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SYMBOLIC AND REAL BOUNDARIES OF SOCIAL PEDAGOGY IN CROATIA¹

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SUMMARY

The assigned framework of this article stands on two ideas of Program committee of the 4th Croatian congress of social pedagogy „Beyond boundaries“. The first one relates to development of professional identity of social pedagogues in last 50 years and three national congresses, and the second one relates to 4th Croatian congress as the opportunity to look beyond framework and boundaries of social pedagogy. Having that in mind this article will be directed towards discussing symbolic and real boundaries of social pedagogy in Croatia. At the first level of distinction of meanings of the notion ‘boundaries’ there are personal professional boundaries and social professional boundaries. Personal professional boundaries are set by individual professionals in accordance with specific professional framework and in line with appreciative and effective interactions between professional and members of the community professional is serving of. Changing (crossing) of personal boundaries in most interpersonal professions is seen as undesirable/ negative. Social professional boundaries are to some extent objectified forms /patterns of differences which distinct social groups (professional groups as well) from each other, and enable their distinct social identity. This article is focused on applying concept of social professional boundaries on practical, as well as theoretical and scientific level of social pedagogy discipline. Mechanisms that cause and constitute boundary change as well as boundary change consequences for social pedagogy in different developmental phases are discussed. Next level of discussion of being in and out of social pedagogical boundaries includes description of significant dichotomies like: professional – unprofessional; national – international; professional – political. At the end, beyond usual perspective on social pedagogy stands

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metaphorical one, the 'line in the sand' (boundaries) how to accept challenges of unexpected wind and water crashes.

Key words: *social pedagogy; real and symbolic boundaries; mechanisms that cause boundaries change*

INTRODUCTION

The introduction of the socio-pedagogical profession generally begins with the conclusion that university level education in Croatia for professionals, today called social pedagogues, began in the academic year 1964/1965 and that it has been performed uninterrupted for the last 50 years. During this period the *status features of the profession* have changed several times in a manner that, in the long run, they have contributed to the development of the profession. For example:

- College education grew into the University education in 1973 with the possibility of obtaining a doctorate.
- Academic title - *graduated* social pedagogue or *professor* social pedagogue changed several times in response to amendments of national laws governing academic titles and degrees. The changes were mainly carried out in five-year periods, and starting from the academic year 2005/2006, the education is carried out in accordance with the Bologna model and accordingly, the latest academic degrees are Univ.bacc.paed.soc. and Mag.paed.soc.
- Name of the profession changed in accordance with the development of the profession itself, but also following the development of relevant scientific disciplines and human rights, so the term social pedagogy was first introduced in the study program in 1979/1980, and appeared on first diplomas more than 30 years ago (1983) and is present ever since, while the term defectologist (special education teacher) is not used officially after the academic year 1997/1998.

Along with the listed status features that are generally seen as the outer frame or boundaries of professional identity of a profession, vital or substantive characteristics of social pedagogy as a profession were changed or better said, developed. A number of authors in Croatia (Ajduković and Žižak, 2007; Bašić, 2011; Bašić, Mikšaj-Todorović and Mejovšek, 1999; Bouillet and Uzelac, 2007; Bouillet, 2011; Dodig and Ricijaš, 2011; Kobolt, 1997; Kobolt, 1998; Koller-Trbović, 1999; Koller-Trbović, 2011; Šućur, 2011; Uzelac, 1999; Žakman-Ban

and Varga, 1999; Žižak, 1997; Žižak 1999; Žižak 2011) wrote from different perspectives about this part of the development path of social pedagogy. These works pointed out, in very concise manner, the basic characteristics of profession and professional identity such as:

- The constant development of the profession reflected on the one hand in the comparative strengthening of interdisciplinary and specific socio-pedagogical dimensions of the profession, and on the other hand, in the expansion of the field of activity and types of jobs/occupations, namely from social welfare and justice (educators) to education, health care, justice (jobs of professional assistants in schools, state attorney offices, at courts, police offices and in health care institutions) and the civil sector.
- Certain satisfaction with the development level of profession elements relating to the substantiation of competences of social pedagogues on theories and researches, fifteen years of existence of the professional association - Croatian Association of Social Pedagogues (*Croatian HUSP*), extensive graded education, the existence of the Code of Ethics, by laws and other acts publicly confirmed legitimacy of the profession for the performance of a variety of occupations in several different sectors. Characteristics of the profession related to the verification of competencies and the licensing of experts, professional autonomy, power, self-regulation and regulation of profession and mobility and rituals still represent a great challenge, and the process of defining the boundaries of the profession in that part is not yet completed.
- The focus of the profession towards recognition and definition of the competence frame of the profession as a key element of professionalism, through empirical research, comparison of basic and specific competences of social pedagogues with competences of other helping professions, and redefinition of the competence frame proposed by undergraduate and graduate education.

Keeping this in mind, our focus will be the reflection of real and symbolic boundaries of social pedagogy with an aim to achieve a better insight into those aspects of openness and flexibility of profession indicated in the literature.

ABOUT THE BOUNDARIES OF SOCIAL PEDAGOGY

Boundaries, usually physical, such as walls, canals, fences, served for a long time throughout history to exclude or prevent outsiders from entering certain “valuable” space. This logic of

physical boundaries aimed at separation of diversities was later also taken by other types of boundaries - those social and symbolic, or boundaries that exist as a thought, more or less abstract categories. According to Lamont and Molnar (2002) *social boundaries* are “objectified” characteristics according to which certain social groups (even professional ones) differ from each other, or are recognized as separate social identities. These boundaries are present and detected through specific, repetitive forms of connection between members of a particular community. On the other hand, *symbolic boundaries* are “conceptual” definitions of diversities created by social players for the purpose of categorization of processes, people, practices, and even time and virtual spaces (Lamont and Molnar, 2002). These boundaries are the tools used for discussion and negotiation of “perceptions and/or definitions” of reality in a particular aspect/area.

