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# Implementation of Shoah themes into teaching at the first level of primary schools

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## ABSTRACT

The paper is devoted to the presentation of the results of a research survey, the aim of which was to find out the opinions of teachers who were professionally working at the first level of primary schools at the time of the quantitative research survey. A total of 319 primary school first cycle teacher education students, 300 females and 19 males, participated in the study at different stage I of their studies. A certain limit to the inclusion of these events in teaching at all levels of institutional education, from our point of view, is the concern of educators about the reaction of the pupils' legal representatives. We are convinced that, with appropriately chosen methods and forms of teaching, the Shoah can be implemented in the teaching of the first level of primary schools through methods that lead to the de-abstraction of this phenomenon. In most cases in favor of integrating the Shoah phenomenon into teaching at the first level of primary schools, especially through authentic artistic creations of children.

## IMPACT STATEMENT

The paper is devoted to the presentation of the results of a research investigation conducted among 319 students of teaching for the first stage of primary schools. The evaluation of the questionnaires shows that most issues are included in the eighth grade of primary school, in the subject of History, which is predestined by its content to integrate events anchored in history. The subjects of Civic Education and Czech Language and Literature also scored significantly. Positive responses were received, while Education in European and Global Contexts, Education for Democratic Citizenship and Multicultural Education were among the cross-cutting themes.

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## SUBJECTS

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## 1. Introduction

In this paper, we present partial results of a research investigation, the aim of which was to find out the opinions and preconceptions of students of teacher education programs on the integrations of the Shoah into the teaching of various subjects within the framework of basic institutional educations. Bensoussan (2016) states that the Shoah and the Holocaust were the culminations of a long history of anti-Semitic sentiment and action in Europe. The origins of the Shoah can be traced back to the tradition of Christian Europe to punish the Jews for not accepting the New Covenant, which led to centuries of discrimination and persecution. The Holocaust, with its unprecedented reach and scope, was the result of events from the Middle Ages to the modern era, including the Nazi regime, wartime occupation, and the failure of international rescue efforts (Buryła, 2019). Together, these historical events set the stage for the systematic genocide of millions of European Jews during the Shoah and the Holocaust, reshaping the course of human history (Dwork & Van Pelt, 2003). The key differences between Shoah and Holocaust lie in their connotations and implications. Shoah, from the Hebrew meaning sudden catastrophe, offers a more accurate designation for the persecution and murder of European Jewry in

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1933–1945 (De Kesel, 2018). On the other hand, holocaust of Greek origin refers to a victim consumed by fire, potentially sanctifying a senseless killing that may not consistent with historical events (Hayes, 2015). Elie Wiesel's preference for terms, such as Acontecimiento or Kingdom of the Night reflects mystical and incomprehensible nature of the Holocaust and emphasizes its incomprehensible aspect (Danzinger, 2007; Ifediora, 2013). For the purposes of this paper, we consider all these terms as synonyms, and we use the term Shoah uniformly throughout the text.

The motivation for conducting this research was:

**a. the continuing relevance of the Shoah for contemporary society**

Perelberg (2022) states that the Shoah, or Holocaust, is still very relevant to contemporary society because it has influenced various aspects of culture, politics, and education. Acedo (2010) underlines that the significance of the Shoah or Holocaust for society lies in its role as a tools to fight fascism, denying revisionist theories and promoting a new understanding of moral, ethical, and legal values after the war. Therefore, the study of the Holocaust is crucial in guiding individuals and communities to stand up to bigotry, protect human rights, and confront discrimination based on various demarcations, such as ethnicity, faith, and gender (Palmeira & Schurster, 2020). Understanding the unique elements of the Holocaust, including anti-Semitism and the decision-making process leading to genocide, is critical to preventing mass atrocities and guiding policymakers toward effective interventions (Nagan & Haddad, 2012).

**b. The necessity of introducing the warnings that this issue presents us with, especially to pupils of primary (compulsory) education, thus ensuring to some extent that all graduates of primary education are in some way acquainted with these aspects of one line of events of the Second World War**

Hekma (2016) sees a poignant warning of the Shoah to contemporary society, highlighting the critical importance of remembering and learning from past atrocities to prevent their recurrence. Scholars emphasize the need to continually rethink how we approach Holocaust commemoration, memorials, and education to ensure that the lessons of history are not forgotten. Rodman (2019) states that holocaust education has been embroiled in political controversies around the world and has served as a tool to combat bigotry and promote human rights, especially in countries seeking to develop international perspectives. Brysk (2022) adds that the Shoah had a profound impact on the global human rights movement. The horrors of the Holocaust served to silence anti-Semitism in many parts of the world (Brysk, 2013) and contributed to increased awareness of the importance of upholding human rights principles.

