	Meiboudia - 353		
Marcer - 143	Meirink - 174		
Marcinkowski - 353	Memeti - 357, 358, 360		
Marcinkowskim - 352	Menard - 377		
Mardell - 142	Menyuk - 119		
Marentič Požarnik - 200, 202, 205	Menzies - 65		
Marinellie - 122	Meredith - 142		
Marin Jerez - 261, 323	Mergendoller - 56		
Markova - 320, 325	Merrick - 396		
Marković - 98	Messer - 37, 40, 43, 46		
Martin - 32	Metioui - 35, 37, 40, 43, 47		
Marton - 295, 298, 311	Meyer - 53, 84		
Marušić - 153	Meyers - 353		
Marušić Jablanović - 36, 48, 49, 342,	Micić - 96		
343	Mikeseii - 325		
Marx - 62	Mikhailova - 261, 321, 323		
Maslova - 236	Milin - 143, 151		
Maslow - 324	Milinković - 124		
Mason - 110	Milkus - 238		

Miller - 75, 76, 176, 352	Myers - 54
Milošević - 102, 113	
Minigan - 66	N
Miočinović - 122, 127	Nagy - 109, 119, 131, 323
Mioduser - 57	Najaka - 375
Mire - 31	Nastić-Stojanović - 375
Mirkov - 275, 287, 295, 296, 297, 298,	Negev - 343, 353, 360, 361, 363
299, 300, 309, 311, 312	Nelson - 387
Mirzaahmedov - 259	Nesbit - 274
Miščević - 48	Newman - 134
Mitchell - 48	Newmann - 343
Moallem - 56	Ng - 287, 352
Močnik - 76	Nguyen - 339
Mohd Zaid - 360	Nikolić-Ristanović - 377
Molle - 63	Nippold - 121, 132
Montpied - 361	Nissen - 126, 134
Mony - 353	Noonan - 174
Moore - 211, 237, 361	Norton - 342
Moretti - 389	Nouri - 211, 212, 236, 237, 243
Morgan - 380	Novak - 50, 63
Morrone - 352	Ntanos - 361
Mortensen - 76	Nussbaum - 75
Moskal - 203	
Moskovljević Popović - 120, 122	Ο
Moust - 56	Obadović - 173
Mrše - 390	O'Brennan - 387
Muis - 298, 312	O'Brien - 360, 361
Mujagić - 275, 286, 288	O'Connor - 361
Mukaržovski - 96	O'Donnell - 375
Mumford - 398	O'Dwyer - 353
Murati-Sherifi - 357	Ogunbode - 361
Muratović - 37	O'Keefe - 297
Murphy - 76, 203	Olinghouse - 131
Murray - 197, 198	Olson - 121
Mutum - 339	Olsson - 38

Olympia - 387 Pejović-Milovančević - 376 Opačić - 114, 298, 300 Pena - 274 Oparnica - 275, 286 Perels - 274 Orion - 343 Perry - 274, 297 Osborne - 66 Persico - 260 Pešec Zadravec - 76 Oshkina - 237 Osin - 261, 262, 264, 265 Pešikan - 36, 48, 53, 124 O'sullivan - 237 Peter - 396, 407 Ovesni - 173, 175, 177 Petrovački - 97, 111 Petrović - 98, 143 Р Phan - 298, 299, 309 Pabon - 377 Philipsen - 175, 176, 177 Packer - 142, 343 Phillips - 274 Pahl - 361 Piatelli-Palmarini - 118 Pais-Ribeiro - 411 Piccolo - 342 Pajares - 289 Piirto - 382 Pijaže - 36, 127 Palmer - 353, 362 Panadero - 273, 274, 276, 289 Pine - 37, 40, 43, 46, 55 Pantic - 353 Pintrich - 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 288, Parakevvopoulos - 353 289, 295 Paris - 274 Piquero - 380 Pirc - 79 Park - 174, 175, 176, 177 Parker - 25, 175, 177 Plazinić - 300, 308 Paternoster - 374, 375, 380 Plucker - 338 Patrick - 289 Poldrugač - 375, 387 Pavlin - 76 Pollard R. - 54 Pavlović J. - 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, Pollard J.A. - 396 Pollozhani - 358 297, 299 Pavlović V. - 375 Polshina - 325 Pavlović Breneselović - 53, 141, 143, 152 Ponmozhi - 361 Payne - 388 Ponte - 64 Pecore - 56, 62 Pope - 159 Pe'er - 353 Popović - 96 Peguero - 377, 380 Popović-Ćitić - 375, 406, 407, 411

