On Pedagogical Culture

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The school is an organism – as a highly experienced, innovative headmaster has recently told me. This succinct statement may provide the best starting point for the following commentaries. Indeed, those who have already attempted educational innovation know very well the difficulties of changing such an organism. No matter how we try (and manage) to change bits and pieces, it is quite probable that the changes we initiated will relatively quickly fall prey to the retrogressive force of the whole. To carry the organism-metaphor forward, we may say that a new external element is either fully assimilated into the organism and thus the change planned obviously does not happen, or, quite contrarily, the element is rejected by the immune system of the organism, thereby making our attempt at innovation an even more spectacular failure. Let us have a look at some well-known examples.

One of the typical cases of educational innovation is when a new curriculum is introduced. Implementing this change, however, may fall through due to the lack of teaching materials (course books) and the fact that teachers are not used to these contents or layouts, they may not agree with them and perhaps no-one supervises whether the new curriculum was actually implemented or not. In such a case, the inconsistency between the curriculum and the (external and/or internal) conditions results in a kind of 'double-dip' situation: on the surface, the new curriculum is being implemented, while at a classroom level everything stays the same. A nation-wide example of such an inconsistency is Tamás Varga's 1970s reform in teaching Maths. The extremely promising reform, which was carried out collectively by several experts and produced significant results, did not become successful in Hungary, although the National Curriculum of 1978 made the new approach compulsory. One of the active participants, Julianna Szendrei claims that the reform was a failure primarily because it was made compulsory. "During implementation it turned out that the teaching of several areas was way too formal" she concludes. "It was not the in-depth content but the externals, the markers and manipulating with them that became the centre of school activity. Therefore, the work done did not entail the understanding planned. The topic of sets and logics was like an alien element treading on the realisation of the other areas" (433).

Although the differences are fairly important, we may witness a similar phenomenon in the tryout of the so-called competence-based program packages developed with the help of EU funds. In this case, the necessary teaching materials were more or less available (the program package, and the concept of the pedagogical system[1] itself meant that the entirety of the tools and means needed for achieving the goals were included); yet, teachers in several schools felt that the programs were unreasonable and impossible to implement, and so did the headmasters, who joined the project trials not for professional reasons but for borrowing and funding. Such an attitude naturally influences the students' opinion as well, thereby creating the general mood of viewing the program as inept and claiming that, as soon as regulations allow it, there should be a return to the good old ways. Consequently, while the introduction of 'new Maths' exemplified the ways the organism assimilates attempts at innovation, the latter case presents the way the immune system works: the organism rejects anything perceived as a foreign body.

We may assert that the pedagogue's preparedness and approach is a vital factor here. Yet, as an educator of pedagogues my experience (in line with that of several educators at other institutions) is that even students who have a good approach and who are educated in methodology are likely to quickly turn into advocates – or at least practitioners – of authoritarian frontal teaching at their new workplaces, obviously somehow influenced by the objective circumstances experienced in the school. The efficiency of further education for teachers is similarly dubious: they may learn, for example, the techniques of cooperative learning and become advocates of cooperative learning (in theory) but it is no use if, under the pressure of a vast compulsory curriculum, they do not have time for competence development or if the evaluation system disregards competencies which can and should be improved by group work.

The conclusion is relatively easy to draw: changes should not be initiated in one area but in all areas in unison – the curriculum, the teaching materials, the evaluation and examination system, and further trainings in methodology need to point in the same direction. As I have asserted earlier, it was precisely a comprehensive approach that pedagogical systems (i.e. educational program packages) attempted to put through. Although the implementation of competence-based program packages came to a halt and, to my knowledge, analyses of the experience of the trials have not been published, I do believe now that the

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[1] An early initiative to define the concept is provided by Arató et al. (2002). For a more elaborate account see Falus et al. 268.

complexity offered by pedagogical systems is insufficient to ignite permanent change. All this is, in fact, stuck within the sphere of instruction, although a lot happens outside this sphere and this supposition is underlined not only by instances of failure but also by those of success. In examining the operation of successful schools we may not find all the prescribed elements of instruction-centred pedagogical systems, but we always fall upon a pedagogical system the elements of which point far beyond instruction, which are highly unique and difficult to be reproduced in other circumstances.

