

# The Teacher and their Contribution to the Educational Process

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## Abstract

Education accompanies us throughout our lives. Acquiring new knowledge, skills, and experience is not confined to a few years of formal study; it is a lifelong endeavour. We continually strive to improve, enhance our efficiency, gain deeper insights, explore new ideas, and broaden our experiences. Family and friends support us in achieving our goals, guiding our personal growth and development. Schools play a crucial role in equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in both professional and societal contexts. Teachers hold a fundamental position in this process. Without them, how would society nurture educated individuals and skilled professionals? Who would lay the foundation of knowledge required for effective participation in the labour market? The teaching profession is both demanding and invaluable. A teacher's role extends beyond imparting knowledge; they also inspire, motivate, and guide students towards their future aspirations. Teacher shows the right path and tries to be a co-creator of the students' future. That is why they deserve recognition for their dedicated work.

*Keywords:* Teacher, School, Curriculum, Education, Motivation

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## 1 Introduction

School plays a fundamental role in an individual's life, serving as a crucial source of knowledge and skills. It shapes a person's development, introduces essential characteristics, and fosters human relationships. An integral component of the school is the teacher, whose work has a

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profound impact on pupils' growth. A teacher's role extends beyond the transmission of knowledge; it encompasses a range of responsibilities essential to their profession.

Pupils mature into adults who embody the values they have acquired at school, which they, in turn, pass on to future generations. A teacher not only educates but also nurtures and guides. They support their pupils, inspire them, and cultivate a positive attitude towards education, nature, society, work, and family.

## 2 The Teacher in the Educational Process

The teacher is the most essential component of the school system. Furthermore, the teacher's role is difficult to replace, as they do not merely perceive a pupil as one among many in a classroom but rather recognise everyone's unique qualities. Each pupil is unique and achieves better results in something else. Someone is better at mathematics, someone is more open to technical subjects, someone is better at foreign languages. There are also those who are talented at sports or have a better relationship towards art. It is not certain that every pupil will be exceptional in something within school activities. Although education, based on its focus, offers several areas that can be interesting for pupils, but not a single school has the capacity to satisfy all the needs of pupils. It often happens that a pupil finishes high school or university studies in a certain field and finds a job in a completely different field.

There can be several reasons:

- the pupil graduated from the school recommended by his parents,
- the financial difficulty of attending another, more distant school,
- unemployment, changes in labour market needs,
- the difficulty of getting a job in your dream profession,
- change of the graduate's interest in the given work activity,
- the influence of family, acquaintances, and friends,
- attractive salary conditions and other factors.

The fact that a school graduate finds employment outside of their current school focus does not have to be the school's or parents' fault. When choosing a secondary school, many children have no idea what they want to be. They have certain information about individual schools and departments, but they may not have an accurate picture of what the given school will provide them during their years of study. Of course, pupils generally have a sense of what to expect in their studies. However, it is not uncommon for them to be surprised by the breadth of topics covered in certain subjects or to question the relevance of particular subjects in their curriculum. Schools, however, recognise the value of all subjects and the topics they encompass. They strive to establish a logical sequence between subjects and topics, ensuring they are interconnected in a meaningful way. As pupils progress through their education, they will encounter a wide range of subject matter, equipping them with essential knowledge and helping them understand the importance of completing each subject. A significant part of this

process depends on the teacher—their personality, empathy, professionalism, expertise, and overall approach to both their responsibilities and their pupils. Teaching should not be regarded merely as a job to be carried out according to prescribed requirements; rather, it is a vocation that demands dedication and a genuine commitment to students' development. Teaching is also about feedback, whether the teacher's effort is also reflected in the pupils' knowledge, whether the pupils understand the essence of the subject matter and can continue to work with it, apply it and develop professionally and personally.

Hrmo et al. (2005, p. 8) states: "the teacher's personality is one of the most important factors in the teaching process, which decisively affects its quality and the quality of its results. Therefore, the teacher must be properly prepared for this activity."