Enmeshed in political disputes (Anckaert, 2022), Holocaust education has become a crucial element in the promotion of universal human rights values, especially in countries seeking to develop international perspectives in education. The atrocities of the Shoah highlighted the need to fight discrimination and promote equality, which resonates with the basic principles of human rights activism outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Acedo, 2010).

**c. A certain distrust of educators at various levels of education to include the**

Shoah in the curriculum Mašát et al. (2020) state that educators at various levels of education show a certain level of mistrust when it comes to incorporating the Shoah issue into teaching. Research shows that teachers face difficulties, such as perceived saturation, anti-Semitism, and competition between different narratives and social backgrounds. The inclusion of perpetrator narratives in educational settings are often excluded, leading to a lack of understanding of the Holocaust and potentially promoting a victim culture (Drahi, 2015). The emotionally and politically charged nature of Holocaust education, intertwined with geopolitical struggles and differing conceptualizations, can leave educators feeling ill-prepared to handle the subject (Mašát, 2019b).

Despite these challenges, Fanjoy (2011) states that there is a call for a more comprehensive approaches to the teaching of the Shoah, emphasizing the importance of combating discrimination and promoting human rights through Holocaust education.

#### **d. The need to determine the current situation in the range of opinions of future**

teachers on the integration of the Shoah into teaching, based on their experience, based on which it will be possible to begin to implement a targeted intervention to possibly increase the inclusion of defined events in teaching at different levels of education Felten et al. (2023) state that educators can address student mistrust in classrooms by focusing on building trust through intentional strategies and interactions. Building trust is critical to learning and success, especially for marginalized groups in higher education. Relating this general thesis to teaching the Shoah, Mašát (2019a) and Tiburzi (2023) suggest that incorporating the Shoah into the classroom involves a variety of methods and a key role for teachers. Methods, such as artistic narratives, iconographic sources, and pictorial education are crucial to introduce students to the historical event. Approaches, such as the Legacy of Survivors, the Historical Approach, and the Interdisciplinary Approach are highlighted as effective ways of educating pupils about the Shoah (Mašát et al., 2020). Teachers play an important role in this integration, with research focusing on their views and opinions on the implementation of the Shoah in the educational environment (Mašát & Sladová, 2019; Palmeira & Schurster, 2020). In summary, teachers can effectively incorporate survivor testimonies into the classroom by developing a critical vocabulary for analysing written and audio-visual testimonies, navigating issues of truth and authenticity, and acknowledging the construction of testimonies to deepen students' understanding of survivors' experiences (Sidky, 2022).

We are convinced that the description of the current situation in the field of opinions, experiences, preconceptions, and misconceptions of future teachers in integration of the Shoah in various ways into teaching at different levels of education is the first, but in our opinion the most important step towards a possible increase in the integration of the Shoah phenomenon into teaching. It would not be possible to implement a targeted intervention effectively without an understanding of the current situation in the field. Simon (2001) states that preconceptions and ideas about the Shoah, also known as the Holocaust, vary according to historical, cultural, and religious perspectives. These specific preconceptions or misconceptions are important to channel, explain and, where appropriate, argue for within education. Olin (1997) notes that educational curricula, particularly in Israel, play a crucial role in shaping the understanding and teaching of the Holocaust, emphasizing the need for strategies that address historical, social, and geographical aspects.

## **2. Research methodology**

Quantitative research was conducted through a questionnaire survey. We chose this methodological approach because our aim was to reach as large a sample of respondents as possible, and we wanted to find out the preconceptions and experiences of the students of teaching in the field of including the Shoah in the teaching in as wide a range of related options as possible. The questionnaire consisted of 24 survey items. The first part of the questionnaire sought information about the respondents (e.g. gender, years, schools attended, field and form of university study, interest in leisure reading), while the second part of the questionnaire focused on questions about the respondents' experiences of implementing Shoah themes into teaching at primary school, they had attended, focusing on the integration of Shoah events into the teaching of Literary Education (how many lessons per week were devoted to Literary Education, across the whole spectrum of grades in the second cycle of primary schools, i.e. years 6–9 of primary education, respondents' views on the subjects and crosscutting themes they considered appropriate for integrating phenomena related to the events of the Shoah or the methods and reading-books used).

