

JURGITA SMILGIENĖ | Siauliai University, Lithuania  
ERIKA MASILIAUSKIENĖ | Siauliai University, Lithuania

## Opportunities of the development of the learning competence of preschool education teachers at workplace as an element of the organizational culture

Możliwości rozwoju kompetencji uczenia się przez nauczycieli wychowania przedszkolnego w miejscu pracy jako elementu kultury organizacyjnej

### Streszczenie

Najważniejszym celem i oczekiwanym rezultatem edukacji jest kształcenie ustawiczne. Chcąc osiągnąć sukces we współczesnym społeczeństwie należy liczyć się z wyższymi niż kiedykolwiek oczekiwaniami. Dynamiczne środowisko wymaga od nauczycieli wszechstronnego rozwoju. Organizowanie procesu edukacyjnego, uczenie się z codziennych czynności lub od bardziej doświadczonych współpracowników pomaga dostosować się do nasilających się zmian. Nauczyciel staje się nie tylko osobą odpowiedzialną za swój codzienny rozkład zajęć, ale także nieustannie doksztalającą się w miejscu pracy. Badanie jakościowe stworzyło nauczycielom edukacji przedszkolnej możliwości kształcenia swoich kompetencji podczas uczenia się w trakcie ich codziennych zajęć, pielęgnowania środowiska edukacyjnego, wspólnej pracy ze współpracownikami, nieformalnego kształcenia się podczas szczególnych wydarzeń, wycieczek lub w ramach ukierunkowanego procesu uczenia się.

*Cel badania:* stworzenie nauczycielom wychowania przedszkolnego możliwości rozwijania kompetencji uczenia się.

*Wyniki badania.* Wyniki prowadzonych badań wykazały, że umiejętność uczenia się związana jest z rozwojem osobowości, umiejętności wyszukiwania informacji i zastosowania ich podczas odpowiedniej czynności. Nauczyciele rozwijają i oceniają kompetencję uczenia się za pomocą różnych metod, praktycznych zadań, poprzez stymulowanie niezależności. Badania wykazały również, że wykorzystanie wiedzy zdobytej w procesie uczenia się przez nauczycieli podczas codziennych czynności podlega stałej ocenie, która zapewnia mu wartość dodaną. Otrzymano również pozytywne informacje zwrotne od nauczycieli i uczniów. Wśród ocen

znalazła się również postawa sceptyczna, próba zaprzeczenia wysiłkowi nauczycieli wykraczania poza ustaloną praktykę i próbowania szukania nowych form aktywności.

Słowa kluczowe: kształcenie się nauczycieli, miejsce pracy, kultura organizacyjna, rozwój kompetencji uczenia się, nauczyciel wychowania przedszkolnego, miejsce pracy.

## Abstract

The most important objective and expected results of education is the conception of a lifelong learning. In modern society, for a person to succeed expectations are higher than ever. Dynamic environment requires teachers to evolve in every way. Organizing educational process, learning from daily activities or more experienced colleagues, helps to adapt to intensifying changes. Teacher becomes not only someone who is responsible for his daily agenda but also a person who is constantly learning in his workplace. A qualitative study has framed the opportunities of teachers learning competence in pre-school, while learning from their daily routine, nurturing educational environment, cooperating and working with colleagues, informal learning during special events, on trips or targeted learning.

*Research aim:* to frame the opportunities of development of teacher's learning competence in pre-school.

*Research results.* The results of the conducted research have shown that the meaning of the competence of knowing how to learn is related to the development of personality, ability to find information, and apply it in respective activity. Teachers develop and assess the competence of knowing how to learn through various methods, practical tasks, by stimulating independence. The research has also revealed that the application of the knowledge gained in teacher learning process in everyday activity receives constant evaluations that give added value to the learning process. Positive feedback among teachers and learners has also been mentioned. Among the evaluations there is also a sceptical attitude, the attempt to contradict a teacher's effort to go beyond the established practice and trying to search for new forms of activity.

Keywords: teacher learning, workplace, organizational culture, development of learning competence, preschool education teacher, workplace.

