

Beata Pitula / Mirosław Kowalski (eds.)

# **Co-Teaching - Everyday Life or Terra Incognita of Contemporary Education?**



**unipress**



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With 22 figures

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## Introduction

Multifaceted, multidimensional, rapid transformations of the modern world include all spheres in which the current civilization is manifested. The human condition in this world, marked by the digital revolution, is the resultant of many processes that account for the progress of civilization. Each person must, therefore, in their individual way, face challenges (however, this individual dimension of the process of civilization is inherently connected with civilization on a social level<sup>1</sup>). Meeting these challenges requires new knowledge and new skills, a different view of reality and continuous learning. Therefore, the question arises how to educate people so that they can not only find themselves in this highly developed modernity, but also function and act responsibly in it. It gives rise to extensive debates and discussions, not only among educators, on the quality and effectiveness of education, strategies, and teaching methods that will optimally support the individual in his or her efforts to build a new, super intelligent society.

Following Dawid Juraszek's statement that education is, in a way, "a conversation (face to face, in the ether, in black and white)"<sup>2</sup>, the Authors (representing various scientific disciplines and various scientific centers in Poland and Czech Republic) of the considerations published in this paper started a discussion on co-teaching as a proposal for the school/university work in the next decade of the 21st century, hoping that the thoughts contained herein will prove helpful to all critically thinking and continuously improving teachers, academic staff and candidates for the profession.

The first part of the book entitled: **Teacher creator and implementer of co-teaching** includes texts about the basic teacher competence for the implementation of co-teaching (**Jolanta Szempruch** Teachers' communicative and

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1 N. Elias, *On the Process of Civilization, Socio- and Psychogenetic Analyses*, transl. T. Zabłudowski, K. Markiewicz, W.A.B., Warszawa 2011, s. 11. Cited after D. Kaźmierczak, M. Szumiec, *Bezpieczeństwo, zdrowie, edukacja*, Wydawnictwo Libron, Kraków 2021, s. 7.

2 D. Juraszek, cited after D. Kaźmierczak, M. Szumiec, *Człowiek we współczesnym świecie. Bezpieczeństwo, zdrowie, edukacja*, Wydawnictwo Libron, Kraków 2021, s. 9.

interpretative competence as a basis for co-teaching); required for effective co-operation between teachers, the attitude of a reflective practitioner (**Jolanta Konieczny** Reflective Practitioner Attitude as a Basis for Teachers' Cooperation); an example of professional learning community in Singapore (**Inetta Nowosad** Example of Professional Learning Community (PLC) in Singapore) and the use of co-teaching in the prevention of professional burnout syndrome of teachers (**Markéta Švamberk Šauerová**, *Co-teaching* and other pedagogical approaches to the prevention of burnout syndrome of beginning teachers).

The second part is: **Co-teaching in the educational practice of schools** and consists of reflections on the possibilities and real use of co-teaching in teachers' everyday work. The problem of space arrangement as a key factor of co-teaching in the context of selected didactic concepts of inclusive education is analyzed by **Zenon Gajdzica** (Spatial models in co-teaching versus educational theories – the case of inclusive education); possibilities of co-teaching in the process of stimulating activity are considered by **Urszula Szuścik** (Co-teaching and art education); **Zdzisława Janiszewska-Nieścioruk** (Elasticity and diversity of co-teaching forms as crucial conditions for the effectiveness of inclusive education of students with disabilities) discusses the cooperation of teachers as an essential condition for the implementation of the assumptions of inclusive education; the topic of benefits arising from the use of team teaching in supporting children with disabilities was taken up by **Anna Potyka** and **Anna Suchon** (Using Team Teaching in Work with Children with Special Educational Needs); the in-depth analyses of the effectiveness of virtual co-teaching were presented by **Zuzana Svobodová**, **Jaroslav Veteška**, **Danuše Dvořáková** (Virtual co-teaching through the eyes of primary and secondary school students) and **Martin Kursch**, **Roman Liška**, **Michaela Tureckiová**, **Jaroslav Kříž** Efficiency of virtual co-teaching.

