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Diversity in special education

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ABSTRACT

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The article discusses the programme of special education and its range of sub-fields. The introductory section summarises reflections on the origin of the field, philosophy and its formation, aims and target groups, paradigm shift and introduction of new methods and forms of pedagogical work in special education. The second part presents a new course Resocialisation and Prison Education in special education, which is one of the specialisations, pillars or schools of special education.

Special education is a fully developed and socially important field, which is primarily rooted in education. Until now, it has been considered a pedagogical field with overlaps into biomedicine, psychology, sociology and other areas of science. As the field developed, its paradigms, target group, methods, techniques and forms of work have also changed. Our first special educators, in their original publications, such as the founder of the field Sovák (1983), then Kábele (1993), Jesenský (2000) and Vašek (2005), pointed out that before the establishment of special education, pupils with special educational needs were educated, in today's educational terminology, as part of the educational mainstream, i.e. together with non-special-needs students. At that time, it was primarily a matter of education and upbringing. With

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the growing development of pedagogical and psychological sciences, forms and methods of education began to be sought for pupils who differed in some way or exhibited differences. They could have differentness in health, which includes sensory disabilities, various forms of somatic diseases, and in a wide range of social areas. The difference in the broad sense could also lead to the failure of these pupils at school, to their exclusion, for example, in the back of the classroom, or misunderstanding and miscomprehension of their disadvantages could lead to the exclusion of these pupils from the educational mainstream. If we reflect on the fulfilment of the basic pedagogical goal, which is the maximum development of a person's personality, social inclusion and employment, we can state that this goal was not always necessarily fulfilled (Vališová, Kasíková, Bureš, 2011). It may not have been fully achieved given the lack of knowledge of pedagogical principles how to educate some individuals, how to communicate with them, how to comprehend them and frame their identity. These problems, situations and condition led to the idea of creating separate institutions – institutes – school for these pupils. According to the difficulty of education of pupils with various types of disabilities, specialised facilities began to be built in Europe and in the Czech Republic, which began to educate these pupils separately from the mainstream. Institutes and schools began to be established, specialising in each different disability, where the forms, methods and techniques of their education were sought. Among the first were schools for pupils with sensory and mental disabilities. (Slowík, 2007) Gradually, a network of special schools was established where pupils with various types of disabilities were typically educated from kindergarten to vocational education/secondary school/trade school. Here, these pupils had enough space for education, individualised approach, the requirement for a smaller number of pupils in the classroom, space for leisure activities and preparation for future occupation, which was one of the main objectives of special education. We can say that thanks to individual and specialised care and support, one of the main goals of education / special education has been fulfilled to prepare them for the future profession and to integrate them into society.

It can be summarised that at present we view special education as a separate scientific discipline, which deals with patterns of care development, education, special pedagogical diagnostics, intervention, counselling, employment and social inclusion of persons with disabilities or social disadvantages.

Current trends of integration/inclusion/communal education are emphasised by special education and considered as new paradigms.

In special education we also see a sharp increase in new terminology. As a consequence, one of the tasks and problems that have persisted for many years is the

unification and correct use of professional terminology in this field. It cannot be said that we resist using medical terminology. On the contrary, medical terminology allows us to correctly identify problems, diagnose and describe the symptoms of disability, in order to determine the exact procedure for intervention, support, counselling, education and training.

The aim of special education that is set out by e.g. Pipeková (2010), Slowík (2016), Renotiérová, Ludíková (2006) is the maximum development of a personality, his/her integration into society, all with regard to the character, degree and depth of disability or disadvantage. Part of the main goal is the goal of reshaping the attitude of some members of our society towards a person characterised by differentness. It is a long-term goal related to the history of looking at illness, disability and differentness (otherness). Our society still perceives differentness or a disability as a stigma, and special education should be the leading discipline that will reshape this attitude. Collective learning/inclusion helps this process.

The overarching goal is also to create such a stimulating environment that would enable all to develop, as far as possible, their potential, integration with or absorption into society and comprehensive support for quality of life.

The target group also changes during the course of the development of the field. From the original focus on school age, later pre-school age, it extends to the period immediately after birth and further emphasises early care, school age and adulthood. In adulthood, due to the specificity and diversity of the broad target group, it is divided into adults and seniors. Seniors are currently the target group that deserves special maximum attention.

Individual target groups have also been broken down from the original five specialisations into other specialisations such as Autism Spectrum Disorders, Specific Developmental Disorders of School Skills, Persons with Exceptional Giftedness, Multiple Disabilities Concurrently and others.

Given the diversity of the target group in terms of age and type of disability, special pedagogy also adopts and creates new methods – therapeutic/formative, expressive, supervised and more.

