

Andrea Liszka

*Waldorf Ház Pedagógiai Szolgáltató Intézet*

Erika Kopp

*Eötvös Loránd University, Institute of Education*

## Alignment of the External Evaluation and Specific Features of Waldorf<sup>1</sup> Pedagogy

**ABSTRACT:** Evaluation and assessment<sup>2</sup> have increasing importance in education. Because of an international trend toward greater school autonomy, evaluation and assessment is fueling a need to monitor how schools are doing as, simultaneously, with demand is increasing for effectiveness, equity and quality in all fields of education, whether mainstream or alternative (OECD, 2013). This study aims to observe the state-required external evaluation of Waldorf kindergartens in Berlin, until now the only case in international practice in which the state has evaluated Waldorf/Steiner institutions' professional work. The main question is how these institutions can preserve their own profiles during the external evaluation process. This question also has great importance in Hungary because a new state evaluation system has recently been introduced that will concern the Waldorf/Steiner schools.

**KEYWORDS:** external Evaluation, Waldorf/Steiner pedagogy.

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Contact: Andrea Liszka  
liszka.andrea@waldorf.hu  
Erika Kopp  
kopp.erika@ppk.elte.hu

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## INTRODUCTION

### Basic questions in school evaluation

Evaluation and assessment methods have changed a lot in recent decades. When Ellet and Garland observed teacher evaluation practices in some of the largest schools districts in the United States (Ellett & Garland, 1987), they found that teacher evaluations had summative rather than formative purpose, and the evaluators used the students' outcomes instead of established performance standards. But decades have passed, and the situation has slowly changed from testing culture to assessment culture (Dierick & Dochy, 2001) in student assessment and also in the teachers' appraisal (Danielson, 2007; Peterson, 2000; Zepeda, 2006).

Although teachers are the main actors in schools (Sanders, Wright, & Horn, 1997), it would be a mistake to focus attention just on individual-teacher quality, as students have been influenced by the whole community of teachers. Education strongly rely on the single teachers (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013), but since a group is far more powerful than an individual (Leana, 2011), it is worth evaluating not just teachers but schools.

The other main question was whether external evaluation or self-evaluation is more expedient. Although not all countries have the same situation, after analyzing data from 25 countries the OECD researchers have shown that the main interna-

tional policy direction is to enhance teachers' professionalism at teacher and school levels. This direction also moves from compliance to quality. So the main policy challenges are ensuring the centrality of the quality of teaching and learning, and aligning external evaluation of schools with school self-evaluation (OECD, 2013).

### **Special requirements for Waldorf Education**

Waldorf educators also think both external evaluation and self-evaluation are important tools for continuous quality development. Most Waldorf institutions use various quality management systems, and in this context they have systematic external and self-evaluation. Though management is often evaluated in the Waldorf schools, educational activity is not (Clouder, 2001), possibly because Waldorf education is very different from mainstream pedagogy and it is hard to align its evaluating processes with state requirements. In the following paragraphs we would like to point out those features that made the comparison difficult.

Professional basics of Waldorf pedagogy rely on Rudolf Steiner's anthropological and philosophical ideas. Waldorf pedagogy assumes that children should be educated not according to the need of the state or society, but according to their own potential, development opportunities, and psychological and spiritual needs. Education's role should be not to transmit knowledge, but to help children use their own judgment and comprehension. The goal is to learn to see with their own eyes, think and act for themselves. That is why the Waldorf curriculum is not built on normative aims, but is a tool that can help unfold every child's abilities and inclinations. In other words Waldorf pedagogy is not functional, but rather substantial, with the child's individuality in the center (Steiner, 1991).

According to Steiner (1991), life is like a plant: its hidden depths carry the seeds of the future, the flower and fruit. Human life is exactly the same: it carries the possibilities of its future. That is the reason Waldorf pedagogy appreciates the seeds of transformation and growth everywhere and springs from the nature of development. So it cannot represent different values in evaluation, either. According to Waldorf pedagogy, evaluation should be formative, as it must serve the development of the person evaluated, not judge his or her performance. Therefore Waldorf/Steiner teachers do not grade, but write text assessment about and for the students. The third main difference is the structure of the schools. Most schools have a hierarchical structure, as that is the most efficient way of directing an institution. But Waldorf schools are organized by other important principles. On the eve of the first Waldorf Teacher's Seminar (Aug. 20, 1919), Steiner gave a lecture in which he introduced his main aims. One of them was that children would be taught by educators who were independent and could develop individual abilities with freedom and responsibility.

[...] This will be possible to achieve only when each of you enters into this work with full strength. Everyone must use his or her full strength from the very beginning.

Therefore, we will organize the school not bureaucratically, but collegially, and will administer it in the republican way. In a true teacher's republic we will not have the comfort of receiving directions from the Board of Education. Rather, we must bring to our work what gives each of us the possibility and the full responsibility for what we have to do. Each of us must be completely responsible (Steiner, 1996).