The questionnaires were distributed via e-mail addresses of potential respondents, i.e. university students. The research instrument was sent to all students who met the above criteria, in all forms of study: full-time, combined, and lifelong (paid students). The validity and feasibility of the questionnaire was verified in the framework of a research investigation, the aim of which was to find out the opinions of

teachers of the educational field of Czech Language and Literature at the lower-secondary schools on the implementation of the Shoah theme in the teaching of Literary Education. The questionnaire used for the previous research investigation and the research instrument used in the current research were very similar, differing mainly in the focus of some questions in terms of time (e.g. How many teaching hours do you devote to Literary Education in all grades of the lower-secondary school? x How many teaching hours were devoted to Literary Education within all the years of the second cycle of primary school you attended?). The chosen methodological approach allows for a comparison of the findings of the two research investigations carried out. Although the core of our paper is the presentation of selected results of the actual research, we will also make some comparative comments on them based on the findings of the opinions of the practicing teachers.

A total of 790 potential respondents received the questionnaire used to determine the preconceptions and opinions of prospective teachers, and 343 of them completed it. The return rate (completion of the complete questionnaire) is therefore 43.4%. The time spent by respondents in completing it is shown in Figure 1.

As can be seen from Figure 1, most respondents spent 30–60 min completing the questionnaire, while the least spent an hour or more.

### 2.1. Respondents of the research survey

A total of 319 students of teacher education programs, 300 women and 19 men, whose study plan includes at least one course provided by the Department of Czech Language and Literature of the Faculty of Education of Palacký University in Olomouc, participated in the research. The age distribution of the research participants is presented in Table 1.

Table 2 presents the year of study of the respondents. The study program that the respondents were studying at the time of the survey is presented in Table 3.

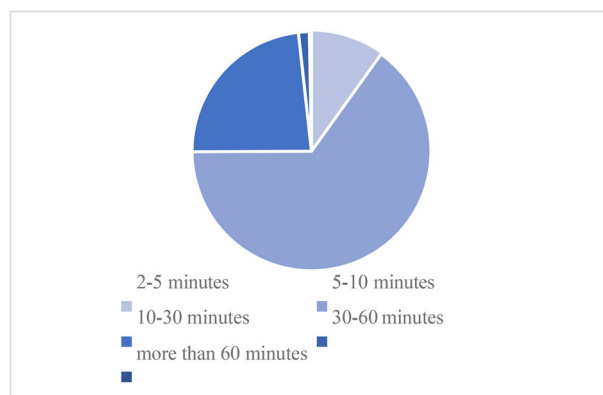


Figure 1. The time spent by respondents in completing the questionnaire.

Table 1. Age distribution of the research participants.

Age of respondents	Frequencies	
	Absolute	Relative
19 years	16	5.0%
20 years	52	16.3%
21 years	45	14.1%
22 years	37	11.6%
23 years	49	15.4%
24 years	27	8.5%
25 years	18	5.6%
26 years	8	2.5%
27 years and more	67	21.0%
Total	319	100%

**Table 2.** The year of study of the respondents.

The year of study	Frequencies	
	Absolute	Relative
1st year	89	27.9%
2nd year	67	21.0%
3rd year	64	20.1%
4th year	40	12.5%
5th year	53	16.6%
6th year and higher	6	1.9%
Total	319	100%

**Table 3.** The study program of the respondents.

The study program	Frequencies	
	Absolute	Relative
Bachelor's degree program	151	47.3%
Master's degree program	102	32.0%
Continuing master's degree program	54	16.9%
Doctoral degree program	5	1.6%
Lifelong learning	5	1.6%
Other	2	0.6%
Total	319	100%

A total of 214 (67.1%) respondents were studying full-time, 99 (31.0%) were studying in combined form and a total of 6 (1.9%) were studying in extension (lifelong learning). In this paper, we present the observed views of students in teacher education programs in several areas:

### ***2.1.1. Opinion on the (in)sufficient hourly allocation for teaching Literary Education at the lower-secondary schools in individual grades (i.e. grades 6–9)***

The amount of time allocated to teaching Literary Education at the lower-secondary schools varies, with some studies pointing to a possible insufficiency. Research has shown that many teachers spend little time on key areas, such as assessment, vocabulary, phonemic awareness and spelling, which are essential components of Literary Education (Mnatsakanyan, 2022). While teachers recommend spending ~178–198 min per day on general literacy instruction and 62–71 min on core reading instruction, there are challenges in meeting these recommendations due to distractions, such as special events that interfere with instructional time (Zharkova, 2017). Spear-Swerling and Zibulsky (2014) state that insufficient hour of Literary Education can have a detrimental effect on students' learning outcomes.

Simões Giroto et al. (2020) add that a structured literary program is considered essential for enhancing children's literary experiences and understanding of literature as a whole. The introduction of targeted literature instruction, such as Literary Education classes, has been shown to significantly improve students' reading achievement, benefiting boys and proving to be cost-effective in increasing student performance (Duernecker & Herrendorf, 2015).