Since the professional identity of experts of each profession can be spoken of as an individual and social phenomenon, the boundaries of the profession can be associated with individual and group identity. Here we will focus on group identity which we usually equate with the profession.

In this sense, the *first function of the boundaries* is to establish a distinction between professional and unprofessional act/action in an area of human activity (Heite, 2012). Although we still relatively often ask ourselves: *How is it that sociopedagogical work, or part of it, may be performed by volunteers, paraprofessionals or other experts (for example: theologists or teachers)?*, we have successfully completed this level of delimitation in the first development stage of our profession, i.e. in the seventies. The best evidence hereof are the academic degrees and earlier, and still existing, classifications of occupations, study programs and scientific areas, fields and branches.

The second function of the boundaries is substantially more demanding and refers to the understanding of the differences between professions, especially among similar professions. *Social boundaries* comply best with this function of boundaries. When it comes to social pedagogy, we can say that to some extent objective criteria of the profession are represented by those elements of professionalism which put its peculiarities at the forefront. Intentionally or not, these elements of professionalism have so far been described best in Croatia, for our social pedagogy (Bouillet and Poldrugač, 2011; Dodig and Ricijaš, 2011; Koller-Trbović, 2011; Ricijaš, Huić and Branica, 2006; Žižak, 1997; Žižak 1999; Žižak, 2010; Žižak 2011). It is primarily about professional competencies - they are the measurable characteristics that

allow through their application the recognition and valuation of the professional community members. Programs of graded education of social pedagogues, the ethical frame of professional action and legitimacy of the profession based on national regulations and documents can also be placed into the category of measurable characteristics that establish the relationship of outside "world" towards the professional community.

However, even when they are very well built, the features of the profession that serves as the boundaries towards other, more or less similar professions, are not unchangeable and static. Tilly (2003) identifies two groups of mechanisms that most often inspire change of boundaries:

1) processes and incentives that come from outside the boundaries of the community (in our case socio-pedagogical professional community),

2) processes and incentives generated within the boundaries of the professional community.

Among the *external incentives for the change of profession boundaries* are, for instance: changes in laws and/or imposed rules; imbalance regarding the strength of various professions within a local/national community during a certain period; assumption of rules, standards, and classifications from other groups (professional, but also non-professional - for example, user associations). Considering those incentives for expanding or narrowing the boundaries of our profession we find those which allowed an expansion of the boundaries in the last 50 years. The most significant among them is certainly *imbalance of power of related professions*, which existed in the period between the 70s and 90s of the last century and allowed social pedagogy to significantly expand the boundaries of its action as a "new profession that entered in the field of other professions (social work, psychology, pedagogy, sociology) and during a relatively short period of existence (around thirty years) won and created numerous jobs in a very wide scope..." (Koller-Trbović, 2011, 245). With the unwillingness or lack of interest then pervading in "old professions" to respond to current needs and demands of society, the favourable, and for social pedagogy stimulating political and social movements in that period, as well as individuals in positions of power and influence also had a significant impact on the expansion of the boundaries of social pedagogy, along with inner strengths and preparedness of the profession. The penetration into the area of education, health care, justice and police is certainly the most significant shift of boundaries achieved in a relatively short time at a time when the profession was still very young. What is important is that the same set

of professional competences enabled professional action in new and different fields. This shift has set standards of expansion of profession boundaries for which it is doubtful whether it will ever happen again. Also, it set a proposal to maintain the profession within those sufficiently wide boundaries not only in times when other professions strengthen and want a piece of that space for themselves, but also in times when paraprofessionals, volunteers and the civil sector develop “new forms of social responsibility” and thus enter “our” space. Furthermore, expanded boundaries of profession, on the one hand, allow a competent action with various groups and populations, and on the other hand, they put the individual expert in the unenviable position of “alone and different” in a number of relevant institutions such as school, social welfare centre, hospital, court, attorney office, police station. Variability of external mechanisms of pressure on the profession requires, as mentioned by Hellstedt and Hogstrom (2005) constant “recontextualisation” of social pedagogy in terms of adjustment to time and space. This constant synchronization with the time and circumstances in which we live is much easier and faster (more flexible) achieved through informal upgrade of competences rather than by waiting for formal ways (usually new study programs or qualification frames).

Right in this period we are in the process of “reconceptualisation” of professional competencies of social pedagogues within the preparation of a revised study program. This was also driven by “external pressures” to better align the learning outcomes with the Croatian Qualifications Framework (Croatian Qualifications Framework Act, official gazette - Narodne novine, 22/13). Will it lead to a better definition of professional competences? We may find the answer at the next congress of social pedagogues or through following similar analyses. What we can now recognize and say is the intention to build the conceptual framework and the competencies simultaneously. This framework is based on the adjustment of given levels of qualification with learning outcomes in agreed areas of action of social pedagogues. At the same time, the groups of learning outcomes are recognized as competences based on professional knowledge and skills, values and abilities. As visible in Table 1, the change from the existing competency model on one hand includes a shift towards a higher level of independence and responsibility (as given by the Croatian Qualifications Framework), and on the other hand, the definition of the areas of work of the social pedagogue, which until now was not part of the competence/qualifications framework.