The aim of the course Resocialisation and Penitentiary Pedagogy is to prepare graduates as independent specialists and for middle management and professional functions within the ministries of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice of the Czech Republic (Prison Services of the Czech Republic), Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Finance and other state and non-governmental institutions that are involved in resocialisation. Therefore, the graduate profile respects the needs of practice, professional standards and competencies. New paradigms in the peda-

gological sciences are accepted, especially in special education and social pedagogy, since resocialisation pedagogy as such is a discipline at the intersection of special and social education, linked to other social, natural and technical sciences. It has many branches (multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary) within its framework. The study is characterised by a broader concept of special and social education, which emphasises understanding and its application in the context of other disciplines. It is conceived as a doctrine based on philosophical, historical, pedagogical, psychological, sociological and legal bases. It is also based on empirical experience and current knowledge of education development and visions of its development in the system of lifelong learning.

After three years of continuous theoretical study in the bachelor's programme, students in the field of resocialisation and penitentiary education will be educated in classical social sciences and in the specific sciences introducing resocialisation pedagogy. In a practical sense, they will be oriented in the field with respect to guided practice and learn special pedagogical skills with a focus on the resocialisation of the individual.

Students are profiled into several segments/activities: pedagogical, resocialisation, managerial, social etc.

Research aims general and special

The aim of the study is to prepare a university-qualified expert who is able to work with an individual, to resocialise him/her, i.e. to eliminate unwanted attitudes and habits and to reintegrate them as a full member of society.

The qualification obtained corresponds to the requirements of Act No. 563/2004 Coll., on Educational Workers, and Act No. 108/2006 Coll., on Social Services, Act No. 555/1992 Coll., on the Prison Service of the Czech Republic, Act No. 169/1999., Coll. on Imprisonment, Act No. 361/2003 Coll., on the Service of Members of Security Forces and other acts of individual ministries regulating the possibilities of resocialisation. It is aimed at the area of reintegration plans and corresponds to the intended structural perspective of special pedagogical care.

General research aims:

- furnish the graduate with an appropriate system of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in the field;
- combine the required expertise in terms of both knowledge and skills with the graduate's professional approach;

- to achieve the appropriate creativity of the graduate, who will be able to analyse pedagogical problems independently and make decisions in solving them, acquire new information, knowledge and skills and process them;
- to educate a flexible personality able to orientate in social phenomena;
- develop the graduate's all-round communicative skills;
- to lead the student to scientific research within his/her field of knowledge.

Special aims:

- master the theoretical foundations of resocialisation and penitentiary studies and acquire the ability to apply adequate re-education methods and procedures;
- understand the system of work in the resocialisation and penological institutions of individual authorities;
- acquire and verify in practice theoretical knowledge related to the issue of all resocialisation methods, procedures, principles and treatment in resocialisation and penitentiary practice;
- apply the principles and master (and alternate) methodologies of resocialisation, reintegration and treatment of incarcerated persons/clients;
- to pass the required practice in selected workplaces of individual ministries and thus acquire the necessary basic competencies for concrete work with persons with special needs, especially etopedic and also penitentiary.

A graduate of the Resocialisation and Penitentiary Pedagogy course is a university qualified specialist/professional prepared in theoretical and practical areas for direct resocialisation work with individuals in the entire spectrum of special education, social education and social work. In the hierarchy of management, he/she will be at the level of an individual worker, or in the area of management activities at the middle management level.

The graduate of the course is able to fully reflect on the individual entrusted to his/her authority, is ready to participate in his/her resocialisation, reintegration, as well as education, respecting his/her anatomical-physiological and developmental peculiarities, gender, ethnicity, language and other specific needs that imply the use of special methods and individualised forms of resocialisation and other care for these individuals.

Graduate profile

The graduate profile is designed in accordance with the knowledge on the development of professions, including all social and special pedagogical activities, i.e.

resocialisation and penitentiary activities, the outcome of which is resocialisation and penitentiary education diversified into all authorities in the public and private sectors. It places emphasis mainly on the following competencies:

- **specialist competencies.** These include a set of knowledge, professional skills and the ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practice. It is mainly the ability to analyse a social and specific (penological and penitentiary) problem, communicate effectively with the client and co-workers and find a solution (situation) – resocialisation and reintegration within the capabilities of the person (system), in accordance with acquired theoretical knowledge. Graduates will acquire professional competencies within the requirements of the aforementioned ministries;
- **social/special pedagogical competence = resocialisation and reintegration.** They include knowledge of the typology and nature of special/social pedagogical processes, conditions, forms and methods of human education, knowledge and skills necessary for social cultivation, socialisation, resocialisation and reintegration of individuals and social groups and prevention of socially pathological phenomena;
- **special pedagogical competence = resocialisation and penitentiary.** They are a collection of knowledge and skills from all areas of special, social and penitentiary education with a focus on psychopedics, etopedics and ultimately penitentiary studies. These competencies require not only creativity, but also a deep knowledge of the individual's personality, methods of dealing with him/her and the ability to search for his/her perspectives in resocialisation and reintegration, by reintegration into society;
- **diagnostic and intervention competencies.** They entail knowledge and skills necessary for diagnosis of social environment, interpersonal relationships, conditions of life, causes of socially pathological phenomena, pedagogical influence and its effects and especially in the complex knowledge of the individual as a basis of resocialisation and reintegration activities. The graduate has the ability and skills to provide or ensure an adequate level of special pedagogical, social pedagogical support, care and protection for individuals and groups. Based on thorough diagnostics, the graduate will be able to determine the conditions of effective resocialisation and work in accordance with the individuality of the client;
- **communication competencies.** They include knowledge of the processes of social communication and the ability to positively influence this communication within the framework of resocialisation and penitentiary procedures. The graduate is able to apply the acquired knowledge in communication

with various types of clients, with their co-workers, within interpersonal communication, and with the public. He/she is familiar with dispute and conflict resolution procedures. He/she is able to work in a group with both his/her charges and co-workers;

