APPRECIATING THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL ASPECTS OF TEACHING

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Abstract
We believe that for this paper, the ideas of the world-famous authors C. Rogers: "We are educated, but evil" and E. Fromm: "We are in the twenty-first century with our minds, but our hearts are in the Stone Age". However, we will immediately point out and emphasise that these ideas are, unfortunately, worldwide and do not apply to this or that country. A sketch of why this is so is also offered in this post. In line with the above quote, this article deals with the social and emotional aspects of education. This is an area that deserves special attention from all parents and teachers.

Key words
ineligence quotient, emotional intelligence, social and emotional learning /SEL/

Introduction

Reflections on how education should be different would surely fill several issues of our magazine. True, it is doubtful whether they would capture the complexity of the issue. But we would certainly argue that education in schools is not solely to blame or responsible for this state of affairs. On the other hand, however, we would note that education still makes insufficient use of various innovative methods and forms of work with pupils, the content of education and its design are also increasingly demanding, which is related to the rapid growth of scientific and technical knowledge, the financing of education is not easy, and even the interest in teaching is not easy, and the often unclear and unsystematic reforms of education also play a part in the shortcomings, and so on.

Only knowledge is important?

However, let us return to the substance and intent of the paper outlined in the introduction. It is obviously not saying anything new to state that in education, knowledge was and still is preferred above all. We still see IQ (intelligence quotient) dominating education instead of EQ (emotional intelligence), or we pay less attention to their complementarity or interplay in education. We believe that we do not need to particularly emphasize that IQ is the aspect that can lead us to be better than we currently are. Psychologist Šuranová (2018) even says: "In our society, the importance of IQ and formal education are highlighted and generally considered to be the most important prerequisites for people to thrive in life. However, the truth is that emotional intelligence (EQ) is mainly behind success and satisfaction in life. If a person has a high IQ, but fails in the emotional area, it causes significant problems for him/her both in private and at work. As an example, we can give the example of a student who is above-average intelligent but is a great demagogue and therefore cannot use his knowledge in an exam. On the contrary, a student with an average IQ and high EQ is better able to handle stage fright, improvise, and balance his lower IQ with his performance."
These are indeed extremely serious words, and we need to pay serious attention to them and approach changes in education in the light of what has been outlined. The reality is that education to date focuses primarily on hard skills - the body of knowledge and skills (in mathematics, grammar, geography, etc.) that pupils acquire in the educational process - which can be 'measured' and assessed by grades, percentages. So far, we have been less concerned with and less appreciative of soft skills, e.g. the pupil's level of

communication, creativity, adaptation to a given situation, interest in cooperating with others, etc. These skills are harder to measure but essential for life, and many experts believe that they are more important than hard skills.
In recent years, experts in the fields of psychology, education, sociology and other disciplines have begun to look more closely at these issues. In 1994, the Collaborative to Advance Social and Emotional Learnin America was formed at Yale University. Later renamed the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) and moved to the University of Illinois at Chicago. The literature also refers to CASEL 5 - the number 5 represents the competencies that are the pillars of social and emotional learning: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relational skills, and responsible decision making. The aim of that society was and is to draw attention to teaching in which much more attention is paid to social and emotional aspects than has been the case up to now. The result of these efforts is the concept of social and emotional learning (SEL).

Why focus on SEL

The history of SEL is essentially short. We've outlined above that school focuses primarily on knowledge - that's what's most often associated with education. Even in common parlance we often say, e.g., "...in school we learned...", "teachers emphasized...", "...those who did not do their duty were punished..." etc. However, we say less, if at all: "...at school we were encouraged to understand ourselves...", "...teachers emphasized being able to overcome any setbacks..", "...we were taught to be empathetic.." etc. From the above, it is clear that cognition dominates in education and the emotional aspects of learning are under-appreciated. However, recent research and scholarly studies highlight the paramount importance of linking
emotional processes with motivational-performance aspects (Frenzel, 2015, in Huber, Krause, 2018). The importance and essence of SEL also lies in the fact that it equips pupils with the skills needed to control thinking, emotions and behaviour, to learn to perceive themselves and to cooperate with others. Equally important, they teach pupils to set positive goals, to show empathy for others, and to be able to make responsible choices as well. These are aspects that have a positive impact on the pupil, but at the same time are a prerequisite for success in adult life.