### ***2.1.2. Experience with the implementation of the Shoah themes in subjects and crosscutting themes anchored in the Framework Educational Programme for Primary Education (i.e. in the school-wide binding normative document)***

The implementation of the Shoah theme in the subjects and crosscutting themes embedded in the *Framework Educational Program for Primary Education* is the subject of research and discussion, especially focusing on the perspectives of teachers in different regions. Studies highlight the importance of integrating the teaching of the Shoah into Literary Education and emphasise the role of teachers in presenting this topic to pupils (Mašát, 2019a; Mašát & Sladová, 2019). Teachers play a key role in presenting the events of the Shoah, which requires a deep understanding of the topic and the ability to facilitate meaningful interaction between students and texts (Mašát, 2019b). Research into the views of teachers of Czech Language and Literature emphasises the importance of aligning teaching practices with the content presented in official reading materials (Mašát & Sladová, 2019). A comprehensive approach to teaching about the Shoah should not only focus on memory but also analyse the social processes that perpetuate racism and emphasise the symbolic importance of minorities for social integration (Fratini, 2013).

### **2.1.3. Experience with a year of primary school in which the events of the Shoah were incorporated**

The inclusion of the Shoah events in the teaching of the lower-secondary school was the subject of research focused on the reception and interpretation of selected texts by pupils. Studies have shown that literary productions on the Shoah are popular among second grade students, which indicates their engagement and interest (Mašát & Šmakalová, 2019). Efforts are also underway to validate the selection of intentional texts related to the Shoah for inclusion in educational materials for lower-secondary schools, considering the cognitive abilities of pupils in different grades (Mašát & Šmakalová, 2020). The use of pictorial materials in History, especially in the context of World War II and the Holocaust, as a valuable tool for understanding historical events and propaganda strategies is highlighted, emphasizing the importance of pictorial materials in teaching complex historical topics (Tiburzi, 2023). Mašát et al. (2020) add that studies have shown that students, especially refugees, show enthusiasm and deeper understanding when learning about the Holocaust, which underscores the positive impact of incorporating Shoah events into educational practices.

### **2.1.4. The methods used to present the literary representation of the Shoah in the primary school attended by the respondents**

Primary schools introduce pupils to literature on the Shoah in various ways, including through non-standardized questionnaires that gauge second-grade pupils' perceptions of selected texts (Mašát & Šmakalová, 2019). Teachers of Czech Language and Literature play a key role in presenting the Shoah to pupils, and research has focused on their views and the texts they use in their teaching (Mašát, 2019a; Mašát & Sladová, 2019). The development of teaching about the Shoah is highlighted, which has gone from a lack of emphasis in the past to becoming a significant and pressing part of history teaching today, even at primary school level (Heddebaut, 2017).

## **3. Results and discussion**

In this paper, we present the answers to the questions we theoretically anchored above. For selected questionnaire responses, we also present a comparison with the responses to the corresponding questionnaire items of the practicing teachers. Opinion on the (in)sufficient hourly allocation for teaching Literary Education (Mašát, 2020).

### **3.1. Opinion on the (in)sufficient hourly allocation for teaching Literary Education at the lower-secondary schools in individual grades (i.e. grades 6–9)**

The responses of students in teacher education programs are presented according to the respondents' answers in the context of individual years of lower secondary school, i.e. in grades 6–9 (see Tables 4–10) (Mašát, 2020).

As Table 4 shows, a total of 68.6% perceive the hourly allocation for teaching Literary Education in year 6 as sufficient ('yes') or rather sufficient ('rather yes').

As Table 6 shows, respondents' opinion of the (in)adequate amount of time devoted to teaching Literary Education in year 7 dropped by 3 percentage points, to 65.6%. Nevertheless, we believe that the percentage of positive choices ('yes' and 'rather yes') is quite high.

As Table 8 shows, the number of positive choices ('yes' and 'rather yes') decreases with higher grades. In year 8, the overall figure is 58.3%.

**Table 4.** Opinion on the (in)sufficient hourly allocation for teaching Literary Education.

6th year Scale	Frequencies	
	Absolute	Relative
Yes	97	30.4%
Rather yes	122	38.2%
Rather no	67	21.0%
No	33	10.3%
Total	319	100%



**Table 5.** Characteristics—6th year.

Characteristics	Values
Diameter	1.67
Median	1
Modus	1
Standard deviation	0.94
Minimum	0
Maximum	4

**Table 6.** Opinion on the (in)sufficient hourly allocation for teaching Literary Education.

7th year	Frequencies	
	Absolute	Relative
Scale		
Yes	78	24.5%
Rather yes	130	40.8%
Rather no	73	22.9%
No	38	11.9%
Total	319	100%