Table 1: Existing competences and proposal of competence area

Competences of social pedagogues according to the current curriculum	Areas where the social pedagogue needs to develop competences (proposal)
<p>1. Undergraduate level - competences for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Knowing (bio-psycho-social paradigm) -Understanding (individual and social phenomena) -Assessment (characteristics of individuals and the community) <p>2. Graduate level - competences for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Planning and implementation of professional work with individuals and groups -Communication and reflexion -Cooperation (with different divisions) -Preparation, management and evaluation of projects -Analytic research work for the purposes of practice 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Population of persons with behavioural problems² 2. Continuum of interventions 3. Environment where the interventions are conducted 4. Cooperation with other professionals, teams, organizations and systems 5. Professional development and professional responsibility <p><i>Competence</i> = knowledge, skills, abilities and values</p> <p>Undergraduate level - 6th level of qualification</p> <p>Graduate level - 7th level of qualification</p>

Among the external mechanisms which stopped or even reversed the expanding of the boundaries of the socio-pedagogical profession, the earlier, but also the current classification of occupations (official gazette "Narodne novine", 147/10) should be singled out. The National Classification of Occupations³, as evident in Table 2, classifying occupations in genera, types, subtypes and groups, classifies activities performed by social pedagogues systematically as "other" occupations in the areas of health care, education, and experts in law, social sciences and culture. In this way, the previously mentioned, broad boundaries of

²The term behavioural problems includes a continuum of problems from risky behaviour (consequences of such behaviour are of low intensity in the present, but may represent a basis for poor outcomes in the future) to behavioural disorders (consequences of such behaviour are numerous, intense, threatening for the person itself, for other people, interpersonal relationships and property) (Koller-Trbović, Žižak and Jedud, 2011). The continuum of behavioural problems is found in all age groups. Therefore, such continuum of behavioural problems is approached by a continuum of interventions that includes pedagogical-preventive, socialisational, corrective and therapeutic procedures, measures and programs (Kobolt, 1997).

³**Occupation** is a set of jobs and tasks which in their content and type, organisation and technology are so similar and interconnected that they are performed by a single person possessing adequate knowledge, skills and abilities (official gazette "Narodne novine" 111/98). The current National Classification of Occupations (official gazette "Narodne novine" 147/10) represents the **standard of official statistics on occupations**. It is not and should not be the basis for determining the rights and obligations of legal and natural persons. It is compliant with International Standards of Classification of Occupations ISCO-88.

social pedagogy are blurred in reality through the framework of classified occupations; they become questionable and produce different interpretations and fears among experts.

It is an indisputable fact that each profession branches in more occupations or groups of related jobs. Starting from this fact and taking into account the number of jobs, it is realistic to expect that the different occupations of social pedagogues in different areas (education, health care, social welfare, and justice) are classified in the group *expert associate*. The problem is, however, that the areas in which social pedagogues work in the National Classification of Occupations (at the level of *types and subtypes* of occupations) are not categorized in the traditional, recognizable way (except for health care and education). In this way, statistics symbolically limit the space within which social pedagogues are employed. But this does not have to be a real limitation, because classification and statistics do not have that mandate, and the current practice of employing social pedagogues mostly confirms this. Fears, interpretations, negative predictions that such classifications will prevent our "recognition" thus become symbolic boundaries that potentially narrow the space of action. Such "common places" in classifications allow for the available jobs to be filled with various professions. In this way the boundaries can also be narrowed and expanded. So in this "market battle for jobs and positions," it is important to count on the quality and recognisability of competences of social pedagogues. In this sense, the promotion of the profession through a clear description of competencies becomes particularly important and a potentially loud strategy.

Table 2: Comparison of the classifications of scientific fields, professions and study programs

Classification of science and art areas and fields	National Classification of Occupations	Classification of study programs (proposition)
AREA: 5. Social sciences FIELD: 5.08. Education-rehabilitation sciences BRANCH:	GENUS: 2. scientists, engineers, experts TYPES: 22 – health experts 23 – education experts 26 - legal experts, experts for social sciences and culture SUBTYPES:	BROADER FIELD: 03 Social sciences, journalism and information NARROWER FIELD: 031 Social and behavioural sciences

5.08.02. Behavioural disorders	226—other health workers 235 – other education experts 263 – experts for social sciences and humanities and religion experts GROUP: 2269 – health experts otherwise unclassified 2352 – experts of the education-rehabilitation profile 2632 – sociologists, anthropologists and related experts 2635 – experts for social work and counselling	DETAILED FIELD: 0318 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving social and behavioural sciences
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On the other hand, as evident in Table 2, the existing classification of scientific areas, fields and branches is much better aligned with the proposed classification of study programs. The fact that the existing scientific field here does not fully correspond to the narrower field of the study program can and should be an incentive to work to improve the definition of our scientific field.

In short - In relation to external mechanisms that affect the change of boundaries of the profession, I would like to single out three things:

- 1) *the sky is not the limit*, but the "silent and powerful border guards" are professional competence; they guarded and preserved the outer boundaries of our profession;
- 2) as a young profession *we were lucky* because in addition to inner strength and efforts, also external circumstances have significantly acted in favour of rapid development and significant expanding of the boundaries of the socio-pedagogical profession;
- 3) and now, as an active profession, like any other 50-year-old, *we need to act reasonably and wisely* in order to preserve what we have achieved and continue to

develop in completely new circumstances, building understanding of how the pace and the manner of development of the profession significantly depend on external mechanisms as well, and as an integral part of the development of the profession, to accept the influence on external mechanisms of change and / or securing the boundaries of profession.

As far as *internal incentives to change the boundaries of profession* are concerned, it can be generally said that they are associated with: networks of cooperation within and outside the professional group and the rules and standards self-imposed or self-required by the profession (Tilly, 2003). I think that the internal processes of our professional community moved its boundaries in different directions – sometimes expanding, sometimes narrowing, and sometimes blurring. When we established our own professional community in 1999 (Croatian Association of Social Pedagogues) we "drew" the boundaries towards other related professions (especially logopedics (speech therapy) and educational rehabilitation). However, the network of cooperation among social pedagogues of the same profession led in the meantime to the strengthening of sub-groups within this new professional community (and this is the real purpose of such networks - such as professional associates in education, health care). Is this how the internal boundaries emerged, with common professional space intersected and divided into smaller spaces? Were these internal boundaries separating / breaking up the professional community? Once "divided", did it become stronger or weaker? Did the new Bologna study program with two "modules" divide and weaken or perhaps strengthen our common professional space? In striving to achieve the same standards of professionalism which were achieved by "old professions" (e.g. psychologists through the Croatian Psychological Chamber), did we push the boundaries of quality or the boundary of frustration? These are the questions which are now difficult to answer unambiguously. These questions certainly deserve the attention of us social pedagogues, if we want to influence at least that part of the processes and mechanisms that determine the boundaries of the professional community.