Turek (2014) points out that if a teacher is to fulfil his tasks to the required degree and be effective in his work, he must thoroughly master the field in which he teaches. In addition, he must also have high-quality pedagogical training and high general culture. The teacher's personal and character traits are also important. A teacher should be patient, responsible, fair, creative, honest, etc.

Průcha (2002) writes that the pedagogical competence of a teacher does not lie only in what he learned during his studies or other training, but also in how the person is personally equipped to carry out teaching activities.

It is therefore essential that a teacher is not only an expert in their subject area but also possesses a range of additional qualities that enable them to effectively impart knowledge and experience. Equally important is the ability to spark interest in the subject matter, teach in an engaging and stimulating manner, and motivate pupils to actively participate in their learning. The success achieved by the teacher with the pupils also depends on the teaching style. Zormanová (2014) describes the teacher's teaching style as the teacher's individual approach to teaching.

### 3 Pupils' Motivation

The teaching style itself can depend on many factors. These are, for example: personality characteristics of the teacher, his previous experience, teaching subject (theoretical or practical), topic of the lesson, structure of pupils, etc. However, it is important that teachers, with their approach, create such conditions and climate in the classroom that the pupils develop a positive relationship with the subject. It is crucial how a teacher delivers the subject matter, responds to pupils' questions, and motivates even those who may have been passive at the start of the lesson. Therefore, understanding the needs of pupils is essential to ensuring effective teaching and engagement.

Petty (2013, p. 39-40) indicated the issue of teaching according to a certain template. When pupils learn the subject according to a certain template, sometimes they do not understand it and therefore forget it. With such learning, they will not know how to proceed in

unpredictable circumstances and situations. Even if they have learned everything correctly, they will lose confidence because learning without understanding is insufficient.

Petty also writes about how compulsory the teaching is. He emphasises that we, as teachers, leave a lasting impact on our pupils through our work. By providing quality education, we enable them to attain qualifications they might not have achieved otherwise. These qualifications can serve as a foundation for further education, allowing pupils to pursue even higher levels of academic and professional achievement. Even in this case, our merit will be visible. Our work will impact their careers and lives. Thanks to us, they will be a happier and more productive part of society.

Therefore, it is important how the teacher approaches the pupils, what teaching methods he applies, how he reacts to different situations during the lesson, how he motivates, how he evaluates, and so on.

Pupil motivation is an integral part of a teacher's work and without it, the desired objective of the lesson shall not be achieved. Motivation arouses pupils' interest in the subject and a higher level of cooperation is achieved. They can be motivated in many ways:

1 – Evaluation of pupils with a grade – The teacher must be objective in the evaluation. The evaluation criteria must be set in advance, and the pupil must have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. In assessments, it is important to distinguish whether they are required to provide an exact answer, such as a definition, or whether they are allowed to express their understanding in their own words. Furthermore, it should be clarified whether pupils must memorise the subject matter verbatim or if they can draw on their creativity, experience, and vocabulary to formulate their responses. The teacher must also correctly set the time needed to test the pupils.

There are inherent differences among pupils in writing, thinking, and responding to questions; therefore, it is essential to consider several important factors. After receiving a grade, pupils must understand the objective reasons behind their evaluation, whether positive or negative. When they comprehend the areas in which their performance was weaker, they are more likely to seek ways to improve, provided they receive sufficient motivation and support.

2 – Praise of pupils – Praise from the teacher has an important function, too. Praise can be given at any time when the teacher sees the space afterwards. After the praise, the pupil gains new strength to continue working, to be even better, more efficient, more diligent and to achieve more. If the pupil feels positive energy from the teacher and sees that the teacher appreciates his efforts, the work of the pupil will be much better and more effective. Praise can also be given at the beginning of solving a task, when the pupil has found the right way to proceed. When a pupil makes a mistake, it is very important for the teacher to praise what is right and point out what is wrong. When offering 'criticism' for incorrect procedures, it is

important not to cross a certain threshold, as doing so could significantly diminish the pupil's motivation.

