Ethical and Moral Aspects of School Education: The situation in the Czech Republic

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Abstract: *This review study focuses on ethical and moral aspects of school education in the Czech Republic after 1989, when change occurred not only in the political regime but also in all spheres of social life, including education. The study is based on publications by Czech authors and is structured into six parts. The first part describes the broader context of the chosen issue: it describes the basic philosophical concepts of ethics and morality and reminds official materials (starting with the International Teachers' Charter, through materials created by the Ministry of Education, to the school rules of individual schools). The second part provides an overview of publications dealing with the ethical and moral education of children and adolescents from the perspective of various scientific disciplines: philosophy, theology, sociology, and psychology. The third part presents the organizational form of ethical and moral education at Czech basic and secondary schools. In terms of its content and conception, ethics education as a subject taught in Czech schools is based on the concept of prosocial education (Roche-Olivar, 1992), adapted by the Slovak author Ladislav Lencz (1995). The fourth part is devoted to a specific genre, review studies which provide information about Czech and foreign research studies, and evaluates them. The fifth and most extensive part reports on selected Czech empirical studies that deal with the ethical and moral aspects of education. It presents research on cyberbullying addressed to both pupils and teachers and mobbing and bossing in schools, examines the course and outcomes of teaching ethical topics, researches the power relations between teachers and their pupils, and examines the tendencies for teachers and pupils to be manipulated at school, cheating by pupils at school, and pupils helping one another. The sixth and last part of the study describes assessment tools with the help of which the ethical and moral aspects of school education are determined. The study concludes that one-off transversal research studies predominate in the studies, while longitudinal research studies are not conducted at all; mainstream research focuses on real-life research and no intervention studies are undertaken; researchers' attention is focused mainly on negative ethical and moral situations, while research into positive phenomena is neglected.*

Keywords: *ethics education, moral education, school, teachers, pupils, research, Czech Republic*

INTRODUCTION

The human values that underpin the work of the school form part of the educational endeavours of teachers and educators; either implicitly or explicitly, these enter the daily work of teachers and pupils. The historical experience of many countries shows that the school can develop the ethical and moral components of the personality of children and adolescents, while in totalitarian regimes it can mark entire generations through deliberate indoctrination. Different generations of inhabitants of the Czech Republic have experienced both. This review focuses on the period after 1989, when the Czech education system set out on the path to democratic education of the young generation, while having to cope not only with new challenges, but also with the burden of the previous period.

The selection of publications for our review study covering the years 1990-2019 originated in two steps. The first step included a Google search for publications **by Czech authors only**, using keywords such as: *ethics*, *ethical*, *morality*, *moral*, *school*, *education*, *teaching*, *teacher*, *pupil*, and *pupils*. The second step was more difficult because it did not follow the formal features of the published works but their factual content. We were interested both in nega-

tive topics (e.g. the exercise of power at school, inappropriate behaviour of teachers towards pupils, inappropriate behaviour of pupils towards teachers and classmates, mobbing and bossing in schools, and the moral distress of teachers), but also positive topics (helping others, social support, and positive education). In terms of the types of publications we chose monographs, textbooks, manuals, journal articles, research reports, and qualification theses (mainly doctoral theses and diploma theses).

The objectives of our study are fourfold: to give an overview of: 1. official school materials in the Czech Republic which mention the ethical and moral aspects of school education and pedagogical situations in which these aspects can be observed; 2. philosophical, theological, sociological, and psychological publications dealing with ethical and moral aspects of the work of schools; 3. the conception and implementation of formal ethics and moral education in Czech basic school[1] and secondary schools[2], and 4. the Czech research on ethical and moral education.

THE BROADER CONTEXT
OF THE CHOSEN ISSUE

Our review study is concerned with ethical and moral aspects of school education. How are we to understand

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[1] In this text, we adopt the term Basic school (in Czech 'základní škola'), which covers the school that provides compulsory education in grades 1-9 in the state education system, i.e. primary level (ISCED1) as wel as the lower secondary level (ISCED 2).

[2] ISCED 3.

both basic concepts: ethics and morality? These are concepts with a long history, developed from different perspectives and still under discussion. For the purposes of this study, the characteristics of the terms 'ethics' and 'morality' were based on a number of works (Rich, 1994; Hartmann, 2002; Havelková & Vodáková, 2018; Příhoda, 2019).

Ethics generally means a philosophical discipline that falls within the field of what is known as practical philosophy. The subject that it examines is the nature of moral reality. It is interested in the morality of people, in the origin and essence of moral consciousness in human beings, and in their moral behaviour. It studies the values and principles that guide human action in situations where a person has a free choice. It monitors whether human action is directed towards good and evaluates it in terms of good and evil. Its methods are searching for, thinking about, and discussing the goals of human endeavour, what it should be; the procedures used are motivated by the concern for the highest good. It can be said otherwise: "Ethics does not directly teach what is to happen here and now, but teaches in general how what is to happen is shaped. What is to happen in general is many and varied. Ethics creates a general basis from which what is current is seen from a bird's eye view. Ethics does not do anything other than philosophy at all: it does not teach finished judgments, but judgment itself. Ethics understands the question 'What should we do?' It does not specify, describe, or define what it is that we do; it has its own 'what'; however, it provides criteria that can be recognised" (Hartmann, 2002, p. 25).

There are several ways of classifying ethics. Here are just three types: descriptive ethics, normative ethics, and metaethics. Descriptive ethics is concerned with the moral state of society as a whole or its sub-communities. It describes the real state of moral values and moral judgments which are currently valid in society, but it does not evaluate the facts but merely states them. In the case of normative ethics, it is clear from the name that it sets out what is to be and is not so interested in what actually is. In fact, normative ethics does not only establish what is binding on a person in terms of how to act correctly (through standards or codes). It says something more important: why one should act just like that and not otherwise (Rich, 1994). Within normative ethics we distinguish the following types according to criteria for morality:
- the ethics of virtue: this considers the quality of a person, i.e. the moral characteristics of his/her personality, to be the criterion of morality;
- the ethics of duty (deontology): this sees the core of morality as lying in human obedience to what is termed the moral imperative;
- the ethics of consequences: this finds the criterion of morality in the nature of the resulting deeds of a person, as a consequence of his/her actions.

Metaethics goes deeper as it examines the foundations of ethics itself, verifying its underlying assumptions and the conclusions drawn from them. It analyses, inter alia, ethical theories, conducting a philosophical examination of the ethical categories that are used, the ethical judgments that are deduced, ways of arguing, the nature of ethical contradictions, etc.

The second important concept used in our study is morality. **Morals** generally mean a set of values, norms, and patterns of behaviour that seek to regulate the relationships between individuals, between an individual and a social group, and between social groups. The set is created by social consensus, which results in its being inconsistent and contradictory. It also follows that one community may have morals that are somewhat different from other communities. Thus, there is a group morality which, however, applies only within a given group, but does not impose an obligation on its members in their dealings with members of other groups or other communities (for example, towards people of different cultures, ethnicity, religion, etc.).

The term 'morality' is usually used in two meanings: 1. in its descriptive meaning, it refers to what the members of a certain community (a certain culture) actually follow, and what they adhere to, since their community (their culture) requires certain behaviours while rejecting other behaviours; 2. in a normative sense, it means a set of principles by which a person is to behave and by which the community evaluates their behaviour; at the level of a member of the community, this means what is right and allowable or not right or allowable (internal norms) according to his/her internal conviction. We can find this out by examining his system of values, beliefs, attitudes, and actual behaviour.

How do ethics and morality overlap and how do they differ? The basic metaphor that expresses their relationship is an hourglass: ethics is at the top and it stands higher, while morality is at the bottom; it has an application and a more practical character, but they are both interconnected. The congruences and differences were well captured by Příhoda (2019) when he wrote that ethics is a conscious search for what is good, while morality is the sum of people's ideas of the good that has already been found and which has been confirmed by the unwritten consent of the group or society.

According to Příhoda, the difference between ethics and morality is both timeless and fundamental: "If I ask myself the question 'how should I do right?' I inadvertently ask it in two ways – actually to two recipients – at the same time.

I put it above all in the way I ask every time I seek advice. I automatically assume that the advice can be obtained, that 'it is somehow known' and that I can learn it. Many times I find that I know, or at least I suspect. And if not, I ask

those whom I consider to be authorities in this regard; I ask for a social consensus on this matter, which is one in which I myself somehow participate (or wish to participate). The addressee of my question is **morality** (which is always the morality of a certain society or culture).

However, I should not forget that I also put the question to another addressee, namely to **myself**, **my conscience**, which is often able to give me an answer. It often happens that there is no social consensus on what is good in a particular situation, and I then have to rely solely on my own conscience. It is in such situations that I am clearly aware of the difference between inquiry and searching (one might say: hunting). I then look for the answer to the question 'how to do right' and find it myself." (Příhoda, 2019, p. 7)

The above interpretation concerned the basic concepts of ethics and morality in general. As soon as we move to the level of application level (e.g. regarding the topic of ethical and moral aspects of school education), it will become clear immediately how many other aspects there are to consider.