The third part of the publication entitled: **Examples of co-teaching in academic education** lists original ideas of the authors, who use the co-teaching method in their work with students of universities and technical colleges. **Barbara Grzyb** (Project-Based Learning – Synergy of Coaching and Co-teaching) shows that the PBL method works perfectly in educating students, as it combines benefits resulting from the use of coaching and co-teaching; **Katarzyna Tobór-Osadnik** and **Anna Bluszcz** (Modern trends in higher education – experiences in the implementation of an international didactic project Erasmus+ CBHE) share their reflections on new possibilities of cooperative education, illustrating it with the results of an international project, in which co-teaching was applied; **Małgorzata Wyganowska** (Implementation of co-teaching in Project Based Learning at a technical University) proves that PBL significantly increases the effectiveness of the educational process conducted at universities, as it is based on co-teaching principles; **Anna Waligóra** presents the author's teaching programme implemented with the use of co-teaching at one of the faculties of the

Silesian University of Technology (Co-Teaching in the Process of Student Education – Innovative Challenge and Inspiring Practice Using the Example of Model Application in the Proprietary Course Held at the Silesian University of Technology); the benefits arising from the use of co-teaching in language education are discussed by **Ida Skubis** (The importance of co-teaching in teaching German varieties).

The fourth part entitled: **Reflection on co-teaching** is an attempt to look at co-teaching from a slightly broader perspective. **Beata Ecler-Nocon** (The category of participation in the context of the phenomenon of cooperation in co-teaching) proposes adopting Karol Wojtyła's theory of participation as a point of reference for the teaching methods used by teachers, including co-teaching; **Jolanta Karbowniczek** (The connective paradigm a new challenge for early childhood education teachers from a community relations perspective) advocates the implementation of the connective paradigm and creates a model of a teacher-co-teacher as one who is compatible with the needs of a contemporary learner; **Mirosław Kowalski and Łukasz Albanski** (Handbags: Another Look at an Everyday Education of Daily Routines and Selves) emphasize relation as a cardinal condition for common teaching/learning, using the metaphor of a "handbag" they show the way the interlocutors experience and understand the world as well as their strategies for maintaining relations with others, objects and the environment; **Beata Pitula** (Education in Relation – Is Co-Teaching a Chance for a New School/Academy) presents co-teaching as seen from the perspective of expectations and needs of the emerging super-intelligent society, concluding that it has a chance to become an everyday practice in a new school/academy.

The editors would like to thank the reviewers – Prof. dr hab. Krystyna Ferenz and dr hab., prof. UMCS Małgorzata Kuśpit for the effort put into preparing the reviews, and to the Authors for accepting the invitation to work jointly on the book.

Beata Pitula  
Mirosław Kowalski



## **Part I:**

### **Teacher creator and implementer of co-teaching**



Jolanta Szempruch

## Teachers' communicative and interpretative competence as a basis for co-teaching

**Abstract:** The subject of the analysis is the teachers' communicative and interpretative competences, which are considered in this text as key in the professional functioning of co-teachers in the same class. The text presents the teachers' competences, which are discussed with reference to their various definitions and classifications as well as it characterises their components and areas. It also depicts the position of communicative and interpretative competences in the structure of teachers' competences. The analysis shows that in a dynamically changing world of opportunities and needs, it is the teachers' duty to reflect on their own work and constantly improve their competences. The conclusion of the text highlights the benefits of co-teaching, emphasising that this model of education creates great opportunities for the development of the teachers' competences, especially communicative and interpretative ones.

**Keywords:** teachers' communicative and interpretative competences, co-teaching

Teachers cooperate with many specialists, special educators, psychologists and other teachers in order to efficiently implement the curriculum and meet the individual needs of students. To enable this cooperation, it is necessary to master the competences that determine its success. Such competences include, among others, communicative and interpretative ones. While most teacher training programs address cooperation and related interpersonal communication, many teachers do not sufficiently master the skills necessary for successful collaboration. It becomes essential to reflect on the improvement of their interpretative and communicative competences which are the basis for mutual understanding and co-teaching.