3 – Didactic technique and didactic means – Nowadays, the diversity of didactic aids is increasingly developing, which can better illustrate the essence of the subject matter and increase the effectiveness of the teaching activity. Every teacher should try to use a wide range of didactic techniques and resources. Learning only from books is becoming less and less effective. Of course, this also depends on the specific subject and topic of the lesson, but in professional subjects the use of information and communication technology is a great benefit. Computers, various software, projectors, interactive whiteboard, product models, production activity simulations, Internet, professional presentations, and videos, etc. they increase pupils' interest in the subject and reduce the monotony of teaching.

4 – Teacher's rhetoric – Communicativeness, clear explanation of new subject matter, appropriate wording of sentences, tone of voice, variety of expressions used, wide vocabulary, enumeration of practical examples, repetition, appropriate enjoyment of praise and criticism, etc. they create a certain image of the teacher in the eyes of the pupils. When the pupil perceives the teacher as an important source of new information and can receive, understand, and subsequently apply that information, the basic goal of the lesson is fulfilled. In this case, it is very important that the teacher chooses appropriate rhetoric and focuses not only on pupils who are more open to receiving new information, but also to find a way to those who are not so open to this. Pupils should also be involved in the communication, so that their communicativeness and effort to present and explain their opinions, attitudes and arguments are also manifested.

## 4 Educational Process

With the help of the teacher's dedication, perseverance and patience, the pupils will get the necessary education.

Petlák (2016, p. 35-36) describes education as a process in which a pupil acquires certain knowledge and activities, creates knowledge and skills, and develops various abilities. In addition to acquiring knowledge, education also provides various other functions that work simultaneously, complement, and support each other. These functions include preparing an individual for a certain profession, for inclusion in society, creating a starting point for further education, developing psychological cognitive processes, but also the educational side.

When we talk about education, we usually think of school and organised, systematic education in school conditions. However, self-education also plays an important role, which is also confirmed by educators and psychologists. They state that an adult acquires most of his knowledge and skills through self-education and life experiences.

However, this does not mean that the role of school education is not important. On the contrary, the task of the school is to teach and prepare a person for self-education.

