

Facilitating Effective Student Learning through Teacher Research And Innovation



Edited by **Milena Valenčič Zuljan** and **Janez Vogrinc**



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Univerza v Ljubljani
Pedagoška fakulteta



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FOREWORD

Innovation of didactic and learning strategies is one of the basic demands in teacher training at all levels of education, as has been clearly recognized by the European Union. In its communication of 13th September 2007 entitled *Putting knowledge into practice: A broad-based innovation strategy for the EU*, the European Commission stressed the need for 'collective action to safeguard the European way of life that combines economic prosperity with solidarity' and said it was 'convinced that innovation in a broad sense is one of the main answers to citizens' material concerns about their future'. The Commission defines education as a precondition for creating a true European innovation space. As a core policy it must promote talent and creativity from an early stage.

The European Union Council of Education, Youth and Culture has stressed in its 2008 *Conclusions on promoting creativity and innovation through education and training* that creativity and the capacity to innovate are crucial to a sustainable economic and social development of Europe, and acknowledged that all levels of education and training can contribute to creativity and innovation in a lifelong learning perspective. The Council held that, starting at the level of individual schools, education systems need to combine the development of specific knowledge and skills with generic capacities linked to creativity, such as curiosity, intuition, critical and lateral thinking, problem solving, experimentation, risk taking and the ability to learn from failure, use of the imagination and hypothetical reasoning, and a sense of entrepreneurship. It stressed that teachers have a crucial role to play in nurturing and supporting each child's creative potential, and can contribute to this by exemplifying creativity in their own teaching; and that teacher education institutions also have a key contribution to make in providing teaching staff with the knowledge and competences required for change, such as the skills needed to promote learner-centred approaches, collaborative work methods and the use of modern learning tools, particularly those based on ICT. Fostering creative abilities and attitudes within schools also requires the support of an organisational culture open to creativity and the creation of an

innovation-friendly environment in general, as well as committed and forward-looking leadership at all levels.

I'm certain that the monograph *Facilitating Effective Student Learning through Teacher Research and Innovation* is a timely, necessary and important step in this direction. This has been recognized by the reviewers as well. I would like to recommend this book to readers with the words of one of the reviewers, Prof. Grozdanka Gojkov, who writes that the teacher's role "implies constant innovations of procedures in the pedagogic-didactic competences of a teacher, which is a guiding principle of all the researches in the present monographic study and its great value, having in mind that it is one in a small number of similar publications in Europe, dealing with innovation of didactic procedures of teachers from the angle of their new role, based on participatory epistemology. Numerous outcomes of empirical researches on the application of new procedures heading in this direction are precious, not only as facts on effects and possibilities of application, but as ideas for designing new relevant research frameworks and ideas for new actions. Truly convinced of the value of the present study, I express my admiration to the authors and congratulations to the publisher."

Janez Krek
Dean

EXTRACTS FROM REVIEWS

THE PAPERS INCLUDED in this volume, both domestic and international, depart from a very topical and important question: how to reshape our teaching so as to effect a deeper and more effective learning process, not only through implementing innovation top down and attempts to transfer political decisions and theoretical findings into the schools (both of these have repeatedly proven unsuccessful in the past) – but by strengthening the active role of the teacher as a researcher and developer of his/her own practice. ...

— Prof. Ddr. BARICA MARENTIČ POŽARNIK
University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

HAVING IN MIND that the theoretical ground of the researches is a constructivist perspective, a teacher has been viewed from the angle of new roles. The main aspect of the teacher's role refers to the preparation of a context, i.e. creation of an encouraging environment including preparation of learning materials through various paths and canals and creation of social situations for learning and ways for an individual to attain insights and understanding of problems occurring during learning. ...

— Prof. dr. GROZDANKA GOJKOV
University of Novi Sad, Serbia