In schools ethical and moral issues appear in many forms. They include:

- in international documents such as the Teachers' Charter, which was adopted at the Intergovernmental Conference on the Status of Teachers in Paris in 1966;[3]
- in normative documents issued by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports (hereinafter MEYS): see e.g. the Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education (MEYS 2017), the Framework Educational Programme for Grammar Schools (2016); the possibility of establishing ethics education as a separate subject at grammar schools from the year 2007 (Motyčka, 2013, p. 39), and the possibility of establishing ethics education as a separate subject at basic schools from the year 2010 (Measures of the Minister of Education, 2009);[4]
- in normative documents at a higher level than the school level; see e.g. the codes of ethics for teachers in some European countries; at present the Czech Republic does not yet have a code of ethics for teachers and is not working on one; the Czech Republic adopted the Christian Teacher's Code of Ethics from Slovakia (Červený et al., 2005);

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[3] It obliges all UN member states in paragraph 73: "Teachers' organisations should draw up a code of ethics for teachers or, where appropriate, a code of conduct for teachers; such codes make a significant contribution to ensuring the prestige of the teaching profession and to the fulfilment of professional duties in accordance with accepted principles." (Teachers' Charter, 1997, p. 13)

[4] The first option is *cross-sectional topics* (e.g. personal and social education) in different educational areas, the second is a separate subject of ethics education. In the Czech Framework Educational Programmes, ethics education is included among what are termed the *complementary educational fields*. Ethics education is therefore not a mandatory part of basic education; it only extends it with its themes. Each school can decide whether to include ethics in its school curriculum and in what form (it may be optional, non-compulsory, or compulsory).

- in publications for teachers dealing with the professional ethics of teaching (e.g. Dorotíková, 2003);
- in courses of ethics education as part of the further education of pedagogical staff (e.g. courses accredited by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports and organised by the Ethics Forum of the Czech Republic in cooperation with the Faculty of Education of the University of Hradec Králové and the Cyril and Methodius Theological Faculty of Palacký University in Olomouc);
- in a normative document by Czech researchers researching pedagogy and related sciences (Průcha & Švaříček, 2009);
- in the normative documents of a particular school: with regard to regional education see school regulations which regulate the rights and duties of pupils in particular; with regard to universities see e.g. the Code of Ethics of Charles University (2018);
- in the decision making of school management;
- in the conduct and decision making of class teachers;
- in the conduct and decision making of teachers of individual subjects;
- in the conduct and decision making of school counselling staff: school psychologists (Štech & Zapletalová, 2013; Mareš, 2017b) or special pedagogues in schools;

- in the lessons of individual subjects in the form of topics that are partially ethical or in the form of ethics education as a separate subject[5] (here in the form of the curriculum, i.e. the ethical topics that are discussed);
- in the conduct and decision making of pupils;
- in the mutual interaction between teachers and pupils;
- in the mutual interaction between the school and the pupils' parents.

CZECH PUBLICATIONS ON ETHICAL AND MORAL ISSUES

Philosophical, theological, and sociological publications

Almost every Czech publication devoted to the ethical and moral education of children and adolescents includes an introductory passage on philosophical and other fundamentals. There are, however, Czech publications that deal solely with this topic. Let us recall only five works as examples.

Špiner (2008) reflects on the philosophical-spiritual dimension of the teacher's personality as a professional who directs the educational process. He emphasises that the teacher should not only be a reproductive worker but a creative professional. After all, the real ethical activity in the educational process is similar to the activity of an artist

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[5] The concept of the independent optional subject ethics education in the Czech Republic was significantly contributed to by the non-profit organisation the Ethical Forum of the Czech Republic, z. s., which was established in 1999. See e.g. Nováková, Vyvozilová, & Blahušová (2005, 2014).

and includes discovering new and original creative activity.

Pelcová and Semrádová (2015) provide a more comprehensive philosophical view of the ethical and moral aspects of teacher education. They draw attention to the shift from classical philosophy to modern and then postmodern philosophy, and to the anthropological dimension of education. They do not neglect to deal with value education and the training of young people in assessment. The first part of the publication concludes with a general reflection on the ethics of the teaching profession. The second part of the publication focuses not only on ethical but also axiological aspects of education in the contradictory contemporary world. They recall the risks that complicate the education of young people today and indicate how to face them. The conclusion of the publication is devoted to changes in the teaching profession and their impact on the contemporary ethics of the teaching profession.

Muchová (2015) bases her approach on the statement that we have witnessed a number of crises in the life of contemporary society (crises of the family, the economy, and the welfare state, the environmental crisis, and the crisis of the world order). The author asks the worrying question whether moral education is even possible in a society that is rather immoral. She assumes that the way out of these crises of contemporary society might be to raise children and adolescents (in families and at school)

with moral values. Being an expert in religious education, she sees the historical and cultural roots of the European concept of values as lying in natural ties to Christianity.

Honzírková (2010) attempts to compare the secular and religious concepts of ethics education. She states that there are, in principle, three main approaches: an autonomous approach sees ethics as being completely independent of religion; a heteronomous approach bases morality on religious beliefs; a theonomic approach takes the view that morality is essentially based on the same source as religion. An example of a secular concept is the psychological concept of ethics education as the education of pupils to prosociality (Roche-Olivar, 1992). This Spanish concept was adapted for the needs and possibilities of Slovak schools by the Slovak author Ladislav Lencz and his colleagues. It is noteworthy that this amendment introduced into the Slovak version of ethics education some attitudes held by the Catholic Church (problems related to premarital sex, abortion, and homosexuality), so some authors talk about the latent religious concept of ethics education. However, there are other, secular, concepts of ethics education, such as school education of students to show respect and responsibility (Lickona, 1997) or school education of the good character of students (Berkowitz, 2012). The religious concept of ethics education in the Czech Republic is mainly found in religious

schools, the number of which is not large. [6]

Strouhal (2010) discusses and updates the ideas of the French sociologist Émile Durkheim about moral education. He mentions its potential to contribute to the development of human autonomy, but also to social responsibility. Durkheim sought a new concept of moral education. He sought to replace the religious concept of morality and moral education in schools with a "lay" concept, based on rational sociological considerations. According to him, an important characteristic of a human being – his/her autonomy – is not a characteristic of the subject or his/her immanent potency, but arises from the clash between the individual and the group. Cultural traditions play a key role in this process, in particular the traditional contents of knowledge and emotionality associated with cognitive and moral categories. The school is a place where the transmission of collective ideas as a whole should take place. The school has two tasks: to create awareness in the child of adherence to specific moral values and to enable him/her to be prepared to enter the world of those categories that determine contemporary society.

Psychological publications

Reflections on the ethical and moral aspects of the lives of children, adolescents, and adults cannot be imagined without a developmentally psychological view of how moral consciousness arises in humans and changes over time.

First of all, it is necessary to mention the pioneering publication by Kotásková (1987), which turned the attention of the professional public to a topic that lay at the margins of the interest of Czech psychologists. The author sought to answer three questions in her work: 1. Which factors in the early development of the child can be considered the main ones, because they shape the later moral maturity, social adjustment, competence, autonomy, and activity of the child? 2. What are the stages of development, especially of learning and cognition, in the personality of early ontogenesis and how does this process relate to the formation of moral consciousness? 3. What position do moral consciousness, moral feeling, and moral behaviour occupy in the evolving system of the personality? She not only provided an overview of the current state of research in the world, but presented the results of her own longitudinal research into the socialisation of personality, which began in 1969.

In a review study, Mareš (2004) put the moral, ethical, and social aspects of education into the framework of the school climate. He also discussed the following topics: the school in totalitar-

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[6] According to data from the Czech Statistical Office (2018), in the 2017/18 school year there were 3914 public basic schools, 196 private ones, and 45 church ones; 977 public secondary schools, 291 private ones, and 40 church ones.

ian systems, antipedagogy, the school as a risk factor for child development (deschooling – Ivan Illich), the external differentiation of pupils, and the integration of disadvantaged pupils into mainstream schools. All these topics have a significant ethical and moral dimension.

In his publication Klusák (2014) summarised the results of a research project entitled *Moral Development of Preschoolers and Schoolchildren: Paradigmatic Challenges by Jean Piaget and his Successors*. Both the research itself and this publication acknowledge the second and more critical wave of the reception of Piaget's work in the Czech Republic. The publication adheres to the original texts; it renders Piaget's perspective and his structuring of terms faithfully. It provides descriptions of all 54 of the experimental situations, including examples of children's behaviour in these situations that Piaget himself described. A specific feature of Klusák's publication is that Piaget's texts serve as empirical material for him in the next step, in which he subjects them to regular qualitative analysis. The result is three levels of findings: one is tied to a particular experimental situation, another reveals the developmental challenges of multiple situations, and the third characterises the search for "common denominators" for a deeper insight and a uniform classification of developmental challenges, revealed either by Piaget himself or his followers.

In the Czech Republic, the psychological aspects of the moral development of children were focused on in a series of publications by Pavel Vacek. See, for example, the volume edited by Vacek and Švarcová (2005), in particular the contribution by Vacek himself. Useful inspiration for teachers was provided by a work that brought all 54 experimental situations that Piaget created for children in Czech translation (Vacek, 2006). Another instructive guide for practical use by teachers was a publication that summarised recommendations on how to classify ethical problems in the classroom and how to manage group discussion in the classroom effectively (Vacek, 2008). A comprehensive view is represented by a work (Vacek, 2011) that first provides information on the basic psychological theories of human moral development (psychoanalytic, socio-psychological, cognitive, etc.). It then presents the relationships of children's moral development to age, gender, intelligence, and emotions. It does not neglect to deal with the complex questions of psychology's view of good and evil. The publication concludes with a section devoted to the influence of schools on the moral development of children, e.g. value education, character education, and the role of teachers in pupils' moral education.