Interpretative and communicative competences should be cultivated as early as in the course of professional training and student internships, and then perfected in the following years of the teaching career. Therefore, it seems necessary to include these issues in higher education programmes and practical experiences that will provide candidates for teachers with a firm foundation of educational theory and practice. It is worth employing many examples of effective modelling and developing collaboration skills among future teachers, which have been



indicated, among others, by York-Barr, Bacharr, Salk, Frank, & Beniek<sup>1</sup> as well as Wenzlaff, Berak, Wieseman, Monroe-Baillargeon, Bacharach, & Bradfield-Kreider<sup>2</sup>.

Teaching collaboration skills, combined with developing communicative and interpretive skills among candidates for teachers, is the basis for teachers' appropriate preparation for co-teaching.

## Co-teaching as a challenge for contemporary schools

Co-teaching is implemented in a variety of ways. Wenzlaff, et. al.<sup>3</sup> agree that co-teaching is “two or more individuals who come together in a collaborative relationship for the purpose of shared work ... for the outcome of achieving what none could have done alone.” Co-teaching is a widely recognized strategy for supporting students with disabilities in an inclusive learning environment where the general education teacher and the special education teacher work together in the same class with non-disabled and disabled students<sup>4</sup>. This leads to satisfying the educational needs of both students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers<sup>5</sup>. The concept of co-teaching can also be related to cooperation between many teachers, and the Global Read Aloud collaboration may serve as its example<sup>6</sup>.

Co-teaching is preceded by an analysis of the students' needs carried out by cooperating teachers – leading and assisting (supporting). Then, the development of a joint didactic and educational work plan, an agreement on the methods of transferring content at the level of domain and pedagogical knowledge, and also sharing conclusions drawn from observations are required. Co-teaching also

1 J. York-Barr, N. Bacharach, J. Salk, J. Frank, B. Beniek, *Team Teaching in Teacher Education: General and Special Education Faculty Experiences and Perspectives*, Issues in Teacher Education, vol. 13, 2004, pp. 73–94.

2 T. Wenzlaff, L. Berak, K. Wieseman, A. Monroe-Baillargeon, N. Bacharach, P. Bradfield-Kreider, *Walking our talk as educators: Teaming as a best practice*, [in:], *Research on Meeting and Using Standards in the Preparation of Teachers*, ed. E. Guyton, J. Ranier, IA: Kendall-Hunt Publishing, Dubuque 2002, pp. 11–24.

3 Ibidem, p. 14.

4 L. Cook, M. Friend, *Co-teaching: Guidelines for Creating Effective Practices. Focus on Exceptional Children*, 1995, (26)3.

5 S. Vaughn, J. Schumm, M. Arguelle, *The ABCDEs of co-teaching. Teaching Exceptional Children*, 1997, 30; J. Platt, D. Walker-Knight, T. Lee, R. Hewitt, *Shaping future teacher education practices through collaboration and co-teaching*, Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education, 2001.

6 J.P. Carpenter, S.N. Kerkhoff, X. Wang, *Teachers using technology for co-teaching and crowd-sourcing: The case of Global Read Aloud collaboration*, Teaching and Teacher Education, 2022, vol. 114, 103719, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103719>.

demands joint evaluation and, as a result, modifying the teaching process<sup>7</sup>. Its openness to the presence of a second teacher in the class and to feedback is a prerequisite.

This way of teaching brings numerous benefits for students. Teachers conducting classes have different specialist knowledge, which they mutually enhance during cooperation. Collaboration between them is beneficial for collaboration between students and has a positive impact on improving the overall achievement of students<sup>8</sup>. During such work, students are activated and democratic atmosphere develops in the classroom. Additionally, a greater variety of pedagogical activities and also multitudes of methods are used<sup>9</sup>. The analysis of the explored issues with an interdisciplinary approach, combined with the presentation of many, sometimes opposing views, justifying one's own opinions and assessments encourages students to ask questions and search for answers, which empowers them to develop critical thinking skills.

Education is carried out in collaboration, as it is required by the conversation itself<sup>10</sup>. It is an element of every interaction. Depending on the type of interaction, the degree of cooperation may vary<sup>11</sup>. Dialogical interactions and a good mastery of communicative and interpretive competences by the participating teachers are essential for co-teaching.