Thus efficiency is a very important aspect of a school structure. Steiner believed that teachers' responsibility is even more important. This republican way – or today we call it “self-managed” and “self-governed” – is not easy, as it requires high-level social skills, but it is the only way teachers can carry responsibility for their deeds, and the way they can become examples of a responsible person for their students.

As these special features – to be substantial on a professional level, development-oriented on a methodological level and self-governed on a social level – are essential for all Waldorf institutions, schools have to preserve them; otherwise they may lose their connections with the original impulse. As there is a quite good practice in Berlin region for integrating state and Waldorf requirements, it is worth observing and looking for the Hungarian Waldorf movement's possibilities of taking over this practice, in the frame of the state evaluation and assessment system.

### **The Berlin case in brief**

The external professional evaluation was initiated by the Berlin State Senate, which was obliged by the German Federal Laws<sup>3</sup> to create a Quality Agreement with the maintaining actors of day-care centers and kindergartens. In this Quality Agreement<sup>4</sup> the parties have committed to fulfill their educational tasks using the Berlin Early Childhood Curriculum<sup>5</sup>. That means all kindergartens in the Land of Berlin will develop their educational activities on the basis of the Berlin Early Childhood Curriculum and develop their internal evaluation processes, while the state ensures the external evaluation of the professional activity, which must take place in every five years. The state entrusted the “BeKi” (Berliner Kita-Institut für Qualität-entwicklung, or Institution for Quality Development for Kindergartens in Berlin) with the coordination of the evaluation process. The external evaluation is carried out among the nine accredited providers.

As the QVTAG agreement applies to all kindergartens that receive state support, it applies to the Waldorf kindergartens as well. So the Association of Waldorf Kindergartens contacted Confidentia<sup>6</sup>, an auditing and certifying company that deals with organizations using “Path to Quality”<sup>7</sup> for their management systems, to develop together an external professional evaluation system appropriate to Waldorf Education.

Confidentia, in collaboration with the Association of Waldorf Kindergartens, developed an interactive, three-phase evaluation concept (the first and third phases evaluate requirements of the Berlin Early Childhood Curriculum (BECC), and the

second evaluates the Waldorf profile) and applied for accreditation to the “BeKi” in 2010. As their application was accepted, Confidentia became one of the recognized provider companies. It has evaluated the first two phases in all 27 Waldorf kindergartens in Berlin till the writing of this article.

As Confidentia wanted to manage this evaluation process in a scientifically monitored way, it asked Prof. Dr. Axel Föller-Mancini and Dr. Jürgen Peters, both of Alanus University Alfter/Bonn, to contribute as scientific guides and counselors.

## **Aims and Questions of the Study**

The Hungarian Educational Governance has just introduced a new professional evaluation and assessment system that also relates to the Waldorf institutions but does not fit their special features, as the Hungarian Waldorf Fellowship indicated to the Ministry. The ministry staff was open to consultation about what kind of changes would be required and possible to make the state system appropriate to the Waldorf institutions. So the main aim of this study is to map those elements and experiences of the Berlin process that can be useful to the Hungarian Waldorf movement.

Based on the reasons mentioned above, we raise the following questions:

- » What is the process of external professional evaluation of the Waldorf kindergartens in Berlin? (We are especially interested in the Waldorf profile.)
- » How can this evaluation system harmonize the state requirements with the special features of Waldorf institutions?
- » What are the two sides’ main criteria?
- » How did they work in practice in different institution?
- » What kind of results does the evaluation have?
- » How do Waldorf principles and external evaluation relate to each other
- » Which elements of the Berlin process could fit into the Hungarian state professional evaluation and assessment system?

## **About the Research**

This study examines the theory and practice of the external professional evaluation of Waldorf kindergartens in Berlin with special attention to the profile specificity. To gather personal experience, we decided to visit two kindergartens during their evaluation process. Because of the distance between Budapest and Berlin, it was, unfortunately, not possible to manage and finance more visits. We chose the two kindergartens on two criteria: that they should be as different as possible, so that we might observe this process in different circumstances, and that the two visits could be made on one trip. So the choices were the Waldorfkindergarten “R,” a small kindergarten with two teachers and a trainee in Wedding, a well-off district in the western part of the city, and the Waldorfkindergarten “P,” a big kindergarten of five groups with fifteen teachers and other co-workers in Pankow district in the east of

the city, part of the DDR until 1991. Both evaluations were led by a very experienced Waldorf kindergarten teacher from Augsburg.

As our aim is to get a complex picture of this complex situation, we chose case study for our frame. Within the case study, information was obtained by various methods, such as (1) analysis of documents – for example: legislation, working papers, evaluation reports; (2) participatory observations of two evaluation processes – the profile-specific evaluation of Waldorfkindergarten “R” and Waldorfkindergarten “P”<sup>8</sup>–; (3) three evaluators’ meetings<sup>9</sup>; and (4) personal statements from Robert Zuegg of Confidentialia, who is responsible for this evaluating process (detailed in Figure 2). The data collection took place in 2013–2014.