In short, there are internal - virtual - symbolic boundaries within our small professional community. Should they be strengthened or moved? I think we should familiarize with their function and then manage them for the benefit of the entire professional community. It would be wise to keep in mind that it is sometimes more difficult to manage internal processes than the pressures that come from the outside.

DICHOTOMIES or ARE THE BOUNDARIES PERMEABLE?

The literature on professions and professional identity can be classified into two major groups (Brown, 1992):

- 1) literature dealing with issues of *relationship of the profession with own competences* in the broadest sense of that term (theories, scientific and professional paradigms and issues of self-regulation);
- 2) literature that deals with issues of *promotion and popularization of the profession*, especially to potential users of specific services of that profession.

These two functions of development of professional identity are often mutually antagonistic and without a real understanding that good answers to one set of questions significantly contribute to the quality of the answers to the second set of questions. This fundamental dichotomy recognizable in many professions is also present in the socio-pedagogical profession. If we analyse the domestic professional literature under this aspect, it is clear that questions about own professional competencies are advocated by social pedagogues coming from fields of science and theory (from the Faculty), while questions of (non)popularization and observation of low level of promotion of the profession come from social pedagogues coming from the practice and are generally not articulated in the literature. Although Koller-Trbović (2011) recently wrote on the promotion of the profession based on a survey, asking "whose job is it?", we can say that this area lacks articulated incentives and their tracks (in words and pictures).

In addition to this general dichotomy inherent in most professions, there are others, especially important for the socio-pedagogical perspective. In the division of an unit into two parts, the boundaries become the strongest and therefore the dichotomies are a way to "talk about the boundaries", to clear and better explain its current status. However, even in these divisions there are parts or aspects that are permeable, in which a unit compliantly opens up to another or overflows into it, so "the line in the sand" gradually disappears. Some of these "divisions" are explored.

Professional: Unprofessional

It is common knowledge today that certain occupation grows into a profession when the job belonging to that profession can be performed full-time and when there is an educational institution (school, faculty) that will prepare the future workers for these jobs. Therefore, competence based on specific theories and knowledge is considered a key fundamental characteristic of professionalism of a profession. Social pedagogy is in some European countries a profession that has been developing over decades and even more than a century (e.g. in Germany), in others its appearance is only in preparation, so currently it does not exist as an independent profession (e.g. Great Britain). Where social pedagogy developed as a profession, a new dichotomy emerged - practically based profession: scientifically-theoretically based profession. It seems that there are no dilemmas about the practicality of the profession (at least in the literature) and that in this sense we can recognize continuous development. From the initial model of practice aimed at finding pedagogical solutions to social problems in everyday situations⁴ to contemporary efforts according to which models of socio-pedagogical practice include work with the processes of change, positive experience and legitimizing marginalization (Eichsteller and Holthoff, 2011; Hatton, 2012; Kornbeck, 2012; Stephens, 2012; Storo, 2012)⁵.

The view of scientific/theoretical bases of profession is however different. One group of authors (Hollstedt and Hogstrom, 2005; Eichsteller and Holthoff, 2011) believes that social pedagogy has not developed their own theories and research problems, despite initial attachment to the humanistic approach and theories (primarily with moral philosophy, theology and hermeneutical scientific orientation). Another group of authors emphasized its merits in the social sciences, primarily pedagogy and psychology (Eichsteller and Holthoff, 2011; Hamalainen, 2012; Kornbeck, 2013a; Ucar, 2013), but without relevant own theories and research questions.

⁴Smith (2009) states that the early practice of social pedagogy rested on three pillars: the nature of man, social conditions and problems and pedagogy.

⁵Storo (2013) states that the socio-pedagogical practice model is based on two types of activities: common activities associated with everyday life and specialist activities associated with work on the change, while Eichsteller and Holthoff (2011) introduce in the Diamond Model the socio-pedagogical practice consisting of four concepts: well-being, comprehensive learning, empowerment and relationship with the aim of generating positive experiences. Kornbeck (2012) represents the CUE model that maps biological needs (through care), socialisation needs (through education) and development needs, including education (through education). Stephens (2012) emphasizes as key elements of socio-pedagogical practice, for example: contextuality of action, decision-making at the macro level and acting at the micro level; theoretical and value foundation of practical action and orientation to users of different age groups.

In Croatia, after 50 years of development of the profession, the situation is not black and white anymore and I therefore estimate that we can speak of a theoretical foundation of social pedagogy in Croatia at several levels: interdisciplinary level, level of theoretical constructs and research problems and level of newly-generated theories.

The level of interdisciplinarity - this is the level at which the theoretical foundation of the profession stems from the interdisciplinary nature of its competences acquired during higher education, in which numerous scientific-theoretical assumptions of social sciences, humanities and medical sciences are integrated inalienably. This interdisciplinary approach has long outgrown the inclination towards pedagogical or social views of the population and interventions at which social pedagogy is focused. In other words, understanding the pedagogical and the social field (professional and theoretical) as multidimensional, social pedagogy in Croatia tried relying on the complexity, to bridge differences and incompleteness of these disciplines relying on other disciplines (f.i. from bio-medical and humanistic fields), thus creating new views and approaches to old, common issues and problems. To some extent this overlaps with the assessment of Coussee and Verschelden (2011) who found that such "integrative concepts" reflecting internal tensions inherent to today's communities, and expressed through public-private relationships; individual aspirations-public expectations, bridge the differences between theory and practice, education and culture, on the one hand, and care and support, on the other hand. This interdisciplinary based competences of social pedagogues enable the study program of social pedagogy to be placed in the field of social and behavioural science.

