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Ss. Cyril and Methodius University
Faculty of Pedagogy “St. Kliment Ohridski” – Skopje
Republic of Macedonia

**VI меѓународен балкански конгрес за образование и наука:
СОВРЕМЕНОТО ОПШТЕСТВО И ОБРАЗОВАНИЕТО**

(Охрид, 29. IX - 1. X 2011г.)
Зборник на трудови

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THE MODERN SOCIETY AND EDUCATION**

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PROFESSIONAL RETRAINING AND SUPPLEMENTARY EDUCATION FOR INFORMATION SOCIETY

Abstract

The last decade of the XX century and the beginning of the XXI century have seen numerous innovations in the educational system and institutions caused by changes in the surrounding. On one hand deep changes in humanism and social establishments have occurred, and, on the other hand, the technical-technological is in expansion. In such conditions, when the speed of transferring information increasingly grows, the out-of-date manner of work results in producing personnel that is inappropriately prepared to respond to the needs of the labor market. A need emerges for acquiring new knowledge and skills, and this in turn imposes the need to use modern educational technology in order to establish qualitatively new relations between the participants of the educational process. For this aim, the teacher, being the carrier of the educational process, should always keep pace with the innovations being brought by the new information society, i. e. he/she should have additional training by taking part in various projects, training programmes, etc. In this way, apart from their classical knowledge, teachers will have to develop new skills and abilities. In order to keep up, they should learn to accept efficient strategies, such as regular reading technical publications, undergo permanent training, visit various Internet web pages, etc.

Key words: *traditional, modern, education, teachers' training, ICT.*

We can change school forms, lessons and curricula, we can build modern schools, form small classes and get equipment that is the latest trend in technique, we can organize counseling and introduce new teaching aids. But, if we do not turn to people, teachers, pupils, parents, in order for them to change, direct themselves towards permanent meaningful orientation, all these organized efforts are futile.

Contemporary life is characterized by great and rapid changes in all spheres of life and work.

“The world of changes is a world where a change is a journey from an unknown station, where problems are our friends, and where asking for help is a sign of power.”(Fullan, 1995, S.2)

The world of changes indicates that there is no absolute happiness in life or permanent harmony, but at the same time that in such a world there are people who

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succeed much more than others; of course, they are the people who know and can perceive the change, cope with it and initiate it. Our goal is to strive, if possible, not to see changes as a possible obstacle in our development, but as a road sign in life leading us to the source of happiness towards which we all aspire.

These changes have implications in the educational domain also. The range of knowledge gained by the humanity is increasing impressively, a range that in turn has influence on the existing concepts of education concerning the change of goals, tasks, contents, and methods. In such conditions of very rapid development of science, schools cannot cope appropriately. Instead of adapting to new times and requirements, they try to prevent the course of changes regretting “the good old time”, which initiates wide criticism of traditional teaching. A number of weaknesses are emphasized concerning the forms used, methods, means, position and role of teachers, position and role of pupils, manner of learning consisting of memorizing facts according to a structure prepared in advance, etc. Such old-fashioned method of work leads to producing staff that are inappropriately prepared to answer the demand of labor market. So a transformation and a change in all aspects are required in that direction, i.e. a change in teaching strategies which are considered to be reduced, isolated, directed exclusively towards the teacher with the aim to make teaching more interesting and more acceptable to pupils, as well as directed towards the recipient who is asked to critically interpret and actively participate in learning. Thus a need emerges for acquiring new knowledge and skills, not only on the part of the pupil but also on the part of the teacher, which in turn imposes a need for using modern educational technology and establishing qualitatively new relations among pupils in the educational process. As an imperative of the established philosophy of life-long learning, a need is imposed to institutionalize a system of continuous education and education of adults. For this aim it is unavoidable to get familiar with modern technology in all spheres of life as well as in education. However, using new technologies in the educational process is faced with many problems and controversies. The better-off segments of the society such as business, military industry, police, banking, are the first ones to use new technologies and profit from them as all other segments should. We are witnesses of the fact that new technologies are not easily accepted in education, and this trend is expected to continue in future. Integrating technological novelties into education has traditionally been a slow and laborious process. There are still schools and families that do not have access to new technologies. The more important these processes become in education, the greater is the retrogression in modern learning that is due to the lack of this access to new technologies. In order to prevent complete retrogression of education, modern teachers are those who should become involved on large scale in speeding up the introduction of new technologies in modern teaching. Although educational informers have already understood the importance of technology, they still have not established a strategic, unique vision of how to change the whole system of education in accordance with the new era. Even today, when the dissatisfaction with the traditional system of learning is increasing and when there is consensus about real need for changes, there is considerable discord about the role of technologies in the restructured system.

There are many fears and dilemmas in teaching staff concerning the questions whether certain teachers' functions will be replaced or their role will be changed; should we only improve the existing methods or change the very nature of education; will distance learning overpower the traditional concept; will they be able to learn successfully to use new technologies, etc. However, as it was said at the beginning of this paper, changes in the educational system should be understood as a challenge, not as a problem to be feared of. But we should also bear in mind that changes should be introduced gradually as sudden braking of this continuity can cause uneasiness even in good teachers. Innovations call for "new people" which provokes fear in teachers about their being replaced; but it does not mean only to introduce "fresh blood", as the absence of experienced staff can lead them to lose the feeling of direction in the educational process. Training, developing team work, attending seminars, workshops etc. can create "new people" from the existing and experienced personnel. All this is the subject of wider debates, analyses, workshops and projects. With the help of summed results of these, we can conclude the following: central principles of building of an effective system of education are the following:

- 1. Role of the teacher** – This role will continue to be of essential importance although it will be radically changed, i.e. technological resources will help teachers to transform from "the person who gives information" into "a reservoir of knowledge".
- 2. Multidisciplinary approach** – This approach will pervade, i.e. isolated knowledge and skills will become integrated activities including various skills.
- 3. Solving problems** – Using new educational technologies, databases, online information, multi-media systems etc. will enable solving more complex and real problems.
- 4. Assessment** – Assessment methods will be changed and they will enable confirmation of knowledge and creative abilities of pupils.
- 5. Introduction of new forms of education** – Distance learning is one of these and already widely accepted in the world. Using the latest technological discoveries enables us to realize teaching by means of Internet from one country to another although they are far.

It is obvious that the teachers of today as the ones who realize the teaching process will have a role and opportunities completely different from their predecessors. They will have to develop new skills and abilities to accompany their classical knowledge. In order to be able to keep up with the changes, they will have to learn to accept effective strategies such as reading technical publications, attend permanent training, visit various Internet websites and apply their new knowledge. Teachers must also have a vision of their working aims and they must recognize the infrastructure needed to make their vision real; they should try to build a technological support system for their job. These activities must become a part of future teachers' repertoire. New technologies will keep on reminding them they can and should never be satisfied with the methods, knowledge level and results.

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