In the following paragraphs, Confidentialia’s process will be presented in detail and then we try to answer our first three questions, namely: (1) What is the process of external professional evaluation of the Waldorf kindergartens in Berlin? (We are especially interested in the Waldorf profile.) (2) How can this evaluation system harmonize the state requirements and the special features of Waldorf institutions? (3) What are the two sides’ main criteria?

Then the visiting experiences will follow, first about “R” and then “P” kindergarten. After that we try to find answers for our fourth and fifth questions: (4) How did they work in practice in different institution? (5) What kind of results did the evaluation have?

In the last chapter, as a summary, we look for answers to the last questions: (6) How do Waldorf/Steiner principles and external evaluation relate to each other? (7) Which elements of the Berlin process could fit into the Hungarian state professional evaluation and assessment system?

## **Harmonizing External Evaluation and the Special Features of Waldorf Pedagogy**

The state’s requirement was not standardized; it just expected kindergartens to carry out their work under BECC. The BECC had defined eight areas of pedagogical activity to be evaluated every five years: (1) Designing everyday life with children; (2) Play as a way of understanding the world; (3) Planning and designing projects; (4) Inspiring spaces; (5) Observing and documenting children’s development; (6) Co-operation with parents; (7) Transition to primary school; (8) Democratic participation – co-operation and communication. The evaluation of these areas was designed by the different accredited providers. There were only two extra requirements: in the 5<sup>th</sup> area, the kindergartens have to use a Speech Development Diary, and in the 6<sup>th</sup> area, all parents – especially non-German-speaking parents – had to be involved in the educational processes. Otherwise the BECC’s expectations and pedagogical goals were quite general. (An example from the 3<sup>rd</sup> area, Play: “[...] Educators should help children to achieve their play ideas and expand their play skills [...]”). So we can say that the state was open and accepting toward different educational approaches.

But this general and wide expectation system raised the risk that if Waldorf kindergartens follow just the state requirements because of the external evaluation, soon-

er or later their attention would turn only to these general principles and they would lose their connection with the original impulse. After discussion with the Association of Waldorf Kindergartens in Berlin/Brandenburg<sup>10</sup>, colleagues of Confidentialia found the following issues, which can be important if they want to keep the specific profile: (1) The kindergarten teachers have to have a vital connection to the founder's impulse; they have to be conscious of these specialties and how they implement them in everyday life. (2) To present these specialties, they need to acquire, maintain and develop special knowledge, skills and attitudes thus competences. (3) They also have to keep the social impulse of the Waldorf pedagogy: self-governance and self-administration. These can be cultivated by supporting self-responsibility, thus strengthening participants' own capacity of liability. (4) Finally, they decided that during the evaluating process, to empower the development-oriented attitude they prefer formative methodology.

So the solution was to expand/complete the state requirements with the profile-specific requirements.

Confidentialia divided the evaluation process into three phases: (1) Evaluation of BECC areas 1 to 5; (2) Evaluation of profile specificity, namely how kindergartens ensure or cultivate a vital connection to their own basic impulse; (3) Evaluation of BECC areas 6 to 8.

These three phases will be evaluated every five years. That means the phases follow each other every second year, resulting a denser rhythm.

In terms of the methodology, evaluators keep these things in mind: (1) They use tools that create opportunities to develop self-assessment skills. (2) They prefer self-commitment to external obligations. (3) They prefer formative methods to summative ones.

## First phase

The evaluator spends one day in the kindergarten after a preparation process in which he or she has collected the necessary data and documents, clarified the tasks, finalized the program with the kindergarten teachers and sent all materials that can help them (for example, guidelines and questions for various tasks).

In the morning the evaluator starts by viewing the building and then visiting the groups. Depending on the size of the kindergarten, she spends an hour or half an hour in each group, observing the interactions between the kindergarten teachers and children.

She records her observations and experiences, raising questions opportunities or needs for improvement, and makes her recommendations in writing.

In the afternoon the evaluator and all the teachers meet to continue the evaluation together in the following steps:

1. Personal objective and subjective reports. The kindergarten teachers divide up the first five areas of the BECC; make an objective report about the work of the kindergarten; then they report on their personal experiences in their chosen

fields. They make these 8-to-10-minute presentations to one another in the presence of the evaluator.