What is the most profound determining factor of what happens in the school? Where shall we search for the root causes of success and failure? It is these deeply hidden structures that my essay investigates.

On mentality

The person thinking about pedagogy faces the same problem that historians do: which are the deepest, most decisive and most unchanged structures? This is one of the recurring questions of historiography that may never be answered properly. For the French Annales School the answer was mentality. As Jacques Le Goff contends, the historian of mentalities seeks to "discover the stablest, most immobile level of a society's existence" ("Mentalities: A History of Ambiguities" 167). "What is feudalism? A set of institutions, a mode of production, a social system, a particular type of military organisation?" ("Mentalities: A History of Ambiguities" 166) Le Goff asks, referring to Georges Duby, the legendary researcher of the Middle Ages in France. For Marxist historiography, the mode of production was the 'base,' the most decisive factor of history. Duby and the French historians gathering around the journal *Annales* (who were in fact not less influenced by Marxism) asked further questions: what is in the background of production systems, political and military etc. structures that determine it in the long run? And their answer was mentality – feudalism is "a medieval mentality" (Le Goff, "Mentalities: A History of Ambiguities" 166).

Marc Bloch's *The Royal Touch* (*Les Rois thaumaturges*, 1924) is said to be the first work about the history of mentality. Bloch analyses the medieval belief and the concomitant ritual according to which the king can cure scrofula with his touch. The resources reveal that the patients touched did not recover, yet this negative experience did not reduce their belief in

sacred healing either. What the historian deducts from this phenomenon is an essential element of medieval mentality (Czoch 481-82).

What is mentality, then, for the historian and the pedagogue? First and foremost, mentality is about the specificities of thinking in a given culture – not an individual's way of thinking but the people's thinking in general. For a certain aspect, then, mentality can be found outside the individual; it may be observed in acts that are everyday and repetitive or recurrent. "The level with which the history of *mentalité* is concerned is that of the quotidian and the automatic, that which eludes the individual subjects of history because it throws a light on the impersonal content of their thought, that which Caesar and the last soldier of his legions, Saint Louis and the peasant on the land, Christopher Columbus and the sailor on his caravels have in common" (Le Goff, "Mentalities: A New Field" 85). Mentality thus means automatisms and ingraindness, ways of thinking which tend to be unspoken and, more importantly, which are not thought over but still – hence – determine our decisions and deeds.

The French borrowed the term *mentalité* from English philosophical terminology, mentality "referring to the collective psychology, the ways of thinking and feeling, which are peculiar to 'a people, a given group of people, etc.'" ("Mentalities: A History of Ambiguities" 171), as Le Goff explains in his brief overview of the history of mentality. He adds that the term entered general usage in French at the turn of the 17th and 18th century with a slightly pejorative connotation. Indeed, the sense of ignominiousness is present in the Hungarian usage of the term as well, in remarks such as 'You will never amount to much with this mentality.' In this sense, mentality also refers to the delimination of thinking, to the fact that our decisions are often determined by deep-rooted automatisms that are hard to control.

From this point on I shall use the expressions *teachers' mentality* and *pedagogical culture* as synonyms. As I have shown above, the basic feature of any concept of culture is the tension between the internal and the external – that is, culture always already has two aspects. One of these aspects may be called psychological and it inhabits the mind of the carrier of culture: it is the way of thinking, those beliefs, convictions and intentions which the individuals of a given culture have in common. Henceforth I shall refer to this side of culture by the simplified term *beliefs*, including both suppositions that can be rationally substantiated and superstitions that are indefensible from a rational point of view.

The second aspect of culture is found in behaviour, in acts (and objects). Henceforward, I shall borrow Lucien Febvre's (1942) term and call these external factors

mental toolbox. As Czoch explains, Febvre's *outillage mental* basically refers to the totality of the perceptional, conceptual, linguistic and expressive categories, as well as the category of action, of an era or civilisation which determine individual and collective experience (Czoch 483).