ETHICS AND MORAL EDUCATION IN CZECH SCHOOLS

After the Velvet Revolution, until 2007 in Czech grammar schools and until 2010 in Czech basic schools it was

not possible to open a separate optional subject of ethics education. However, schools were encouraged to discuss and discuss selected ethical topics with their pupils in different subjects within what were termed the cross-sectional topics. The professional and general public began to discuss whether it would be appropriate to give schools the opportunity to establish (where the conditions were appropriate) ethics as an independent subject. Some teachers and groups of experts (e.g. the Ethics Forum of the Czech Republic) and also politicians attempted to do so. Meanwhile, specialists were wondering which concept of ethics education the Czech Republic should adopt. It was not a simple decision, because as early as in 1923 the writer Karel Čapek had pointed out two problems. The key one for us is the first of these: "When it is said that a high school is supposed to lecture on ethics, two unpleasant questions occur to me: 1. Whose ethics? There is not just one of them; there are at least a dozen. From this dozen you can make either a patchwork, or an extract, a bacterium-free health-enhancing distillate that has all possible merits, but no taste. Or one particular ethics will be chosen, but then I do not know whose it is or why. 2. And how will ethics be talked about? Certainly, in many cases with tremendous interest, just like Latin or crystallography: *Well, boys, watch out, today we*

proceed to Chapter Fourten, one's duty to one's neighbour, and so on to the end…" (Čapek, 1988, p. 319).

Eventually, the concept chosen by the Slovak Republic many years before was chosen in the Czech Republic.[7] The author of the Slovak concept is Ladislav Lencz (2000, 2003, 2005). It was based on the Spanish project of R. Roche-Olivar (1992) from the Autonomous University of Barcelona, which developed a concept called Prosocial Education in the 1990s. It was a psychological project. The Slovak researcher Lencz extended Prosocial Education with six application themes (family relations, sex education, ethical issues of ecology, the relation to economic values and work, the relation to religion, and the relation to people with other opinions) and thus (in his opinion) it could therefore be described as ethics education. It matches four basic characteristics of ethics education: 1. it leads gradually to pupils' moral maturity; 2. it stresses the unconditional acceptance of pupils and empathetic understanding, opening the door to initiative; 3. it creates relationships in a group of pupils that resemble the relationships in a good family, and 4. it emphasises prosocial values (Lencz, 1995).

There was discussion about the concept of the new subject in the Czech Republic, in which, in addition to positive attitudes, critical voices were also

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[7] Since 1993, ethics education has been included as a compulsory elective subject in the second level of basic school education and is an alternative to the subject of religious education. Since 2004, both subjects have also been introduced in the first level of basic school.

heard. Let us mention just two examples. Šrajer (2012) asked the following questions: Is ethics education necessary in our schools? In his opinion, its supporters claim that this will strengthen the weakened educational aspect of the school and promote the moral cultivation of its pupils; after all, the school is not only there to educate but also to bring children up, especially when the family fails. However, the new subject is required to be impossible – to be a panacea: aesthetic education should be crucial for the future of society and the school itself, the psychosocial climate of which is deteriorating, something which aesthetic education alone cannot achieve.

The second question was this: Is the Czech concept of ethics education that is presented truly ethics education in the philosophical sense? The answer is no, because it is mostly a psychological concept. It does not work with the categories of good and evil. Its authors want to develop empathy, assertiveness, positive self-esteem, self-acceptance, and socially expected and accepted decent behaviour among pupils. The formation of a morally advanced human being cannot be the result of external influences only, but above all of the inner efforts of the individual. Educating pupils in conscience requires the cultivation of reason, will, emotion, and other human qualities, the understanding and internalisation of moral norms or religious commandments, and the skill of arguing for values. The essence of morality

is the ability to act according to one's own beliefs.

The third question was this: Does the new subject introduce new topics and new perspectives? The answer is negative. Comparative analysis showed that 80% of ethical education overlaps with the existing, long-established, and functioning cross-cutting theme of Personality and Social Education (Šrajer, 2012).

Petr Piťha (2009) likewise warned that the name of the new subject itself was confusing. The correct designation should return to the term 'Prosocial Education': "It's… a kind of substitute for something a child is supposed to get before they enter preschool and school facilities. However, it cannot replace the fundamental formation we call imprinting. It will necessarily remain something somewhat book-like, not experienced, but learned. There will always be a danger of technological behaviourism because it can lead to behaviours but cannot establish true love and dedication. Its success, in spite of the great passion of those involved, will be determined by the fact that one, preferably two, school lessons cannot outweigh the remaining 163 hours of the week, during which the children will live in a different climate." (Piťha, 2009, p. 3)

So much for the concept of the new subject. What do its content and implementation look like? In the Czech Republic, the full text of the curriculum of the subject of ethics was published as an annex to the Measure of the Minister of

Education (Opatření, 2009). Gradually, publications that summarised practical experience with the introduction of the new subject provided teaching materials for teachers and pupils (Nováková, 2009; Valenta, 2011; Muchová, 2012; Rozum, 2012; Motyčka, 2013; Team of Authors, 2014; Šťastná, 2014).

An overall assessment of the state of ethics education in the Czech Republic was provided by the report of the Czech School Inspectorate (ČŠI, 2016), which stated that more than a third of basic schools that had not included ethics education in their school educational programme. In those basic schools that had already included it in the school curriculum it was most often integrated into one or more other subjects (at both the first and second levels). For the teaching of ethics education topics, teachers most often used controlled conversation, discussion, interpretation, explanation, and narration. Approximately four-fifths of basic school teachers who were contacted believed that since the introduction of ethics education at school, the relations among pupils and the overall school climate had improved. The greatest changes in pupils' behaviour after ethics education had been introduced into their teaching that were perceived by teachers were that pupils were more tolerant of each other and able to help each other.

As far as secondary schools are concerned, more than one-sixth of them do not include ethics in their school curriculum. However, more than a quarter of schools wish to introduce ethics education in the future. In those secondary schools that already have ethics included in the school curriculum it is most often integrated into one or more other subjects. Teachers most often use interpretation, explanation, and narration to teach ethics education topics; controlled interviews and discussion with pupils are also frequently-used methods. Most of the teachers who were addressed thought that since the introduction of ethics education at their schools, the relations between pupils and communication between teachers and pupils had improved. The greatest changes in students' behaviour after ethics education had been introduced into their teaching that were perceived by teachers were that pupils were more tolerant of each other and more open to each other's opinions. The problem is that schools choose only some topics for teaching and there is a lack of continuity of topics, which reduces the effect of teaching on the positive development of the individual to be brought about by ethics education (ČŠI, 2016).

Ethical problems of a particular subject: the example of history

In addition to ethics education as a separate subject or discussing partially ethical topics with pupils in each subject, there are also subjects in which teachers face serious ethical and moral problems and must address them. These are problems such as: how to conceive

the content of the subject after a change in the political regime, how to evaluate historical processes (especially after World War II), and how to respond to students' searching questions about recent history. History is an example of such a subject.

Karel Černý has pointed out that in the Czech Republic, as yet not enough research attention has been paid to practising history teachers. The author's qualitative research points out the considerable problems faced by basic and secondary school teachers, especially with regard to teaching the most recent Czech history. In teaching about the period of totalitarianism and the transition to democracy, this is a difficult matter, 'dealing with the past'. The teaching of the most recent history is a very thorny topic, not only from a historical or didactic point of view, but above all from an ethical point of view (Černý, 2012).

Zdeněk Beneš (2017) stated that in everyday language it is often said that it is useful or even necessary to "cope" with history or with the past, both on an individual and collective level. However, this turn is rather a media shortcut whose content is not more precisely defined and can therefore be handled very freely. There is no doubt that the relation to the past is closely linked to the system of values that both the individual and society profess. In doing so, people not only accept the hierarchy of values, but also modify them. The system of collective values comes to us as individuals from outside and we identify with it, sometimes absolutely and sometimes only partially, while sometimes we reject it. We rely on our own system of values when formulating our judgment. An ethical judgment is a distinct type of judgment. If a value judgment concerns certain parts of the reality that surrounds us, then an ethical judgment (in any sense of ethics) is always tied to the polarity of good and bad. The historian cannot avoid this judgment, especially in those cases where the problems are related to current problems, whether political or of another type (Beneš, 2017). This is all the more true for history teachers.

Jaroslav Pinkas (2017) begins his study by stating that historians and teachers of history agree that a "neutral" approach to the past is not very possible. Although the historian tries to avoid open judgments on the actors in historical events, it is nevertheless necessary to make a value judgment when it comes to some historical facts and the actors in them (for example, concentration camps or political trials). The difficulty, according to the author, is that assessing history is both an extraordinary challenge and a challenging problem for school education, and the problem is even more complicated because it is not adequately reflected in the Czech Republic. At the same time, the school environment is in a good starting position in relation to values, as both parents and the public assume that the school should also raise children by giving them a system of values, teaching

them about social norms, and teaching them decent behaviour.