As we have pointed out elsewhere, the results of such education are not immediately visible, unlike the educational results or the pupils' current learning activity. It is a longer-term and systematic effect on pupils.
What is the essence of social and emotional learning?
Since its inception, dozens of descriptions and definitions have been published in the literature, e.g.
Pfeffer (2002) states that social-emotional learning (SEL) is the process of developing self-awareness, self-control, and interpersonal skills that are essential for school, work, and life success. People with strong social-emotional skills are better able to cope with everyday challenges and benefit academically, professionally and socially.
Summarizing the views of several authors, we can say that SEL is learning in which students acquire and effectively apply knowledge, attitudes, and skills to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, build and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. It focuses on knowledge, attitudes and skills and aims to develop the five competences listed above. Social-emotional learning SEL is understood as an active, participatory learning process during which students develop knowledge and competencies that are foundational for managing and processing emotions in social situations (Huber, Krause, 2018; Reicher, 2010).

From the above, as well as from the following description, the particular importance of SEL for educational work emerges. When studying the above area, we were aware, for example, of how much time and energy we devote to, for example, eliminating bullying of pupils in schools, but also to many other negative manifestations of pupil behaviour. If we base the intentions and implementation of SEL on how we approach education, it comes across as if we are implementing "post-education" or "post-education" to improve something, to fix something, to perfect something, instead of consistently preventing problems from occurring in the first place. SEL is precisely the option that leads to the prevention of the undesirable in the behavior of students and people in general.

Five competencies that are key in SEL

Self-awareness: the pupil is guided to be able to identify his/her own emotions, thoughts and values that influence his/her sleeping patterns, to be able to assess his/her own strengths and limitations. This is of considerable importance for his/her self-esteem, promotes optimism and contributes to growth mindset - striving for improvement.

This area needs to be addressed in primary school. In Year 1, pupils should be able to understand the expression and meaning of simple emotions - smiling, joy, crying, experiencing happiness, etc. In the upper grades and in secondary school, it is no longer just about the simple perception of emotions, but pupils should also be able to analyse the factors causing positive or negative emotions, the factors causing, for example, stressful situations. However, it is essential not only to perceive emotions but also to analyse them (why and what causes emotions, what effect they have on people, etc.).

Self-control: The pupil should learn to successfully regulate his/her emotions, thoughts and behaviour in different situations, to manage stress effectively, to control impulses and to motivate himself/herself. It is important to guide pupils in the skill of setting personal and educational goals and working towards achieving them. This involves guiding pupils to develop their own organisational skills and encouraging them to use their own initiative.

At Key Stage 1 of primary school, it is important that pupils are able to set and define goals, the achievement of which leads to an overall aim. At Key Stage 2 and in secondary school, pupils need to be guided to be able to organise their work - to plan activities and monitor the achievement of personal goals. This includes guiding pupils to be able to overcome difficulties in achieving planned targets.

In the first stage of primary school, it is important that pupils are able to set and define goals, the achievement of which leads to an overall aim. At Key Stage 2 and in secondary school, pupils need to be able to organise their work - to plan activities and monitor the achievement of personal goals. This includes guiding pupils to be able to overcome difficulties in achieving planned targets.

Social awareness: Social awareness and sensitivity education is about guiding pupils to empathy, i.e. the ability to empathise with others, including people from different backgrounds and cultures. Part of the above is also leading to respect for others, the ability to empathise with others, to understand and perceive their perspectives, to understand and express gratitude, etc.

In primary school, social awareness is shaped, for example, by pupils being able to identify the different expressions - verbal, physical - that signal how others feel. Secondary school pupils are encouraged to anticipate other people's moods, attitudes and opinions. They should be able to evaluate their own empathetic attitudes.