**Table 7.** Characteristics—7th year.

Characteristics	Values
Diameter	1.75
Median	2
Modus	1
Standard deviation	0.95
Minimum	0
Maximum	4

**Table 8.** Opinion on the (in)sufficient hourly allocation for teaching Literary Education.

8th year	Frequencies	
	Absolute	Relative
Scale		
Yes	88	27.6%
Rather yes	98	30.7%
Rather no	88	27.6%
No	45	14.1%
Total	319	100%

**Table 9.** Characteristics—8th year.

Characteristics	Values
Diameter	1.903
Median	2
Modus	2
Standard deviation	0.96
Minimum	0
Maximum	4

**Table 10.** Opinion on the (in)sufficient hourly allocation for teaching Literary Education.

10th year	Frequencies	
	Absolute	Relative
Scale		
Yes	93	29.2%
Rather yes	90	28.2%
Rather no	77	24.1%
No	59	18.5%
Total	319	100%

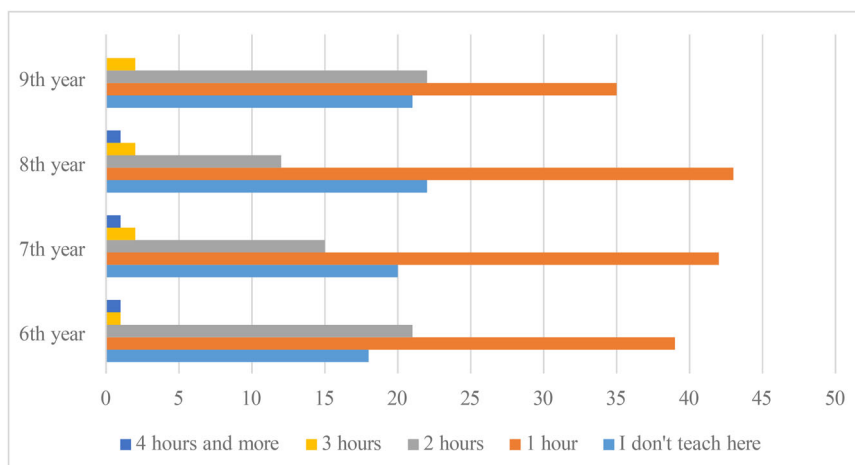
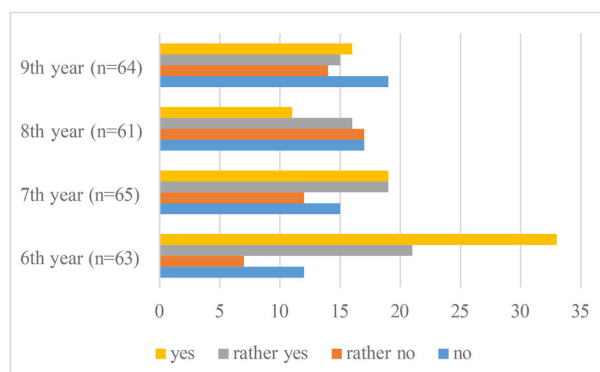
The decreasing trend of positive answers can also be evidenced by the choices ‘yes’ and ‘rather yes’ in the 9th grade, 57.4%. At the same time, the number of ‘rather not’ and ‘no’ choices is increasing (Table 11).

Figure 2 (Teaching Literary Education in individual grades) and Figure 3 (Do you consider the weekly 1-h subsidy for Literary Education to be sufficient?) present the summary results of teachers’ opinions from practice on the identical questionnaire item.



**Table 11.** Characteristics—9th year.

Characteristics	Values
Diameter	1.98
Median	2
Modus	2
Standard deviation	0.98
Minimum	0
Maximum	4

**Figure 2.** Teaching Literary Education in individual grades.**Figure 3.** Do you consider the weekly hourly allocation for literary education to be sufficient?

As can be seen, most teachers include literary education in their teaching in the amount of 1 h per week. The second question from this category was a question about the (in)sufficiency of the weekly lesson allocation for the given component of the educational field.

Figure 3 summarizes the answers to the question Do you consider the weekly hourly allocation of Literary Education to be sufficient?

The frequencies shown in Figure 3 are recorded in absolute numbers based on the respondents' choices: teachers filled in the data for each grade in which they teach Czech language and literature in the respective year. For the answers in the category 'grade 6', there is a strong predominance of the answers 'yes' and 'rather yes'. We believe that the relatively sufficient total weekly number of Czech language and literature lessons in these grades, which indicates that there is enough time for teaching literary education, causes this situation. A similar situation can be observed in 'grade 7', although the categories 'yes' and 'rather yes' show a lower numerical representation. Respondents in 'grade 8' ('rather no and no') gave the largest number of negative answers (for more details, see Mašát, 2020).