In the teaching of history, two approaches can be identified, in Pinkas' opinion. The weak approach is based on three types of values: behaviorual values (the desirable behaviour of pupils in class discussion), procedural values (the ability to interpret evidence and consider arguments), and substantive values, which include value judgments (e.g. J. I. Smith). A strong approach builds on the assumption that moral attitudes are more important than analytical skills and abilities. He considers history in school to be a kind of training space for moral behaviour that can prepare pupils for thinking about justice in public life (e.g. L. S. Levstiková and K. Barton).

At the end of his study, Pinkas writes: "(…) assessing the past is one of the most challenging teaching activities, mainly because pupils often resort to decontextualised views and presentism: they apply their own moral standards to the past and consider historical actors to have been morally inferior. In my opinion, the "gap" between a superficial knowledge of a historical event and the ability to put it into context constitutes the main core of the problem of presentational approaches to the past and, in general, of Czech history teaching." (Pinkas, 2017, p. 66).

A review study (Mareš, 2017c) dealt with the ethical and moral aspects of teaching the most recent history at Czech basic and secondary schools. It sought answers to three questions:

1. How do teachers proceed when designing their lessons and teaching the most recent history? First, it is important to remember that history teachers form a heterogeneous group in terms of age, life experience, their political orientation, and the number of years they have been teaching history at school. It is therefore not easy for them to *conceive the teaching* of the most recent history *in a new way* for two reasons: this period is not yet completely explored in history and intrinsically contains controversial aspects; each history teacher must deal with this period internally and individually.

2. How do history teachers cope with the controversial issues that this content implies? According to Czech research studies, teachers' attitudes are different: 53 % of teachers say they prefer to interpret conflicting topics, while 47 % of them prefer to discuss historical topics on which there is consensus among experts and leave the issues at stake to one side.

3. What ethical dilemmas do they have to deal with and how do they proceed? There are basically two types of dilemmas. The first type concerns each history teacher him-/herself, his/her personal affair. Teachers have identified four tendencies: not to address this problem, not to open it up, to suppress it; not to recognise a degree of personal responsibility for the persistence of the totalitarian regime; to admit that everything was wrong and to realise that he/she had changed after 1989 and that he/she had not been as critical of the ruling

regime as he/she was now; to admit that he/she him-/herself tolerated the totalitarian regime or, to a large extent, actively disseminated opinions in school that legitimised it.

The second type of dilemma faced by teachers concerns the teaching, and thus the way of interpreting, of the controversial topics that the most recent history includes. The approaches used by teachers to cope with these dilemmas were four: relativise historical events by pointing out extreme views; relativise the extent and severity of the historical event; refer primarily to the broader historical context (the influence of power, the overall situation in the world, the power of the ruling regime, and the threat of repression) so that the share of the personal responsibility of certain groups of actors ceases to exist; to point out the distortion of historical events by the media and politicians (Mareš, 2017c, pp. 54-55).

The overview study, the conclusions of which we have just mentioned, stated that thoroughly conceived empirical research into ethical aspects of school history which truly goes in depth is still lacking in the Czech Republic. This situation contrasts with the situation abroad, where the teaching of history and the problems faced by teachers after the totalitarian regime ended in their country, the country gained independence, overcame a civil war, etc. are the focus of interest of many researchers (Northern Ireland, Spain, Cyprus, South Africa, Guatemala, Chile).

SURVEY STUDIES BY CZECH AND FOREIGN RESEARCHERS

It is clear from the production of Czech book publishers and Czech journals that the professional public in this country is particularly concerned about the ethical and moral problems that occur in Czech basic and secondary schools; therefore they deal with **negative** phenomena.

Suffice it to mention review studies devoted to e.g. theoretical views on child aggression (Čermák, 1998) or studies on specific forms of aggression, i.e. bullying among pupils. For example, Janošová, Kollerová, Zábrodská et al. (2016) define bullying and point out how it changes over time. There has been a shift from physical aggression to more sophisticated forms (indirect bullying, cyberbullying, or exclusion from the community of children and adolescents). The authors describe theoretical approaches, the functioning of bullying, and its main actors and do not neglect to cover diagnostic problems. Further work (Kolář, 2011) focuses on the very complex issues of preventing bullying in schools and using appropriate intervention strategies if bullying has already occurred.

Unethical behaviour on the part of pupils in class is the subject of two review studies. The first concerns traditional student cheating. It points out that cheating at school cannot be explained only by the idiosyncrasies of the pupils themselves, but also by those of

their teachers, the classroom climate, and the school. The study gives an overview of the basic types of traditional and electronic cheating. It discusses how cheating can be detected, how to respond appropriately, and how to prevent it. It presents the results of empirical surveys that identified the main variables that affect cheating and student motives leading to cheating at school (Mareš, 2005).

The second study focuses on current research on students' indiscipline in the classroom. It shows why it is difficult to define the notion of discipline and how unstable the terminology is. Different types of students' indiscipline and the factors that influence it are characterised (it turns out that this is not just about the pupils' idiosyncrasies). The study gives an overview of the procedures by which students' indiscipline and its consequences can be examined. It outlines three conceptual approaches that should help address class discipline: the oldest approach is based only on the teacher, i.e. punishing and rewarding pupils; others build on the pupil and his/her self-control and self-regulation, and finally, the third builds on the class, group decision making, and group pressure on problem pupils. At school, however, it is not enough only to suppress or eliminate inappropriate behaviour by pupils, but it is also necessary simultaneously to develop positive behaviour in pupils (Mareš, 2018).

There is also unethical behaviour by the teacher towards pupils. The *teacher's misbehaviour* refers to behaviour that does not go beyond the law but interferes with teaching, thereby disrupting teacher-pupil relationships and impairing pupils' learning. The study presents four psychological theories that seek to explain the causes of the teacher's inappropriate behaviour: the theory of causal attribution, the theory of *self-efficacy*, the theory of teacher interaction behaviour, and the theory of the teacher's exercise of power. It describes the possibilities for diagnosing the teacher's inappropriate behaviour and summarises the results of the research. It notes that misconduct by the teacher aggravates variables on the pupils' side, teacher-pupil interpersonal relationships, teacher-pupil communication, and important variables on the teacher's side: his credibility, competence, and ability to provide social support (Mareš, 2013).

In contrast to mobbing and bossing, which are discussed below, two review studies focus on those critical situations in the school that are triggered by social pressures on school staff (from senior authorities, the community, the school management, staff members, and parents). Social pressures expose school staff to moral dilemmas and they have to deal with them. They have to make a choice, either to submit to social pressure and accept a decision that they do not internally agree with, or risk taking a stand against pressure and doing what they consider morally right.

The first study is devoted to teachers and discusses the concept of critical

events, as in many cases it contains an ethical conflict which results in moral distress for the teacher. Experts have pointed out that this distortion changes over time: they therefore distinguish between primary moral distress and reactive moral distress, which only occurs at a certain distance. It also illustrates the model of cumulating the negative effects of distress over time, i.e. the increasing moral residue in a person who is repeatedly experiencing moral distress. The study also discusses the problems associated with the diagnosis of moral distress in teachers and suggests possible intervention procedures that could alleviate or eliminate distress (Mareš, 2017a). A follow-up study examines the same moral problem in school psychologists. A school psychologist too is sometimes pressured to agree, in the "higher interest", with decisions that affect pupils, colleagues, parents, and the school, even though such decisions are not ethically correct. The study summarises the results of research on ethical problems encountered by school psychologists in the Czech Republic, the USA, Canada, and selected European countries and suggests possible solutions (Mareš, 2017b).

The teacher's power over pupils is an ethically difficult topic, because its different forms can result in either a negative or a positive pedagogical effect. The exercise of power in a group of novice teachers is a special case. An overview study on this topic was written by Šalamounová, Bradová, and Lojdová

(2014). The authors characterise power using three main characteristics: circularity, situationality, and reciprocity. They draw attention to important factors in the organisation of power in the classroom, which have a significant influence on the situation in the lessons of beginner teachers. These include teachers' and pupils' views of the situations that occur in the classroom and during the lesson, or the definition of the same situation by each of the two parties involved. The definitions may be similar, but also very different, and then it depends on which party asserts its point of view or what compromise the teacher and pupils eventually reach. The second factor is the interpersonal relationships between teachers and pupils which are gradually developed. It happens that, at the beginning of their careers, teachers try to be rather critical friends of their pupils, while over time they can become stricter and more demanding. The third factor is the context in which teachers and pupils meet. It is not only the context of a particular school class, but also the context of a particular school, the location where the school is located, and the socio-cultural customs of the country.

Obviously, there are also review papers that deal with the positive aspects of upbringing and education in Czech basic, secondary, and higher education institutions. These include, in particular, works inspired by the emergence of positive psychology in the USA. First, let us mention generally conceived

works (Mareš, 2001; Křivohlavý, 2004; Slezáčková, 2010a), on which work focused on the issue of education of children and young people was based. For example, they mention the need to focus pedagogical research on the study of positive phenomena at school (Mareš, 2000), examining teachers as a source of social support for pupils (Mareš, 2003), reflecting on three levels of positivity in education (Valenta, 2003), the positive aspects of human beings, created by Christopher Peterson, Martin Seligman, and their colleagues (Mareš, 2008), inspirational examples of positive programmes implemented in American and Australian schools (Slezáčková, 2010b), or an overview of positive education in the world (Janštová & Slezáčková, 2018).