The level of theoretical constructs - this level is associated with a growing academisation in the field of social sciences which resulted in thousands of researches and theories and made the mastering and use of knowledge in this area extremely complex (Storo 2012). Therefore, on the one hand, instead of whole theories, only theoretical constructs⁶ are used, and on the other hand, we have recently moved towards the construction of meta-theories⁷ (Wallis, 2010). At this level theoretical foundation of the socio-pedagogical profession now relies on the study of specific phenomena that are simultaneously taught in a number of other scientific disciplines. This has been demonstrated in Figure 1 on examples of ideas / phenomena /

⁶Theory constructs are features which cannot be observed directly, so conclusions about them are made indirectly.

⁷Meta-theory is most simply defined as theory about theories.

constructs which are studied in more or less similar social sciences, but from different, their specific perspectives. For example:

- Phenomena such as well-being of the individual, standards of treatment, services, except for social pedagogy, are studied from various aspects in economics, social work and political science.
- With psychology, pedagogy and social work social pedagogy share, for example, interest in phenomena such as behaviour, emotions, values, risks etc.
- Theoretical constructs such as culture, experience, (auto)biography with social pedagogy are also studied by anthropology, sociology, history.
- Law and sociology, as well as social pedagogy, are focused on the study of rules, norms, deviation, sanctions, responsibility.
- With the other branch of education and rehabilitation sciences (inclusive education and rehabilitation) we share an interest in adaptation, integration and inclusion.

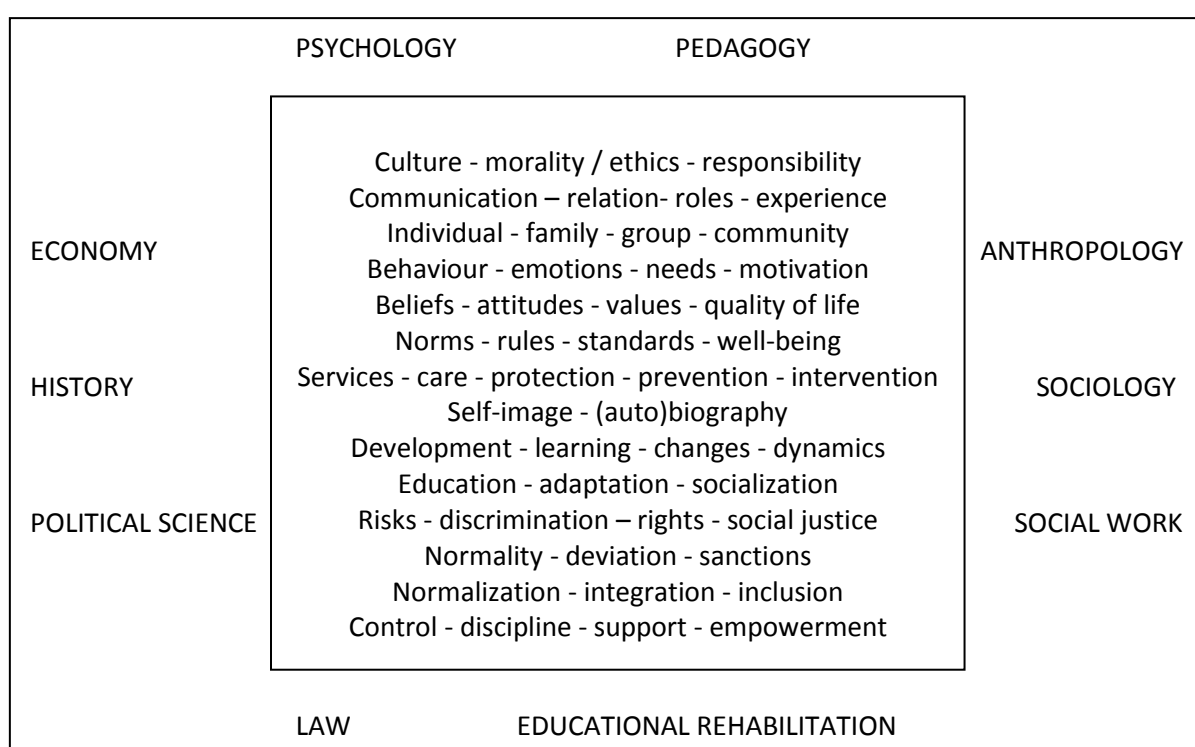


Figure 1: Overview of some theoretical constructs / phenomena and ideas (located in the inner frame) which are studied by scientific disciplines in social sciences (located in the outer frame) relevant for social pedagogy

The level of research problems – referring to the empirical examination of the meaning of the aforementioned theoretical constructs / ideas / phenomena (e.g., attitudes, behaviours, risk,

interpersonal communication, interpersonal relationships, changes, interventions, sanctions, etc.) for a better understanding of different groups within the population of persons with behavioural problems and / or the circumstances in which they live. In this way, on the one hand a distinctive contribution to a more complete clarification of these phenomena / constructs is given, on the other hand, in a scientifically relevant way specific socio-pedagogical questions and problems within the area of social sciences and their results are set up and studied; interpretations and conclusions are used as new scientific-theoretical starting points in the socio-pedagogical practice.