Popović-Deušić - 376

Pejatović - 153

Postholm - 274	Reis - 213
Powell - 173, 174, 176, 177	Reyes-Garcia - 353
Pozo-Munoz - 203	Rhodes - 297, 299
Pratt - 119	Richardson V 63
Primack - 342	Richardson J.T.E 295, 298, 373
Prince - 213	Rickinson - 343
Prtljaga - 52, 53, 54, 58, 60	Rieser-Danner - 54
Psacharopoulos - 27	Rihn - 296
Puckett - 30, 31	Rikers - 56, 57
Pugachev - 237	Ristanović - 58, 60
Pulkkinen - 273, 274	Roberts - 353
Purdie - 311	Robinson - 238
Putnam - 64	Robottom - 361
Putnick - 131	Roccas - 336
Puustinen - 273, 274	Rocco - 142
	Rockcastle - 352
Q	Rodriguez - 38, 40, 47
Quintilian - 77, 78, 83, 90	Roehlkepartain - 397, 407, 409, 410, 411, 412
R	Roglić - 375
Radden - 108	Rolston - 342
Radić - 131	Romanova - 237
Radlović-Čubrilo - 173	Romashko - 322
Radović - 173, 175, 177	Rosandić - 108
Radulović - 152, 155, 275	
	Rosenfeld - 61
	Rosenfeld - 61 Rosenthal - 288
Ramli - 360, 361	
	Rosenthal - 288
Ramli - 360, 361 Rasskazova - 260, 261, 262	Rosenthal - 288 Ross - 142
Ramli - 360, 361 Rasskazova - 260, 261, 262 Rasulić - 108	Rosenthal - 288 Ross - 142 Rossi-Arnaud - 131
Ramli - 360, 361 Rasskazova - 260, 261, 262 Rasulić - 108 Raven - 352	Rosenthal - 288 Ross - 142 Rossi-Arnaud - 131 Roth - 352, 354
Ramli - 360, 361 Rasskazova - 260, 261, 262 Rasulić - 108 Raven - 352 Rebolloso-Pacheco - 203	Rosenthal - 288 Ross - 142 Rossi-Arnaud - 131 Roth - 352, 354 Rothstein - 66
Ramli - 360, 361 Rasskazova - 260, 261, 262 Rasulić - 108 Raven - 352 Rebolloso-Pacheco - 203 Redditt - 142	Rosenthal - 288 Ross - 142 Rossi-Arnaud - 131 Roth - 352, 354 Rothstein - 66 Rovira - 353
Ramli - 360, 361 Rasskazova - 260, 261, 262 Rasulić - 108 Raven - 352 Rebolloso-Pacheco - 203 Redditt - 142 Reed - 375	Rosenthal - 288 Ross - 142 Rossi-Arnaud - 131 Roth - 352, 354 Rothstein - 66 Rovira - 353 Rud - 375
Ramli - 360, 361 Rasskazova - 260, 261, 262 Rasulić - 108 Raven - 352 Rebolloso-Pacheco - 203 Redditt - 142 Reed - 375 Rees - 110	Rosenthal - 288 Ross - 142 Rossi-Arnaud - 131 Roth - 352, 354 Rothstein - 66 Rovira - 353 Rud - 375 Ruggiero - 353

Rumble - 237	Schley - 121
Rusljakova - 262	Schmidt - 56
Russ - 174, 175, 177	Schmitz - 274
Rutar - 204, 205	Schnase - 259
Rutten - 75, 76	Schoenebeck - 175
Rutter - 361, 388	Schommer - 297, 299, 300
Ryabukhina - 320, 323	Schommer-Aikins - 297, 298, 299
Ryan - 259, 289, 396	Schon - 159
Rynsaardt - 160	Schugurensky - 174
Ryung - 353	Schultz - 336, 340, 341, 347, 361
	Schulz - 261, 323
S	Schumann - 325, 327
Sachs - 296, 298, 299	Schunk - 274, 290
Sadovnikova - 259	Schwartz - 336, 337, 338, 345
Sagiv - 336	Scott - 109, 119, 363
Sagy - 343, 353	Seegers - 297
Şahin - 38	Segedinac - 173
Saigo - 352	Segers - 56
Saizmaa - 238	Seifert - 297
Sakashita - 238	Semenova - 259
Salisbury - 110	Senechal - 120
Salzberg - 343, 353	Serra-Roldan - 398
Saljo - 295, 298, 311	Sesma - 407
Sanchez Abchi - 131	Shaha - 175
Sander - 203	Shek - 396
Sans - 76	Shevyakova - 254
Santana - 66	Shiang-Yao - 352
Savanović - 308	Shin-Cheng - 352
Savery - 55	Shih-Wu - 352, 360, 361
Savić - 111	Shillingford - 398
Scales - 397, 398, 405, 406, 407, 409,	Shoreman-Ouimet - 342
410, 411, 413	Shores - 387
Schahn - 362	Short - 161
Schaie - 319	Showers - 161, 170
Schleicher - 95	Shramko - 407, 410