The internal aspect is inevitable hidden and we may only infer its presence from external manifestations, which suggests that the internal (thinking and beliefs) is the reason (the independent variable) and the external (acts and objects) is the effect (the dependent variable). This hypothesis, however, is not axiomatical, since culture is the collective possession of a group and its centre lies outside the individual's mind. I shall elaborate this thought later on.

On beliefs

Earlier I have mentioned the root narrative of the history of mentality, the healing kings as analysed by Bloch. The basis of the ritual is obviously the belief in the healing power of the king's touch. We have also seen that the belief persists even if those concerned are faced with such phenomena which, for the modern man, seem to be the apparent confutation of the belief (for example, the same diseased person returns to the healing ceremony again and again, as he did not recover but in fact got worse).[2] We would be wrong to think, though, that such phenomena only occurred in pre-modern societies. Since the Age of Enlightenment, we have been proud of systematic scepsis, that is, without evidence we do not take anything as true. Truth is, however, our scientific view of the world is likewise based on beliefs. Those who insist on the – seemingly reasonable – notion that no medicine can be effective without an active substance (or on the equally rational notion that untested medicine should not be vied as effective) will not be convinced by the great number of positive reports and fortuitous recoveries suggesting that homeopathic medicine works and they will not make a small effort in trying it themselves. Or, quite contrarily, faith in Western medicine will not necessarily be weakened by the relatively frequent experience of the patient's condition deteriorating despite the treatment.

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[2] A similar case is recorded by Michael Polanyi, with reference to Evans-Pritchard's researches, about Azande mystical rituals (Polanyi 74-77). I have used the analysis of the case earlier – see Knausz, *Műveltség és demokrácia* 28-30.

What makes these – often implicit – beliefs so stable? In *Personal Knowledge* (1958-62), Michael Polanyi discusses three aspects of stability (308-10). The first stabilising factor is *circularity*, that is, circular arguments that provide the basis of belief. At whichever point one attempts to confute a certain belief, the mind dedicated to that belief may fight the attack back by referring to further allegedly true arguments.

An unexpectedly good test result by a usually poorly performing student may be proof that he or she can only achieve good results by cheating. However, if we point out that the student might as well have written the tests by him- or herself, we may get the following response: 'Of course, they are great at cheating, very skilled indeed in getting away with it!' Behind this argument lies the image of a poorly performing student who is skilled at cheating and likely to cheat, which may apply to a certain localisable group of students as a strong prejudice against that group. One component of this prejudice (these students are fatuous) is justified by the other (they are cheaters), and vice versa. This is why we speak of circular arguments, that is, circularity.

The second important factor in stabilising beliefs is their *self-expanding capacity*. As Polanyi asserts, if facts seem to confute our conceptions, we are inclined to conceive of supplementary suppositions in order to keep the coherence of the theory. In academic slang these suppositions are sometimes called epicycles, pointing to the fact that Ptolemy's theory of planetary motion (planets moving on a regular orbit) does not provide a full explanation of the ostensible movement of planets. The astronomer thus supposed the presence of complementary circles, so-called epicycles in order to make theory coherent with experience. In a similar fashion, we need to think in epicycles when we think of an educational technique as insufficient although others call our attention to the fact that it in fact works well in other schools. In such cases it is only easy to suppose that a) those schools are attended by students with a better background, b) those schools are better funded/supported financially, c) the results are sugarcoated, the situation is not that picture-perfect from close up etc.

Polanyi refers to the third stabilising factor as *the principle of suppressed nucleation*. It is a phenomenon we all know well: we do not welcome alternative explanatory principles that confront our beliefs because these principles are hard to understand. Since our beliefs provide answers to occurrent problems, there is not one point in this closed system around which – like around a core – a new, alternative theory could evolve. We find the new theory odd and alien; the arguments that prove its soundness are no less unconvincing than our

arguments for our discussion partners. One example of this phenomenon in the school may be the acceptance of – formative – evaluation situations without grading, or accepting the tenet that certain elements important from the aspect of the canon of cultural literacy may be left out of the curriculum to make room for acquaintance with and a deeper understanding of other elements (Polanyi 82-86). Accepting such new paradigms is always a difficult task – we need to start using new concepts and/or reinterpret the ones we already have.[3]