Relational skills: this area refers to the ability to build and maintain healthy and beneficial relationships with a variety of individuals and groups. Important skills include communicating clearly, listening effectively, cooperating with others, resisting undue social pressure, negotiating conflicts constructively, and seeking and offering

help when needed. Pupils are encouraged to be socially engaged and also to understand the importance of teamwork.
In primary school, emphasis should be placed on pupils reinforcing the requirements of good manners, learning to be good friends who will give help to each other when needed, not to ridicule others when they are not doing well, etc. Secondary school pupils are encouraged to understand the importance of cooperation, so that they themselves perceive that they are contributing to teamwork. However, relational skills are not just about relationships between pupils, but also with teachers, parents and the wider community.
Responsible decision-making: the ability to make constructive choices in personal behaviour based on ethical standards and social interactions. Ability to realistically assess the consequences of various actions, taking into account one's own and others' interests. To teach pupils to be able to identify their own problems, to lead them to analyse information, speeches, to cultivate critical thinking, etc.
Pupils in primary school should be encouraged to be able to assess and evaluate their actions to see if they are in line with the standards of good behaviour, to be able to judge themselves and others. Secondary school pupils should already be able to realistically assess the level of their behaviour and its possible impact on the behaviour of others, they should be able to master the strategies of interactions and their impact on the outcome. It is actually a self-assessment and reflection of a certain moral responsibility for one's own behaviour.
Of course, the content of the above competences is much richer than we have mentioned and every teacher can certainly enrich what else a given competence may contain or include. However, it should be stressed that the above competences are not just part of education. That would be insufficient. The family must also be involved in these processes. Good cooperation and communication between the school and the family must be two-way, because this is the only way to understand the education in the school and the educational background of the family.
After the above enumeration of what needs to be paid attention to, the question or reflection on whether the above competences are being addressed in education is forced upon us. However, we will leave this aspect as a stimulus for teachers' self-reflective evaluation.
In this context, it must be said that SEL is not just some short-term effort to influence students. It is an ongoing part of education that contributes to improving pupils' learning outcomes and, most importantly, teaches them to manage their emotions, which has a positive impact on pupils' overall performance. Research conducted in America involving 270,000 children from kindergarten to high school revealed such results:
- 9% decrease in classroom behavior problems, aggression,
- 10% decrease in emotional difficulties such as anxiety and depression,
- 9% improvement in attitudes towards self, others and school,
- 23% improvement in social and emotional skills,
- 9% improvement in school and classroom behaviour,
- 11% improvement in achievement test scores.
Thus, SEL has been shown to increase students' predictors of success in school which will have an impact on their later life (CASEL, 2003).

What to do to develop social-emotional learning
Indeed, there are many themes and recommendations in the literature on how to approach SEL or what needs to be done. These are primarily as follows:
- SEL needs to be seen as a real and fundamental change in education, which can be ground-breaking because it accentuates those aspects that have not been given as much attention as they need to be. SEL does not focus only on the cognitive side of the

personality of the pupil or adult, but emphasises a holistic approach to education in terms of the areas described. However much we would persuade ourselves that the above aspects have been and are being given attention, we have to admit that we have reserves, and not small ones at that. As we saw in the introduction of the paper, this is also not just our shortcoming, but rather a worldwide problem, which is also addressed by the OECD, which consistently recommends that SEL be given special attention and, together with the use of ICT, be considered an actual education.

- In education, we need to be more consistently aware that the development of social and emotional skills is an extremely important part of education. In this context, we recall the saying, which also applies to the neuroscientific aspects of education, 'What Janko learns, Jano will not learn again'. It follows that social and emotional aspects need to be addressed from a young age. What a person acquires at a young age essentially accompanies him throughout his life. The 5 SEL competencies mentioned above therefore need to be inculcated in children from the beginning of their schooling.
- The development of social and emotional skills must become an integral part of education in assessment as well. The reality is that we can assess the cognitive side (assessing pupils verbally, with grades, percentages), but we have not yet developed the assessment of social and emotional skills so that it is a matter of course in education. Even with verbal assessment in this area, we often remain at the level of general statements such as: "...you are trying hard, but you should improve in...", "...you should be more considerate to yourself..."...". etc.
- In education we need to focus more on responsibility, which is extremely important for improving social and emotional skills. A sense of responsibility is the basis of a person's success and also the basis of their social recognition. Accordingly, it needs to be given special attention in education; it is an important part of the overall cultivation of personality.

- It is particularly important to cultivate in pupils a sense of belonging to the school. The philosophy of the work of the school is manifested in particular in the relationship which the pupils have to it. If the school is staffed by teachers who are interested, if the school approaches the pupils in terms of creative humanistic approaches, etc., then we can expect a strong correlation with the pupils' social and emotional abilities. It must be important for every school to foster pupils' belonging to the school. This is one of the extremely important goals of a school.