## Teacher competences

The meaning of the term “competence” seems to be unclear and multidimensional. There are many who criticise the application of this term in the area of pedagogy for the lack of reflection, imprecision and the lack of determination. The instrumental aspect of the concept of “competence” is determined by the Latin word *competentia*, derived from the verb *competere* meaning “to agree”, “to

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- 7 Por. N. Bacharach, T.W. Heck, K. Dahlberg, *Co-Teaching in higher education*, Journal of College Teaching & Learning (TLC), 2008, 5(3), pp. 9–16. <https://doi.org/10.19030/tlc.v5i3.1298>.
  - 8 K.A. McDuffie, M.A. Mastropieri, T.E. Scruggs, *Differential effects of peer tutoring in co-taught and non-co-taught classes: Results for content learning and student-teacher interactions*, Exceptional Children, 2009, 75(4), pp. 493–510. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001440290907500406>.
  - 9 J. Ferguson, J. Wilson, *The co-teaching professorship: Power and expertise in the co-taught higher education classroom*, Scholar-Practitioner Quarterly, 2011, 5(1), pp. 52–68. <https://cutt.ly/JpPTdcD>; K.J. Graziano, Navarrete, L. A. (2012). Co-Teaching in a teacher education classroom: Collaboration, compromise, and creativity. Issues in Teacher Education, 21(1), pp. 109–126. <https://cutt.ly/FpPYRhT>.
  - 10 H. Sacks *Lectures on Conversation*, 1992, Volumes I & II, Blackwell, p. 379.
  - 11 O. Sutherland, T. Strong, *Therapeutic collaboration: A conversation analysis of constructionist therapy*, Journal of Family Therapy, 2011, 33 (3), pp. 256–278.

be suitable”, “to compete”<sup>12</sup>. The essential meaning of the word applies to the inner potential of the entity that determines its ability to take action or hold a certain position. Competence in this sense determines the subjective ability to adapt to the conditions of the social environment. In pedagogy, it means the capacity for personal self-actualization and the basic condition for a child upbringing. Competence is considered to be the outcome of the learning process that results in the ability to perform specific task areas<sup>13</sup>. The basic meaning of the concept of “competence”, deriving from its etymology, relates therefore to the individual’s potential which determines their ability to perform certain types of activities<sup>14</sup>. It also means the scope of one’s knowledge, skills and responsibilities, as well as powers and authorizations.<sup>15</sup>

Competence, therefore, is determined by the internal context and is described as a subjective potential dependent on something, and it is also determined by the external context and it is assigned a meaning of the capacity for something. Both scopes may overlap. The reference to the term of competence enables to distinguish people who professionally fulfil the tasks entrusted to them, from those who cannot act professionally due to deficiency or lack of competence in a certain scope.

Competence is also accounted for as the ability and readiness to perform tasks at a certain level consistent with social standards and also to bear the consequences of such behaviour and take responsibility for it<sup>16</sup>, though this ability depends both on the knowledge of the abilities involved and the belief in the possibility of using this ability. It can also be considered as a category describing an individual and its relations with the environment, it is possible to distinguish its levels by setting standards of competences recognized as a measure of a person’s suitability to fulfil their role and predicting its effectiveness<sup>17</sup>. It has major significance in the context of considerations about professionalism.

12 W. Kopaliński, *Słownik wyrazów obcych i zwrotów obcojęzycznych z almanachem*, Oficyna Wydawnicza RYT, Warszawa 2007.

13 W. Okoń, *Nowy słownik pedagogiczny*, Wyd. Akademickie “Żak”, Warszawa 2004, pp. 174–175.

14 T. Pilch (ed.), *Encyklopedia pedagogiczna XXI wieku*, Wyd. Akademickie “Żak”, Warszawa 2004, vol. I, p. 693.

15 M. Szymczak (ed.), *Słownik języka polskiego*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 1994.

16 J. Szempruch, *Pedagogiczne kształcenie nauczycieli wobec reformy edukacji w Polsce*, Wydawnictwo WSP, Rzeszów 2000, p. 264.