On social representations

The concept of social representation was introduced in social studies by Romanian-born French social psychologist, Serge Moscovici. "Social representations are sets of conceptions and explanations deriving from everyday life and created in communication between individuals" (László 63). Highlighting everyday life in this definition is of key importance. Social representations are the schemes which our everyday thinking and behaviour are based on. Moscovici argues that we do not experience the phenomena surrounding us directly but through the 'lenses' of representations. If we look at a student, we see him or her as a student, that is, we always already attribute them features which 'the student' possesses in the given cultural community. As Moscovici puts it, representations are conventional and prescriptive by nature, that is, "they impose themselves upon us with an irresistible force" (23); they locate them in a category, significant from non-significant (22).

This brief definition clearly indicates (what for us is) the most essential feature of social representations: they create an objective reality independent of the individual psyche, which has a decisive influence on the individual's thinking. Although they are conventional by nature, that is, produced by individuals through communication processes, this feature of theirs recedes after a while. Moscovici makes the following claim: "The more its origin is forgotten, and its conventional nature ignored, the more fossilized it becomes. That which is ideal gradually becomes materialized. It ceases to be ephemeral, changing and mortal and becomes instead lasting, permanent, almost immortal" (27). "I would even go so far as to say that, the less we think about them, and the less we are aware of them, the greater their influence becomes," he adds (28). What is this effect? In short, it means that social representation makes the unknown known. When we come across a new phenomenon or a

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[3] In Hungarian theoretical literature it was István Nahalka (2002) who investigated such conceptual changes most thoroughly.

new person, we may have the consoling feeling that we have seen this (person) before, this is not new for us. As Moscovici points out, "the conclusion has priority over the premise … the verdict has priority over the trial" (27). This is exactly what characterises everyday thinking, based on common sense, and this is what distinguishes it from science. In fact, science does quite the opposite through methodological scepticism: it makes the familiar unfamiliar.

On mental toolbox

We may conceive of Febvre's concept of mental toolbox as forms of social representations. If we say that representations are outside us, we need to answer the question: where are they, then? In general, the answer is: in the social field. The concrete answer, however, would reveal that they are kept alive by the mental toolbox of a community. Let us have a look at some characteristic features of mental toolbox with special regards to the world of the school.

Acts. Representations are first and foremost alive in acts or actions, in what we do every day as a routine, in a repetitive and automatic way – that is, in rituals. They are to be found in the rituals of lessons and the life of the school, for example in reporting at the beginning of the lesson, reciting[4] and writing tests, in the choreography of entering the teachers' room and the system of having lunch, etc. There are no innocent rituals. We cannot say 'oh well, it is just a formality, it has nothing to do with human relationships.' If the rituals of school life are soldierly, if they imply hierarchy and isolate teachers' and students' respective spaces, then they determine thinking and have a definitive effect on the relations between the individuals.

Forms of communication. There is a power we cannot overestimate in greetings, addresses and nicknames, in the complicated system of first-naming others, calling them Mr and Ms or even Aunt and Uncle. Does it actually have a special implication whether students call their teachers by their names or neutrally refer to them as Sir or Madam? Does it give something away about 'the teacher's' representation in the cultural community of his or her school? We may think that this is of no great importance but what if it turns out that the students do not even know the teachers' names? What if the teachers do not have a nickname at all? (Kovácsné Duró 27) The recurring issue of first-naming and 'last-naming' (i.e. addressing someone as, for example, Mr. Smith) is even more undervalued in the school. It is plain to see that the so called *csendőrpertu* or *gendarme pertu* (when the person who is older/ superior/ in

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[4] For a classical analysis of rituals of reciting from the perspective of teachers' domination see Síklaki (1988).

a higher position talks to the person who is younger/inferior /in a lower position in an informal way, while the latter speaks to his or her 'superior' in a most polite, formal way) suggests a massive power inequality. Mutual last-naming indicates a formal relationship, a distance. Yet, when faced with such criticism, we are inclined to protest, saying that these habits do not influence our relationship with the students. True it may be but what is in question here is not the relationship between two individuals but the prevalent mentality of a community.