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

To date, professional pedagogical societies in the Czech Republic have paid only partial and unsystematic attention to research on the ethical and moral education of children and adolescents. In 2010, the Czech Pedagogical Society organised a themed conference entitled Ethics in the Sciences of Education. The meeting was divided into three sections: Social Values and Norms in Education, Morality in School Life, and Ethics in the Academic Environment (Dopita & Čech, 2010).

The Czech Educational Research Association (ČAPV) organised a separate section on Ethical and Moral Aspects in Education at its 21st Conference in Ústí nad Labem (ČAPV, 2013). An important paper by Filip Smolík (2015) entitled Ethical and Social Aspects in Education and Pedagogical Research, was presented at the 23rd Conference, in Pilsen. Occasional reports on this topic have also appeared at other ČAPV conferences, (e.g. Hábl, 2010).

However, there have also been specialised conferences organised by more institutions. For example, a conference on Bullying as an Ethical, Psychological, and Educational problem was organized by the Ethics Forum of the Czech Republic, the White Circle of Safety, and the Institute of Psychology of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (Philippová & Janošová, 2009).

After this introduction, it is time to briefly introduce some specific research studies.

Research on cyberbullying among *children* at Czech schools (AISIS, 2010) was carried out on a representative sample of 1004 basic school pupils aged 8-15 years across the entire Czech Republic. The sample was selected by the quota method according to the children's gender and age, the region, and the size of their place of residence. The research was carried out using personal interviews with respondents according to an interview protocol. The results showed that 10% of the respondents had experienced cyberattacks in the last six months. The following platforms were those most commonly

used for cyberbullying in children: mobile phones (68%), chat rooms (30%), email (28%), and community networks such as Facebook or Libimseti (14%). The child usually responds to cyberbullying by ignoring the aggressor and cutting him-/herself off, e.g. by changing his/her SIM card or email address (37%), contacting the aggressor and trying to talk to them (34%), involving their parents (26%), or trying to return the attack to the aggressor (24%). In general, the children who were interviewed considered cyberbullying dangerous (69%), but they were not too afraid of it. The perpetrator was a classmate in 51% of cases, a pupil at the same school in 27%, and remained anonymous or unknown to the victim in 22% of cases.

A national research study on cyberbullying addressed to *teachers* took place in all 14 self-governing regions of the Czech Republic (Kopecký & Szotkowski, 2016). The research involved 5136 respondents (79% women, 21% men) with an average length of practice of 20.65 years. Teachers in basic schools (60%) and secondary schools (37%) dominated; the rest were teachers in nursery schools, colleges, and universities. An original online questionnaire with 44 items was used. The results show that 6.19% of the respondents had experienced cyberattacks in the last 12 months. Most of the attacks were one-off; serious forms of cyberbullying are rare. The following platforms were those most commonly used for cyberbullying: social networks (39%),

mobile phones (30%), email (22%), and public chat rooms (10%). The impacts on the teachers were manifested in the emotional area by rage and feelings of awkwardness, sadness, and insecurity. In the physiological and behavioural areas, the teachers experienced sleep disturbances, a deterioration of their concentration, and headaches. The teachers usually responded to cyberbullying by blocking or deleting harmful content from the Internet. The most frequent culprits were pupils (40% of cases) or pupils' parents (8%); in 24% of cases the perpetrators were not found.

Čech (2011) was interested in the experience of Czech basic school teachers with the manifestations of mobbing by colleagues on the staff and bossing by school management. He chose a quantitative approach and used a non-standardised semi-structured electronic questionnaire with 32 items. The sample was created by randomly selecting 140 schools from a nationwide database of 4194 basic schools in such a way that all 14 regions of the Czech Republic were equally represented by 10 schools. Email addresses for school management and individual teachers were obtained from each school. They were contacted and asked to cooperate. The final number of respondents was 1003 primary school teachers (81% women and 19% men). In terms of the length of their teaching experience, the most numerous group of teachers was the one with 21-30 years (31%), followed by the group with 11-20 years (28%).

The results provided data on the prevalence of mobbing and bossing in the sample of Czech primary school teachers. According to the definition of mobbing (attacks lasting more than half a year), a total of 5.8% of teachers can be considered real victims of bullying in the workplace, while mobbing accounts for 3.7% of the respondents and bossing for 4.1% of them; of all the research respondents, 2% had experienced both mobbing and bossing). The most common forms of attack on a victim were: underestimation of their work, constant criticism of their work, ridicule and gossip, assigning absurd tasks, assigning no tasks, and ignoring the teacher. The most frequent defence strategies used by teachers were: seeking support from one of their colleagues, trying to talk to the aggressor and settle the conflict, thinking about quitting their job, and pretending that nothing was happening. Only a few teachers asked the school management for help. The school management's response to the reported mobbing and request for assistance took the following forms: the school management did not respond at all; it listened to both sides and drew conclusions in the form of measures, or it distanced itself from the problem among the staff. Regarding the aggressors, in the case of mobbing the teachers gave this response: *more often women, but also men*, and in the case of bossing *men and women alike*. I consider bossing among elementary

school teachers as a more dangerous and risky phenomenon than mobbing. Both mobbing and bossing occur more often in large urban schools than in smaller schools. Teachers working in secondary schools have more experience with both mobbing and bossing than teachers working in primary schools. The serious conclusion of the research is: there are 18.4% of teachers who have been exposed to some forms of bullying in the workplace, or in the course of their teaching practice (Čech, 2011). Therefore, these manifestations should not only be detected and addressed in a timely manner, but also prevented.

A similar issue, but at university level, was dealt with by Zábrodská and Květoň (2012). The authors contacted three public universities in three different regions of the Czech Republic, which enabled them to obtain answers from a relatively large and diversified group of respondents working in different faculties and teaching different fields. The sample consisted of 1533 people (58% women, 42% men). The most numerous group was the 30-39 age group. Most of the respondents worked in natural sciences (54.3%), social sciences and the humanities (33.5%), and technical sciences and formal sciences (6.8%). It was a quantitative research study based on the NAQ-R electronic questionnaire. Inspired by international studies on mobbing in a university environment, it contained 99 items.

The authors submitted a definition of mobbing[8] to the respondents and, according to the criteria stated therein, 7.9% of the respondents said they had been the target of mobbing in their current workplace during the last year. A further 28.8% of the respondents reported witnessing mobbing during the same time period. In addition, 13.8% of the respondents added that they had been the target of mobbing or bossing at one of their previous workplaces. The most common forms of negative behaviour on the part of colleagues and superiors were as follows: assigning work below the person's level of qualification, exposing them to an unmanageable workload, ignoring their views and opinions, spreading slander and unsubstantiated reports about them, ignoring them, or concealing information that was important for their work. The respondents most often cited their bosses as the originators of the negative behaviour (73% of cases), i.e. it was mostly bossing. Mobbing by colleagues occurred in 23% of cases. In terms of gender, men (53% of cases) were bullied more often, while women were bullied less (40%). The closest relationship between negative behaviour and an unpleasant psychosocial climate in the workplace was found for the following variables: intimidation of staff members, disparagement of their work, a lack of respect, a lack of support from management, and unwillingness on the part of colleagues to cooperate.

There are relatively few such extensive research studies in the Czech Republic. Rather, partial research probes predominate, mainly in the form of studies by university students to obtain qualifications or research probes by university teachers.

Teaching focused on ethical and moral problems

Hábl and Polinský (2017) chose a qualitative approach. They wondered whether the method of moral dilemmas is a suitable tool for the ethics education of adolescents. They assumed that the method would work if it developed pupils' moral consciousness, and if it helped pupils make morally desirable decisions. The research probe was carried out among 71 pupils aged 15-16 years. The procedure was as follows: the pupils listened to a dilemma story (this was one of Kohlberg's dilemmas, namely the situation in which a father asks his son to lend him the money his son earned from his own work and would like to use to go to a weekend event with his friends). Then the students gave written answers to pre-prepared questions which determined their moral attitude and its justification. A total of 48 pupils took a negative attitude towards lending money, 19 a positive one (12 pupils were

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[8] Mobbing refers to a situation in which an individual repeatedly and for a long time perceives that he or she is the target of negative behaviour by one or more people and finds it difficult to stand up to such behaviour.

motivated by altruism, six pragmatism, and one fear); the rest did not answer clearly. Afterwards, there was a joint discussion of the problem and then the pupils re-wrote their moral decision. As a result of thinking more deeply about the model situation and by hearing the arguments for and against a total of seven pupils changed their negative attitude to a positive one. The authors stated that the dilemma method provides an opportunity for teachers to influence moral development in a non-directive manner, which is both functional and desirable in adolescents.

In recent years, migration has introduced a number of specific problems into the functioning of the Czech education system, including the education of foreign pupils. These are children whose parents have non-Czech citizenship (with stays in the Czech Republic that differ in thir length and status). It also includes children born in the Czech Republic to foreign parents. The research, which is ongoing, focuses on ethical aspects of the education of Russian pupils at Czech basic schools (Janečková, 2018). Russians are in fourth place in the representation of minorities in the Czech Republic (after Ukrainians, Slovaks, and Vietnamese). The aim of the ongoing research is to describe and analyse the reality of education of Russian pupils in the Czech Republic and to identify and evaluate ethical dilemmas that are both experienced and hidden. The research is based on multiple case studies and is still continuing.

Power relations between teachers and pupils at school

The relationships between the teacher and his/her pupils have a significant influence on the behaviour of the pupils and their learning outcomes. They are characterised by a specific structure and dynamics of the influence of power. In general, a teacher in a classroom has more power than his/her pupils and usually maintains dominance: he/she controls and directs the classroom.