## Introduction

Life in the society of today is being influenced by intensive social, economic, organizational changes followed by the processes of *constant teaching/learning* as inseparable from everyday professional activity of an individual. Education reacting to the changes in the society emphasizes the individual's (self-)preparation to live in such social environment where the features of versatile development and constant teaching/learning, mobility, creativity, critical thinking become important (Jurašaitė-Harbison, 2004; Neifachas, 2008; Lukošūnienė, 2011). In this context *knowing how to learn* should be emphasized as conditioning a successful process of teaching/learning. In the sector of education (including preschool education) knowing how to learn becomes a part of successful personal activity (both educational/learning and professional).

A preschool educational institution is an educational organization where teachers' activity is consciously coordinated and focused on striving for specific aims acting

together. The essential priority of preschool education is child-focused high-quality (self-)education, the ensuring of which can be related to a teacher's competence, the quality of his/her activity. Today for a teacher it is important to become/be a reflecting, effectively working teacher-professional. A teacher in an educational institution as an educational organization and outside it influences and implements the changes that are related to a big responsibility, new requirements for competence and professionalism. J. Smilgienė (2015) points out that the roles of the teacher of today (as a counsellor, assistant, expert, etc.) are related to a constant aspiration to improve, reflect, analyse, develop the competences one possesses and gain new ones, i.e. learn all life long. Teacher's competence, the quality of his/her activity is inseparable from the ability to *constantly improve while learning in various environments (including workplace)*. The scientists (Evans, Hodkinson, Unwin, 2002; Quinn, 2004) note that *in every situation of work there is an opportunity to learn*. The cases of learning in the workplace have been analysed by national (Žydzūnaitė et al., 2012; Jurašaitė-Harbisson, 2008; Kvedaraitė, 2009, etc.) and foreign (Torokoff & Mets, 2004) scientists.

In the National Lisbon Strategy Implementation Programme (2005) the problem of the development of the competence of the pedagogical staff of educational institutions is emphasized. The ***problems of the development of learning competence of preschool education teachers*** closely correlate with the education strategy of Lithuania for 2013–2022, where one of the aims that have been set is “to create the system of stimuli and conditions for lifelong learning based on effective help in recognizing oneself and choosing one's way in the world of activity” (The Education Strategy of Lithuania for 2013–2022, 2012). The scientists (Saulėnienė & Žydzūnaitė & Katiliūtė, 2006; Gedvilienė et al., 2008) emphasize the importance of metacompetence for a pedagogue as well, i.e. not only ability to learn but also *motivation for professional development* is important. J. Smilgienė (2015) notes that learning is important as a basis for individual's successful career projecting and the survival of the organization, striving to appropriately develop and adjust to the challenges of time. In the context of the culture of a preschool educational institution as an educational organization it is important to note that knowledge and skills constantly updated by a teacher become a necessary and meaningful condition of a successful organization rendering high-quality services.

In the context of the development of learning competence it is important to note that the concept of competence in scientific literature has been quite widely analysed. P. Drucker (2009) are considered the originators of the investigation of this problem. The concept is described as the combining of knowledge and skills and ability to apply them under particular circumstances. In Lithuania various aspects of competence have been analysed by L. Jovaiša (1997), R. Laužackas (2000), E. Jurašaitė (2004), R. Pocevičienė (2014), J. Lenkauskaitė (2014). Meanwhile, the problem of the development of the competence of knowing how to learn lacks scientific research. It is important to emphasize that the competence is not obtained as a traditional qualification after receiving a diploma, it must be constantly developed. Therefore, organizations (educational organizations are not an exception) striving to meet constantly changing requirements should create teaching/learning systems that should be consistently focused on the development of the competences of the staff in the workplace.