2. Issues and supplements to facilitate understanding. After all the presentations, there is a bit of time for colleagues' contributions, issues or constructive criticism. (These methods strengthen the kindergarten teachers' capacity for self-reflection, individual responsibility and trust between colleagues. Moreover, they offer a living and authentic picture of the activities taking place in the kindergarten.)
3. Comparison of the kindergarten's own educational program and the BECC quality requirements. This is a group discussion among the kindergarten teachers, whose task is to show (and raise awareness of) how to meet their own educational programs and the BECC's. They have guiding questions, and the evaluator can help with facilitating or deepening questions.
4. Evaluation by the kindergarten teachers themselves. They discuss their impressions and issues raised during the reports and the group discussion. (At the same time, the evaluator deals with evaluating what has been said.)
5. Conclusions and commitments. The kindergarten teachers, now in the presence of the evaluator, formulate their decisions on what they want to change in the future.
6. Development opportunities and needs from the evaluator's perspective. The evaluator provides feedback on quality of the reports, self-assessments and the final decisions, and tells what kind of developmental opportunities and needs exist. The evaluator can set out required tasks and recommendations if important things are missing from the kindergarten teachers' self-commitments.
7. Documentation. Finally the developmental opportunities and needs, as well as the self-commitments of the kindergarten teachers, are recorded, as well as recommendations or required tasks, if any. Another option is to decide who will be responsible for the tasks.

Open questions are asked, such as:

“How do the kindergarten teachers involve the children – according to their developmental opportunities – to shape their lives in the kindergarten?” (1<sup>st</sup> area), or “How do educators document the development paths and progresses of each child?” (5<sup>th</sup> area).

## **Second Phase**

The methods and tools were very similar to the first phase. The main difference was the content, as in the second phase they evaluate the profile specificity and review the first phase's self-commitments and recommendations. Otherwise the same tools are used, such as personal subjective and objective reports, group discussion, self-evaluation, self-commitments, etc.



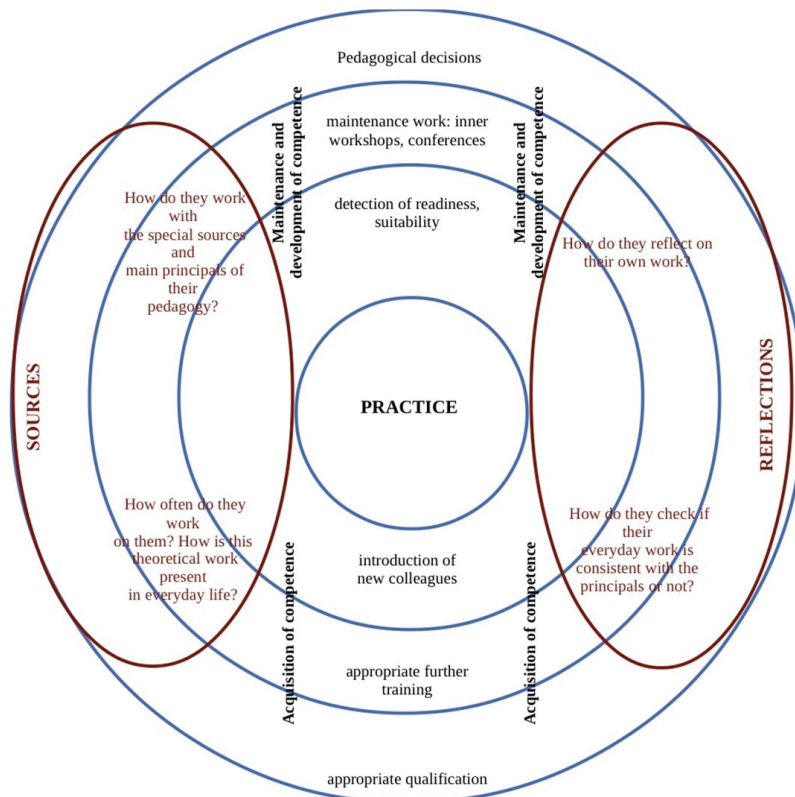


Figure 1. Concept of the second phase

(This figure was originally a drawing on a blackboard on the training of Confidetiã's evaluators in 2013. – Invented by R. Zuegg, M. Ross and F. Linde, the designers of the Confidetiã's evaluation process in Berlin, and not previously published.)

The first issue – the vertical one – is competence. On one side the evaluator observes the acquisition of competence:

- » Do teachers have proper qualification?
- » Do they go to appropriate further training?
- » How are new colleagues introduced?

On the other side, the evaluator observes the existence and continuous improvement of competence:

- » How are colleagues' readiness and suitability detected? Do they visit one another's classes?
- » How do the teachers support the maintenance of the pedagogical work? How do they eliminate defects? Do they have regular workshops or conferences, team-coaching, caseloads? Do they invite external coaches or advisors?
- » How do they make pedagogical decisions?

The second issue – the horizontal one – is the connection with the pedagogical profile:

How do the teachers work with the special sources and main principles of their pedagogy? (For example, in a Waldorf kindergarten with Steiner's works.) How often do they work on them? How is this theoretical work present in everyday life?

How do they reflect on their own work? How do they check whether their everyday work is consistent with the principles?