Teacher-pupil relationships are extremely important for education. This is an old truth about which many studies have been written, and it goes without saying that these relationships not only affect knowledge, but are also extremely important for the formation of pupils' character. Positive relationships, which we use the terms democratic, fair, motivational, informal, etc., are also extremely important for the formation of social and emotional skills in pupils. The best response to this and the previous area must be given by and to the collective of teachers. They know best what kind of 'school spirit' prevails in their particular school. It is important to realise that the social and emotional skills of the teachers themselves are observed by the pupils and imitated by them, and are therefore extremely important for the informal education of the pupils. This is an area that deserves attention. We base our investigation on this statement. In exploring pupils' views on several aspects of education, we found that of 206 primary 2 pupils, as many as 24.2% said that 'teachers do not care much about them'. Of course, we did not ask this question directly, but by answering various questions and we found, e.g. "...the teacher does not care if I know the material, it is the written paper that is decisive,,,", "...the teacher throws me off when answering..", "...the teacher often texts and does not have time to answer us...", "...the teacher often shouts at us until my ears hurt..." Instead of longer explanations, we remind: " Examples attract."

- We cannot leave out the family in the social and emotional learning described. It is the first place in which the foundations of education are laid. It is therefore necessary

to strengthen the relationship between the school and the family. Unfortunately, the reality is that, in recent years, information technology has encroached on this area too, and often the reality is that the school works with the family mainly only at the level of information via the computer. It is important to realise and bear in mind that mutual communication between the school and the family is necessary to strengthen pupils' social and emotional skills.
Of course, the approaches described above do not exhaust the possibilities of acting on pupils in terms of SEL. The literature describes a variety of methods, strategies, but also programmes - role-playing aimed at empathy, communication, discussions, projects, self-reflective evaluation of the pupil and his/her actions, etc. Just as an example, we will reference 26 simple ways to integrate social-emotional learning throughout the day (Mulvahill, 2021).

Conclusion

At the end of this work, we will return to the idea – why it is necessary to address social and emotional skills. Everyday life begins to convince us that social and emotional skills are becoming extremely important not only for success in school, but also for success in life. Many authors claim that these skills are like glue that holds together people who are dependent on each other in today's world. Therefore, we must learn to be empathetic, understand each other, etc. Unlike in the past, schools can no longer rely on some kind of self-development in these areas, but it must be about conscious pedagogical work that supports the development of these skills in students. If teachers and schools can do this, there will be less unwanted student behavior, less bullying, better educational results and informal joy of students from learning.
We must also be aware of these aspects, because society is fundamentally changing and requires new skills from its members. Work skills and work relationships are also changing, and people are entering into contacts and cooperation more than in the past, also on the basis of social and emotional relationships. Today we can already see that life and work are becoming increasingly demanding. Creativity, stress management, managing emotions, coping with the pitfalls of social networks and many other areas require competencies such as those listed in the article. However, it is essential and motivating for us that what we describe here can be taught at school, in the family and also in various leisure activities of students.
The OECD, mentioned in the text, recommends and emphasizes the following sets of educational requirements for the future:

- open-mindedness (openness to new experiences) - curiosity, tolerance, creativity,
- task orientation (conscientiousness) - motivation to perform, responsibility, self-control, perseverance,
- emotion regulation (emotional stability) - stress tolerance, emotional control, optimism,
- engagement with others (extroversion) - sociability, assertiveness, energy
- cooperation (yieldingness) - empathy, trust, collaboration (OECD, 2015).

In conclusion, it can be said that social education and learning (SLE) should be considered one of the extremely topical areas of education. With the presented article, we try to motivate teachers to work with students even more creatively. We are convinced that the study of social education and its relevance for the future of current students in their adult lives will “awaken” everyone’s interest. As we mentioned in the text, our educational approaches often seem to be “extinguishing” – fixing something that is not working. However, social and

emotional learning is extremely effective and in many ways is a prevention of undesirable behavior in students; it has a strong motivational impact on students' learning and behavior and, above all, it prepares them for real life. Therefore, it should be a given schools.

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