The relevance of the topic discussed allows determining the problem field of the research. It should be noted that analysing the exploration of the problem of teachers' learning the most attention is paid to the processes of teachers' teaching/learning (in general), motives, acknowledgement of competences, etc. The development of the learning competence of preschool education teachers in the organization as a process important for the organizational culture also having vital importance for the quality of preschool education lacks scientists' attention. It should be noted that the quality of preschool education, the expectations of the users (parents, children, society) are related to the competence of pedagogical staff, as a consequence of which the (self-)improvement of teachers' qualification becomes an integral part of the quality of the activity of an educational institution as well as the culture of the organization. N. Kvedaraitė (2009) notes that one of the priorities of the (self-)construction of the organizational culture is "to learn, to learn while teaching the others, and learn from the others" (p. 7), establishing the conditions necessary for that in the workplace. Constant changes of (self-)education, aspiration for high-quality (self-)education stimulates a teacher to constantly develop and look for new ways of improving his/her competences. A teacher should feel a constant need for competences that would help him/her to make the education process more effective and corresponding to new requirements that are being constantly set. However, the learners usually choose traditional ways of learning not relating them to personal features or do that intuitively. The research conducted by V. Lukošūnienė, M. Barkauskaitė (2013) shows that the majority of teachers' skills are to be improved, e.g.: to create strategies to overcome obstacles that hinder from meeting the terms; to make a timetable and write a diary; to plan activities so that they are performed without external interferences; to estimate the amount of efforts each tasks requires in order to find out whether the time is not wasted while looking for the ways to perform it.

- » **The problem-based question of the research** is how are the conditions favourable for the development of teachers' learning competence created in a preschool educational institution?
- » **The object of the research** – the development of teachers' learning competence.
- » **The aim of the research** – to reveal the opportunities of the development of the learning competence of teachers in the institution.

## Methods of the empirical research

*The method of the research* – structural written reflection (Kolb, 1984; Bitinas, 1996). In education science reflection (Lat. *reflexio* – bending back, turning back) is defined as "a way of thinking when a personality critically analyses, realizes and actualizes the contents, form, and preconditions of one's thinking, the structure and peculiarities of one's spiritual world" (Jovaiša, 2007, p. 245). *The aim of the application of the method* – to investigate the opportunities of the development of the learning competence of teachers in preschool educational institution, i.e. what knowledge was gained by the teachers during the process of teaching/learning (from everyday occupational activity)

and how it was used in professional activity. A structured written reflection was created referring to the analysed theoretical scientific literature, also the principle of the model of experiential learning by D.A. Kolb (1984) and methodical recommendations by B. Bitinas (2006). In the context of the research the purpose of such a reflection is to record the process of teaching/learning of preschool education teachers in a preschool educational institution, to describe the situations of experiential learning. The written reflection helped to identify the ways teachers learn in an institution, how they intend to apply the obtained knowledge in future in their professional activity striving for the aims of professional development.

*The sample of the research* – 19 teachers having at least one year of working experience in preschool educational institution. *The research was conducted* in January-March, 2016. Applying the method of a written reflection the process of teachers' teaching/learning (in everyday occupational activity) in preschool educational institution describing the situations of experiential learning (ways of teaching/learning, relations of the gained knowledge to professional development, etc.) was recorded. Having conducted the research the written texts created by the teachers were analysed. For the analysis of texts – to distinguish categories and subcategories and to create the network of subcategories – the method of content analysis was applied. The results have been presented in the tables of categories-subcategories. The analysis of the statements of teachers' experience enabled to reveal the process of teachers' teaching/learning in preschool educational institution and forecast the opportunities of the development of teaching/learning competence in the institution.

The empirical research is based on the following theories: the *theory of experiential learning* that allows analysing the learning of preschool education teachers as an active process of the construction of knowledge and meaning based on collaboration, the dissemination of the experience one possesses, investigation, observation while reflectively exploring one's environment, experience, knowledge, activity (Kolb, 1984; Jarvis, 2001; Jarvis et al., 2003; Bubnys, 2009, etc.); *pragmatism*, the proponents of which emphasize everyday experience of a learner and open environment stimulating for education (Locke 1954; Ozmon & Craver, 1996; Dewey, 2003). In the context of the research teachers' teaching/learning in the workplace is analysed through everyday learning experiences the teachers possess; the *theory of constructive teaching/learning*, referring to which teachers' learning is perceived as a process of the construction of meanings, intellectual activity and interactive social exchange. This theory highlights the idea that every person learns differently, in different ways of learning and using different means thus constructing and reconstructing the knowledge about the world, giving sense to experience (Kohlberg, 1986; Vygotsky, 1986)

## Theoretical approaches of the research

Essential *changes in the field of preschool education* are based on the new educational culture of the society. It has been influenced by internal and external factors: globalization and joining the European Union, changing economic, social and political

conditions, development of information and communication technologies, increasing demands of the society and requirements for education.