17 J. Szempruch, *Pedagogiczne kształcenie nauczycieli...*, op. cit., p. 264; J. Szempruch, *Nauczyciel w warunkach zmiany społecznej i edukacyjnej*, Oficyna Wydawnicza “Impuls”, Kraków 2012, pp. 186–197.

The understanding of competences can be placed in various areas of meaning, in which competence is the basis of subjective involvement in the world<sup>18</sup>. Therefore, competences can be treated as: (1) the basis for the efficiency of action, (2) the condition for constructing the psychosocial identity of an individual, (3) the ability to take reflective action, (4) the condition for distancing understanding, (5) the potential for taking emancipatory action.

In relation to teachers, the term “competence” is most often used in the context of their education, further training and professional development. The aim is to recognize and explain the demand and methods of developing specific competences, necessary for teachers to perform professional tasks effectively in the era of social and educational changes. The dynamically changing world, which poses new challenges for teachers, also forces the ongoing improvement of their competences. Thus, the priority dimension of teachers' professional competences is the category of change. It means opening the teacher to the subjectivity and creative development of the student, to innovation, coping with the stress accompanying the performance of a professional role, together with tensions and conflicts at school. Openness to change also means tolerance, understanding the contemporary world and awareness of one's place in the world.

In the pedeutological literature, there are proposals to classify teacher competences according to their various types, depending on the theoretical assumptions adopted by the authors, understanding the basic tasks of education or the perception of the role of the teacher in preparing people who will be ready to face the challenges of the modern world<sup>19</sup>. In the descriptions of teachers' competences, the groups which are most often distinguished concern the issues of the taught subject, the teacher's and the student's workshop in the form of teaching and learning techniques and methods, as well as various ways of influencing students in terms of communication skills, networking, solving educational problems, etc. Teacher's competences are constantly developing and require constant corrections. This is due to the specificity of the work, which comes from the uniqueness of the situation (openness, non-stereotypical attitude), the non-standard nature of working with people and the communicative character of this work. Correct assessment of teacher competences is restricted by contextual factors, including class behaviour, its size or composition.

18 A. Mączkowska, *Od świadomości nauczyciela do konstrukcji świata społecznego. Nauczycielskie koncepcje wymagań dydaktycznych a problem rekonstrukcyjnej kompetencji ucznia*, Oficyna Wydawnicza “Impuls”, Kraków 2002, p. 123.

19 cf.: R. Kwaśnica, *Wprowadzenie do myślenia o nauczycielu*, [in:] *Pedagogika*, vol. 2, Z. Kwieciński, B. Śliwerski (Ed.), Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2004, pp. 298–305; K. Denek, *Nauczyciel – jego tożsamość, role i kompetencje*, “Wychowanie Fizyczne i Zdrowotne”, 2011, no 3, pp. 9–10; J. Průcha, *Pedeutologia* [in:] *Pedagogika*, vol. 2, B. Śliwerski (ed.), GWP, Warszawa 2006, et al.

In the teaching profession, competences are understood as a cognitive structure composed of the skills, knowledge, disposition and attitudes of teachers necessary for the effective implementation of tasks, which result from a specific educational concept<sup>20</sup>. Competencies can therefore be defined as personality traits, knowledge, skills and values which characterize a given teacher in performing the assigned professional tasks. This understanding of competences is illustrated in Figure 1.

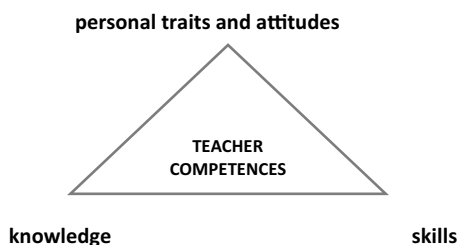


Figure 1: Components of teacher competences. Source: J. Szempruch (2013), *Pedeutologia. Studium teoretyczno-pragmatyczne*, Oficyna Wydawnicza "Impuls", Kraków.

## The place of interpretive and communicative competences in the structure of teacher competences

Teacher competences, understood as a function of the interaction of knowledge, skills, emotions and behaviour, are characterized by: a connection with tasks, as they are manifested in specific behaviours; changeability, which means that they are developing; and measurability, which means that competences can be measured. Therefore, the following areas of competences, important for the teaching profession, can be distinguished: personal, interpretive and communicative, creative and critical, cooperative, pragmatic, ICT and media. This is an open-ended list. Teacher competences are closely related to each other, constituting a comprehensive, dynamic system of one's professional competences (Figure 2).