The level of newly generated theories - implicit and grounded. These are the theories that give a special contribution to the comprehensive understanding of the characteristics of the population and themes that social pedagogy deals with. These are two types of theories - non-scientific and scientific. *Implicit theories* belong to the category of non-scientific theories because they are not based on empirical data but on estimations and constructs that exist in people's minds and which are subjected to change. Implicit theories generally fill the space of *not-knowing of experts* about phenomena belonging to the area of personal experience (user). *Grounded theories* belong to the category of scientific theories (inductively shaped and reinforced by data), but at the same time, they are theories of "short-range", because they are subject-based and contextually related. As implicit theories, they are generated in areas not easily accessible to the professional perspective, i.e. where that perspective is not enough to see the wholeness and complexity of the phenomenon. On such theoretical approaches several researches with populations that are in the focus of social pedagogy have been founded in the last fifteen years. Many authors wrote on such theoretical approaches through research results, for example: Koller-Trbović and Žižak, 2005; Jeđud Borić, 2011; Koller-Trbović and Žižak, 2012; Žižak at all, 2012; Ricijaš at all, 2014. These studies typically offered guidelines to improve practical aspects of socio-pedagogical work, but also professional policies as a whole.

Based on this, we can confirm that the levels of scientific and theoretical foundation of social pedagogy in Croatia speak in favour of following the *constructivist paradigm*. In the dichotomy professional: unprofessional, this leads us to the side of professionalism and points to a further strengthening of the scientific aspect of the profession for the sake of its practical and theoretical foundation. Whether we are more or less within the boundaries "of own theoretical constructs" may also be the subject of empirical verification.

International: National

The common conclusion of all analyses of the condition of social pedagogy/education in Europe is that it is the subject of very diverse concepts, in relation to the practice, the level of development, the name of the profession and the level and structure of education for the profession. Paget, Eagle and Citarella (2007), Regional Youth Work Unit-North East (2010) and Kornbeck (2013a) point out the following as an important common characteristic of these different concepts:

Working with children/youth (direct contact with children; relationship with children/youth being in the focus; sharing living space with children)

Working in a team (competences for work in a team; flexibility as a basis for work in different sectors; work with users of different ages, with different disabilities, including mental, physical and learning problems)

Working on community development (working outside the family and school, but tightly networked with them; work based on creative approach, generating new solutions; focused on group and community)

Work on the normalisation of difficulties/problems (holistic, positive approach; creation of conditions for learning from experience and relationships).

Especially interesting are messages of Moss and Cameron (2011). Based on the analyses of European space, they indicate the existence of two different views on social pedagogy. According to the former, it is a profession of ***rich tradition, but grey future***. According to the latter, it is a profession of ***rich tradition, which will work hard in the future*** to come up with a common European conceptualization of the profession. The second, more optimistic view is in some way supported by Kornbeck (2013b) stating that in Germany at some universities social pedagogy is “left to live” regardless of the fact that the national curriculum of higher education in 2001 envisaged its merging with social work.

Eriksson and Markstrom (2000, according to Hollstedt and Hogstrom, 2005) suggest that social pedagogy is developing in very different directions in the world. Within this diversity, authors are recognizing three key directions:

- *Continental* - focused on education and socialization of children and youth in the broadest sense.
- *Eclectic* - transformation of the continental model raised under the influence of movement/approach such as community work, social mobility, empowerment, animation and experiential pedagogy.
- *Anglo-Saxon American version of social work* - built on the models of medical diagnostics, treatment and evaluation.

Analysing the profession of social pedagogy in Europe AIEJI⁸ and CGCEES⁹ (2011) teams have established three levels of its development. The analysis was conducted in 30 European countries (27 EU countries + Iceland, Norway and Switzerland). We are dealing with the following levels:

1. the level of development is associated with incorporation of social pedagogy in social work (8 countries - for example, Great Britain, Malta, Greece);
2. the level of development is based on a polyvalent approach in a way that social pedagogy includes various/multiple meanings and forms (18 countries - for example, Spain, Germany, Denmark, Austria);
3. the level of development was reached when social pedagogy has grown into a separate, profession specific for certain country (4 countries - Slovenia, Norway, the Czech Republic, Poland).

This diversity is also reflected in the name of the profession, so the analysis points to the following terms (the taken terms are in English): *child care worker; social worker; social pedagogue; social pedagogue counsellor; social pedagogue in health sector; pedagogue-counsellor; social educator; organizer in adult education; pedagogue in student homes; team leader in a day care centre for school-age children.*

How much the language and the name of the profession are important is proven by the fact that the European Commission founded a group called “Languages for Jobs” whose task it is to develop recommendations in the area of language and employment, in order to avoid misunderstandings in the unitary European labour market.

⁸ The initial meaning of the abbreviation was referring to the „Association International des Educateurs de Jeunes Inadaptes“ and this abbreviation now stands for „International Association of Social Educators“.

⁹ CGCEES – Consejo General de Colegios de Educadoras y Educadores Sociales (Association of Pedagogues and Social Pedagogues of Spain).

Let this be an incentive for us to work on the language of the profession. Anyway, “our local” social pedagogy, as mentioned earlier, has a tradition of 50 years of university education and is an independent, recognized profession. In that sense, we belong in a group with the Czech Republic, Norway, Poland and Slovenia. Maybe this is the “network” which should be consulted during the *reconceptualisation* of professional skills, or in the language of the 4th Croatian Congress of Social Pedagogues - *boundaries of the profession*. Although we mostly do not like the official classification of occupations, because we would be happy to see that it says: expert associate - social pedagogue, at this moment it is a fact which should be the starting point, and paraphrasing the vision offered by Moss and Cameron (2011), with regards to an important breakthrough towards a common European framework, strive to better recognition, not only at the national, but also at the international level. This step should be initiated as soon as possible, possibly by joining those countries where the social pedagogy is a regulated profession or strives to be one. With that, or without it, in the very near future we can expect the setting of occupational standards, qualification standards and sets of learning outcomes.

A comprehensive analysis of this topic would also indicate to a whole line of other particularities of social pedagogy in Croatia in relation to concepts in Europe. Two of these particularities will be addressed here.