The changes also require the change in the behaviour of preschool educational institutions and the competences of their employees (management of human resources should change, collaboration with various groups of interests should be developed). In a modern educational institution a teacher here and now should be able to manage various situations during the process of education. For this purpose he/she needs to employ complementary aids, ways, methods of education, forms of the organization of education (Jovaiša, 2007). It is important for a teacher to realize that learning is a lifelong activity. It is not a one-time phenomenon related to the beginning of professional activity. In the context of lifelong learning experiential learning is becoming relevant. In this case a critical attitude towards various aspects related to professional activity, especially to the accumulation and reflection of professional experience, formulation of conclusions, becomes a relevant skill.

The *importance of adult teaching* is characterized by constant professional or personal development that is conditioned by changes taking place in the society. According to J. Smilgienė (2012, p. 20), the changing environment is setting more and more new requirements, therefore, the specialists need to or even must care about their qualification: expand knowledge, improve skills, evaluate and develop professional attitudes, requalify, keep mastering different technologies and abilities.

In education programmes implemented in Lithuania *knowing how to learn* is defined as a person's wish and preparedness to take up new tasks, ability to control cognitive and emotional processes while learning, apply gained skills in various contexts (Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, 2005; Analysis of the Problem of Education, 2013; Lithuanian Education Strategy for 2013–2022). The essential elements of the structure of the competence of knowing how to learn are as follows: these are value attitudes of learning that forecast the shift of the focus of pedagogical activity from teaching to learning process; learning abilities, that is to be able to set learning aims and objectives; to purposefully act striving to achieve the set learning objectives; to plan learning activity; to reflect the learning process; knowledge about the learning process (Linkaitytė et al., 2005). The development of the competence of learning how to learn is not the transference of separate learning methods. The main task developing the ability to learn is the application of various learning methods and using them to form individual teaching strategies (set individual learning goals, correct them depending on the need and/or situation, plan and organize one's own learning process, solve problems of different character arising during the process, reflect one's own learning experience and evaluate the obtained results, etc.).

When the aims of education are changing a *teacher must know various ways of teaching/learning* and be able to apply them. Institutions not only should have the policy of the improvement of employees' qualification, give time and resources, but also create conditions for teachers to learn in various methods and forms in preschool educational institution. G. Gedvilienė, E. Stasiūnaitienė, A. Petruilytė (2008) point out that learning depends on many different factors, the most important of which are knowledge and previous experience of learners, character of information

and knowledge, the context, where learning takes place, knowledge about oneself, positive inner motivation, etc.

The job of a teacher of a preschool educational institution requires versatile adjustment in professional activity. A teacher must master various methods of education and choose the most suitable one to every individuality, be able to analyse, reflect and evaluate himself/herself and forecast the opportunities of his/her impact on a maturing personality.

In the national documents on education the following form of obtaining the competences is presented: individual; collegial sharing of experience; specialized events; academic ways of gaining competence; public non-occupational activity. There exist the ways of learning conditioning the accumulation of best practices, these are learning from colleagues, giving an example, observation, individually planned activity, activity guided by an advisor. Essential factor of teachers' growth is the activity of educational institutions and favourable environment. Suitable environment of the organization encourages taking responsibility for one's own growth. The learning of the institution takes place when its members learn. It happens when an institution employs new members who have information the institution had not had before. Both staff and computers or books can participate in the learning process as teachers and learners (Simonaitienė, 2007).

Learning how to learn will be identified as having high quality only referring to respective knowledge and skills. Positive attitudes and motivation are not enough. In the process of learning how to learn a teacher must be able to plan his/her learning process, reflect, analyse and forecast the further outline of learning. Analysing the development of learning competence in an educational institution as an educational organization it is evident that there is no one right way to learn. The conditions must be established for a teacher to develop his/her skills and experience in the form that is acceptable to him/her and meets his/her individual needs. Teachers can freely choose learning activities that are acceptable to them, look for original forms of education, discover creative ideas and forecast the possibilities of their implementation. Such a teacher not only strives for the quality of education but also feels satisfied with the results of his/her activity.