During statistical processing of the data, a correlation was observed between the data in Figure 2 (teaching Literary Education in individual grades) and Figure 3 (question on the (in)sufficiency of the hourly allowance for Literary Education in each grade of lower-secondary school). We show the dependence separately for each grade (for more details, see again Mašát, 2020).

**Table 12.** Implementation of the Shoah into subjects.

Subject	Frequencies	
	Absolute	Relative
History	305	31.9%
Czech Language and Literature	277	29.0%
Civics Education	224	23.4%
Geography	67	7.0%
Art Education	49	5.1%
Music Education	31	3.2%
Other	2	0.2%
None	1	0.1%
Total	956	100%

It can be stated that the answers of future and practicing teachers are similar: with increasing grades of the 2nd grade of primary school, satisfaction with the hourly allowance devoted to the Czech language and literature generally decreases, especially from the subjective point of view of approaching entry into secondary school.

### **3.2. Implementation of the Shoah into subjects and crosscutting themes**

In Table 12, we present the experiences of students from other study programs with integration into selected educational fields in the primary schools they attended (Mašát, 2020).

Figure 4 shows the results of the survey, which was oriented towards finding out the views of practicing teachers.

Our expectations were met when implementing the phenomenon in the educational field of History. Mašát (2019a) states that Literary Education serves as a platform for introducing students to the topic of the Shoah through artistic narratives and involves them in the factual and imaginative realm. Fratini (2013) adds that the inclusion of the topic of the Shoah in the curriculum is crucial due to its importance in collective memory and public discourse, which represents a didactic challenge that emphasizes the acquisition of knowledge and historical concepts over values and sentiment. It can therefore be stated that these are achieved on the theoretical level based on our findings.

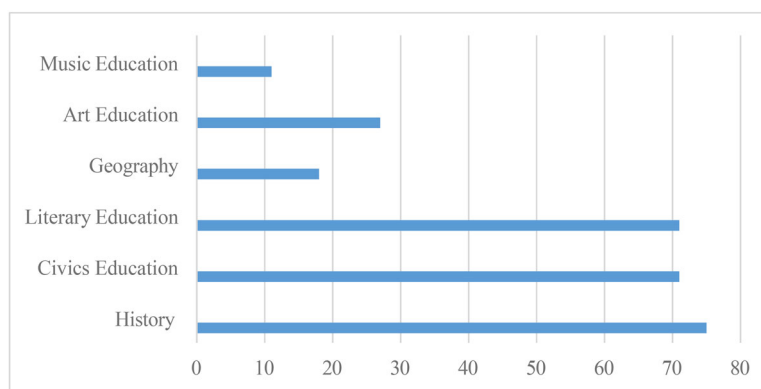
The question of the subject implementation of the Shoah phenomenon was related to a questionnaire item that surveyed the opinions of a defined sample of teachers on the integration of the Shoah phenomenon into cross-curricular topics. It is assumed that cross-curricular topics support the integration of the subject with their expected results.

The content composition of selected cross-curricular topics—see, for example, Mašát (2019b). In Table 13, we present students' experiences with the integration of the Shoah phenomenon into crosscutting themes.

Kitzes et al. or Levis Sullam state that by connecting the teaching of the Shoah to these broader themes, educators can provide a more comprehensive understanding of historical trauma and its social consequences, fostering critical thinking and empathy among students. Mašát (2019b) underlines that this approach is consistent with evolving trends in medical education that emphasizes the importance of considering socio-cultural dynamics, communication skills, and ethical considerations in preparing professionals to serve diverse populations. By incorporating the Shoah into crosscutting themes, educators can foster a deeper understanding of historical events while developing the basic skills and values necessary for a more inclusive and empathetic society. Based on the results of the research presented investigations, it can be concluded that teachers (both practitioners and those who taught the student respondents) are aware of the potential of crosscutting topics (not only) in terms of integrating the events of the Shoah (Figure 5).

### **3.3. Grades of the second grade of primary schools suitable for the integration of the events of the Shoah**

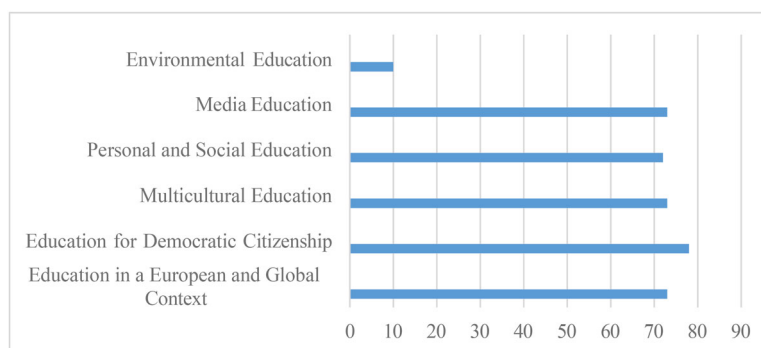
Another questionnaire item, the results of which are presented here, is the answer to the year (or age) when pupils should be introduced to the events of the Shoah. In Table 14, we present the experiences