The first is related to the fact that social pedagogy in Croatia involves working with people of different age groups, not only with children and the youth. It is based on the idea and the need for social inclusion in the community of all those persons and groups (regardless of age) which in a certain period of their life, due to their behaviour, lifestyle and/or life circumstances are not able to do so without the support and help of experts. Although we find such approaches in other socio-pedagogical practices as well (for example: Bohnisch and Schroer, 2011; Hegstrup and associates, 2012; Kornbeck, 2012), social pedagogy in Europe is commonly associated with children and the youth.

Another feature of social pedagogy in Croatia is related to the fact that a scientific branch called social pedagogy belongs to the scientific field of pedagogy, while experts, i.e. social pedagogues at undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate level are educated in the field of education and rehabilitation sciences, branch of behavioural disorders (according to the Ordinance on Scientific and Artistic Areas, Fields and Branches, 2008). This fact has more symbolic than real meaning, especially if it is looked at from the perspective of the socio-

pedagogical practice. From the scientific-theoretical aspect, this situation is a permanent challenge for new research and theoretical-conceptual solutions that will comprehensively explain the relationship of pedagogy and social pedagogy.

Politics: Profession

In developmental terms, the relation of social pedagogy and politics (as the most visible part) from its beginning until today could be placed on a continuum which is described by Wilhelm (1959, according to Marburger, 1987, p. 104) at one end as: "The public considered itself intact, and the endangered or educationally neglected youth jeopardises that intactness" and at the other end as: "The endangerment of youth derives from the public in which it is ruthlessly included. The public should not be protected from the youth, but the youth should be protected from the public". Other authors also witness that social pedagogy has always been in "some relationship" with politics and the public. For example Ucar (2013) who claims that work with people, especially with children, has always been a political issue, while Hallstedt and Hogstrom (2005) argue that, in addition to other dimensions, the public-political level of action is located in those professions whose mission it is to influence other people. The same authors say that social pedagogues carry that function of their profession already through the fact that their jobs are most commonly found in institutions for "repairing" and in "shaping" institutions. Considering the Croatian situation, we can also add jobs in institutions of "reproduction" and in "executive" institutions.

Table 3: Six groups of social institutions (Bernsteinn, 1990, according to Hallstedt and Hogstrom, 2005)

Type of institution:	Function / examples:
Repairers	Diagnostics, prevention and correction of social/public relations - most often in activities of <i>health and social services</i>
Shapers	Modelling of symbolic forms/values - usually in activities of <i>higher education and science</i>
Reproducers	Transfer/repetition of existing forms/knowledge/values through generations- <i>education activities</i>
Executors	Implementation - different levels of <i>state administration and civil sector</i>
Regulators	Establishment and maintenance of symbolic control - activities of various <i>public and religious institutions</i>
Diffusers-propagators	Transfer and changing of forms - <i>mostly media activity</i>

This development path indicating that social pedagogy is to some level always a “public/political” profession with a number of other meanings:

- Very often this function is built into the definition of our profession as **reactive or proactive**, where reactivity is more associated with executive functions of “repair and refit” based on public – stipulatory acts, and proactivity is associated with professional activity based on “soft” professional competences. Some views consider that social pedagogy developed from initially defensive (reactive) into a proactive profession of the twentieth century (Marburger, 1987).
- Others suggests that this leads to internal tensions of the profession, especially at the level of everyday work, where **empowering and disciplinary** functions of the profession (work of individual expert) in various forms and intensities meet, compete, oppose and even threaten each other (Hallstedt and Hogstrom, 2005).
- It is said that the public aspect of the profession is visible in the name of the profession. It is pointed out that the pedagogical and the social have their public-political level. The focus on education and socialization, informal and lifelong learning is attributed to **the pedagogical dimension**. Orientation to deficits, compensation and treatment is attributed to the **social dimension** of the profession. The merger of these two “given dimensions” provides a space used for the creation of the characteristics of the profession visible in (Hallstedt and Hogstrom, 2005; Kornbeck, 2013a; Smith, 2009; Ucar, 2013):
 - the dedication to general human dimensions of beneficiaries relationship quality (as opposed to the exclusivity of the professional expert position),
 - work with different types of groups and communities (as opposed to the exclusivity of work with individuals),
 - orientation to prevention, normalization and positivity (as opposed to the exclusivity of work on the problem/disorder and its correction),
 - learning through personal experience (as opposed to the focus on formal learning and academic education), and
 - work on change (as opposed to focusing on control).
- **Sensitivity for others and showing solidarity** has its personal-professional and its public-political function. Their alignment and practice are a “tricky business”. It

requires an authentic individual and an authentic society; otherwise it leads to distrust (of service users towards experts) and manipulation (of politics with the profession).

- Finally, as said by Smith (2012), **politics** were once the **barrier** to development of the social and pedagogical profession. Today, in times of predominance of neoliberal culture and business, the willingness of society to encourage the development of social and helping professions is much more questionable. According to Kornbeck (2013b) that is why social pedagogy in Great Britain will develop far easier as an academic discipline than as a practical activity. In Croatia it will certainly have an impact on the further (non)development of the profession.

Briefly, the focus on balancing these two opposites is a constant, creative challenge of social pedagogy, but also other social and even helping professions. As per Lorenz (1994, according to Hallstedt and Hogstrom, 2005), social professions cannot be solely in the service of the state, but are included in the non-governmental, civil sector.

METAPHOR: A DIFFERENT VIEW ON THE PROFESSION

And finally, one of the possible, less common views of the profession and its boundaries is the metaphorical view. Metaphors as semantic changes of key features of a phenomenon that can relativise and / or revitalise these features. In addition, as suggested by Solomon (2007), metaphors are a window into abstract concepts, they briefly explain one, lesser known "thing" with the help of another one, simpler and more familiar. In order to shed more light on some "delicate" features of social pedagogy, here are some metaphors that correspond with our profession as a member of a group of professions such as: helping, interpersonal, unregulated, social and professions focused on sanctioning and monitoring. Table 4 shows appropriate metaphors for certain groups of professions and a short description of these professions. Following Solomon's (2007) idea that metaphors can be created in order to establish additional elements of professional (personal or collective) identity, metaphors are displayed or taken from other authors (where specified), or created for the purpose of this work mainly through the study of the meaning of the profession and professionalization of social pedagogy.