Language use. It is worth paying extra attention to the phenomenon of the teacher's and the student's differing language use. This may be a neutral fact in itself as long as it does not hinder communication. In most cases it does not, or at least not significantly, since there are no dramatic differences between Hungarian dialects. However, the way communication partners relate to these differences is culturally determined. Most typically, the general language norm that teachers use is the dominant form in the school, while the students' language use is in an inferior position. This power relation often manifests in teachers operating in a 'correcting mode,' defining the students' certain lexical and grammatical idiosyncrasies as errors and continually correcting them during daily communication. As for attitudes to dialects, the school's conduct has changed significantly in the past one hundred years. Novelist Gyula Illyés in *People of the Puszta* (1934) described 'old' attitudes the following way: After the teacher silenced the classmates making fun of the dialect of the child, he

> pronounced the correct e clearly to me two or three times. But his efforts to make me imitate him were of no avail. Then he explained that I must learn it without fail, otherwise how was he to know what letter I meant?
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> 'You will learn the correct pronunciation by tomorrow,' he said, losing his patience, 'and report to me.'
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> All afternoon I walked up and down among the willows on the banks of the Kapos, practicing. Sometimes I thought I had mastered it. I gasped and croaked, and squeezed my throat with my face turned up towards the sky. (qtd. in László Tamás Szabó 223-24)

Today the general attitude to dialects is more tolerant. However, despite this tolerance, the school on one hand does away with dialects differing from the norm quite efficiently; on the

other hand, it views certain dialects (such as the language use of Roma students' living in poverty or widespread idiomatic inflexion) as primitive or erroneous and continually corrects them.[5] The phenomenon we are focusing on here is not about teaching the general language norm – an evident task of the school –; it is the attitude to a differing language use, the issue of linguistic dominance, which may manifest not in an additive approach (teaching the general language norm *besides* the dialect the student uses at home) but in a subtractive approach (perceiving the student's dialect as not valuable and thus encouraging its *abandonment*).[6]

Metaphors. I do not use the term 'metaphor' in a rhetorical sense here, nor am I referring to the method of analysis so fashionable in pedagogy nowadays (in which we explicitly ask the examinee to compare a central phenomenon to another, e.g. the teacher is like a gardener). What I shall discuss here is what Lakoff and Johnson termed conceptual metaphor theory and which became well-known in Hungary owing primarily to Zoltán Kövecses's (2010) textbook-like volume. According to this theory, metaphor is not first and foremost a literary devise but an essential element of our everyday thinking, which not only appears in expression where we explicitly name a thing that we compare to another (e.g. 'How can you be such a *butt*?'), but also in sayings where we only imply the source domain that serves as the basis of the metaphor, for example with a verb (e.g. 'I heard what you said but what *came through* is...') The latter example perceives understanding as a spatial movement, where the information given is received differently or partially, since cognition is always partial. "In the cognitive linguistic view," Kövecses claims, "metaphor is defined as understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain" (4). What happens, then, is the cognition of a characteristically abstract phenomenon (target domain) through thinking in terms of a more concrete phenomenon (source domain). We are speaking of understanding here, thus the metaphor theory can be easily inserted and employed in the conceptual

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[5] For an elaborate empirical study of this phenomenon see Tamás Péter Szabó (2012).

[6] The additive and subtractive approaches derive from Canadian psychologists and were originally developed to describe the linguistic situation of national-ethnic minorities. "A bilingual situation is when the languages used in a heterogeneous environment and the corresponding cultures are equally appreciated and they have a relatively equal status. Since in such a case acquiring or learning the languages is an equally attractive goal, a language shift hardly ever occurs. Learning one language does not take place at the expense of the other; one language keeps the other and develops to its level. Although personality development is more complex in such a linguistic environment than in a mono-lingual one, but in several respects it allows a fuller development evolution of the individual's capabilities. In contrast, a subtractive linguistic situation is when one of the languages and cultures are valued more than and preferred to the other in the given linguistic environment" (Göncz 316; trans. Pataki).

framework of the theory of representation: with the help of our metaphors we are in a way categorising things, 'turning the unknown into the known.'