The qualitative research of Šeďová, Švaříček, and Šalamounová (2012) was carried out on 16 primary school teachers and their pupils. They identified four types of power constellations:

1. *Pecking from the hand*: a constellation in which the teacher is strongly dominant, pupils share his/her view of the situation in the classroom with enthusiasm; the relationships between the two groups are warm and personal.

2. *Power play*: a constellation in which the teacher is strongly dominant and the pupils do not share his/her view of the situation in the classroom but do not openly oppose him/her. They are rather passively resistant, fulfilling the assigned tasks, but only to the extent that they avoid sanctions.

3. *Circulation of power*: a constellation in which power is decentralised and the pupils are proactive and actively influence the lesson. The view of the situation is shared by both sides and school work is perceived by the pupils as valuable and interesting.

4. *Scramble*: a constellation in which power is highly decentralised, but the pupils do not share the teacher's goals and both groups struggle to see which of them will enforce their view of the classroom. The relations between the teacher and pupils are personal and contain negative emotions; both sides are dissatisfied and try to change each other's behaviour.

From the ethical point of view, two of these power constellations are very complex: power play and scramble.

The research among experienced basic school teachers was followed by further research which was interested in what power relations look like in student teachers and fresh graduates, i.e. teachers who are just starting their teaching career.

Mixed-methods research (Vlčková, Lojdová, & Lukas et al., 2015) was carried out on eight student teachers who were doing teaching practice in basic schools and 130 of their pupils. The research question was: How does the process of negotiating power between teachers and their pupils in teaching at the second level of the Czech basic school during long-term teaching practice proceed? A number of methods (i.e. a multimethod design) were used in the research: observation of lessons which the teachers taught, field observers' notes; video recordings of the observed lessons and their transcription into protocols and subsequent analysis; questionnaires for pupils assessing the exercise of power in the class by the student teachers,

reflective diaries about the teaching practice kept by the student teachers, and semi-structured interviews with the student teachers about their teaching in the classes. The researchers were interested in the process of "negotiating power" between the student teachers and their pupils in the classroom, or, in other words: how the power situation in the classroom is established. The authors interpret the results they obtained through the individual components of power, which they refer to as bases of power. The research identified manifestations of legitimate power (connected with the student's entry into their new role as a teacher), coercive power (which appears in relatively stable communication structures), manifestations of rewards (these are situations where pupils were rewarded, sometimes unexpectedly), mainfestations of expert power (derived from the skills and expertise of a student teacher), and manifestations of referential power (based on the relationship of the student teacher with the pupils).

Lojdová and Lukas (2015) were interested in the way students of teaching work during long-term practice when they want to get their pupils to work. As part of a large-scale mixed research study (see Vlčková, Lojdová, & Lukas et al., 2015 above), they chose a student teacher, Alice, and her teaching in the eighth grade of basic school. The results showed that coercive power can take four forms: verbal direct coercion of pupils, non-verbal direct coercion,

verbal indirect coercion, and non-verbal indirect coercion. The teacher's application and combination of the four types of coercive power mentioned in her interactions with pupils was described by the authors as a scenario. They explain two scenarios and imagine their consequences. The first is a scenario of gradual coercion and is based on a gradual increase in teacher pressure on pupils. The teacher moves from applying indirect power to direct power, from non-verbal power to verbal power. This *gradation* affects all the pupils in the class, who are involved in it whether or not it is targeted at them. It creates a certain tension that is subjectively perceived by all the pupils and, of course, the teacher. The second scenario is the teacher's *resignation* of coercive power. The teacher does not "accomplish" his/her intention in the lesson to the end. He/she leaves the pupil's answer (which does not suit him/her) without comment and prefers to open another topic. He/she proceeds from direct power to indirect power.

Aggression, bullying, mobbing, and bossing at school

In addition to larger research projects on this topic, we also find partial research probes dedicated to the unethical behaviour of pupils, teachers, and school heads.

The topic of bullying among classmates is well mapped in the Czech Republic. However, it is less clear which variables demonstrably affect its origin and development. Kollerová and Smolík (2016) examined the relationships between bullying in the classroom, rejection of a pupil by his/her classmates, social support, the fear of bullying, and differences in the position and popularity of the pupil in the classroom. The research was carried out on 512 pupils (52% boys, 48% girls) in the sixth grade of basic school (age 11-13 years). The authors used the following methods: at the individual level, rejection of the pupil by his/her classmates and the pupil's fear of bullying (Bully Victim Questionnaire) and the social support perceived by the pupil (CASSS); at the whole class level, the incidence and frequency of bullying in the classroom and the differences in perceived popularity among the pupils in that class. A higher level of rejection of a student by their classmates and a lower level of social support from schoolmates in boys is related to bullying by classmates. The relationship between the rate of rejection of a pupil by their classmates and bullying was lower in girls if bullying was more frequent in the class. Greater fear of bullying on the part of a pupil, lower levels of social support from classmates, and a higher incidence of bullying in the class were related to bullying in girls. The relationship between the fear of bullying and greater differences in perceived popularity among pupils in the class was related to bullying in girls.

In an international survey, Bendl and Voňková (2010) analysed whether and in what situations the teacher ap-

pears as a person who tends: 1. to manipulate his/her surroundings (pupils, colleagues, school head), 2. not to manipulate anyone; 3. to be a victim of manipulation. The research sought to correlate these three tendencies to the behaviour and selected characteristics of teachers. The research was conducted in three countries: Poland, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. The Czech sample that was surveyed consisted of 268 basic and secondary school teachers (12% men and 88% women). The research used an international questionnaire, which contained 20 items and presented the teachers with hypothetical situations from which it was possible to deduce the tendency of the teacher to act in a certain way.

The results indicate the following differences. Male teachers agree statistically significantly more often than women that adults must use their power over the child to teach them desirable behaviour, and that the use of punishments and rewards in education is necessary for children to learn desirable behaviour. In some situations, teachers at the second level of basic schools act more manipulatively than those teaching at the first level and in secondary schools. The length of teaching experience of a teacher has a statistically significant impact on his/her attitude to dealing with a situation in which the school head has a different opinion from the teacher and tries to persuade the teacher to act against his/her beliefs. Teachers with shorter teaching experi-

ence would be inclined either to discuss matters with the head or to categorically reject pressure from the head. On the contrary, teachers with longer experience would rather submit to the school head's manipulative behaviour. The authors conclude that undergraduate teacher training should include more courses that develop the sensitivity of future teachers to recognise manipulative behaviour in themselves and in others. Teachers should try to minimise their manipulative behaviour when educating pupils. Teachers should also teach pupils how to recognise manipulation, how to react to it, and how to defend themselves against it.

In his work entitled The Teacher as a Victim of Violence, Tomášek (2008) examined the experiences of teachers and heads of Czech secondary schools with various forms of violence by pupils and their parents towards teachers and heads. 200 schools were randomly selected from the list of Czech secondary schools and they were sent two questionnaires asking for cooperation. One was for the school head, the other for three teachers. In total, 366 teachers (34% men, 66% women, most often with 11-30 years of experience) and 127 heads (69% men, 31% women, with less than 20 years of experience) participated in the research. The results show that secondary school teachers (predominantly secondary vocational and grammar school teachers) most often face the following negative phenomena during their careers: gross verbal abuse or in-

sults by a pupil in class (21.9% of the teachers), gross verbal abuse by a parent or other relative (12.3%), and threats made by parents or other relatives to misuse influential connections (10.7%). 4.7% of the teachers had experienced serious cases of physical assault during their careers, either by a pupil or by a parent. As far as the heads of secondary schools are concerned, they most often face the following negative phenomena during their careers: gross verbal abuse or insults by a pupil (48.8% of the heads), and threats made by parents or other relatives to misuse influential connections (27.0%), intentional personal injury (18.9%), and pupils threatening to misuse influential connections (13.4%). 4.7% of the heads had also experienced serious cases of physical assault by a pupil or parent during their careers. The author concludes that it is necessary to perform a more in-depth examination of the relationships, causes, and consequences of violence against teachers.

In addition to the quantitative research on mobbing and bossing among teachers that was discussed above, Čech (2011) also conducted *qualitative* research into the personal experience of primary school teachers with bossing. The aim of the research was to analyse its origins, the forms it took, its course, the feelings of the victims, the possibilities of defending themselves and attempts to solve a demanding situation, the personal and professional impacts on the victim, and, finally, the conditions for the occurrence

of bossing in the given workplace. The participants in the survey were 13 basic school teachers from all over the Czech Republic (three men and 10 women). The basis was a semi-structured interview, which was recorded, transcribed, and analysed using a grounded theory approach with three types of coding (open, axial, and selective). The validity was ensured by triangulation from several sources (correspondence, police records, newspaper articles).