## The results of the empirical research

The results of the empirical research reveal the opportunities of the development of teachers' learning competence in preschool educational institution. The results of the research have been presented from the following aspects:

- » *ways/forms of learning of teachers of preschool educational institutions;*
- » *applicability of knowledge gained by preschool education teachers;*
- » *evaluation of the application of the experience gained by teachers in activity.*

## Ways of learning of teachers of preschool educational institutions

Analysing the contents of everyday experiences of the teachers it was aimed to reveal what ways/forms of learning (see Table 1) in the preschool educational institution – in

the workplace – are important for the development of teachers’ learning competence and what opportunities to use the obtained experience in one’s activity exist.

**Table 1.** Ways/forms of learning of teachers of preschool educational institutions

Category	Subcategory	Number of statements	Examples of statements <sup>1</sup>
<b>Informal independent learning while observing activities (14)</b>	Learning while observing open activities	6	<i>“My colleague shared <b>interesting ideas</b> about how it is possible to enrich a physical training session delivered in my group”</i>
	Learning while observing events	5	<i>“I was <b>surprised by the use of small folklore</b> (riddles, counting games, jokes, imitations) while activating children’s speech, its perception and expression”</i>
	Learning while observing educational sessions	2	<i>“I was <b>fascinated by the hostess’ ability to make children interested</b>, to convey the process of how bread gets to our table”</i>
	Learning while observing an interinstitutional event	1	<i>“<b>It was the most interesting for me how in a simple hall of the kindergarten it is possible to play football</b>, but this solution is very simple. The playground was formed out of the benches turned upside down. It was unexpected and really useful”</i>
<b>Self-directed learning while sharing best practices (3)</b>	Learning while interacting with colleagues	3	<i>“I didn’t have much working experience then so I had questions how to do it as well as possible, so I <b>decided to ask the vice-principal for education</b>”</i>
<b>Personal professional development through activities (3)</b>	Self-directed learning during everyday activities	3	<i>“So this week together with the children we <b>were making up a plan ourselves</b> what we would like to do”</i>

<sup>1</sup> Here and further on the statements of the informants representing a subcategory and/or category have been presented, the language has not been corrected.



Category	Subcategory	Number of statements	Examples of statements <sup>1</sup>
<b>Professional development while participating in interinstitutional activity (5)</b>	Self-directed learning during lectures (seminar)	2	<i>“The PPS psychologist delivered a one-hour lecture about active and hyperactive children”</i>
	Learning while organizing conferences	3	<i>“When I started working in a kindergarten <b>it was necessary to finish an international Comenius project</b>: trip to Poland, receiving foreign partners in Lithuania, writing a final report, writing a new project”</i>
<b>Purposeful learning (1)</b>	Self-directed learning while developing professional knowledge	1	<i>“<b>I remembered the theoretical knowledge that I had forgotten.</b> I conducted a research about the computer games children play”</i>
<b>Learning while solving problems/ conflicts (3)</b>	Solving a conflict situation with the staff of the institution (interinstitutional aspect)	2	<i>“<b>A conflict situation has occurred</b> – a worker thought that our requirements for hygiene for her are big, that comparing with other families under her care the sisters’ mum is very caring. A worker from the social services centre came to the kindergarten to meet us”</i>
	Solving conflicts among children	1	<i>“Due to the fact that my group is attended by 5/6-year-old children, their games overlap with each other, so <b>many conflicts and quarrels occur.</b> I wanted to know what innovations are offered by psychologists, other pedagogues”</i>

Source: own research.

The data have revealed that the most popular way/form of teaching/learning of preschool education teachers is *open activities, events, educational programmes*. The participants of the research mention that the frequent forms of activity they gain experience from are *observation of everyday activities and events*. The activities are usually delivered by the colleagues from the same institution. The teachers in the organization learn not only by observing their colleagues’ activities or events but also participating in seminars, lectures, listening to the specialists in other different fields.