The language of teaching – similarly to the language of any profession – applies a host of metaphors. I shall discuss two of the most well-known – and most expressive – metaphors here. What happens in the classroom is often referred to in Hungarian as 'handing down the material/knowledge.' In this expression we compare teaching to handing someone an object, with handing being an action directed downwards.[7] The idiom 'children-material' expresses a similar basic approach, in which pupils/students appear as the passive raw material that teachers work with. It is quite typical that the majority of teachers are well-aware of the symbolism of both expressions and few of them identify with the approach these expressions imply. Yet, these idiomatic expressions seem impossible to be extirpated from teachers' pedagogical communication, which is probably because their background-beliefs is still a decisive component of their mentality as pedagogues.

Signs and symbols. School life is traditionally bound up with symbols. It is worth highlighting the symbolic significance of clothing. Teachers' clothes may be formal or casual; they may express their pursuit of uniformity or may be emphatically diverse. Students, on the other hand, may be expected to wear clothing items that express conformity, such as the school coat worn a few decades ago or the uniform and the badge today. Even if there are no such rules, students' clothing can express belonging to specific subcultures and the limits to such self-expression may be characteristic.

Quantitive matters. The issue of conventions and units of measurement has traditionally been at the forefront of the history of mentality (Arcangeli 39). This phenomenon may be detected, for instance, in the problematic of timing in the school (the lesson as a unit) and in how teachers and students relate to time (the need for the lesson starting punctually, what happens to those who are late, how important it is to finish the lesson on time etc.). Grading is a particularly important system of measurement in the school – a lot is pivoted on grades, so it may be crucial to investigate what the difference between grades suggest, whether the same measures apply to everyone (and how we know when they do not) and what influence grades have on human relationships. In the 1970s Györgyné Hunyady studied the upper-form pupils of 46 primary schools from the aspect of the correlation of their grades and social relationships. In short, we may claim that the correlation is significant: when asked which

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[7] I have already discussed this in a somewhat literary essay. See Knausz (2009).

classmate of theirs they wish to be like, they characteristically named someone from their own category and they were in fact aware of this connection (Hunyadi 64-65). Furthermore, the choices based on sympathy indicated that pupils performing in the top of their class chose pupils who were equally good, while poorly performing pupils chose their similarly performing peers (Hunyadi 68-70). Although the statistics do not reveal the direction of the causality, nor do they prove a direct correlation between grades and social relationships, one of the possible interpretations of the results is that school performance has a decisive effect on human relationships as well.

Rules. What do written, formally recorded rules apply to, and what do unwritten, perhaps even unspoken, rules concern? How do unwritten rules unravel themselves? What happens when rules are broken? Similarly vital is the question of who may participate in making and altering the rules and how much the participants of school life are inclined to keep these rules, or, at least, to take them seriously.

The mental toolbox of teaching communities that I have briefly outlined above are in part the manifestations of beliefs, but they are also a kind of arsenal that keeps these beliefs alive, verifies and to a certain extent even generates them. When beginning teachers enter a school community they do not yet possess the culture or mentality that characterises the school. They bring their mentality from the university, from youth subculture; this is what they express in their clothing, their manner of speech, their learned routine of connecting with pupils. All these are, however, conflict the prevalent pedagogical culture of the school and in most cases there is no doubt about how the tension will be diffused. The change that beginning teachers go through is dramatic. Adopting the habits defining the social space of the school actually means adopting social representations, thus beginning teachers will soon have the same beliefs (opinion) as the older members of the community. The core of pedagogical culture is not in one's spirit but outside of it, in the social force field.

On transforming pedagogical culture

Here we need to return to our starting point: the issue of pedagogical innovation. I wish to formulate the statement that some pedagogical innovations require a shift in pedagogical culture, that is, they cannot materialise without a turn or change in the entire culture

(mentality). This means that even the smallest changes prove to be futile if intervention does not focus specifically on cultural structures.

Which are the most essential dimensions in Hungarian schools that support or hinder pedagogical reformation? Hereinafter I would like to bring three of these possible dimensions to the readers' attention.

Personality – formality. Although several signs indicate that the culture of public education in Hungary has become formal/bureaucratic/reificated, most educational innovation build precisely on personality, thus, in the case of unchanged pedagogical culture, they are bound to fail.