- **personality-cultivating competencies.** The graduate has the necessary general overview of the basic disciplines applied in the concept of resocialisation and penitentiary education as an interdisciplinary, biodromal and systemic discipline. They are able to reflect on new paradigms of social sciences in the context of the current social situation. The emphasis is on philosophy and ethics, and graduates are encouraged to use management and management knowledge as a means of positive changes in the lives of individuals and social groups. The graduates have the prerequisites for objective interpretation of traditional issues of special, social and penitentiary education, their research and use in practice in a humanistic context, aware of the limiting factors of legislation, economic situation, influence of public opinion, media, religion, customs, traditions and environment as a whole. These competencies entitle the graduate to the correct setting of resocialisation and reintegration.

The graduate demonstrates the following professional knowledge:

- pedagogical;
- special-pedagogical (etopedical and psychopedical);
- psychological;
- philosophical (ethical);
- legal;
- sociological;
- linguistic;
- penological and penitentiary;
- general (cultural, political, sports).

The graduate demonstrates the following professional skills:

- communication;
- organisational;
- methodological;
- linguistic;
- administrative;
- computer skills;
- consulting;

- assertiveness;
- crisis and stress management;
- therapeutic;
- hygienic.

The graduate demonstrates the following general competencies:

- consistency, morality, objectivity, patriotism, multiculturalism, self-control and discipline, firm will;
- pedagogical optimism;
- pedagogical tact;
- pedagogical composure;
- pedagogical passion;
- pedagogical empathy;
- strict sense of justice;
- humane approach to all individuals.

Summary

The profile of a graduate from the course Resocialisation and Penitentiary Education from the field of resocialisation and penitentiary education is a borderline science between special education, social education and penitentiary studies, interconnected with many other social, natural and technical disciplines in science. Therefore, in defining the graduate profile of this field, emphasis will be placed on both his/her broad and deep professional knowledge of pedagogical, psychological, sociological, philosophical, legal, penological and penitentiary, biological and medical, technical (electronics, engineering, construction, architecture), economic and others. The main disciplines are (besides pedagogy, psychology and law) especially special education, social education, resocialisation and penitentiary pedagogy. In addition to grounding in these sciences, the graduate must be empathetic, communicative, creative and generally cultivated. It must have all the traits of the educator's personality, such as pedagogical humanism, pedagogical optimism, pedagogical tact and patience, organisational skills, fairness and non-intervention.

This knowledge also includes skills that are actually applied in pedagogical practice. This means that the graduate in the field of resocialisation and penitentiary education must master educational methods, methods of socially educational work, methods of dealing with the individual, special pedagogical methods, organisational forms of educational work, must be able to solve crisis and margin-

al situations. His/her practical “toolkit” includes the application of pedagogical and special pedagogical principles, principles and methods from moral education, drawing up programmes of treatment of clients and orientation in penitentiary practice etc.

The Bachelor in Resocialisation and Penitentiary Pedagogy is a qualified specialist focused on pedagogical and special pedagogical activities in institutions focused on resocialisation and penitentiary activities and treatment (e.g. in prison facilities, detention centres, post-penitentiary care facilities, low-threshold centres, Refugee Facilities Administration, etc.).

By studying the programme “Resocialisation and Penitentiary Pedagogy”, the graduate will acquire suitable knowledge of the core subjects, which are pedagogy, psychology, sociology, law, social work, special and social pedagogy, penology and penitentiary studies and resocialisation pedagogy. Graduates have developed communication abilities and skills or, more specifically, a high degree of emotional intelligence. The graduate handles crisis situations and is educated in crisis communication and intervention. He/she is able to compensate the demands of his/her profession with adequate mental hygiene, and master basic techniques of relaxation. The graduate is also educated in management oriented to the specific environment of prisons, detention centres, etc.

The result of the graduate profile of resocialisation and penitentiary pedagogy is therefore a highly educated and humanistically-oriented professional dealing with occupational resocialisation, reintegration and penitentiary studies (including post-penitentiary care), i.e. by reintegrating various socially excluded individuals into civil society so that they are able to carry out personal roles and lead a social life. Its attributes include the ability to master and use modern forms, methods and means of resocialisation and penitentiary action in the spirit of postmodern society, willingness and ability to educate, but also educate others, to be communicative, assertive and empathetic.

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