Another important aspect is that teachers also gain useful experience in the process of informal independent learning while preparing for activities, conferences or looking for suitable solutions of problems, which shows the opportunities of the development of teachers' competences in preschool education activities.

### Applicability of knowledge gained by preschool education teachers

The other part of a structured reflection is meant to analyse in what way the knowledge obtained by teachers in the workplace is applied (see Table 2). The research has revealed that the experience gained in this way is used in everyday professional activity.

**Table 2.** Applicability of knowledge gained by preschool education teachers

Category	Subcategory	Number of statements	Examples of statements
Application of knowledge in everyday activity (15)	In practical educational activity	9	<i>"The following day after the delivered and observed activity we tried to repeat this process with children in the group"</i>
	During events	4	<i>"During this project week I applied gained knowledge and experience in further events"</i>
	For the production of educational aids	1	<i>"I used this knowledge at my work: I made some aids"</i>
Scientific, practical events (2)	Conferences	1	<i>"I used the gained knowledge while organizing another conference in our institution"</i>
	Contests	1	<i>"We used this knowledge while preparing the application for the contest for the selection of innovative models of the organization of preschool education"</i>
In the development of personal competences (8)	In the field of the development of the research and analytical competence	1	<i>"Evaluating children, submitting the evaluation report to the supervisor"</i>
	In the field of the development of communication skills	3	<i>"I learned to listen to a child better, to hear his or her voice, and this conditions a higher quality of child's education"</i>

Category	Subcategory	Number of statements	Examples of statements
In the development of personal competences (8)	In conflict situations	4	<i>“I used this therapy in order to facilitate children’s adaptation when they started to attend the group”</i>

Source: own research.

Consequently, as it has already been mentioned, the research has shown that gained experience and knowledge in many cases are actually used in everyday professional activity, especially while organizing various educational activities. Experience and knowledge are accumulated while observing colleagues’ activities and events. A part of the obtained knowledge and experience is also applied to develop personal competences (e.g., communication skills).

### Evaluation of the application of the experience gained by teachers in activity

The results of the research confirm that teacher’s new experiences and knowledge demonstrated in professional activity are mostly evaluated by learners and their parents (see Table 3).

**Table 3.** Evaluation of the application of the experience gained by teachers in activity

Category	Subcategory	Number of statements	Examples of statements
Evaluation by colleagues (7)	Positive evaluation	7	<i>“The colleagues <b>have tried it themselves</b> in the education process, they mentioned that it was effective”</i>
Evaluation by the administration of the institution (7)	Positive evaluation	5	<i>“The supervisors were <b>fascinated and satisfied</b> with the work and they motivate and initiate to go on working”</i>
	Sceptical (contradictory) evaluation	2	<i>“The opinion was <b>rather sceptical</b>. What will happen if we start bathing everyone?”</i>
Evaluation by learners and their parents (16)	Positive evaluation, comments	8	<i>“The parents <b>were very glad</b> that we talk a lot with children”</i>
	Evaluation expressed in motivated activity	6	<i>“When the parents heard children’s stories and saw the handicrafts, they <b>showed a bigger interest</b> in this therapy and its usefulness in the child’s education”</i>

Category	Subcategory	Number of statements	Examples of statements
Evaluation by learners and their parents (16)	Changes in children's behaviour (positive)	2	<i>“Even the colleagues <b>have noticed</b> that the children <b>have become more courageous, initiative, creative, have “revealed themselves”</b>”</i>

Source: own research

Positive evaluations are expressed not only in good words or emotions. Positive feedback, interest in activities and certain techniques is also observed. Positive results of the applied newly gained knowledge are observed in children's behaviour as well. Equally the application of the experience gained by teachers is evaluated by their colleague teachers and the representatives of the administration of the institution. It should be noted that the heads of the institutions positively evaluate employees' initiative and wish to develop in their professional field, encourage and motivate them.

The conducted research proves the constant development of the community in everyday activity, practical events, and emphasizes the importance of teachers' constant teaching/learning. It is important for preschool education teachers not only to realize that learning is meaningful but also to perceive what the meaning of their work is.