### Third Phase

The original idea was to evaluate the 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> areas of the BECC in the same way as in the first phase. But in 2014, as the BECC turned ten years old, the authority decided to review it, and this renewing process brought many changes. The new BECC has an extra area, Inclusion, so now there are nine areas altogether. There are other new features as well: the former BECC had determined only the eight areas; the new one determined not just nine task areas, but also the quality assets and quality criteria. That means the state sets stricter standards, creating a completely new situation. So Confidentialia also had to rearrange its original concept.

In the preceding paragraphs, we could see the process of external evaluation of the Waldorf kindergartens in Berlin, with special attention to the Waldorf profile. In Figure 2, which follows, we try to show how the Waldorf method of external evaluation can relate to the state requirements by collecting the two sides' main criteria.

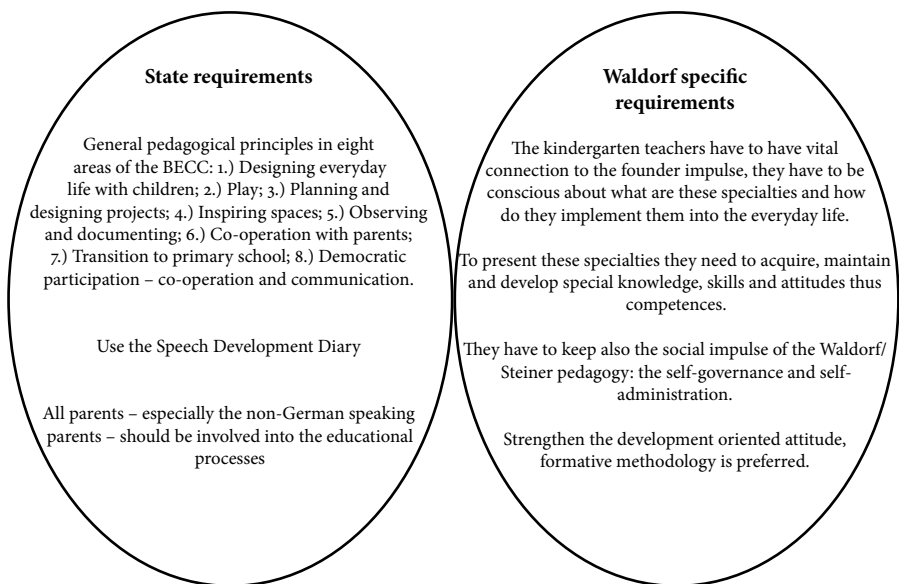


Figure 2. State and special Waldorf requirements in Berlin<sup>11</sup>.  
(Andrea Liszka invented this figure)

In summary, this process in Berlin harmonized the state requirements with the special features of Waldorf institutions in such a way that they have expanded/completed the state requirements with profile-specific requirements and have used evaluation methodology that supported the basic Waldorf principles.

#### **RESULTS OF EXTERNAL EVALUATION IN THE TWO KINDERGARTENS**

The following paragraphs present the experiences of the two visits in the second phase of the evaluation process. As mentioned, we tried to choose as different kindergartens as possible to see what kind of differences and similarities can occur in the practice.

The process had the same steps in both cases, so we have tried to compare them by these steps:

1. Start.
2. Results from the last evaluation – a kind of mirror, a self-control. The kindergarten teachers have to reflect on their self-commitments and what they have done with the recommendations.
3. Discussion of the competence issue. In Figure 1 this is the vertical issue.
4. Evaluation of the discussion of the competence issue.
5. Discussion in connection with the pedagogical profile. In Figure 1 this is the horizontal issue.
6. Evaluation of the discussion of the profile issue.
7. Feedback on the evaluation process.

#### ***Start***

The R-kindergarten has only one group and there are just three colleagues, so the evaluation could be done in one afternoon from 15:00 to 19:00, after school. P-kindergarten has five groups and 14 co-workers – ten kindergarten teachers, two trainees as assistants, a eurythmist<sup>12</sup> and a curative teacher. With so many colleagues, the process takes longer time, they planned to manage this evaluation process on an in-service day that started at 8:00 and finished at 15:00.

Both programs started with an introduction circle, and afterward the evaluator presented the planned schedule.

#### ***Results of the last evaluation***

In the R-kindergarten there were only four self-commitments from the first phase that teachers had to fulfill. They had managed three of them properly but couldn't manage the fourth, as they had difficulties with the Speech Development Diary's content. It was not clear to them what they should write in it, so they asked the evaluator, who kindly helped them.

The P-kindergarten had a lot of self-obligations and recommendations from the first phase. Many had been fulfilled in the last two years, but two were still problematic: they didn't have the Speech Development Diary, and they didn't really understand the general idea of the "guiding vision" or "leading picture." After a long discussion (65 minutes), the evaluator summarized the presentations and found they had evolved a lot in the last two years.