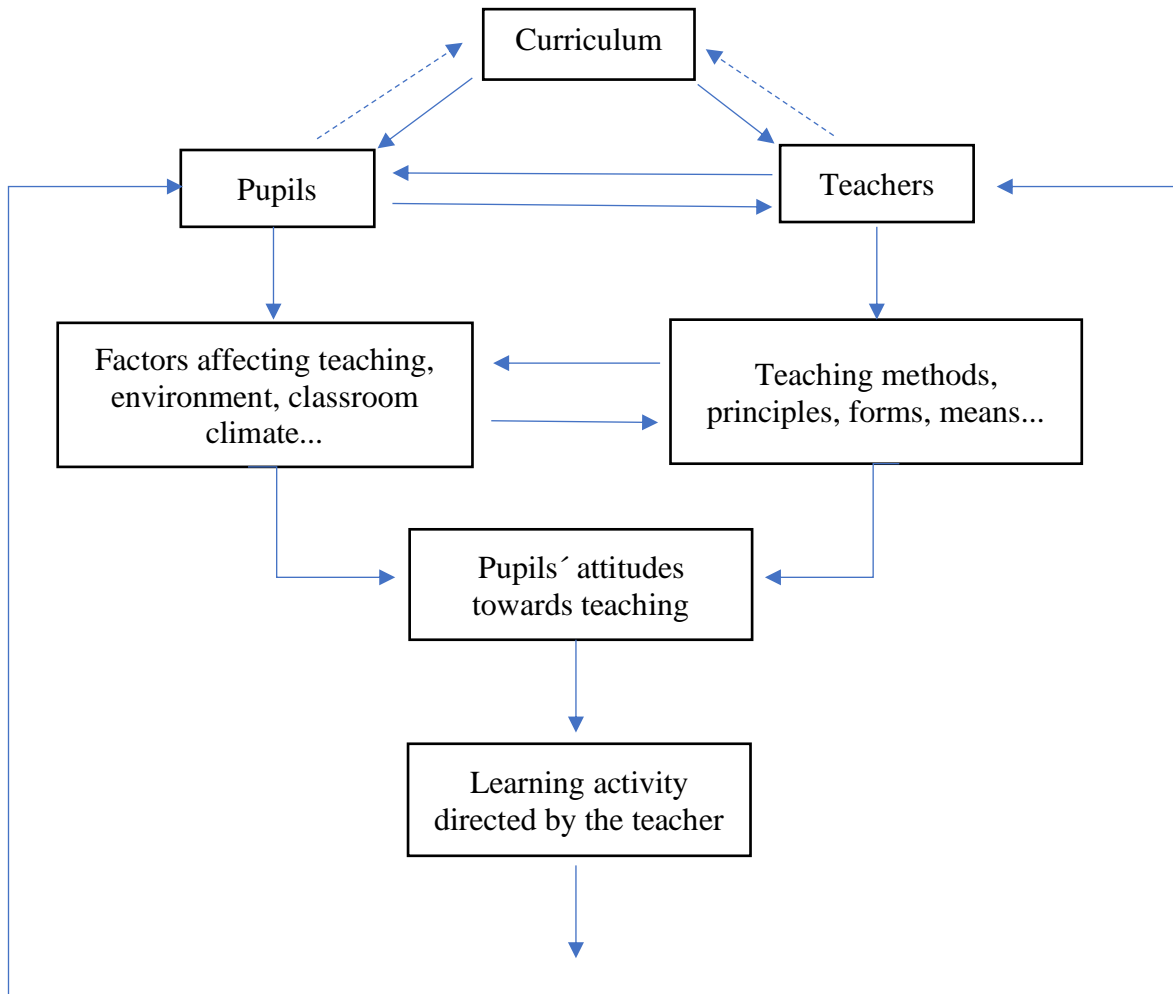


Figure 1: Petlák (2016, p. 67).

People who do not know the work of a teacher in detail think that a teacher only teaches, and results come easily. It is not true. A teacher has a few other tasks that may not be directly related to teaching. A certain group of pupils is created in each class. The difficulty of a teacher's work also lies in the connection between education and upbringing. Pupils are diverse, they come from different families with different moral values, they have different perceptions of their duties, they are brought up differently, they come from better or worse financial backgrounds and their ability to absorb new knowledge also varies.

The teacher must create an environment in the classroom that allows everyone to feel like a valued member of the collective. Each pupil has intrinsic value and can contribute to the group through their attitude and actions, becoming an asset to the entire class. In getting to know their pupils, the teacher recognises both their potential benefits to the collective and the possible challenges they may present. Risks mean the pupil's ability to guide his classmates in the wrong direction, which does not benefit the teachers, pupils, and the school. Pupils who are carriers of qualities and positive impulses should be role models for others. When an ideal environment is created in the classroom and the pupils can follow certain rules of social values regarding work in the classroom, the teacher has a ready space for imparting as much knowledge as possible.

## 5 The Personality of the Class Teacher

The classroom teacher has a crucial role, as they not only carry out the core teaching responsibilities (educating pupils) but also fulfil several other important duties. They serve as the communication hub between pupils, other teachers, school management, and parents. The teacher collects and processes information from various sources, assessing its accuracy, objectivity, and relevance. When necessary, they respond and act in the best interests of all parties, striving to address issues in a timely, flexible, and efficient manner. The class teacher also encounters a situation when the parent-child relationship does not work perfectly and must also be partially a psychologist. Not all parents devote enough time to their children, mainly for work reasons, and the class teacher, as well as other teachers, should help and eliminate these deficiencies.

For the teacher to be able to perform their work perfectly and to keep up with new requirements, rules, and standards of teaching, he must also be educated. The teacher learns throughout his working life, in addition through various trainings, courses, but also thanks to experience from various situations during classes, school events, etc. The teacher draws new knowledge from various possible sources, updates their knowledge and thus is always ready to fulfil their work duties. It does not only draw information that is part of the curriculum. It also needs a lot of other no less important information, for example for working with pedagogical documentation.