Stančić - 111, 275 Stanisstreet - 38

Shriberg - 121	Stanišić - 342, 343, 359, 361
Shwom - 336	Stanković - 59, 63, 143, 151, 160, 163
Sicurella - 375	Stanojčić - 96
Silberberg - 375	Stanojević - 173, 175, 177
Silva - 119, 131, 411	Starkova - 325
Simić R 96, 104	Starostina - 237
Simić N 153, 308	Stein - 36
Simmons - 352	Stepanova - 320, 321, 322, 325
Simoncini - 142	Stern - 339, 340
Sinclair - 389	Stevanović - 95, 96, 97, 102, 106, 107,
Skaalvik - 297	110, 112, 113, 119, 134
Skordoulis - 361	Stevenson - 203
Sladoje Bošnjak - 300	Stoeger - 298
Smith C119	Stojanović - 53
Smith D275, 278	Stojnov - 63, 160, 163
Smith K199	Stoll - 141
Smolleck - 43	Stromso - 310
Snow - 120, 121, 128, 129	Suarez Riveiro - 296
Soares - 410	Suhre - 274
Soćanin - 375	Sujo de Montes - 174
Soetaert - 75, 76	Sun - 396
Sofroniou - 29	Sutton - 210
Sokoloff - 413	Sweeten - 374, 375, 380, 389
Soldatović - 143	Swennen - 197, 200
Somuncuogly - 297	Sychev - 261, 262, 264
Sözbilir - 356, 373	Symanyuk - 320, 323
Spataro - 131	Syvertsen - 405, 409, 410, 411, 413
Spiroska - 360	Szechy - 353
Srbinovski - 353, 354, 355, 357, 358,	Szerenyi - 353
359, 360, 361, 362, 363	Šefer - 58, 63, 64, 66, 119
Srećković-Stanković - 160	Ševa - 59
Stables - 352	Ševkušić - 143
Stahl - 109, 119	Šipka - 98
	and the state of t

Štefanc - 84

Τ Turaga - 361 Taccogna - 398 Türkmen - 37 Turner - 915 Tager-Flusberg - 119 Tal - 343, 353 Tuul - 238 Tamim - 61 Twomblly - 142 Taneva - 236 U Tanner - 343 Taraban - 54 Ültay - 37 Taskın - 37 Unruh - 389 Taylor - 93, 135, 342 Uşak - 355, 373 Tenjović - 106, 110 Usta - 37 Teodorović - 59 Utkina - 259 Thomas J.W. - 56, 61, 62, 67 Uyanga - 238 Thomas S. - 141 Uzelac - 386 Uzun - 353 Tighe - 119, 120 Tindall-Biggins - 375 V To - 119 Todd - 361 Valenčič Zuljan - 205 Valle Arias - 296 Tolchinsky - 131 Tomasello - 131 Van Berkel - 56 Tomera - 354, 361, 362, 363 Van Den Bergh - 360, 361, 363 Tomlinson - 288 Van den Bossche - 56 Tondeur - 175, 176, 177 Van Den Brink - 375 Torenbeek - 274 Van der Klink - 197 Torphy - 174, 176, 177 Van der Linden - 297 Tošović - 106 Van De Vijver - 338 Treleaven - 212, 222 Van Driel - 174 Van Dulmen - 407 Tretyakova - 237 Trikaliti - 344 Vangrieken - 142 Trivić - 95 Van Klaveren - 375 Trudel - 35, 37, 40, 43, 47 Van Petegem - 361 Van Putten - 297 Trust - 211, 212, 237 Tsai - 38 Van Tulder - 161 Van Veen - 174 Tulman - 380 Tunmer - 119 Varis - 212