## Generalization

*Teaching/learning is perceived in a much wider context as a dynamic process of searches, in which interacting with the environment and teaching/learning partners new perception of oneself and the surrounding world is born.* In the context of the culture of a preschool educational institution as an educational organization the development of teachers' learning competence is based on teachers' involvement into lifelong learning processes in order to obtain teaching/learning competences necessary for organizations and individuals: to share knowledge, to be able to learn while teaching and to understand learning as an essential factor of the survival of an individual and organization. Referring to the results of the research that has been conducted and presented in the article it is possible to state that teachers develop the competence of learning through various methods, practical tasks, encouraging independence.

The teachers of preschool educational institutions gain knowledge in everyday occupational activity, while solving professional problem situations or by the method of informal independent learning. Teachers apply knowledge gained in preschool educational institution in everyday educational activities, while planning future activities. The most frequent ways of learning in preschool educational institution are observation of the colleagues of the institution and the group of learners, conducting everyday activities, festivals, sharing experience. All this is closely related to teaching/learning from one's own experience. Learning during seminars, projects, conferences is less frequently mentioned. It should be emphasized that teachers gain knowledge

not from the application of innovative methods or forms but from everyday occupational activity, solutions of professional problem situations.

*Most often new knowledge is produced in everyday occupational activity, therefore, the organization must find the right ways to develop the dissemination of knowledge so that it reaches every member of the organization and further develops.* The application of the knowledge gained by teachers in the learning process in everyday activity receives constant evaluations that give added value to the learning process. The research has shown that the majority of evaluations were positive and stimulating the motivation for learning, the wish to develop in the professional field. Positive feedback between teachers and learners has also been mentioned. Among the evaluations there is also a sceptical attitude, the attempt to contradict a teacher's effort to go beyond the established practice and trying to search for new forms of activity.

Referring to the results of the research it is possible to state that in preschool educational institution the essential strategies of teachers' teaching/learning and development of competences in an institution/organization (at workplace) are as follows: observation of the colleagues of the institution and the group of learners (observation of children's reactions in activity); teaching/learning from one's own experience, i.e. learning while analysing one's own activity and correcting it, trying to eliminate the mistakes; participation in open activities organized by colleagues is also an effective way to get new experience because it is possible to compare them with the activities organized by the teachers themselves, to foresee the priorities of professional development; the teachers give priority to the ways, in which they can organize themselves into groups or teams and present there the activities they perform, to analyse the colleagues' work, to share the newest information related to the educational process.

The teachers of preschool educational institutions consider teaching/learning at workplace as an advantage, because their teaching/learning with an "advisor" is purposeful and free of charge, moreover, everything takes place in the environment which is "their own".

## References

- Bitinas, B. (2006). *Edukologinis tyrimas: sistema ir procesas*. Vilnius: Kronta.
- Bubnys, R. (2009). *Reflektyvus mokymasis kaip edukacinis fenomenas ugdant specialiuosius pedagogus aukštojoje mokykloje*. Daktaro disertacija. Šiauliai: Šiaulių universitetas.
- Dawe, S. (2003). *Determinants of successful training practices in large Australian firms*. Adelaide: NCVER.
- Drucker, P.F. (2009). *Diukerio mokymo pagrindai*. Kaunas: r grupė.
- Gedvilienė, G., Stasiūnaitienė, E., Petrulytė, A. (2008). *Prioritetinės suaugusiųjų mokymo(si) teorijos, naudojamos mentorystės procese*. Suaugusiųjų mokymas ir konsultavimas. Kaunas: Technologija.
- Jarvis, P. (2001). *Mokymosi paradoksai*. Kaunas: Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas.
- Jarvis, P., Holford, J., Griffin, C. (2003). *The theory & Practice of Learning*. London: Kogan Page.
- Jovaiša L. (2007). *Enciklopedinis edukologijos žodynas*. Vilnius: Gimtasis žodis.
- Jurašaitė – Harbison E. (2004). *Ikimokyklinio ugdymo pedagogų profesinės kompetencijos: struktūra, modelių realizavimas, įvertinimas*. Daktaro disertacija. Vilnius: VPU.