The results of the analysis can be summarised as follows. There are four causes of bossing for the teachers: the peculiarities of the aggressor (narcissism, arrogance, domination, directiveness; a feeling of being at risk of competition, disability; the negative influence of his family); mutual antipathy between the aggressor and the victim; the idiosyncrasies of the victim (activist, warrior, or acquiescent individual); the situation around the selection procedure for a management role. The range of ways in which the victim is attacked is very rich, such as error-finding, humiliation, defamation, nonsensical orders and prohibitions, threats, worsening working conditions, or a constant change of instructions. The victim's experience of long-lasting psychological terror is manifested in daily stress, great insecurity, fear, a strong sense of helplessness and humiliation, and sadness that no one trusts them, but also annoyance at the whole situation. The psychosocial context of bossing comprised four components: an unhealthy

climate among the teaching staff (the general disruption of interpersonal relationships, the existence of two camps, the harassment of some teachers by the head, the teachers being forced to teach by the head); the aggressor and the victim knew each other before, but not in the role of superior and subordinate; a lack of a reaction by most colleagues to the bossing, motivated by fear for their position and job; the impossibility of the head being removed from his/her managerial position for bossing, which is also difficult to prove (a head can only be dismissed on the grounds of managerial or economic misconduct). The strategy used by the victim to deal with the whole situation by the victim takes four forms: the initial excusing of the aggressor by the victim; ways of coping with the burden on the victims (humour, non-response, trying to "bite" the director); factual argumentation of the victim; a stage of "this is not possible" (first option: filing a complaint, dealing with the municipality, considering a lawsuit; second option: leaving the school: arguments for and against, finding a new position, giving notice). The result of the research is a paradigmatic model of the entire complex bossing process, including the psychological and health implications for the teacher who has been the victim.

Pupils cheating at school

Empirical research on cheating among pupils at basic and secondary schools is not very common in the Czech Republic. One of the exceptions is the research study by Vrbová and Stuchlíková (2012). It took place among 401 pupils (53% boys, 47% girls) from basic schools and grammar schools. These were a group of adolescents aged 14-16 years. It was a quantitative survey using a 66-item questionnaire, with 19 items concerning cheating. Factor analysis identified two factors: the first concerned the pupil-teacher level and included active and passive copying by pupils, excuses for a forgotten workbook, and information on test questions (34% of the variance); the second concerned the pupil-parent level and involved falsifying a parent's signature, lying about grades, and simulating illness when the pupil was to be tested (10% of the variance). Overall results: 65% of the respondents reported having copied in the past year, 90% let their classmates copy, and 88% of them saw their classmates copying. The second type of cheating (forgery, lying) was reported by only 9% of the pupils. There was no statistically significant difference between the responses of the basic school pupils and grammar school students. On the contrary, a statistically significant relationship was found between copying and lying, between copying and an advantage for the pupil, and lying and an advantage for the pupil. The surprising conclusion of this research is that it does not apply that the poorer pupils are those who are more likely to cheat. It is the best-performing pupils who try to cheat more often because they want to avoid failure and maintain their good grades.

In addition to negative topics, research into positive ones does appear (albeit sporadically) in the Czech research.

Helping

Some pupils have learning difficulties and sometimes their classmates help them. Legitimate aid for learning among classmates (as a specific form of social support among adolescents) was a topic of research at basic school level (Mareš, Ježek, & Ludvíček, 2003). The research probe was conducted among 185 pupils aged 12-14 (55% boys, 45% girls). The Czech version of the screening questionnaire of Lind (1997), which has six items and investigates the hypothetical behaviour of pupils, was used. The research probe indicated that although pupils attach great importance to mutual assistance in learning among their classmates, mutual help is not really common. On the basis of a hypothetical case in which a classmate has serious problems and is at risk of repeating a year and needs help, it was found that the pupils feel a moral obligation to help such a classmate and they are (to some extent) willing to help him/her. The individual student (in order to assess the willingness of his/her classmates to help him/her learn) is relatively sceptical about his/her class as a whole. If a classmate did not get help and failed, almost half of the students would feel responsible.

There are differences in the pupils' responses according to their gender and age. Girls perceive mutual help as more important than boys do; they feel a greater moral obligation to help and are more willing to help; if a classmate failed, they would feel more responsible for the failure of a classmate than boys. Among boys, however, the motivation to help may be linked to a feeling of their own incompetence: "I would like to help him, but I guess I wouldn't be of much use." Younger pupils are more willing to help than older ones. Overall, the pupils' stance has greater motivational power than a call for help from the teacher ("If they are willing to help, I will help too.").

In the section that dealt with children's aggression, we talked about a specific form of aggression – bullying classmates. However, we can also look at the problem of bullying through a positive lens and examine how classmates help the victims of bullying (Kollerová, Janošová, & Říčan, 2015). The research was conducted among 512 basic school pupils (53% boys, 47% girls; age 11-13) in two large cities. The two fundamental research questions were: Can gender, position in the class (i.e. social preference and perceived popularity) and the social support provided by the teacher predict the moral motivation of a student to prevent a classmate from being bullied? Can the interaction of a pupil's moral motivation with gender, classroom status (i.e. social preference and perceived popularity), and the social

support provided by the teacher to the pupil predict the defence of a classmate against bullying when we add all the other independent variables? The moral motivation of pupils was determined by the pupil's solution of a modified case study from Feigenberg, King, Barr, et al. (2008). Social support is a block of items dedicated to teachers in the Child and Adolescent Social Support Scale-Revised questionnaire (Malecki et al., 2002). Hierarchical regression analysis shows that the defence of a classmate can be predicted by a) moral motivation, taking into account the following variables: gender, social preference, perceived popularity, and social support of the pupil by the teacher, b) the interaction between moral motivation and the pupil's social preference in the class, taking into account all other independent variables. The proposed model explained 40.5% of the variance.

RESEARCH DEALING
WITH DIAGNOSTIC ISSUES

The **diagnostics** (assessment) of the ethical and moral characteristics of pupils and teachers is a separate – and hitherto little developed – area in the Czech Republic.

Perceived social support of pupils is one of the important components of personal well-being and good relationships between people. One of the diagnostic tools for detecting this variable in children and adolescents is the Child and Adolescent Social Support Scale-

Revised CASSS (Malecki et al., 2002). The Czech version of CASSS-CZ (Mareš, Sr., Ježek, & Tomášek, 2005) was verified on a sample of 247 pupils (49% boys, 51% girls) in the sixth to ninth classes of basic school (age 11-15 years). The questionnaire has 60 items and consists of two types of items: type A contains factual items that identify various forms of social support from the perspective of children and adolescents, while type B contains items that determine the degree of subjective importance that the respondent attaches to a specific form of social support. The Varimax spin factor analysis identified five factors that correspond to these five variables: my parents, my teachers, my classmates, my friends, people at school. The questionnaire is suitable for use with both individuals and groups.

Surveys devoted to the manifestations of teacher power over pupils abroad often work with questionnaires. The aim of the work of the research team (Vlčková, Mareš, Jr., Ježek et al., 2017) was to select and modify a questionnaire used in western countries for the socio-cultural conditions of the Czech Republic. The choice fell on a tool measuring pupils' reflection on teacher power in the classroom: TPUS – the *Teacher Power Use Scale* (Schrodt, Witt, & Turman, 2007). The original questionnaire has 30 items and is intended for undergraduates, but partly also for high school students. The Czech authors modified the questionnaire so that it could be used by pupils at the second

level of basic school and the lower years of multi-year grammar schools. Because the respondents would be younger, the items had to be reworded to make them more specific. The newly created version of the questionnaire, entitled *Power Base: Teacher Version* (BMU), consisted of 45 items. Of these, nine were newly proposed and four more were variants of the original questionnaire items. The seven-point scale used in the original questionnaire was shortened to a five-point one. The research sample consisted of a total of 2175 pupils from the sixth to ninth classes of basic school from 106 teachers from 111 schools. The teachers mostly taught social sciences: civics, geography, history, the mother tongue, and literature. The average age of the pupils who completed the questionnaire was 13.7 years (median 14.0 years). The average length of teaching experience of the teachers who were assessed was 18.7 years (median 17.5 years).

The confirmatory factor analysis identified five factors that generally correspond to the structure of the original TPUS questionnaire. In fact, they correspond to the theoretically postulated five bases of power – expert (E), relational (R), legitimate (L), coercive (C), and remunerative (R). In the end, the authors of the Czech version leaned towards a simpler four-factor model in which legitimate and coercive powers are combined into one factor. The final version of the Czech version of the questionnaire, called BMU, contains 40 items.

The teacher has not only some power over his/her pupils, but also a certain responsibility for his/her pupils learning something at school and being successful in acquiring knowledge and skills. There are many types of teacher responsibility (e.g. legal, objectively proved by the educational success/failure of the pupils, but also felt subjectively by the teacher him-/herself). This is what the RSA – *Responsibility for Student Achievement* questionnaire (Guskey, 1981) – measures. The original questionnaire has 30 items; 15 items to measure a teacher's responsibility for pupils' success and 15 items to measure his/her responsibility for pupils' failure. The questionnaire gives the respondent teacher a description of specific pedagogical situations that relate to the class as a whole and asks them to give thought to what affects the performance of the pupils. The questionnaire always offers two explanatory reasons. One attributes responsibility to the teacher, the other to the pupils. The Czech version was created by Mareš, Skalská, and Kantorková (1994). The sample consisted of 421 teachers. Of these, 220 were basic school teachers (6% men and 94% women), 80 secondary school teachers (35% men and 65% women), and 121 university teachers (70% men and 30% women). The PFA factor analysis identified (in accordance with the original) two factors: the perceived responsibility of the teacher for the success of his/her pupils and the perceived responsibility of the teacher for their failure. The fi-

nal version of the Czech version of the RSA-CZ questionnaire has 25 items. The authors (on the basis of empirical data) have created five types of teachers: 1. teachers who claim the credit for their pupils' successes but deny responsibility for their failures; 2. teachers who share the credit for successes with their pupils but deny responsibility for their failures; 3. teachers who give the credit for their pupils'successes to their pupils, but, in a situation where their pupils are unsuccessful, disagree as to who is responsible; 4. Teachers who accept responsibility for both their pupils' successes and their failures; 5. teachers who attribute the same responsibility to both themselves and their pupils for both the pupils' achievements and their failures.