**Figure 4.** In which subject do you think it is appropriate to implement the Shoah theme?

**Table 13.** Integration of the Shoah phenomenon into crosscutting themes.

Crosscutting theme	Frequencies	
	Absolute	Relative
Education in a European and global context	305	21.9%
Education for democratic citizenship	301	21.6%
Multicultural education	297	21.3%
Personal and social education	266	19.1%
Media education	152	10.9%
Environmental education	73	5.2%
Total	1394	100%



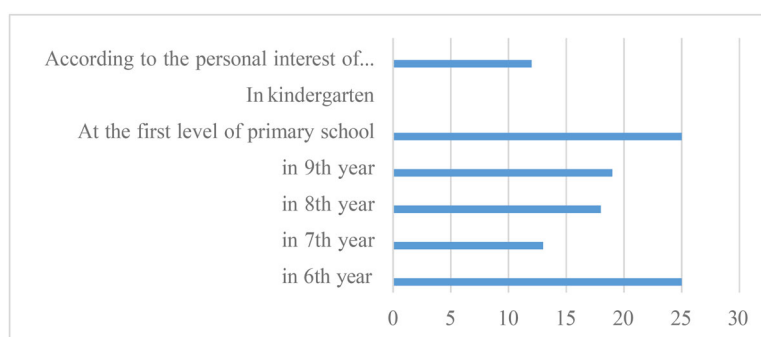
**Figure 5.** Inclusion of the Shoah in the crosscutting themes.

**Table 14.** Experiences of student teachers of the year in which they first encountered the Shoah events.

Year	Frequencies	
	Absolute	Relative
In 6th year	80	25.1%
In 7th year	57	17.9%
In 8th year	95	29.8%
In 9th year	37	11.6%
At the first level of primary school	37	11.6%
In kindergarten	1	0.3%
According to the personal interest of the pupils	12	3.8%
Never	0	0.0%
Other	0	0.0%
Total	319	100%

of student teachers, i.e. their experiences of the year in which they first encountered the Shoah events in institutional education, in any subject or cross-curricular topic.

According to the students' experiences, most of them became acquainted with the events of the Shoah in the 8th grade of primary school. The students' experiences are slightly at odds with the views



**Figure 6.** In what grade do you think it is appropriate to implement the Shoah theme?

**Table 15.** Opinions of the respondents in connection with four methods: project teaching.

Scale	Frequencies	
	Absolute	Relative
Yes	198	62.1%
Rather yes	105	32.9%
Rather no	16	5.0%
No	0	0.0%
Total	319	100%

**Table 16.** Opinions of the respondents in connection with four methods: dramatization.

Scale	Frequencies	
	Absolute	Relative
Yes	55	17.2%
Rather yes	79	24.8%
Rather no	147	46.1%
No	38	11.9%
Total	319	100%

of the teachers practicing. The earliest introduction of the issue to students was the most represented opinion of the tested teachers in year 6, which contrasts largely with when teachers include the issue the most. The same percentage as year 6 was represented by the response 'in the first year of primary school'; the results also included 12 responses 'according to pupils' personal interest'. A total of 2 teachers chose the option 'other', listing 'according to the situation' and 'according to the mental maturity of the grade' (see Figure 6). Gil (2009) comments that the implementation of the theme of the Shoah, also known as the Holocaust, into the educational curriculum has evolved over time. In the past, the teaching of the Shoah was minimal or even ignored, but today it is considered a vital and impactful topic in the teaching of History, even at the primary school level.

### 3.4. Methods used to present the literary representation of the Shoah at the primary school

As part of the presentation of the results of this questionnaire item, we present the experiences and opinions of the respondents in connection with four methods: project teaching (see Table 15), dramatization (see Table 16), the method of creative writing (see Table 17), and writing one's own poetry (see Table 18). We are convinced that these methods are ideal for introducing students to the events of the Shoah, that based on their use and application, they can also become familiar with this line of events of the Second World War in the form of experiential pedagogy, and that they can thereby internalize to a greater extent the expressions that are theirs to us through submitted (Mašát, 2019b).