- Jurasaitė-Harbisson, E. (2008). *Learning in and from Practice: Opportunities and Implications for Teachers' Informal Learning in Lithuania and the United States*. Daktaro disertacija. Mičigano universitetas.
- Kolb, D.A. (1984). *Experiential learning: experience as the source of learning and development*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Kohlberg, L. (1986). *The philosophy of moral development*. San Francisco: Harper and Row.
- Kvedaraitė, N. (2009). Šiuolaikinės mokyklos kaip besimokančios organizacijos bruožų raiška personalo savivaldaus mokymosi sklaidos procesuose. Daktaro disertacija. Šiauliai: Šiaulių universitetas.
- Laužackas, R. (2000). *Mokymo turinio projektavimas*. Kaunas: VDU leidykla.
- Lenkauskaitė, J. (2014). *Socialinis žinojimo konstravimas taikant probleminių mokymųsi universitetinėse studijose*. Daktaro disertacija. Šiauliai: Šiaulių universitetas.
- Linkaitytė G., Valiuškevičiūtė A., Lukšytė D., ir kt. (2005). *Atsivertime ateičiai*. Kaunas: Vytauto didžiojo universitetas.
- Locke, J. (1954). *Essays on the law of nature*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Lukošūnienė, V., Barkauskaitė, M. (2013). Mokymosi mokyti kompetencija: suaugusiųjų požiūris. *Pedagogika: mokslo darbai*, Nr. 110, p. 41–48.
- Lukošūnienė V. (2011). Refleksija kaip integrali mokymosi mokyti kompetencijos dalis. *Pedagogika*, Nr. 101, p. 43–49.
- Neifachas, S. (2008). *Ikimokyklinio ugdymo programos kokybės užtikrinimas: turinio konkretizavimas, tikslų ir uždavinių įgyvendinimas, atitikties nustatymas*. Vilnius: Ciklonas.
- Ozmon, A. H., Craver, M.S. (1996). *Filosofiniai ugdymo pagrindai*. Vilnius: Leidybos centras.
- Pocevičienė, R. (2014). Mokymosi mokyti kompetencija kaip būtina studentų savarankiško darbo kokybės sąlyga. Studijos šiuolaikinėje visuomenėje. *Mokslo darbai*. Nr. 5 (1), p. 52–60.
- Saulėnienė, S., Žydžiūnaitė, V., Katiliūtė, E. (2006). *Pedagogo rengimo standarto gairių projekto tyrimo ataskaita*. Kaunas: Mokytojų kompetencijos.
- Simonaitienė, B. (2007). *Mokyklos – besimokančios organizacijos vystymas*. Kaunas: Technologija.
- Smilgienė, J. (2015). *Ikimokyklinių įstaigų pedagogų mokymo(si) organizacijoje patirčių reikšmingumas ugdymo(si) kokybei*. Daktaro disertacija. Šiaulių universitetas.
- Smilgienė, J. (2012). Ikimokyklinio ugdymo įstaigų pedagogų kompetencijų tobulinimo poreikis bei galimybės dalyvaujant profesinėje veikloje. *Mokytojų ugdymas*, 18 (1)12–29.
- Torokoff, M., Mets, T. (2004). Learning in organisation: Congruence between goals, process and success (with the example of educational institution). In *International Scientific Conference: Development of Economy: Theory and Practice, Kaunas, 30.09–2.10.2004* (p. 14). CD-ROM.
- Vygotsky, L. (1986). *Thought and language*. Cambridge: MA.
- Žydžiūnaitė, V., Lepaitė, D., Cibulskas, G., Bubnys, R. (2012). *Savaiminis mokymasis darbo aplinkoje: bendrosios kompetencijos vystymosi kontekstualumas*. Šiauliai: Šiaulių valstybinė kolegija.

---

## Jurgita Smilgienė

PhD in Social Sciences (Education), lector  
 Šiauliai University  
 Vilniaus g. 88, Šiauliai 76285, Lithuania  
 e-mail: jurgita.smilgiene@gmail.com

---

**Erika Masiliauskienė**

PhD in Social Sciences (Education), associate professor  
Šiauliai University  
Vilniaus g. 88, Šiauliai 76285, Lithuania  
e-mail: erika.masiliauskiene@su.lt