### ***Discussion on the competence issue***

In preparation for the evaluation process, both kindergartens received guiding questions on this step. The teachers in both kindergartens consciously prepared and reported about their work. In P-kindergarten one of the reports – about the defect elimination – resulted in a lively discussion. One teacher mentioned that she has problems with the expression "defect"; others mentioned other problems, and it was clear that this is a sensitive point among the teachers. Slowly it became clear that the main problem is communication. Sometimes it hurts when they tell each other about the problematic issues, and sometimes information doesn't flow properly. Finally, the teachers agreed that "communication is a real art; we have to learn how to give feedback to each other; it is a social skill."

After the reports, the colleagues made comments, and then the evaluator asked questions. She inquired if there were any written task descriptions for the kindergarten teachers, but none of the kindergartens had any. After a short discussion, the teachers agreed with the evaluator that a written task description can be a very useful tool to develop their consciousness in their work.

In the R-kindergarten, the other question was about the class visits, and there was a long discussion. The kindergarten teachers questioned if they are needed at all, as most of the time they are working together in the group. But finally they accepted that the kindergarten teacher's attention is different if she does her everyday work in the children's group or observes the work of her colleagues.

### ***Evaluation of the competence issue***

After a short break, the evaluator asked kindergarten teachers what they had found during the previous discussion, what kind of self-commitment they wanted to make. She wrote down these self-commitments and added some recommendations for important tasks they didn't mention. Finally she closed this conversation with some encouraging words: In the R-kindergarten she mentioned her good impressions of their work, and in the P-kindergarten she mentioned how much the teachers had developed from the last evaluation phase.

### ***Discussion in connection with the pedagogical profile***

In connection with the pedagogical issue, the kindergarten teachers had to choose whether they wanted to work with the basic pedagogical principle or with the resonance of their everyday work. Both kindergartens chose the first. The R-kindergarten worked with the theme of transition into the kindergarten because a little boy there had difficulties. The P-kindergarten worked with the theme of kindergarten-readiness (or maturity). At this step the evaluator just observed the work of the teachers.

In the both kindergartens it was noticeable that they had great practice in child observation and caseloads, and their pedagogical knowledge was very well grounded.

In P-kindergarten, beside the kindergarten teachers' pedagogical preparedness, there were a great proficiency in leading discussion. The moderator colleague moderated the talk nicely, stopping interruptions and encourage the silent ones. There were arguments pro and con, but there was no debate. It was clear that teachers had advanced discussion culture.

### ***Evaluation of the profile issue***

After a short break the evaluator asked the teachers' opinions about the preceding talk. Guided by questions, they evaluated the discussion together.

Finally the teachers summarized the experiences and their commitments. Both kindergartens did a great job and painted a correct picture of their work. They formulated all the possible self-commitments, so the evaluator didn't have to make any recommendations.

### ***Feedback on the evaluation process***

Closing the day, the evaluator asked the kindergarten teachers' opinions and impressions of the evaluation. From both kindergartens, she received very positive feedback. The educators appreciated the good timing of the day and expressed that the method had made the process very friendly. Some teachers had a little fear at the beginning of the day, but by the end all had had good experiences. In the R-kindergarten the teachers said that "such a day is very useful in terms of the awareness about pedagogical work."

We have seen that this evaluation worked well in both cases; it was well designed to get a vital picture of the pedagogical profile of different kindergartens, and it was open enough to uncover the real problems (e.g.: the communication problem in the P-kindergarten).

The methods helped to strengthen the teachers' responsibility. They realized the problems, felt the need for change and really wanted to change, as is shown by the fact that they fulfilled nearly all of their self-commitments of the first phase. The Speech Development Diary was the only thing they couldn't manage, but it should be

mentioned that 68 percent of Waldorf kindergartens had strong reservations about its pedagogical suitability<sup>13</sup>.

The problem around the Diary It poses the question whether only the methods strengthen the teachers' responsibility, or whether the areas and criteria of the evaluation also matter.

Let's have a look at this question. If we compare the first and second phases, we can see that the methodology was the same, but the state requirements were evaluated in the first phase and the specific Waldorf requirements in the second. In both cases, the kindergarten teachers realized the problems and made self-commitments to solve them. So there is no difference in that area.

In the first phase, we could see the results as well: the teachers had fulfilled most of their self-commitments and requirements. The only exception was the Speech Development Diary, but this task was not really internalized; it remained an external liability they could not identify with pedagogically, so they didn't fulfill it. In the second phase, we could see that the evaluator made significant efforts to make the kindergarten teachers understand and adopt the importance and usefulness of the task description and the class visit, to awaken their inner will to strengthen their responsibility. It shows that the criterion does matter a lot. If the evaluated teachers cannot accept a criterion, their inner will not move for it. So the criterion should be in harmony with the teachers' pedagogical beliefs. Last but not least, we could see how important role had the evaluator in this situation. The inner will of the kindergarten teachers can be awakened with great empathy, respect and professionalism, and the evaluator should know deeply the adequate alternative pedagogy.