Due to the topic of the study, the subject chosen for the analysis was interpretive and communicative competences, which are crucial in the professional functioning of teachers who co-teach in the same class. They are expressed in the ability to understand and define educational situations and in the effectiveness of communication behaviours, both verbal and non-verbal. Interpretive competences, in particular, relate to the ability to define and interpret various edu-

20 E. Goźlińska, F. Szlosek, *Podręczny słownik nauczyciela kształcenia zawodowego*, Wydawnictwo ITE, Radom 1997, p. 52.

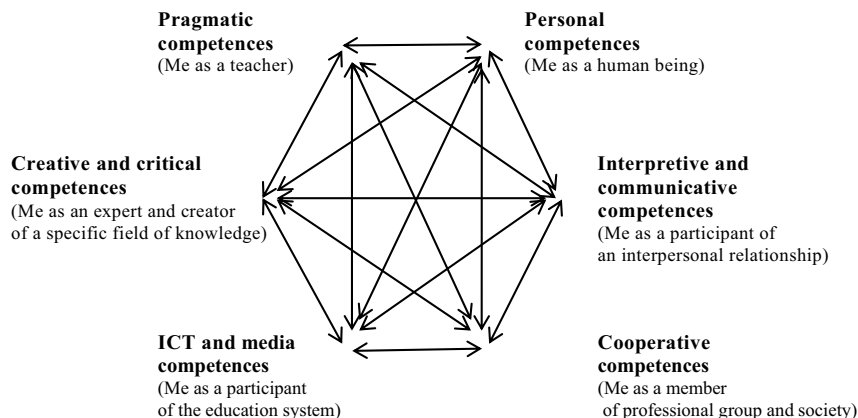


Figure 2: Areas of teacher professional competences. Source: J. Szempruch (2013), *Pedeutologia. Studium teoretyczno-pragmatyczne*, Oficyna Wydawnicza "Impuls", Kraków.

cational situations related to understanding the student, understanding oneself and the sense of the relationship between oneself and the student, and adapting one's own style of communication with the student to them. Interpretation of the situation is very important in case of co-teaching and cooperation of teachers in this area, as joint and accurate defining of the situation of students as well as the agreement and general consensus of teachers in the field of diagnoses is the basis for good organization of co-teaching.

Interpretive competences are related to diagnostic competences, which are understood as goal-oriented gathering and integrating information in order to reduce uncertainty while making educational decisions<sup>21</sup>, such as collaborative teaching, lesson planning or student assessment<sup>22</sup>. Earlier studies of these competences focused on the accurate judgment, that is, the correspondence between teachers' expectations of learning outcomes and the actual test results of students<sup>23</sup>. More recent publications signal the need to include qualitative assessment and to understand student misconceptions and strategies<sup>24</sup>, but also to

21 cf. N. Heitzmann, T. Seidel, A. Opitz, A. Hetmanek, C. Wecker, M. Fischer, S. Ufer, R. Schmidmaier, B. Neuhaus, M. Siebeck, K. Stürmer, A. Obersteiner, K. Reiss, R. Girwidz, F. Fischer, *Facilitating diagnostic competences in simulations in higher education*, *Frontline Learning Research*, 2019, 7(4), pp. 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.14786/flr.v7i4.384>.

22 F.W. Schrader, *Diagnostische Kompetenz von Lehrpersonen*, *Beiträge zur Lehrerinnen- und Lehrerbildung*, 2013, 31(2), pp. 154–165.

23 B. Spinath, *Akkuratheit der Einschätzung von Schülermerkmalen durch Lehrer und das Konstrukt der diagnostischen Kompetenz*, *Zeitschrift für Pädagogische Psychologie*, 2005, 19, pp. 85–95, <https://doi.org/10.1024/1010-0652.19.12.85>.