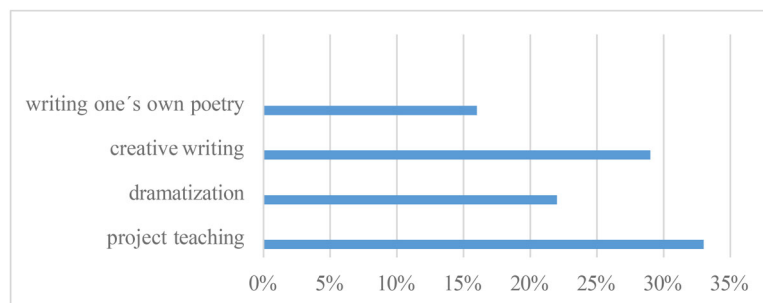
von Borries (2017) states that in Shoah education, project-based learning involving dramatization, creative writing methods, and poetry writing can be powerful tools to engage students and deepen their understanding of the Holocaust. The use of methods, such as The Survivors' Heritage, The Historical

**Table 17.** Opinions of the respondents in connection with four methods: creative writing.

Scale	Frequencies	
	Absolute	Relative
Yes	115	36.1%
Rather yes	131	41.1%
Rather no	67	21.0%
No	6	1.9%
Total	319	100%

**Table 18.** Opinions of the respondents in connection with four methods: writing one's own poetry.

Scale	Frequencies	
	Absolute	Relative
Yes	71	22.3%
Rather yes	96	30.1%
Rather no	116	36.4%
No	36	11.3%
Total	319	100%

**Figure 7.** Opinions of the respondents in connection with four methods: views of practicing teachers.

Approach, and An Interdisciplinary Approach can provide a multi-level and comprehensive understanding of events. In addition, incorporating drama as a teaching strategy can improve communication skills and offer a more immersive learning experience (Fratini, 2013; Mašát et al., 2020). Carreño et al. (2011) underline that by encouraging students to write their own poetry and creatively express their thoughts and emotions about the Shoah, educators can foster empathy, critical thinking, and a deeper connection to historical events, contributing to a more holistic approach to education.

The views of practicing teachers are presented in Figure 7.

The most positive responses were recorded for the project-teaching variant. Creative writing ranked second in positive responses. This method helps develop students' imagination, they get to know the text through creative aspects, and they get to know their own process of creating a work of art, which can help them in the reception of texts and in learning about different authorial styles. This method is very suitable for presenting the Shoah, especially the opportunity to grasp a serious topic in a certain creative way (Mašát, 2019a). According to the teachers (see Mašát, 2019a), dramatization ranked third in terms of suitability for working with the Shoah. In terms of positive feedback, the method of writing one's own poetry is in the last place. We believe that the higher number of negative responses is related to a certain negative attitude of Czech teachers towards poetry as such. Teachers believe that they do not know how to work with poetry that it is necessary to find the meaning of the text, that it is very intimate form of expression, or that it does not belong to the school curriculum (Mašát, 2019a; compare Vala, 2016). This attitude is manifested in the (non)use of the method of writing student poetry, which in a cyclical circle again leads to the fact that future potential teachers will not work with poetry. We believe that the poetic treatment of the Shoah provides an extraordinary space for expressing the atmosphere associated with the defined phenomenon (compare the results published in Mašát, 2019b).

## 4. Conclusion

In this paper, we present selected results of a quantitative research investigation, the aim of which was to explore the experiences of students of teacher education programs with the implementations of the Shoah in the primary school they attended. We compare the selected results with the results of previously conducted research in which we investigated the opinions of Czech Language and Literature teachers on the inclusion of Shoah issues in primary school teaching.

Based on the findings, we believe that the pre-research thesis has been fulfilled, i.e. that most of the problematic is included in the eighth year of primary school, namely in the subject History, which is predestined by its content for the integration of events anchored in history. Civics Education and Czech Language and Literature also received a significant number of positive responses, while Education in a European and Global Context, Education for Democratic Citizenship and Multicultural Education were among the crosscutting themes. Respondents also consider the hourly allocation to the teaching of Czech Language and Literature to be less and less sufficient as the second year of primary school progresses. This is mainly explained by the upcoming entrance exams to secondary schools.

Of the four methods chosen, project-based learning, dramatization, creative writing, and writing one's own poetry, all the respondents, based on their opinions or experience, consider project-based learning to be the most suitable, with its possibilities and scope being, in their opinion, the best for familiarizing pupils not only with the events of the Shoah. We see the limitations of the research presented in the large sample of respondents; on the other hand, we are convinced that the comparison of the results of two identical research surveys in which bidding teachers and practicing teachers participated presents interesting results that can be used in further research. Based on the results presented and possibly based on the results of subsequent research, it will be possible to undertake an adequate targeted intervention to improve the situation in the inclusion of Shoah events in the teaching at different levels of education.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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