#### SUMMARY

### **How do Waldorf principles and external evaluation to one another?**

Based on the cases and theory presented above, we can see that the Waldorf principles are consistent with the *formative assessment culture* (Dierick & Dochy, 2001) and totally harmonious with the theory of *learning communities* (Wenger, 1998; Stoll, 2006)). As they support individual responsibility, they also contribute to the development of the *decisional capital* (Hargeaves & Fullan, 2012) in the institutions.

The external evaluation – by a well-prepared evaluator – can greatly help teachers recognize real problems and support them in finding their own solutions and making self-commitments driven by their own sense of responsibility, which guarantees that they will complete these undertaken tasks.

Observing this process, we have seen that the openness of the state requirements made it possible to evaluate the Waldorf principles in a way appropriate to the Waldorf schools, and their special features like self-governance can get worthy attention (8<sup>th</sup> principle of the BECC – democratic participation).

But this is true only as long as the state requirements are not based on standardization. Standardization cannot consider the diversities, the different educational

approaches. (We could see that such a simple thing as a Speech Development Diary can cause problems.) Nor does it leave room for discovering the unique problems (e.g. communication in „P” kindergarten). Therefore it is predictable that the new standardized version of the BECC will complicate the situation of Waldorf kindergartens in Berlin.

However, it is reassuring that in the international trends of evaluation at school level, the direction is moving from compliance to quality. So the main policy challenges are ensuring the centrality of the quality of teaching and learning, and aligning external evaluation of schools with schools’ self-evaluation (OECD, 2013).

### **Which elements of the Berlin process could fit into the Hungarian state professional evaluation and assessment system<sup>14</sup>?**

As the Hungarian system is very much standardized (and Waldorf pedagogy does not fit into a standardized system), it is not easy to compare the Berlin process to the Hungarian system. But we can find some useful and important examples. First of all, the Association of Waldorf kindergartens in Berlin took care of their own profiles and did not let the Waldorf teachers and institutions move away from their original impulse, so it is urgent that the Hungarian Waldorf institutions also find a way to keep their special profiles.

Since the Qualification System and the Inspection System are carried out by external experts according to central criteria, it is very important that the evaluators understand the special features of Waldorf pedagogy. It would be fortunate if Waldorf experts could take part in the processes. (As in Berlin, all the evaluators who took part in this external evaluation of Waldorf kindergartens were trained and experienced Waldorf kindergarten teachers.) In the Inspection System, in addition to Waldorf experts, it is necessary to achieve the acceptance of the self-governed structure of Waldorf institutions as a main principle. That means there is no director, as in a mainstream school, since the teachers lead the school – and to change the “*principals’ level*” to a “*leadership’s level*.”

But real margin is needed in self-evaluation. In this field it would be important to have the possibility of using methods that create opportunities to develop the skills of self-assessment, prefer self-commitment to external obligations, and strengthen the development-oriented attitude and keep the social impulse of Waldorf pedagogy. It is also important to supplement the state requirement with those that can ensure that teachers have a vital connection to the founder’s impulse and have the necessary special competences.

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## ZEWNĘTRZNA EWALUACJA A SZCZEGÓLNE CECHY PEDAGOGIKI WALDORFSKIEJ<sup>15</sup>

**ABSTRAKT:** Ewaluacja i ocena<sup>16</sup> odgrywają coraz bardziej istotną rolę w edukacji. W efekcie międzynarodowego trendu autonomizacji szkół ewaluacja i ocena podsycają potrzebę monitorowania działań i osiągnięć placówek oświatowych. Jednocześnie zaś coraz bardziej wzrastają oczekiwania skuteczności, sprawiedliwości i jakości wobec edukacji tak powszechnej, jak i alternatywnej (OECD, 2013). Niniejszy artykuł przedstawia projekt badawczy dotyczący wymaganej przez państwo ewaluacji zewnętrznej berlińskich przedszkoli waldorfskich, stanowiącej jedyny jak do tej pory w międzynarodowej praktyce przykład państwowej oceny profesjonalnych działań placówek waldorfskich i steinerowskich. Głównym zagadnieniem artykułu jest zdolność tych placówek do utrzymania swej specyfiki w procesie zewnętrznej ewaluacji. Zagadnienie to ma doniosłe znaczenie również dla Węgier, gdzie niedawno wprowadzono nowy system państwowej ewaluacji szkół, który obejmie instytucje waldorfskie/steinerowskie.

**SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:** ewaluacja zewnętrzna, pedagogika waldorfska/steinerowska.



1. In Germany this alternative pedagogy is called “Waldorf” after the first school founded for the children of workers at the Waldorf-Astoria Cigarette Factory in Stuttgart in 1919. In English-speaking countries this pedagogy is called “Steiner Education” after Rudolf Steiner, the initiator and founder of this school. In this study I will use “Waldorf,” even though this expression is not usual in English, because the research took place in Germany.
2. For those for whom English is a foreign language, it is worth mentioning the difference between the concepts evaluation and assessment. Evaluation has a broader meaning; it is usually used when institutions, curriculums or different programs are evaluated. Assessment has a narrower meaning; it is used mainly when student or teacher performance is evaluated. And there is one more important synonym: appraisal, which is used mostly when the teachers are evaluated in a way that may lead to reward or even sanction.
3. Tagesbetreuungsbaugesetz – 2004. (Day Care Establishing Act) and the Gesetz zur Förderung von Kindern in Tageseinrichtungen und Kindertagespflege – 2005 (Law for promotion of children in day-care centers and Kindergartens).
4. Vereinbarung über die Qualitätsentwicklung in Berliner Kindertagesstätten – QVTAG. 2008. (Agreement on the Quality Development in the Kindergartens in Berlin).
5. Berliner Bildungsprogramm für die Bildung, Erziehung und Betreuung von Kinder in Tageseinrichtungen bis zu ihren Schulentritt, Weimar, Berlin 2004.
6. Confidentia – Gesellschaft zur Förderung der institutionellen Eigenverantwortung (Confidentia – Society for the Support of Institutional Self-Responsibility) is a Swiss-based, ISO / IEC 17021 accredited, auditing and certification company.

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7. Paths to Quality – Wege zur Qualität – is a quality management system invented in Switzerland in the 1990s, for institutions (social institutions, hospitals, schools, kindergartens, homes for people with special needs, etc.) that provides relationship-based services. They include more than 200 Waldorf institutions.
  8. The visits took place on Oct. 10 (Waldorfkindergarten „R”) and 11 (Waldorfkindergarten „P”), 2013.
  9. These meetings took place on Jan. 23, 2013, June 16, 2014, and Feb. 27, 2015.
  10. Vereinigung der Waldorfkindergärten e.V. Region Berlin/Brandenburg.
  11. Speech Development Diary is a special notebook for each child that must be filled in regularly. Teachers should make notes about the child’s speech development, the child has to reflect on his or her own speech development.
  12. A eurytmist is a teacher of Eurythmy, an expressive movement art taught as a special subject in Waldorf Education.
  13. The particular focus of the criticism was the fact that the child is being pushed toward premature reflection on personal and family life and other kinds of cognitive one-sidedness, as we can see in Mancini’s research (Mancini, 2014).
  14. Let me give a short overview of the Hungarian Educational Assessment system, introduced in 2013. It covers three areas: (1) Qualification of teachers – professional experts’ external appraisal on teachers work by eight competences determining their progress and salary; (2) Inspection of teachers, principals and schools – external evaluation identifying strengths and weaknesses at all level; (3.) Self-evaluation at all levels, the basis for the other two ways of evaluation.  
All these areas are standardized; the Qualification System assess by eight competences, each of which has seven to twelve indicators. The appraisals rely on the teachers’ portfolio (60 percent) and class visit (40percent). The Inspection System has the three levels. The teachers’ level uses the same competences and indicators as the Qualification System. The principals’ level is determined by five areas: (1) the strategic leadership and operational management of learning and teaching, (2) strategic leadership and operational management of the changes, (3) strategic leadership and operational self-management, (4) strategic leadership and operational management of others, (5) Strategic leadership and operational management of the institution. The schools’ level has seven areas: (1) educational processes, (2) personality and community development, (3) results, (4) internal relations and cooperation, (5) the institution’s external relations, (6) conditions of pedagogical work, (7) compliance with the expectations of the National Core Curriculum and institutional goals formulated in the local pedagogical program. All these areas have their evaluation criteria and associated requirements. The self-evaluation system has been designed to correlate with the Qualification System and the Inspection System, so the same levels, evaluation criteria and requirements have been defined.
  15. W Niemczech ten alternatywny model pedagogiczny nazywany jest „waldorfskim” od pierwszej szkoły założonej dla dzieci pracowników fabryki papierosów [niektóre źródła podają: fabryki cygar] Waldorf-Astoria w Stuttgarcie w roku 1919. W krajach anglojęzycznych model ten nosi nazwę „pedagogiki steinerowskiej” od nazwiska Rudolfa Steinera, pomysłodawcy i założyciela szkoły. W naszym opracowaniu używamy terminu „waldorfski”, chociaż nie jest on często stosowany w języku angielskim. Kierujemy się jednak tym, że nasze badania przeprowadzone zostały w Niemczech.
  16. Warto jest wyjaśnić różnicę między pojęciami ewaluacji (*evaluation*) i oceny (*assessment*). Termin ewaluacja ma szersze znaczenie i używany jest, gdy ocenia się placówki, programy nauczania czy też różne projekty. Termin ocena zaś ma węższe znaczenie i stosowany jest głównie, gdy ocenia się efekty pracy i działań uczniów lub nauczycieli. Jeszcze inny, synonimiczny termin – ocena pracownicza (*appraisal*) – stosowany jest zazwyczaj, gdy ocenia się nauczycieli konkretnie w celu nagrodzenia lub ukarania ich.