Table 4: Metaphors for professions

Group of professions	Features of professions	Metaphor
Helping professions: -Psychologists -Social workers -Psychotherapists -Theologists	Professions whose field of work includes work with behavioural problems, emotions and interpersonal relationships	-Confessor -Wounded healer
Interpersonal professions: -Teachers -Pedagogues -Police officers -Jurists	Professions that can realise / perform their tasks only through interaction with users of their services	-Inhale and exhale -Lonesome rider
Unregulated professions:	Professions performing their activities - the goal, content and manner of performance not being regulated by laws / bylaws	-Unknown soldier/citizen
Social professions: -Social workers -Sociologists -Psychologists -Social helpers	Professions that act in a space framed by public – social policies	-Political symbol -Reflecting stigma
Professions of supervision and sanctioning: -Jurists -Police officers -Probation officers -Correction officers	Professions with one of their tasks being to implement and to supervise the order / rules /other members of the community.	-The Lord of Discipline -Dirty jobs

Paraphrasing some authors (McCully, 1966; Durhem 1985; Ajduković and Ajduković, 1996) one can say that *helping professions* are involved in the work and decision-making related to individuals and groups, and solving their problems in terms of behaviour, emotion, interpersonal relationships and their overall well-being. Psychologists, doctors in general and particularly psychiatrists, social workers, but theologians as well, teachers and different therapists (speech, work, leisure time) are commonly referred to as helpers. Metaphorically,

literature refers to two aspects of helping. The one which puts the helper in the role of a person who listens and to whom can be said what cannot be said to other people. So for that part of work a parallel with the '*confession*'. Because these "things" are often associated with difficult personal experiences, sometimes for this aspect of helping work, the metaphor 'container' is used. The metaphor of the '*wounded healer*' corresponds with a number of features of helping professions, such as the certainty that the helper is also a person and therefore has its own problems, that the helper persists in helping others and when threatened himself, that the helper cannot help himself but needs other helpers and the like (Benziman, Kannai and Ahmad, 2012; Groesbeck, 1975). Since in literature the phenomenon of the wounded healer is associated with archetypal messages of the Greek myth of Chiron (a centaur who, having survived a wounding with the help of the gods, has successfully treated ones and at the same time taught others how to heal), this metaphor is commonly associated with the choice of the helping profession as a profession of helping others, but also of self-help.

Interpersonal professions can realise / perform their tasks only through interaction with users of their specific services. This is a very broad group of professions, so on the one hand we find here professions such as retailers and the counter staff, on the other hand, there are professions closer to social pedagogues such as teachers, pedagogues and jurists, but also all those professions included in the helping group. Interpersonal professions are based on communication with the users of their services so laymen and casual observers may think that these professionals do nothing more than '*opening their mouth and breathing*'. The nature of their work often places them as individual experts in a relationship with a large number of concurrent service users (customers, students, clients) so they feel like '*lonesome riders*' in the open prairie.

Unregulated professions are professions that perform their activities without the objective, content and manner of performing the corresponding work being regulated by laws or bylaws of a given country. In many national communities, these professions carry out a large number of jobs in various sectors and contribute to society in its successful functioning. They remain inconspicuous, little known - to the general public and to other professions and experts. They are like '*unknown heroes*' who actually won the war, but the medals and badges were awarded to others, known heroes. They were all together honoured with one monument to the Unknown Soldier.

Social professions are professions that act in a space framed by public – social policies of a certain country. This group of professions includes professions closest to social pedagogues, such as social workers and psychologists. The selected metaphors reflect primarily the one aspect of those professions that is associated with the public sphere of their action in the name of the state (*'political symbol'*), as commonly perceived by their users. On the other hand, they are associated with low / poor status of their service users in the society that is reflected in the position of these professions among other professions and in society as a whole (*'reflective stigma'*).

Professions of supervision and sanctioning are aimed at, among others, the implementation of the lawfully prescribed or otherwise stipulated order in certain public places / institutions, then at the establishment and enforcement of rules and supervision of other members of the community. This is a relatively narrow group of professions which, for example, includes jurists, police and probation officers. These professions are in the service of the state; they establish and maintain order for the state and in the name of the state (*'lord of discipline'*), which can be deemed unnecessary, excessive and malicious by those at which it is aimed, as well as by neutral citizens, and these professions may be experienced to perform a state's *'dirty work'*.

Speaking the language of metaphor, social pedagogues or social pedagogy as a member of several professional groups, should count on a lower recognition of their profession, the unwillingness of the community to fully recognize their work as an important contribution to the development of certain activities and the society as a whole, or be prepared that the inefficiency of a certain activity will be attributed to them as individuals or profession. Equally important is the message that the challenge of helping lies in the fact that it may have different facets and even opposites.

And at the end instead of a conclusion here is a question: Have you ever encountered occupations such as: biography preparation consultant; trend researcher; guide through nature, (non)ethics hacker? All of these are occupations that already exist in the world (and are well paid). These are occupations that may yet not have "their metaphors," but they push the boundaries and shed a new, different light on the relationship of profession and occupation / job. This will not come as a surprise to all who show interest or have insight in the labour market, because they know that new professions, and in particular occupations, are emerging

and old are disappearing faster than we would expect and / or like. There are tricky, but very probably realistic, assumptions that this will happen faster to occupations within professions that are not flexible enough and whose educational programs are inflexible. So it is good to belong to a group of open, yet completely undefined but creative professions. And it instructs us never to "fence" with strong (either internal or external) walls, but to keep the boundaries permeable and flexible, learning from others and with others.

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