Turek (2014, p. 187-188) describes pedagogical documents as materials that determine the activities of schools, teachers, pupils, and school management. These can be school laws, lesson plans and curricula, school regulations, class books and reports, but also various protocols and many others.

Depending on the specific types of pedagogical documents, the teacher must work with them, create, or study them and observe their content. The teacher must have an overview of what he must administer, how he should proceed, what he must respect so that his work meets the required level.

Turek (2014, p. 194-195) outlined a certain issue about the teacher's work with the curriculum and preparation for teaching. The preparation for teaching itself is often limited only to the description of the subject matter to be covered during the lesson. Many teachers understand their work and duties in such a way that their task is to explain or practice the subject matter based on the curriculum and then test the pupils to see if they have mastered the subject matter to the required extent. It should be emphasised that the role of the teacher is more than just explaining the subject matter and testing. Pupils must understand, remember, and apply the material, and this must also be the goal of the teacher. It is not enough to simply teach pupils; that alone is insufficient. They need to be guided and nurtured in their learning. In addition, it is crucial to simultaneously develop their cognitive and creative abilities, while also shaping their attitudes, value systems, and their ability to communicate and cooperate effectively. To manage all of this, the teacher must have a clear understanding of the curriculum's scope, knowing exactly what content the pupils should master and understand in each lesson. Choosing the right teaching methods, teaching aids and didactic techniques is also important. In all of this, the fact that there are weaker and better pupils, pupils with different styles and pace of learning must also be considered in the class.

Of course, every teacher is unique. Each has their own approach to the structure of their lessons, the scope of the subject matter, and the allocation of time for activities such as revision, testing, covering content, and discussion. These approaches are shaped not only by what they learned during their professional training but also by their experience. Experience is a key factor in shaping a teacher's attitude towards the teaching process, and it is through experience that a teacher becomes more effective and skilled. A lot also depends on the technical security of the school, because someone would like to improve the quality of teaching with the help of modern technology, when the technical possibilities of the school are limited. The structure of pupils (their diligence, creativity, manual dexterity, willingness to cooperate, social and family background, mental and psychological background...) can influence the teacher's decisions about the course of the lesson, the scope of the subject matter, the approach to the class and to individuals. Sometimes the teacher has a rather difficult task of choosing such a procedure for taking over and repeating the subject matter or testing pupils so that every pupil understands the essence and goal of this procedure, so that they can accept the teacher himself and so that no pupil feels disadvantaged.

## 6 Principles of Teaching

When we talk about the effectiveness of teaching, we must not forget about teaching principles. As Petlák (2016, p. 112-119) stated, it is not about the rules, nor about the so-called standards, as teaching is very complex, and the teacher must also adapt to the pupils. Therefore, we can understand teaching principles as "the most general or basic requirements



that, in accordance with the goals of the educational process and its basic laws, determine its character".

These policies are as follows:

- a. The principle of awareness and activity – pupils should approach the learning activity consciously and be active in the lessons to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills through their own active activity.
- b. The principle of visibility – the pupil should acquire new knowledge and skills with the help of a certain sensory perception of objects.
- c. The principle of adequacy – the curriculum, its content, scope, but also the methods, forms and means of the teaching process should be appropriate to the pupils' abilities.
- d. The principle of durability – pupils should not only listen to the teacher as he explains the subject matter, because it is important to understand and remember the subject matter itself, so that the new knowledge is retained in the memory and thus usable in the activity.
- e. The principle of systematicity – the didactic system of the curriculum should be logically organized, also regarding the age characteristics of the pupils, so that the pupils learn it under the guidance of the teacher.

Following these principles creates a solid foundation for effective teaching, which is a priority for every school and every teacher.

## 7 Conclusion

The world is always changing. New technologies are coming, science and technology are developing, people have new priorities, and social values are partly changing. Both schools and teachers must keep up with these changes to prepare pupils as best as possible for the changing world. Educating people must be a priority for the state, because an educated person is the bearer not only of knowledge, but also of precious human values. Therefore, it is very important that teachers have the best possible conditions for their profession, because their work is irreplaceable.

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