24 S. Herppich, A.K. Praetorius, N. Förster, I. Glogger-Frey, K. Karst, D. Leutner, A. Südkamp, et al., *Teachers' assessment competence: Integrating knowledge-, process-, and product-oriented*

investigate the diagnostic process that leads to awarding grades. Diagnostic situations in teaching practice may vary, most of them occur in student-teacher interactions in the classroom<sup>25</sup>, they are aimed at formative assessment of students' learning and are closely related to the teacher's pedagogical activities.

Moreover, co-teaching requires a diagnosis of method preferences and the selection of the potentially best team teaching methods. It forces the teacher to learn their ways of working, their strengths and areas of development. It also requires working on developing communicative skills in teamwork.

Communicative competences relate to the knowledge of interpersonal communication and the ability to apply it for educational purposes. They are connected with the ability to establish and maintain contact with a student, as well as to properly receive and interpret educational messages. Understanding the dialogical nature of the teacher-student and teacher-teacher relationship and the ability to properly formulate educational messages is the basis for reaching agreement during the teaching-learning process. In addition, other important components of communicative competences are the ability to use non-linguistic means of expression, appropriate to the situation, and to display pedagogical tact in relationships occurring in teaching, which is a manifestation of the orientation towards others – partners in educational interactions. Equally important is the improvement of the correctness, readability and ethics of one's own linguistic behaviour, e.g. the ability to shape the linguistic sensitivity of pupils, to reveal the value of cultural heritage and the function of language as a tool of thinking and communication, as well as the ability to make moral reflection.

Interpretive and communicative competences are the basic component of teaching qualifications which can be used by teachers to maintain and sometimes even restore proper relations in the process of education between "I" and "we"; thanks to them, the development of students can be supported and they can be taught correct self-assessment, but also develop a sense of belonging to a group or the local community. The need to develop them is often signalled in the literature on the subject, as they hold a superior position in the teaching profession due to its specificity<sup>26</sup>. They are also a prerequisite for the professional cooperation of teachers during the organization and implementation of co-teaching.

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*approaches into a competence-oriented conceptual model*, Teaching and Teacher Education, 2017, 76, pp. 181–193, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.12.001>.

25 J. Klug, S. Bruder, A. Kelava, C. Spiel, B. Schmitz, *Diagnostic competence of teachers. A process model that accounts for diagnosing learning behavior tested by means of a case scenario*, Teaching and Teacher Education, 2013, 30, pp. 38–46. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2012.10.004>.

26 J. Habermas, *Teoria działania komunikacyjnego*, vol. 1, trans. A.M. Kaniowski, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 1999, pp. 121, 160–161.

In educational activity, communication activities identified by Jürgen Habermas are particularly important, as they serve to set goals, values, norms, rules, renew and construct knowledge, and their essence is reaching an agreement and consensus<sup>27</sup>. According to Habermas the structure of communication influences: (1) the quality of cognitive processes and methods of constructing knowledge, (2) the shape of relationships with other people and a sense of belonging to a specific community, (3) the development of the autonomy of one's own self and the ability to express one's individuality, which altogether determine man's capacity for moral judgment. The teacher's communicative competence, i.e. the ability to perform linguistic and extralinguistic behaviours appropriately to the conditions and requirements of the situation and the students, the participants of these situations, requires extensive linguistic knowledge and knowledge about the surrounding world. Its level is determined by communication behaviours manifested in various situations, which are an expression of the ability to function effectively as a sender and recipient of messages. The teacher should possess three types of communication skills: the speaking skill (sending communicative educational messages), the listening skill (proper reception of messages and openness to the student) and the ability to use "body language" (appropriate use of non-verbal messages). The teacher's communicative competence is manifested in educational situations characterized by changeability and dynamics. It is an open structure, dependent on the personal qualities as well as the willingness and the possibilities of continuous self-development.

The results of the research on this competence revealed in the contacts with students, in the group of teachers in grades 1–3 of primary school, do not instil optimism. The results of the observations revealed that there are more teachers with low competences in managing the communication process in the classroom, which prompts us to seriously consider the effectiveness of their pedagogical activities. After all, the implementation of most of the didactic and educational tasks takes place through the direct meeting of the teacher and the student by means of various communicative behaviours. Therefore, teachers need to constantly develop their communicative competences in terms of constructing statements, ethics of speech and the principles of organizing interpersonal contact. It is also essential in the situation when a society embraces other cultures and in the times of rapid exchange of information or information explosion, in which the teacher should demonstrate communicative competences in four dimensions: intercultural communication, intracultural communication (between groups and value systems), interpersonal communication (between task and social groups, in a dialogue between partners) and intrapersonal communication (between identity patterns).