Varisli - 360	Ward - 375	
Vasić - 97, 122, 124, 129, 130, 133	Wardani - 360, 361	
Vath - 174	Ward-Lonegran - 132	
Vavrus - 210	Washington - 342	
Veenman - 161	Waterston - 295	
Vegetti - 213	Watson - 121	
Vermunt - 297	Wehlage - 343	
Vescio - 142	Wehren - 135	
Veselinov - 58, 60	Wei - 63	
Veselinović - 390	Wei-Ta - 352	
Vesić - 289	Welsh - 388	
Vezeau - 297	Weltzel - 339	
Vigotski - 36, 109	Welzel - 338, 339, 345	
Villadsen - 76	Weston - 342	
Vilotijević - 53, 101	Whalen - 211, 212	
Vizek-Vidović - 289	Whitehouse - 173	
Vladisavljević - 130	Wierstra - 297	
Voeten - 161	Wierzbicka - 108	
Vogrinc - 205	Wigfield - 259	
Volk - 343, 353	Wiggins - 65	
Voss R 203	Wiliam - 65	
Voss H. L 375	Willet - 177	
Voyer - 110	Williams - 360, 375	
Vučetić - 286	Willits - 363	
Vujačić - 59, 64, 289	Willott - 238	
Vuković - 122, 135	Wilson - 375	
Vušurović - 390	Winder - 296	
	Winne - 274	
W	Winstead - 210	
Waintrup - 389	Wolf - 55	
Walford - 362	Wolfgang - 380	
Wallace - 141	Wolters - 274, 275, 288	
Walsh-Daneshmandi - 353	Wong - 296	
Wang B 175, 177	Wood - 259	
Wang M.T 388	Woodhall - 27	

Wrosch - 261, 323

Wubbels - 64

## Χ

Xenitidou - 344

Υ

Yablochnikov - 259

Yap - 339

Yaşar - 356

Yavetz - 353

Yildrim - 297

Yilmaz - 38

Yopp - 119

Yovanoff - 389

Yu - 275, 352

## Ζ

Zabukovec - 205

Zeer - 320, 323

Zener - 237

Zeng - 352

Zenki - 357

Zhu - 175, 176, 177

Zidar Gale - 79

Zimmerman - 273, 274, 290

Zlatić - 106

Zmeev - 323

Zmeyov - 318

Zobenica - 275, 286

Zsoka - 353

Zubrick - 135

## Ž

Žagar - 76, 79, 80

Žmavc - 76, 78, 79, 80

Žunić-Pavlović - 375

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## FROM REVIEWS

Main aim of the monograph titled *Problems and perspectives of contemporary education*, is to thorough explore, critically analyze and elaborate complex, dynamic, multilayers and reciprocal relationship between significant changes in educational social environment and readiness, of educational system to anticipate, recognize, understand and adequately respond to those challenges. All contributing authors enthusiastically embraced the notion that education presents an important and proactive agent of social changes and consequently accepted all challenges as an opportunity for improvement and development of both society and educational system.

Professor Emeritus Djuradj Stakic Pennsylvania State University, USA

The monograph is dedicated to looking into extremely significant and current concerns within educational policy and educational practice. The selected topic is viewed from the perspectives of contemporary theoretical approaches, but it is also empirically researched. A very large and relevant literature was used both for explaining the selected research subject and discussing the obtained results. A diverse, contemporary methodology was applied in researches, and the authors of works, starting from the existing results, analysed issues at a deeper level and illuminated some aspects that had not been studied thus far.

Professor Marina Mikhailovna Mishina Russian State University for the Humanities, Russia

The main topics covered by the monograph can be classified as traditional to some extent — related to approaches to learning, language culture etc., and modern — connected with the andragogical view, coaching in teacher training, also the problem of distance learning during the covid pandemic, and models for preventing problem behaviors...The main leitmotif that permeates the content of all presented articles is the topic of the development of key skills, attitudes, experience, creativity — by both subjects in the educational process, and it gives semantic integrity to the monograph.... In view of the new social realities, a reasonable emphasis is placed on the continuing education and development of the teachers themselves, dictated by the accelerated pace of social change.

Professor Teodora Stoytcheva Stoeva University of Sofia "St. Kliment Ohridsky", Bulgaria

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