One of the important variables to be measured in research on ethical and moral issues at school is human moral competence. The German author Georg Lind developed his own theory of moral development, which he called a two-aspect one, because it includes both cognitive and affective aspects. Underpinned by this theory, he developed the *Moral Judgment Test* (MJT) (Lind, 1999), since 2013 the MCT – *Moral Competence Test*. The test as a whole consists of two parts, two dilemmas. The standard version of the MJT includes the dilemma of a worker, an employee of a company, and the dilemma of a physician. Each dilemma first involves entering a problem situation in the form of a story, followed by 12 arguments (six arguments for and six arguments against), from which the respondent can choose.

Slováčková (2001a) introduced Lind's theory of moral competence to the Czech public and translated the test into Czech. In a transversal study with 310 Czech and 70 foreign students from a Czech medical faculty, she examined their moral competence. They were students of all six years of medical studies. The results indicate that the level of moral development was post-conventional for both the Czech and foreign students (Kohlberg's stages 5 and 6) throughout their studies. The level of moral competence in the Czech students *decreased* significantly depending on their age and year, and in the foreign students there was an insignificant slight increase. Among those of the Czech students whose satisfaction with life was increasing, there was a significant increase in their moral competence. The influence of other variables (gender, nationality, religion) on moral competence was not proved in either the Czech or foreign students (Slováčková, 2001b).

Dvořáková (2007) conceived her research probe on the moral reasoning of adolescents to include some cognitive, personality, and situational factors. The research was conducted among 261 secondary school students (54% boys, 46% girls) aged 15-20 years. The author administered five methods to the students: an inventory of moral situations, an inventory of value preference, an inventory of the significance of morality, self-assessment by the respondents, and free

statements of respondents on two cases of their own moral decisions (examples of good and bad decisions).

For the purpose of her research, she created an original *Inventory of four moral situations* close to the everyday experiences of today's adolescents. They investigate how an adolescent would make a decision and how he/she would justify his/her decision. What is interesting about the inventory is that it does not ask about the decision of an indeterminate person AB, but asks: "*Situation X has befallen you; what do you do?*" Each situation was followed by ten items offering different solutions and different reasons for the situation that was described.

According to Wark and Krebs (1996), the individual moral situations can be classified as follows: Situation A: Friend versus classmates; the offence is currently present; its nature is antisocial; the student's reaction to the offence is examined. Situation B: Friend versus partner; the offence is imminent; its nature is antisocial; the student's reaction to temptation is examined. Situation C: Brother vs. mother; the offence is currently present; its nature is prosocial; the pupil's reaction to the request is examined. Situation D: Friends vs. classmates; the offence still imminent; by its nature, it is social pressure to transgress values and the student's reaction is examined.

For each situation, the author created two items at the pre-conventional level, four items at the conventional level and four items at the post-conventional level. Half of all the items offered one way of resolving the situation, the other half offered a completely different way of resolving the situation. The items offering a justification also differed in substance. Half of them referred to social norms in the explanation, while the other half referred to relationships with other people. For each situation, the author also ascertained whether the respondents themselves or a friend had experienced a similar situation.

The results can be summarised as follows. The method makes it possible to find out both aspects of moral reasoning, i.e. both the respondent's decision (the chosen solution to the situation) and the reasoning behind his/her decision. The solution (i.e. general opinion) most often explained around 50% to 60% of the total variance for the item. The research noted that there are only minor differences between girls and boys in dealing with situations A and C, but great ones in situations B and D. Five or six factors were extracted for all the situations for both girls and boys in the analysis of the rationales for each item. That explained 73% to 85% of the total variance. Individual factors often affected the *developmental aspect*, i.e. the shift from a lower form of moral judgment to a higher form (pre-conventional – conventional, conventional – post-conventional, pre-conventional – post-conventional). Furthermore, the factors included *the difference between the reasoning and the judgment referring*

to the norm. Some factors included both the developmental aspect and the difference between the relationship and the norm.

Conclusions

Our review study focused on publications that explicitly addressed some of the ethical and moral aspects of school education. The selection was given primarily by the chosen keywords, which were formulated in Czech, because the review studies focused on publications of Czech authors in Czech. We also searched for publications by Czech authors that were published in foreign journals in other languages, but we cannot verify whether we found all of them. This is a limitation of our choice.

We are aware that there are other approaches than the one we chose, e.g. the one used by Handschuh Plowman (2016) to examine ethical aspects in school psychology publications. She took all four major journals in the field and all the articles published in them for the past 16 years. She not only analysed whether the authors mentioned ethical aspects in their articles and cited ethical publications, but also studied which specific ethical aspects were involved, which ethical principles they related to, and whether the occurrence of these aspects and principles in the articles changed with time.

The ethical and moral aspects of school education and the schooling of pupils are an eternal theme and become more urgent in difficult social times. Meanwhile, in the Czech Republic, it resonates more in simplified discussions and evaluative trials by lay people than in expert discussions and precise research by scholars. This review study attempted to summarise the situation regarding the ethics and moral education of children and adolescents in schools in the Czech Republic. It is structured into four sections of unequal length.

The first section puts the chosen issue into a broader context, starting with the International Teachers' Charter, through official materials of the Ministry of Education and the school rules of individual schools, to the specific course of the interaction between teachers and pupils.

The second section provides a general overview of Czech publications that introduce readers to the ethical and moral issues of raising children and adolescents from the perspectives of various scientific disciplines: philosophy, theology, sociology, and psychology.

The third section focuses on various formal frameworks of ethical and moral education in Czech basic and secondary schools. Ethical and moral issues are discussed with pupils in various forms in these schools. There may be a separate subject of ethics (whether compulsory or optional or non-compulsory); selected topics are included in another subject, because there is no separate subject of ethics education at the school; selected topics are included in several different subjects, because there

is no separate subject of ethics education at the school; ethical issues are discussed at school once, as part of what is called a project day. In terms of content and concept, the independent subject of ethics education at Czech schools is based on the concept of prosocial education (Roche-Olivar, 1992), adapted by the Slovak author Ladislav Lencz (1995).

The fourth and most extensive section provides information on empirical research on ethical and moral issues at Czech schools. First, it reports on review studies of Czech authors on the topics of the aggressive behaviour of pupils, bullying among pupils in schools, pupils' indiscipline at school, unethical behaviour by teachers, the moral distress of teachers and school psychologists, and teachers' power over pupils.

The focus of the review study is the characteristics of Czech empirical surveys carried out after 1989. The research includes the following topics: cyberbullying addressed to both pupils and teachers, mobbing and bossing in schools, examining the course and results of teaching ethical topics, studying the manifestations of power relations between teachers and pupils, examining the tendency to manipulate teachers and pupils at school, cheating on the part of pupils at school, pupils helping one another, and creating original diagnostic tools and adapting foreign ones to research the ethical and moral qualities of people and their behaviour.

The more detailed analysis of existing research into ethical and moral aspects of the functioning of Czech schools has reached these conclusions. In Czech empirical studies:

- these are mainly purely Czech research studies; only exceptionally are they studies that are part of international research projects;
- one-off, transversal studies predominate and there is a lack of longitudinal studies;
- descriptive analytical studies predominate; there is a lack of work using structural models, i.e. a more detailed study of the relationships between variables;
- there is a lack of good-quality experimental studies;
- a significant part of the research is carried out on samples that lack data on the selection method and selection criteria; this raises the question of the wider generalisability of the results obtained;
- quantitative surveys work with questionnaires that lack detailed data on their psychometric characteristics; this raises the question of the validity of the results obtained;
- a number of published papers lack a thorough comparison of the results that are obtained with the results of similar foreign research studies;
- most of the research is carried out in basic schools, less in secondary schools;
- the staff of universities and research institutions deal with ethical and

moral issues in school education to a much lesser extent than would be desirable;

- it is gratifying that university students are interested in this issue (doctoral dissertations and diploma theses);

- at present, the main stream of research focuses on describing the actual situation; few research studies deal with the problems of the diagnostic tools used, and practically no research has been undertaken to address appropriate intervention procedures;

- although it has been 20 years since the scientific discipline of positive psychology was officially constituted, the attention of Czech researchers still focuses mainly on negative ethical and moral situations and neglects research on positive phenomena; the investigation of negative phenomena is certainly motivated by the effort to improve the sometimes serious and urgent situation in Czech schools, but it is also necessary to examine positive efforts and examples of good practice.

Research into ethical and moral aspects of bringing up children and adolescents is very demanding in terms of substance and methodology. They should include, inter alia, the personality traits of individuals, cognitive and affective variables, their system of values, and the influence of family upbringing and peers, but also the situational specifics, the socio-cultural and religious norms of the community, etc. As long ago as in 1984, J. R. Rest sighed, aptly, that something like a comprehensive approach to this issue is a task for Nobel Prize winners.

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