27 J. Habermas, *Teoria działania komunikacyjnego*, op. cit., pp. 121, 160–161.



Interpretive and communicative competences of teachers are related to their collaboration competences and together they determine the success of this process. The collaboration competences are perceived as the effectiveness of the teacher's prosocial behaviours and the efficiency in integrating student teams and other educational entities. They are mainly manifested in the possessed knowledge about the regularities of cooperation and social development of students as well as in the ability to use it properly to create an educational environment within a student group. They require teachers to understand the connections between their own interactive style and the social processes in a student group, and the ability to modify their own style of managing a group of pupils depending on the level of their development and socio-moral maturity. Teachers' skills in resolving conflicts through negotiation and compromise, as well as teaching students these skills are both necessary to organise efficient cooperation during co-teaching. It is also important to understand the need to cooperate with other teachers and participants of the educational process in order to create conditions for collaborative learning and shared responsibility for its effect.

The competences mentioned above are equally important in the work of teachers. Accordingly to the changes in axiology or social and educational teleology, the perception of specific categories of professional competences should change and they must harmonize with the vision, concepts and assumptions of education.

## **Development of interpretive and communicative competences in the process of co-teaching**

The teachers' ability to reflect is an important condition for the development of their competences. The state of awareness of reflection can be presented as a five-stage model – a model for teaching about the “consciousness of competences: (1) unconscious incompetence; (2) conscious incompetence; (3) conscious competence; (4) unconscious competence; (5) conscious competence of unconscious competence”<sup>28</sup>.

The state of unconscious competence occurs when teachers do not know that they lack knowledge or skills – they do not know that they do not know! The task of people supporting their professional development will be to provide assistance and help in identifying problems and attending to those areas of work where teachers prove to be ineffective. In the next stage of competence development,

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28 J. Jones, M. Jenkin, S. Lord, *Developing effective teacher performance*, Paul. Chapman Publishing, London 2006.

teachers become aware of their incompetence – they know that they do not know. They realize that improving their skills will mean enhancing their effectiveness. Thus, there may be a decline in the teacher's confidence when they try to introduce new skills but fail. People who create and execute the teacher support program should devote a lot of attention to rebuild their confidence. When teachers become aware of their own competence, they gain a new skill, they become more confident in their actions, provided they focus on what they are doing – they know that they can do something, but do not do it automatically. The duty of the school management is to encourage and support their further development. Once the skills are integrated and well rooted in the teacher's work, they become a habit. Then, the stage of unconscious competence is reached, it is when teachers no longer have to concentrate on what they are doing. They may have difficulty explaining how they do it (they do not know themselves how they know it). The final stage of competence development is reached when teachers have acquired the ability to recognize deficiencies and are able to teach the skills to others, sometimes it is described as reflective awareness. People responsible for identifying and developing effective support programs in schools should act at this level of awareness.

When teaching together, the competences of each teacher are developed. Co-teaching requires teachers to get to know each other beforehand, establish mutual relationships and analyse their own teaching styles. Thanks to this, the planned actions will become more effective. Teachers should get to know their strengths and weaknesses, which will allow for a conscious choice of the areas and methods of mutual support during the lesson. Regular discussion of the lesson assumptions and detailed action plans will allow for systematic monitoring of the students' learning process, as well as improvement of cooperation and development of professional competences.

Manifestations of teachers' competences are related to their personal self-awareness and the sense of their professional worth. It constitutes an important condition for a critical, reflective and independent attitude to everyday school dilemmas. Since modern teachers are perceived primarily as the subject of change, they should also become more active participants as well as more responsible and courageous agents of the change. To do so, they must be aware of the need for continuous development of all competences, especially those responsible for the proper understanding, the interpretive and communicative competences. They are the basis of co-teaching.