Partnership – hierarchy. The inner world of Hungarian schools is characteristically hierarchic; its functioning is based on the power of teachers' authority. Meanwhile, most pedagogical innovations build on partnership between teachers and students (as well as among teachers and among students) – a non-hierarchic co-operation.

Acceptance – strangeness. In most schools one of the most decisive elements of thinking is a belief in the superiority of the culture that the school represents, and the concomitant disparagement of mass culture, the culture of poverty and Roma culture, and the treatment of these cultures as alien. On the other hand, these school attempt initiating programs that perceive an accepting attitude to other cultures as a basic condition.

If we take the implications above seriously, then we must accept that transforming pedagogical culture is the core issue of any pedagogical reform. In other words, the following techniques of innovation – when applied in themselves – will quite probably be ineffectual in the long run:

- introducing educational programs that are based on approaches substantially divergent from the ones we have been accustomed to,
- shaping the attitude of pedagogues in in-service training courses,
- implementing trainings in personality development, self-recognition and reducing prejudice,
- separate innovations for an isolated group of pedagogues.

I am not saying that these approaches are not good or that they are harmful – in fact, they involve both a great power and opportunities. Yet, without deliberate efforts at reforming our

pedagogical culture, they may either turn into their own antithesis or assimilate into the 'normal' system of school life or they shall fail and die away.

What does a turn in pedagogical culture mean, then? In the following, I shall not – cannot – define the techniques of this turn, since there is too little experience to be processed or, more precisely, the processing of the experience gained so far is still in its infancy. In concluding this essay all I can do is draw up a few basic principles, which may only be interpreted jointly, intensifying one another.

Promoting collective self-recognition. Since culture is the common property of a given community, facing these issues may only happen collectively. The teaching stuff needs to go through processes whereby they collectively interpret all their mental toolbox and determine the meaning and significance of the toolbox.

Exchanging views with other communities. No-one shall ever believe that there exist other pedagogical cultures differing entirely from their own, until they get a first-hand experience of it. This experience, however, may only be a long process, not just a short visit to another school – that would yet again result in assimilating what was observed into their own culture. Here, the significance of exchanging views, of a conference enabling personal co-operation and revelations of self recognition, must be stressed again.

Agreements. Without changes in "the structures of everyday life" – to draw on the findings of the Annales School yet again – there may obviously be no turn in our pedagogical culture. Nevertheless, seemingly small changes in the rules (for example students can enter the teachers' room freely or we give up asking for a report at the beginning of lessons) may trigger a chain reaction in reforming mentality. The main benefit of agreements on changes is that there actually *are* agreements, as the primary obstacle in reformation is often the lack of collective thinking

Introducing innovations alien to the pedagogical culture. That which is presumably doomed to fail in itself can in fact be the chief generator of change if it is part of a comprehensive program to revolutionise pedagogical culture. Project method, for example, may serve as a means of revolutionising pedagogical culture by creating partnership between teachers and students. At first glance it may seem that changing our approach should come first, followed by the transformation of actions. However, inconsistency between actions and approaches

may also emerge in a reverse direction[8] – it is partly what we learn about in Festinger's well-known theory of cognitive dissonance. Sometimes, out of necessity, we change our behaviour, and we may also reduce the emerging dissonance by adapting our beliefs and convictions to our changed behaviour. This phenomenon may not only be the basic process of acculturation but also be of service to a turn in pedagogical culture.

Authority figures as role models. It is crucially important who initiates changes and who is/are first in their realisation. The head of the school is obviously a key figure, but in some cases other important reference persons may also play an important part in this process. Following the example set by key innovators is probably central to a turn in pedagogical culture.[9]

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[8] See Ágnes Einhorn's essay in this volume, especially her thoughts on the Klippert method and the lessons learned from it.

[9] When writing this essay I particularly had in mind the example set by two schools, which – in my opinion – are successful in educating disadvantaged children primarily because of the particularities of their pedagogical culture: Wesley János Többcélú Intézmény (John Wesley Multipurpose Institution) in Abaújkér and IV. Béla Primary School in Hejőkeresztúr. See Knausz (2011; 2012).

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